A Social Semiotic Analysis of Mini-Bus Taxis as Mobilescapes in Cape Town

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ABSTRACT

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Linguistic Landscape (LL) is a rapidly growing area of investigation that concerns itself with the attention to language, cultural objects and images displayed in public spaces. Prompted by caveats of the earlier traditional studies which included counting the visibility of languages, the fixity of signs, coupled with methodological issues that lacked data triangulation, new approaches emerged. In this present study, framed as *A Social Semiotic Analysis of Mini-Bus Taxis as Mobilescapes in Cape Town*, specific inquiry about the emergence of language use through an analysis of the evolution of messages that are inscribed on taxis that transport people within Cape Town and between Cape Town and other cities around South Africa is made to disentangle these caveats.

In arguing for a more comprehensive investigation of this discursive practice of adorning signage, we take an approach to landscapes as semiotic instants in the social production, circulation, distribution and consumability of discourses in society and view signs as re-semiotized, and due to their constitutive nature, also view these as symbolic and interactional artifacts of a sociolinguistics of mobility. This approach also accounts for a gap in theorisation of space within the LL framework. Therefore, an ethnographic study is conducted and it draws on theoretical/analytical insights from other research disciplines such as tourism studies, transport studies, genre studies and consumer studies. Throughout the exposition of the theoretical framework, we provide illustrative examples of signage, through taking photographs, primarily from within the Cape Town taxi industry. The photographs were complemented by interviewing both consumers and producers of the signage, with a particular view of establishing the extent to which language use conforms to national and provincial policy making proclamations. Of particular relevance here are questions relating to historical, ideological, socio-cultural, economic, political, etc. factors behind particular linguistic and visual/image choices. The analysis of the qualitative data was accompanied by multimodality. Concepts such as remediation, resemiotization, afforded us a theoretical toolkit to delve into the mobile signage emplaced on taxis.

Contrary to what has often been assumed, the study unearthed that every government's undertakings have a prolific role in persuading crucial decisions that language users take. The upsurge in the use of African languages can also be attributable to the fact that the South African Constitution elevated nine previously marginalized indigenous African languages to officialdom status. Moreover, this research has also revealed that local South African indigenous languages are increasingly being commodified. Taxi owners in South Africa use not just English, but particularly African languages and other socio-cultural materials such as clan names as commodities to lure consumers.

The study further shows how spaces in the taxi industry are semiotically themed as Christianized, gendered, bloodied, and as a space where an enmeshment of beliefs (traditional and Christianity) and ancestral and traditional affiliations can be evidenced. Further, the juxtaposition of material artefacts, some of which are synonymous with particular rural areas and hybridized forms of linguistic features also double-articulated multiple localities, with significant evidence multilingualism and multiculturalism, and thereby blurring rural-urban scape boundaries. Such kind of multilingual and multicultural dispensation is not often captured in other methods of sociolinguistic enquiry.

The study contributes to the development of the theorisation of Linguistic Landscapes by repudiating some of the claims made based solely on Western urban contexts and not considering rural contexts such as those found in African contexts by extending the theory of spatialization through local and global mobilities. Second, the study contributes to studies on LL in transit by expounding on the South African mini-bus taxis as mobilescapes, on which the mobility of semiotic resources displayed for consumption.

This study also contributes to language policy and planning studies by showing some shortcomings of policy pronouncements in which languages are 'zoned' and fixed to regions. For example, Sesotho and isiZulu are not official languages in the Western Cape Province, and yet they are found on signage on minibus taxis.

DECLARATION

I declare that the '*A Social Semiotic Analysis of Mini-Bus Taxis as Mobilescapes in Cape Town'*, is my own work. It has not been submitted before, for any degree or examination in any other university. All the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Full name: Mathapelo Matsabisa (2222459)

Signed: …… Date: November 2020

DEDICATION

To Karabo Mojakisane, Kamohelo Mojakisane, Relebohile Mojakisane, Phakoana Ntjeke, my children; Moliehi Monoana (aka Mabokang) for being my pillar of strength during very tough times, as well as my brothers and sisters at large for every supportive role you played. My brother, Tsepo Matsabisa (posthumous), for being my tireless chauffeur whenever I had to travel and my sister, Mannini, for always being there, every step of my academic way. That didn't go unnoticed. A word of gratitude also goes to some of my colleagues who pushed me and supported me when I was losing hope in finishing this writing and this goes to Mr. Christopher Banda for constantly enquiring about my progress. That gave me the edge to push as I realized that my failure would bring such disappointment to you. Thank you for believing in me, *Buti*. To Mrs Nomalungisa Ngondo (posthumous). You were a sister I never had, so open and supportive of my every endeavour. Thank you ever so much sis L for your wisdom and strong character and for your ardent faith in God. You taught me a lot. As you would always say, God made our paths cross for a reason. But most of all, to my two mothers: my academic mother, Professor Zubeida Desai for seeing the potential in me and believing in me when I doubted myself and to my maternal grandmother, 'Makhotso Matsabisa, for raising a very strong woman in me so I was able to climb the steepest mountains of this life we lead! I thank all whole-heartedly!

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The writing process of this thesis has not been easy. I owe debts of gratitude to lots of people who have helped and encouraged me along the way. I mention no names, but you know who you are. Thank you to all my friends and family for your love and constant support!

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	African National Congress
ATM	Automated Teller Machine
BBBEE	Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment
CBD	Central Business District
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CATA	Cape Amalgamation Taxi Association
CODETA	Cape Organisation for the Democratic Taxi Association
DA	Democratic Alliance
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
LGBTI	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex
LL	Linguistic Landscapes
MDA	Multimodal Discourse Analysis
SANTACO	South African National Taxi Council
STATSSA	Statistics South Africa

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

While the study of language grammars has long been a matter of interest within the linguistics cycles, studies concerned with material and social manifestations of language are recently ventured into. In this chapter, a thinking about the various interests that currently govern the development of landscapes, be they socio-culturally, ideologically, attitudinally, politically or economically inclined, are introduced through the lens of *A Social Semiotic Analysis of Mini-Bus Taxis as Mobilescapes in Cape Town.* This is done due to the realization that in South Africa, public transportation is a major contributor to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Public transport plays a pivotal role in everyday life of people, especially those that are in the low economic class, as the wealthy drive their own cars. This, it does through its facilitation in access to social and economic mobility. Therefore, a suspension of services by taxi operators has a significant impact for people getting to and from work.

The chapter first provides the sociolinguistic background of South Africa. This includes delving into the embryonic background of the taxi industry in the country in general and then in the Western Cape, coupled with the role played by the taxi industry towards the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the country. The chapter extends the background by pinpointing the aims, specific objectives, research questions and a statement of the problem, the rationale, the scope and the limitations of the study.

1.2 The Sociolinguistic Background of South Africa

Before the emergence of democracy in South Africa, the apartheid regime had brought segregation and imbalance amongst people mainly through the *Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act No 55 of 1949, Immorality Amendment Act No 21 of 1950, Bantu Authorities Act, Act No 68 of 1951* and probably the most notorious of all, *the Group Areas Act 41 of 1950*. Through the Group Areas Act 41 of 1950, people were displaced from their homes by forcefully removing them from the city centres across South Africa in order to make way for white businesses. Since business was conducted by whites only, through denying blacks permits to operate, the closest residential areas were also earmarked for whites. Blacks were therefore, marginalised and kept at areas that were far from the

city centres and if and when they needed to enter the white only areas, they had to produce identification in the form of a 'dompas'.

Coupled with the segregation of the people by the apartheid regime was the linguistic segregation. The Group Areas' Act No 41 enforced "… physical separation between races by creating different residential areas for different races." In so doing, the act predetermined homogenous communities with a singular dominant language being spoken in a specific community. For example, isiZulu is associated with the KwaZulu-Natal province, isiXhosa with the Eastern Cape, Sesotho with the Free State, SiSwati with Mpumalanga and many other languages dispersed throughout the country. Gauteng was an exception. Because Johannesburg was and still is an economic hub for South Africa, it attracted people from all walks of life, therefore they brought with them their languages which existed alongside one another in their multiplicity. Although this was the case, other languages were still found in their minority state within the different homelands.

When the new democratic government got into power in 1994, and through its Constitution which came into being in February 1996, it sought to redress the spatial and linguistic imbalances. For instance, the declaration of eleven languages as the official languages of South Africa was made. This was done in an effort to give recognition to the historically marginalized use and status of the indigenous languages so that they could also enjoy the same benefits enjoyed by English and Afrikaans as they were the only two languages that were given officialdom status in South Africa prior to 1994. Over and above this, provinces were afforded an opportunity to look at their demographics and choose languages that were prominent and declare them as official provincial languages. Even though this was a noble thing to do, what the promulgations of the constitution did not take into account was the fact that this was done very early when people had not yet amalgamated spatially as a nation. Therefore, in many provinces, the status quo remained, with the exception of one or two African languages that would have been chosen as a way of enacting the constitution.

In particular, in an effort to give prominence to the Constitution, the Western Cape Language Policy of 1997 promulgates that English and Afrikaans, with the addition of isiXhosa, were the official languages of business and administration as a strategy for elevating the use of isiXhosa to the same status with English and Afrikaans. However, even up to this day, isiXhosa still must fight its way into the business and political arena because those in power still do not use it optimally. The greatest challenge posed by this promulgation was the fact that there were no measures spelt out, whether punitive nor non-punitive, for non-usage of the previously disadvantaged languages even in the political arena where laws have to be followed to the core. But the entrenchment of attaching

ethnolinguistic identity of a particular linguistic group to a specific area is so deeply ingrained to such an extent that even after twenty-six years of democracy, some people still question the existence of the Sesotho-speech community in the Western Cape to this day. For example, upon learning that I come from a Sesotho-speaking background and residing in the Western Cape, some people cannot believe that I was born in the province. This is so because, languages are sometimes still regarded as closely linked with specific communities (Heller 2007, Moore, Pietikanen, and Blommaert 2010, Urla 1995) and areas, even in the South African context.

Even though giving prominence to the African languages though the Constitution was the initial intention, English still enjoys its optimal use in the province and throughout the country, even in the echelons of the South African Parliament because it is supposedly regarded as a global language. Consequently, English is being used as the language of business and therefore, of power, prestige mode of interethnic communication, to the detriment of the African languages which are negatively valued (Unseth, 2003). This is evident even in cases where taxi owners and drivers have bought into the notion of using English as a way of demonstrating their aspirations towards the 'betterment of their lives'. A case in point is through the inscriptions on taxis throughout South Africa.

With the growing influence and upsurge of globalization, neoliberalism and late/new capitalism, language has been placed at the centre of key sectors of production and consequently, of consumption. Hence a look at the impact that these have on languages is imperative. Apart from the positive impact that the operation of these vehicles has on the economy of the country at large, languages, on the other hand, were adversely impacted upon. This was primarily due to the fact that blacks were also segregated within the communities they stayed in and the homelands and a people of a particular language (speech community) were not exposed to other languages except theirs. Languages are, even after the new dispensation, still geographically confined within certain provinces, wherein isiZulu is associated with KwaZulu-Natal province; isiXhosa, with the Eastern Cape and Sesotho, with the Free State. This is so to an extent that even after twenty-four years of democracy, people still frown at the existence of the Sesotho-speaking community in the Western Cape.

As suggested by the title of this study, the study is concerned here with what Jaworski (2010: 1) calls 'the interplay between language, visual discourse, and the spatial practices and dimensions of culture, especially the textual mediation or discourse construction of place and the use of space as a semiotic resource in its own right.' Simply put, it seeks to make an inquiry about the emergence of language use in the taxi industry space through an analysis of semiotic messages that are inscribed

on taxis that transport people within Cape Town and between Cape Town and other cities around South Africa. The messages appear as additional information over and above the prominent features of what seems like a print advertisement such as the owner's name, which might be taken to be representing a company's name, and contact details of the owner, some even going to the extent of adorning pictures that speak to the inscriptions as formal advertising does.

1.3 Contextualizing the Taxi Industry within the South African Context

Violence, poverty, crime, mayhem, lawlessness, murder, corruption; are but all the concepts that characterize South Africa while still slowly transitioning from the apartheid rule to its young democracy. As a country coming out of a past characterized by violence and domination, South Africa is still marred with the legacy of the mechanisms of the apartheid system in one form or another. One such legacy pertains to the over-reliance of black communities on taxis to ferry them to work on a daily basis and to their 'homelands'. This is despite the spate of deaths and fatalities that have mired the industry since its inception.

Consequent to the segregation of the people caused by the Group Areas' Act 41 of 1950 and other apartheid segregation strategies, the economy also rested in the hands of the whites, with the Africans having had to walk long distances from their homes to workplaces in the city centres. The only means of transport that was available, which was in the form of buses and trains, was minimal, costly and inconvenient in that they could not take the Africans closer to their habitats. As a result, from the early 1980s, the 'kombi' minibus taxis that could carry up to 15 passengers were introduced. However, the regime prohibited their operations until the deregulation that took place in 1987 (Dugard, 2001; Sekhonyane and Dugard, 2004).

It is widely reported that the taxi industry injects more than R7.2 billion into the GDP of the country in terms of gross loans and advances. This, it does directly and indirectly through the employment of drivers and other positions of management. The employment rate is estimated at around direct 360 000 jobs and around 600 000 indirect jobs, according to the South African Department of Transport (Budget vote debate of 2014/15) through the fuelling of the vehicles; cleaning; licence holding to operate on certain routes; insurance; repayment of financed vehicles; maintenance of the vehicles. But the minibus taxi industry accounts for the biggest share not only within the industry itself but also in the transport system as a whole. According to National Household Travel Survey of 2013 conducted by StatsSA, it is estimated that there are around 250 000 minibus taxis while the metered taxis are between 17 000 and 20 000. Moreover, the National Land Transport Strategic

Framework reported in 2015 that the minibus taxi industry dominates all other modes of public transportation, followed by walking as the most preferred means of transportation as can be seen in Figure 1.1. It is this volatile, over-traded commuter transport market coupled with other systemic factors such as lack of government's regulatory systems that fuel mafia-like wars.

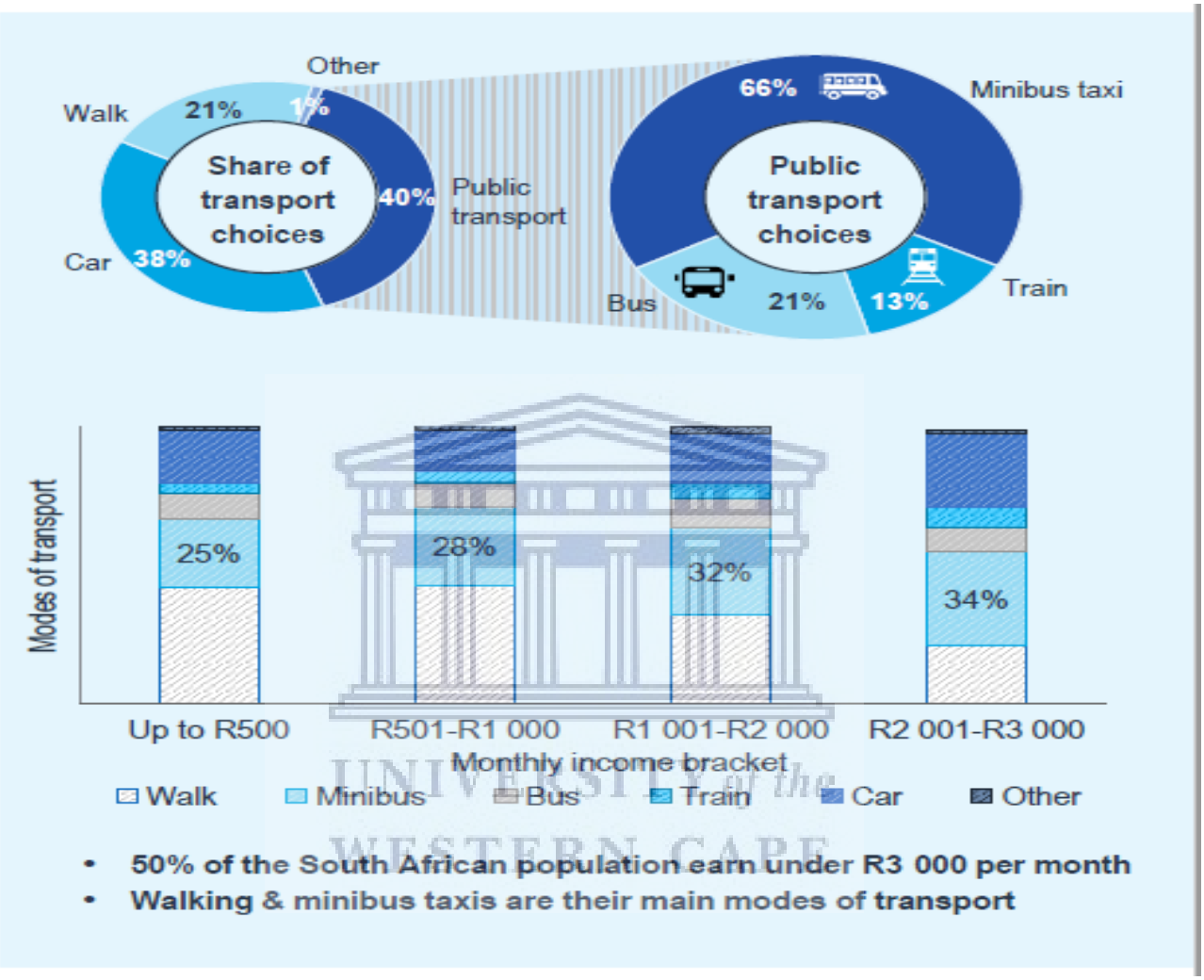


Figure 1. 1: Source: National Land Transport Strategic Framework 2015. Passenger statistics from Arrive Alive & StatsSA

According to an excerpt taken from Transport Education and Training Authority (2015),

> the taxi industry accounts for 65 percent of all public transport while buses and trains account for 21 and 14 percent respectively. The department of transport estimates that there are over 120 000 minibus taxis on the road (based on the number of taxi permits it has issued), while industry organizations estimate that there are between 150 000 and 200 000 taxis as at 2006'.

Moreover, it is purported that with the existence of the taxi industry, thousands of people were able to secure work. These come in the form of drivers, rank marshals, fare collectors, administrators and some of which are not directly created by the industry but came about as the result of the existence

of the ranks such as people selling food, car washers and street vendors. According to this report, the International Labour Organization (2003), (Second Impression 2004) reported an estimate of

> about 185 000 people who work in the minibus taxi industry in South Africa with the largest group of workers being drivers. About 95% of these workers are African while less than 2% are women. But of paramount importance is the fact that there are very few taxi owners who have a formal written contract of employment.

As can be seen, unlike in formal business, in this business, things happen the other way around. The owner or the driver is king; therefore, commuters have no say in the service being rendered to them, least of all on the mannerisms of drivers who put commuters' lives at risk due to an increasingly huge number of deaths and casualties caused by road accidents involving taxis over the years.

According to the National Travel Household Survey published in 2013, public transport accounts for 5.4 million trips per weekday, with the minibus taxis making 3.7 million trips. Therefore, this spells out clearly that the minibus taxis are the preferred mode of public transport. This is despite the impetuous violence that characterizes the industry due to the many fatal accidents and deaths such as a news report article written by Solly Maphumulo titled 'Hunt for Taxi Boss's Killers' which was published on the Internet on 14 April 2016 at 11:04am.

The article is just but one example of the commonly read about newspaper articles whose main content is about the warfare that characterizes the taxi industry. According to the Arrive Alive website,

> a study done by the Automobile Association of South Africa recorded an annual total of 70 000 minibus taxi crashes which indicates that taxis in SA amount for double the rate of crashes than all other passenger vehicles.

But the article is also quick to mention that 'there is insufficient evidence to support clear cause for the number of fatalities in minibus accidents'. It presupposes that 1) operating at high speeds; 2) meeting strict daily targets of trips; overloads; cheapest replacement of brake linings/ and pads; un-roadworthiness and driver attitude are but some of the causes of the fatalities.

Equally viable is the spate of fatalities that play out publicly and are almost synonymous with the taxi industry due to violence related to lucrative routes which, according to Dugard (2001: 6), was opportunistically manipulated and orchestrated by the apartheid regime to provide 'a springboard for the state-sponsored destabilization of African communities in a region where there was no Inkatha presence' especially in the Cape Peninsula. According to an article titled 'From Low Intensity War to Mafia War: Taxi Violence in South Africa (1987 – 2000) under the banner of 'The Violence and

Transition Series' published in 2001, the author, Jackie Dugard, posits that although the violence that racked informal settlements in the Cape Peninsula between 1990 and 1992 was over the commercial competition over routes, the reality however,

> The reality however, was more complex with the taxi conflict providing a springboard for the state-sponsored destabilization of African communities in a region where there was no Inkatha presence.
>
> Dugard (2001: 5)

1.4 The Rationale

This research was prompted by a long-distance trip to the Eastern Cape at the beginning of November 2011. Although there is vast literature on the South African taxi industry in general, its focus is concerned primarily with the evolution of the taxi industry itself, the reasons behind the violent nature of the industry and the data on fatalities emanating from using minibus taxis (Dugard, 2001; Khosa, 2006; Petzer & Weber, 2003; Barrett, 2003; Lomme, 2008; Hansen, 2006). Very little has been written on the ideological and socio-political construction of the taxi industry as it plays itself out in the public.

Secondly, the current study does not necessarily deal with the study of signs on *fixed land*, per se, but deals with the study of 'ephemeral/transient' or 'mobile structures' signs, according to Ben-Said (2011), or what Sebba (2011), on the other hand, prefers to call 'discourses in transit' or 'transitory, mobile texts within the linguistic landscape'. Two factors need careful consideration here. First, most studies on linguistic landscapes focus on a particular 'territory, region or urban agglomeration' but the study at hand intends studying inscriptions on taxis that move between different local and regional routes, meaning that the inscriptions may not necessarily be attached to a definite or particular region/area as this 'may better track the shifting, changing and changeable nature of language in place' (Burdick 2012: 2-3). Consequently, because of the 'ephemeral nature' of the signs under investigation, intertextuality and entextualisation are two linguistic terms that cannot necessarily allow us to attach the signs to a specific area, hence the call for the study of language to reflect the 'deterritorialization of language' (Burdick 2012:10). This came about as a result of

> questions of mobility in the age of increased border fluency, flows of capital in the age of post-nationalism, flows of discourse in the age of the internet, and the valuation of language in the age of late-capitalism have been at the forefront'.
>
> Burdick (2012: 10)

It is against this background and the understanding that even before the age of the internet, physical mobility of people and exchanges in transactions brought with them an inheritance of other languages into communities that once considered themselves homogenous in nature. Therefore, through this study, a different perspective to the study of LL in South Africa is added as the study highlights the social distribution of different languages in the age of globalisation and thereby the rhetoric around the creation of provincial delineations based on linguistic differentiation.

1.5 Aim, Research Questions and Objectives of the Study

1.5.1 General Aims

Overall, the current study aims at exploring messages that are inscribed on taxis that transport people within Cape Town and between Cape Town and other cities around South Africa. The overall framework for the study is guided by a number of questions, themselves borne out of the intricacies of language contact as a whole.

1.5.2 Specific Objectives

The study is limited to the following interrelated specific objectives:

1. To evaluate languages and images as social semiotics across mobile landscapes (taxis);
2. To explore how taxis are juxtaposed as mobile materialities within a landscape.
3. To determine the social construction of identities through the linguistic and visual messages;
4. To examine the socio-cultural, ideological, attitudinal and/or political factors behind particular linguistic and visual/image choices.

Considering the objectives outlined above, the following questions become pertinent to the study:

1.5.3 Research Questions

Based on the objectives, the current research therefore hopes to respond to the following questions:

1. Which language(s) and images are prevalent in the messages and why?
2. What are the economic, socio-cultural, ideological, attitudinal and political factors behind particular linguistic and visual/image choices?
3. What are the effects of particular emplacement of signage e.g. front vs rear vs sides, etc. on the production and consumption of meaning?
4. What factors are significant in determining the social structuring of languages across mobile landscapes (taxis)?

5. How are identities socially constructed through the linguistic and visual messages on mobile landscapes (taxis)?
6. What are the implications of mobile semiotic landscapes for the study of LL?

1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study

While the study seeks to explore the LL of Cape Town by predominantly focusing on taxis departing from Cape Town and Bellville taxi ranks, as these two are the biggest taxi stations that feed into almost every corner of Cape Town, the breadth of this work means I cannot make no claims to completeness, no matter how ephemeral the taxis and the linguistic manifestations they carry may be. Therefore, although some form of similarities can be detected between certain areas, the findings cannot be generalized to other areas other than the ones being studied since the Linguistic Landscaping practice of the different areas and of any other area is considered to be comparatively unique given the socio-economic and socio-political status of each and every area. The findings only make some observation to the general LL of South Africa.

1.7 Structure of the Thesis

The thesis is arranged in various chapters. It starts with from Chapter One to Chapter Eight and each chapter is mapped with a particular issue that speaks to the overall aim of this thesis.

Chapter One, for instance, encompasses a reflection on the history of the South African commuter transport in general, with the reflection zooming into the Taxi Industry, prior to 1994, the year that marks the birth of democracy in South Africa, and after. This is where the study is introduced and some background information on the Western Cape is also provided. The chapter contextualises the study and delves into the significance of the study, the research questions, objectives and hypothesis and ends off with a brief discussion on the outline of the study.

In Chapter Two, relevant literature on Linguistic Landscape (LL) is reviewed. The chapter extends the discussion by focusing on geosemiotics, multilingualism, globalisation, appropriation and multimodality that the thesis draws upon and contextualizes these as the theoretical and analytical framework that the thesis is premised on.

It is in Chapter Three that the theoretical and analytical frameworks are dealt with extensively. To start with, the chapter presents an empirical study of the LL using the triangulated method of data collection. This entails a discussion on the qualitative text-based method of data collection which

delves into an ethnographic methodology that underpins this thesis, itself complemented by unstructured interviews and a collation of other materials such as music, pictures and observations. Coupled with this methodology is a look at the design elements of the study, focusing on data collection procedures and data analysis.

Chapter Four outlines the main findings of the data collected and it looks specifically at how meaning-making and place-making plays itself out through the inscriptions in the taxi industry.

Chapter Five extends the notion of meaning-making and place-making and centres by paying particular attention to the material culture of the inscriptions within the taxi industry. It does this by focusing on notions of cultural flows, glocalisation and acculturation and cultural appropriation to show the extent to which media and human mobility, themselves being regarded as two major diacritics, have played a role in the semiotic landscape of the taxi industry. The chapter also discusses the extent to which taxis are themselves considered as typical examples of mobile materialities.

Chapter Six moves towards a discussion around what the language prevalence tells us in terms of one's or the group's identity and self-stylization.

Chapter Seven deals with commodification. In the wake of languages, visuals and materialities being used to achieve certain ends, attaching commodity candidacy to particular manifestations and materialities has grown acutely due to globalisation and the neo liberalism.

The study ends off with Chapter Eight which gives a comprehensive summary of the findings and draws some general conclusions about the taxi industry's linguistic landscape and summarizes the key results. It emphasizes that the study of language on signs should not be confined only on billboards and shop signs but also on a myriad of other possible situations people deem fit or comfortable to express themselves.

1.8 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the study is situated in the sociolinguistics of South Africa and it is conceptualised within the multimodal Linguistic Landscape. The aims, objectives, the scope and the statement of the problem and the imitations to the study are visibly stipulated. To accomplish this, a brief historical background on the origins of the taxi industry and the other factors that helped characterise it as a violent space are presented. The chapter does this by highlighting factors towards the industry's contribution to its growth and to that of the country's economy. Moreover, the chapter has also highlighted the supposedly homogenous state of provinces in terms of their linguistic and

cultural norms. The orchestration of the apartheid regime is regarded as the main contributing factor in the regionalization of languages in South Africa. This, in spite of the country spanning more than two decades into democracy which abolished provincial borders and allowed for free mobility across the country but the imperial projects of the apartheid regime are still alive and consistently entrenched by the language policies of the current dispensation. It is against this background that the chapter also dealt with the rationale behind the study so that the interest behind the study can be contextualised and evidently understood.

Given a huge bearing that the literature on the South African sociolinguistics has on our complete understanding and analysis of the inscriptions adorned on the taxis, it is imperative that its review is embarked upon. Not only that, but also a review of the intricacies of literature around the theoretical framework of Linguistic Landscape both within and outside the confines of the South African context, with a huge focus on conceptualisation of space/place as a point of departure. It is for these reasons that the next chapter primarily focuses on a discussion around literature review.

CHAPTER 2

THE LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

The chapter will start off by giving a brief background on the study of Linguistic Landscape (LL) and go on to show the intricate links between Linguistic Landscape and communication. Linguistic Landscape has received quite a considerable attention as a field of study even though its methodological and theoretical caveats have been heavily criticised for lack of conclusiveness. Therefore, to counteract these, a material ethnographic approach, which draws from multimodal discourse analysis and the notion of geosemiotics, is employed in the study. To achieve this, the study draws from several other disciplines such as transport studies, sociolinguistics, genre studies and many more. Moving from Landry and Buorhis' premise of LL being basically regarded as the presence of signs, whether in public or private spheres, we will then move on to review the relationship between linguistic landscape and space in its ephemeral or mobile state as theorization of space always has close affinities with the analysis of LL. This will help in accounting for the circularity and distribution of semiotic materialities within the various areas of taxi operations in Cape Town and beyond the peripheries of the Western Cape taxi industry.

The overall chapter is premised on the phenomenon that, in the process of reading a landscape, analysts have to take into consideration the fact that discourse is 'something that is produced, circulated, distributed, consumed in society' (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000: 448). This simply implies that speech acts, coherence and interdiscursivity must also be given much attention and in getting an in-depth understanding behind the rationale on the choices made and which prior texts informed the choices, unstructured interviews and oral conversations were considered to complement the investigation.

Therefore, the next section unpacks the study of LL and attempts to situate it within this study.

2.2 Situating the Study of the South African Taxis

2.2.1 Historicizing the study of LL

Building on the work of Jacques Leclere (1989), Landry and Bourhis (1997) propose Linguistic Landscape to mean:

> The language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings combines to form the LL of a given territory, region, or urban agglomeration.
>
> Landry and Bourhis (1997: 25)

Landry and Bourhis (1997) are considered as being the first pioneering advocates of the research on Linguistic Landscape, widely known in its short form, LL. Drawing from this definition, the branch of linguistics defines Linguistic Landscape (LL) as "the visibility and salience of languages on public and commercial signs in a given territory or region" Landry and Bourhis (1997:23). This is said in the context of Gorter (2006: 82) who posits that

> the word landscape was first recorded in English in 1598. It was a loan from Dutch where it is a term used by painters who were around that time becoming famous for their skills in the landscape genre. The Dutch word *landschap* means 'region' or 'tract of land' but in the 16th century obtained artistic significance as 'a picture depicting a scenery on land', which meaning then was brought over into English
>
> Gorter (2006: 82)

Drawing from their research which sought to understand the ethnolinguistic vitality in Canada, the authors are said to have linked the 'signs and other writing in the public sphere with speakers' conceptions of the landscape, and speakers' conceptions of the landscape'. As such, they came to the conclusion that the LL has two functions: informational and symbolic functions. The latter part was said against the backdrop that 'Canada has historically seen struggles for minority language rights, in and outside of Quebec, the emplacement of language of public signage became an important facet of this ongoing struggle' (Burdick, 2012: 3).

Following in the footsteps of this pioneering study in an effort to investigate the symbolic function of languages in a landscape, Kelly-Holmes' (2018) research was concerned with the fact that the more prominent a particular language or languages are, the greater the illusion of their relative dominance in the social stratification of all languages prevalent in any particular community. And this has proved to be true in many societies and even more so in South Africa where the apartheid

government elevated the status of the English and Afrikaans languages only to the detriment of the indigenous African languages.

Moreover, in her quest to confirm Landry and Bhorhis' notion of the prevalence of a language against its perceived ethnolinguistic vitality, Tulp (1978) investigated the linguistic complexity in Brussels. She studied the languages of big commercial billboards and found out that the use of French in the public space contributed to the city's gradual 'Frenchification' as one-third of the billboards were mainly monolingual Dutch while the other two-thirds were predominantly in French while signs in both Dutch and French accounted for less than 10% (Backhaus, 2007). In a nutshell, her study argues that 'Brussel's linguistic landscape is not bilingual but predominantly French with only 'here and there a small place for the Flemish.'

Linguistic Landscape was regarded as an alternative approach to the study of multilingualism because of its holistic approach to language use as opposed to an established trend within sociolinguistics research that favours speech over written forms. Furthermore, most researchers adopted Landry and Bourhis' definition of a linguistic landscape as a starting point but great criticism has been levelled against these earlier studies of the LL and it is to this that this study turns.

2.2.2 Critical Reception of Linguistic Landscape

The earlier studies were criticised for investigating speech at the expense of written forms. Most recent LL studies seek to break away from the traditional LL research that concerned itself with counting the visibility of languages, itself interpreted as the ethnolinguistic vitality of languages in a given commercialised territory. This was done in order to inform urban language planning and policy, notwithstanding other extra-linguistic and sociohistorical factors that might have impacted on the construction of such landscape. This study seeks to build on recent LL research and argue for an expansion of the landscape in terms of disciplinary boundaries.

Added to this is the methodological caveats of earlier studies of LL have been summarily outlined as follows, but not limited to:

1) Difficulty in defining unit of analysis
2) Fixity of signs
3) Incomprehensive sampling and representativity
4) Lack of data triangulation

Ben-Said (2011: 62)

Apart from methodological issues, earlier studies have been criticized not only for their terminological shortcomings but also for focusing on written signage only and not encompassing the orality of the investigated areas (Banda and Jimaima, 2015). Coupled with the lack of research on oralscapes is a focus on investigating signage in cities/urban sites only, at the expense of peri-urban or more correctly semi-urban and rural environments (Banda and Jimaima, 2017; Leeman and Modan 2010). Leeman and Modan posit that commercial zones have been investigated in most LL research even though they argue that the main focus of these research was based on areas with a large number of stores and restaurants. Their material manifestations of language compared favourably to that of public sector or residential areas.

Furthermore, many LL studies implicitly assumed that the prevalence of languages in any given landscape reflected the comparative relation between the status of various ethnolinguistic groups within the community to that of the prominence of the language(s). Although this might have been relatively true in some instances, it did not hold in other areas due to a myriad of factors.

Adding to these caveats is the global use of English in landscapes. Looking at this in line with the presupposition made by many researchers, Leeman and Modan (2010: 183) postulate that earlier studies presupposed that 'the target audience of a given language consists largely of people who can read and/or understand that language'. Moreover, these studies were seen to be monomodal in nature, in the sense that they focused their attention mainly on linguistic resources only. Another criticism was levelled at the fact that the researcher's perspective was always interwoven when making analysis.

But a burgeoning number of current studies of LL has realized an array of other factors or perspectives that contribute to signage which include the association of the use of English as 'an index of sophistication, cosmopolitanism of modernity (e.g. Cenoz & Gorter, 2006; Huebner, 2006; Ben-Rafael *et al.*, 2006)', just to name a few, itself a consequence of colonization. Some of these factors are reflected upon briefly in the following sections.

2.2.3 A Contextualized Approach to Linguistic/Semiotic Landscapes

Tremendous strides have been made in developing research on Linguistic Landscapes. In their review of *Semiotic Landscapes: Language, Image, Space*, Adam Jaworski and Crispin Thurlow (2010) and Banda (2015) postulate that the scopes of the LLs are completely varied. Three major shortcomings are briefly discussed here.

Firstly, in their introductory chapter to Semiotic Landscapes, Jaworski and Thurlow (2010) challenge the conceptualisation of LL and introduce what they called Semiotic Landscapes. This, they did because of the 'interplay between language, visual discourse, and the spatial practices and dimensions of culture, especially the textual mediation or discursive construction of place and the use of space as a semiotic resource in its own right' (2010: 1). Following Kress and van Leeuwen's (2001) notion of multimodality, they do not regard language as the only representation for semiotic mode and communication but also other semiotic modes.

Ben-Rafael *et al.* (2006:14), on the other hand, refer to linguistic landscape as "any sign or announcement located outside or inside a public institution or a private business in a given geographical location" in order to compensate for the focus on top-down signage as it became apparent that confining the LL of any given territory on top-down signage is not a true reflection of the linguistic assemblage of a territory because according to Leeman and Modan (2010:196), 'all cities and neighborhoods have a relationship with the municipal bodies that govern them. Whether that relationship is one of regulation, investment, suppression, negotiation or neglect, it has a bearing on the ways that social actors are encouraged or discouraged, desire, or can write (on) the landscape'. Based on this argument, bottom-up signage had to be taken into account when reading a landscape.

Also, worth noting is Backhaus (2007:10) who reflects on a different terminological suggestion that has been made by Itagi and Singh (2002a). He argues that "theirs is just a mere paraphrase of the terms Linguistic Landscape/Landscaping (LL)" to "language use in its written form (visible language) in the public sphere" even though they do not give any sort of explanation about the difference between the two excepts that one is a gerund when the other is a noun.

Secondly, is the issue of the conceptualization of space in a landscape. Jaworski and Thurlow (2010) posit that:

> But landscape as a way of seeing is not to be confined to the mediated representations of space in art and literature. It is a broader concept pertaining to how we view and interpret space in ways that are contingent on geographical, social, economic, legal, cultural and emotional circumstances, as well as our practical uses of the physical environment as nature and territory, aesthetic judgements, memory and myth, for example drawing on religious beliefs and references, historical discourses, politics of gender relations, class, ethnicity, and the imperial projects of colonization – all of which are still present today and consistently reproduced in, for example, contemporary tourist landscapes.
>
> Jaworski and Thurlow (2010: 3)

Echoing the sentiments outlined above is Mitchell (2000: 100) who postulates that

> Landscape is both a place and a 'way of seeing' … [It] is additionally a form of ideology. It is a way of carefully selecting and representing the world so as to give it a particular meaning. Landscape is thus an important ingredient in constructing consent and identity – in organizing a receptive audience – for the projects and desires of powerful social interests.
>
> Mitchell (2000: 100)

As can be seen, this study is not the first one to deal with the subject of Linguistic Landscape (LL) as it is evident that there are conflicting views on theorization of space within the context of a landscape. It can be witnessed from these arguments pertaining to the conceptualization of a landscape that most of the earlier studies do not tell a comprehensive tale as it is either they put more emphasis on the Western visual communication, with the use of global languages such as English as a commodity, leaving out the other South African indigenous languages, except for Mokwena (2018). Taking into consideration that the focus on the Western visual communication derives from the Western mass media and its technologies, this study acknowledges the fact that these practices do not stay intact in their territories but are aided by globalization to cross physical and virtual borders. Therefore, given the closely intertwined nature of culture and language, this study seeks to include the possibility of regional and social variation by analysing the extent to which the conventional Western iconographical elements are infused into designing the signage in the South African context.

Moreover, most of the LL studies are premised in urban areas, with very few studies that are based in rural areas (Jimaima, 2015) or semi-urban environments (Stroud and Mpendukana, 2010). Furthermore, studies about the taxi industry within the South African context are primarily concerned with the violent legacy of the industry, this particular study is paying homage to the signage in the industry which has become established as conventional.

Therefore, paramount to creating meaning is the realization that in constructing a landscape, there is an anticipated receptive audience that is being called upon to consume the landscape and maybe act upon it. This, therefore, means that the act of producing and consuming the material manifestations is a two-way process that compels us to briefly look into theories of communication in the next section. We seek to understand how producers, specifically in the taxi industry of the Western Cape, in the process of communicating or enacting their ideologies and/or their identities, use space and their material manifestations of language, in written and oral modes, and other semiotic resources.

2.3 Communication through global cultural flows

Herlé and Rustema (2005) have alluded to the increased number of communication media has since the last half of the 19th Century.to be specific, they single out the telegraph, phone, PC and www, text message, videophone, skype, and twigger and twitter as being amongst those that have been introduced. But they are also quick to critique the stagnation that is evident between cultures 'in business ethics, organization, management, preferred leadership style, the aspects that motivate employees, business letters, annual reports, argumentation, presentation, and negotiation styles' in spite of this increased number of platforms that are at their disposal to communicate. This emanates from the view that global flows operate in intrinsic circuits of influence in that the flows are not from centre to periphery but they may also be the other way around.

Pavlenko (2005) cites Dainton and Zelley (2005) who argue that information is considered synonymous to communication. It is against this background that they, instead, define the communication process as

> the flow of information from one person to another (Axley, 1984). Communication is viewed as simply one activity among many others, such as planning, controlling, and managing (Deetz, 1994). It is what we do in organizations. Communication scholars, on the other hand, define communication as the process by which people interactively create, sustain, and manage meaning (Conrad & Poole, 1998). As such, communication both reflects the world and simultaneously helps create it. Communication is not simply one more thing that happens in personal or professional relationships and professional experiences - it is how we plan, control, manage, persuade, understand, lead, love, and so on.
>
> Pavlenko (2005:2)

Drawing from these, texts, whether meant for business or private use, have a communicative purpose in nature. Therefore, it can only make sense to look at communication and its relevance to this study. Communication is a two-way process, whether we communicate through language, dress code, mannerisms or in any way. There are an addresser and an addressee. In communicating through the use of a language, Danesi (2009) has observed that the kind of language we use in communicating messages depends very much on the setting and the interdependent social roles of the people interacting. Flower (1994:53) graphically echoes these sentiments through Figure 2.1 below even though the focus in her case was on a reader-writer relationship. We want to believe that the same processes are engaged even in cases of speaker-listener relationship.

What one gathers from the quotation is the fact that an enquiry into communication can be equated to discourse analysis as written and spoken communication is defined as discourse. Therefore, since

Fairclough's (1992b) CDA states that discourse is 'socially constitutive and as well as socially conditioned' this study follows on Fairclough's three-dimensional framework for analysing discourse, 1) discourse-as-text; 2) discourse-as-discursive-practice; and 3) discourse-as-social-practice.

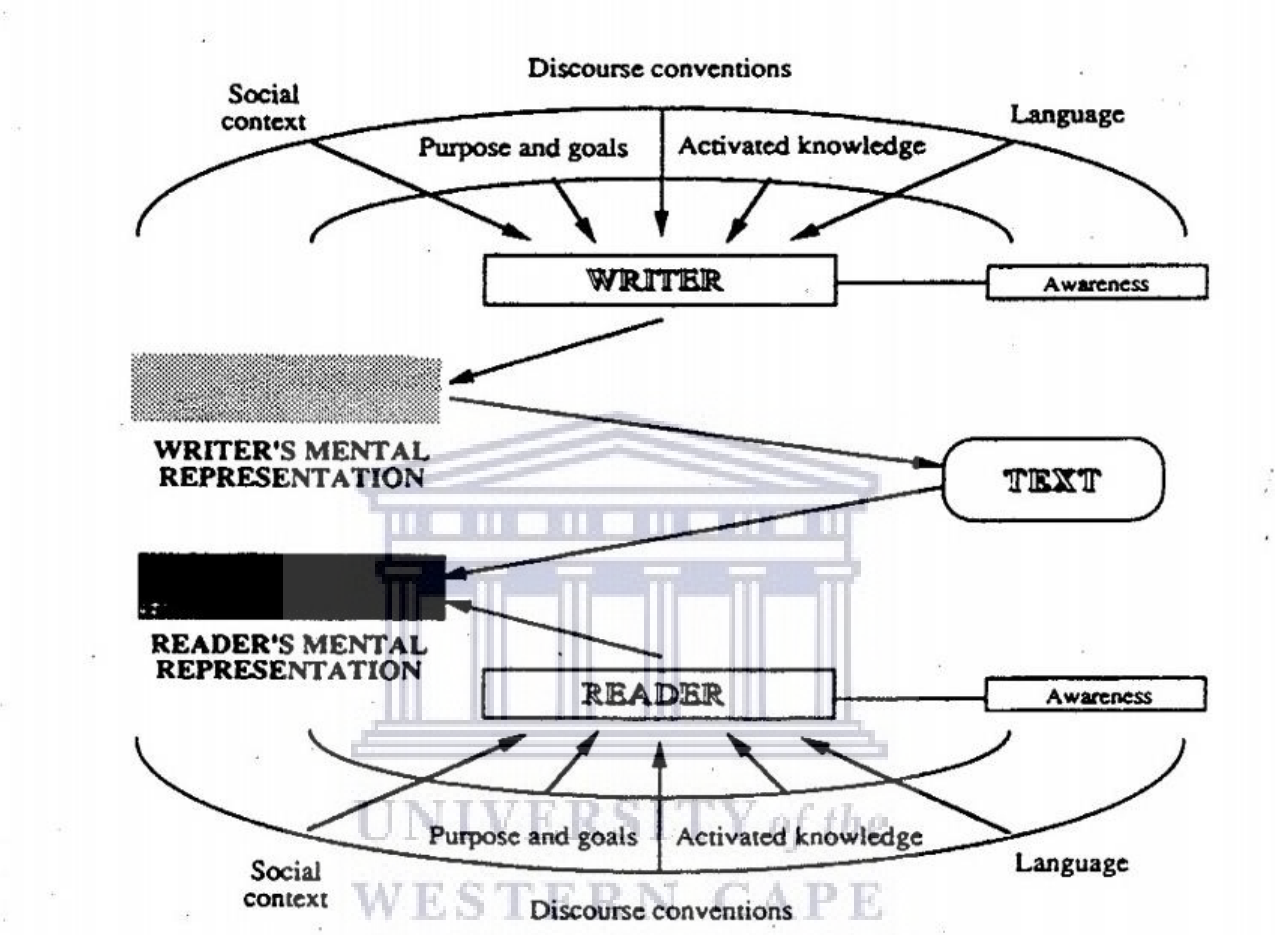


Figure 2. 1: A model of discourse construction (figure from Reading-to-Write: Exploring a Cognitive and Social Process by Linda Flower, Victoria Stein, John Ackerman, Margaret Kantz, Kathleen McCormick, and Wayne Peck, copyright by Oxford University Press, reproduced by permission of the publisher).

Following Fairclough's sentiments, Blommaert and Bulcaen, (2000) support the notion that discourse should be looked at in terms of three categories mentioned above. They continue to explain that

> Discourse as text comprises of linguistic features and the organization of concrete instances of discourse. It involves choices and patterns in vocabulary, grammar, cohesion and text structure. Discourse as discursive practice includes its conceptualization as discourse as something which is produced, circulated, and consumed in society. Finally, discourse as-social practice refers to the ideological effects and hegemonic processes in which discourse is a feature.
>
> Blommaert and Bulcaen, (2000: 121)

It is from an understanding of these dimensions that discoursing is considered a social activity performed through representing other social practices in diverse contexts through language use. It is in this sense that for a researcher who would like to conduct discourse analysis is advised to immerse themselves into the day to day dealings of the cultures being investigated. Consequently, many researchers have been compelled to do ethnographic studies because without first-hand knowledge of how people communicate in different spheres of life, they may come up with disputable claims about communities. As people, we have different cultures that make us unique or distinct in one way or another, therefore, there is no way that one can be able to conclude such as the claim made by Scollon and Scollon.

Drawing from Figure 2.1 above, the social context that Flower alludes to can be equated to space as the intended message to be communicated cannot be understood or could lead to an array of interpretations if it happens outside of a particular context, by extension, space.

Harvey (2006) postulates that

> The problem of the proper conceptualization of space is resolved through human practice with respect to it. In other words, there are no philosophical answers to philosophical questions that arise over the nature of space – the answers lie in human practice. The question 'what is space?' is therefore replaced by the question 'how is it that different human practices create and make use of different conceptualizations of space?'
>
> Harvey (2006: 125–126)

Bhatia (2004) underpins three overlapping concepts of space. Thee encompass textual, socio-pragmatic (incorporating both generic as well as professional practice), and social. A graphic representation of this argument is presented in Figure 2.2, while Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995: 21) posit that "genre conventions signal a discourse community's norms, epistemology, ideology, and social ontology".

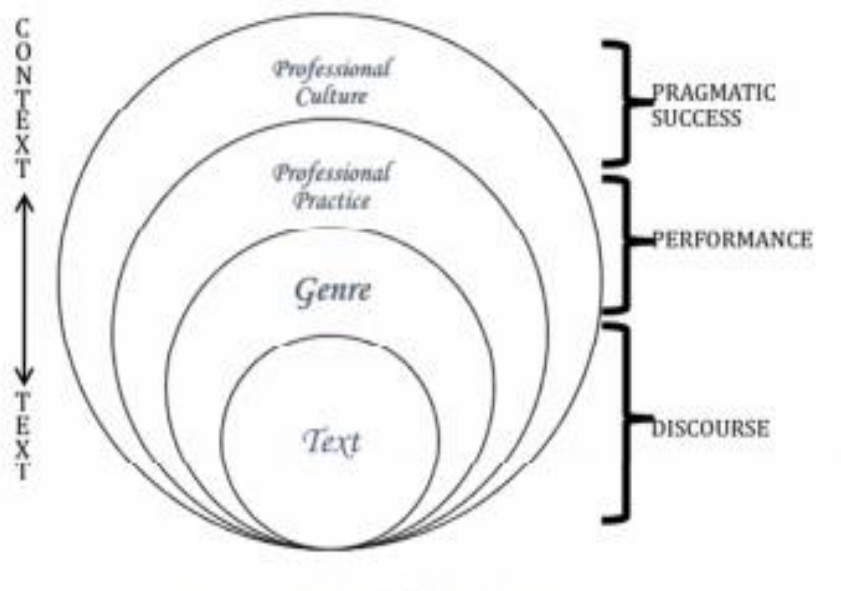


Figure 2. 2: Patterns of discourse realisation in professional settings

Jaworski and Thurlow (2009), on the other hand, argue that

> But landscape as a way of seeing is not to be confined to the mediated representations of space in art and literature. It is a broader concept pertaining to how we view and interpret space in ways that are contingent on geographical, social, economic, legal, cultural and emotional circumstances, as well as our practical uses of the physical environment as nature and territory, aesthetic judgements, memory and myth, for example drawing on religious beliefs and references, historical discourses, politics of gender relations, class, ethnicity, and the imperial projects of colonization – all of which are still present today and consistently reproduced in, for example, contemporary tourist landscapes.
>
> Jaworski and Thurlow (2009: 3)

Echoing Jaworski and Thurlows' sentiments of viewing landscape as an enactment of our habitual use of language as dictated to by geographical, social, economic, legal, cultural, emotional circumstances and practical uses of the environment is Guthey (2014) in that it is what we do as a people within the confines of these spheres of life that mediates our conceptualizations of our space. Hence Guthey postulates that

> Places are constructed and experienced as material ecological artefacts and intricate networks of social relations. They are the focus of the imaginary, of beliefs, longings, and desires (most particularly with respect to the psychological pull and push of the idea of 'home'). They are an intense focus of discursive activity, filled with symbolic and representational meanings, and they are a distinctive product of institutionalized social and economic power.
>
> Guthey (2014: 316)

Closely linked to the discussion on space conceptualization is the cue taken from theories of genre. Drawing from the assertion that linguistic and other semiotic resources are seen as 'central in giving space its meaning' (Jaworski, 2013), and due to the fact that the very same linguistic and semiotic resources are regarded as 'ideological in their everyday use' (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000), Hyland (2002), equates them to genres. He postulates that

> a central principle of genre theory is that genres are ideological. This is true in both the sense that no texts are free of the values and beliefs of their users and the sense that some genres are more dominant and hegemonic within a community. Genres are systems of meaning which help construct the social realities within which we live, and so this advantages those who have access and control of valued genres and disadvantages others who do not. Conceptions of genre thus have a close affinity with current work in literacy studies. They reinforce the view that all uses of written language are socially situated and indicative of broader social practices (Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Barton, Hamilton & Ivanic, 2000) and bring an important text-analysis dimension to literacy studies.
>
> Hyland (2002: 124)

This proves the close affinities that exist between space conceptualization and genre. In other words, Bhatia's (2005) definition of becomes evident. According to Bhatia (2005: 13), "a genre is defined by its conventionalized communicative purposes shared by the discourse community of a given genre. Through these conventions the discourse community influences the text-patterning." In the same breath, whether we look at the inscriptions on taxis as a different type of genre emanating from vehicle branding, we seek to understand the extent to which this type of branding is synonymous or deviates from normal branding. Hence, we need to draw from Bhatia's postulation that

> the genre is primarily characterized by the communicative purpose(s) that it is intended to fulfil. This shared set of communicative purpose(s) shapes the genre and gives it an internal structure. Any major change in the communicative purpose(s) is likely to give us a different genre; however minor changes or modifications help us distinguish sub-genres (Ibid.).
>
> Bhatia (2005: 13)

Contrary to the traditional view that language, as a means of communication, mainly consists of words, Kress and van Leeuwen (2001, 2006), Kress & Hodge (1998) and Van Leeuwen (2005) argue that meaning can be transferred both through language and signs (visuals) in stating that

> In the era of multimodality, semiotic modes other than language are treated as fully capable of serving for representation and communication. Indeed, language, whether as speech or as writing, may now often be seen as ancillary to other semiotic modes: to the visual for instance. Language may now be 'extravisual'.
>
> Kress and van Leeuwen (2001: 46)

Because discourse deals with texts and texts are defined as any form of communication that enables a message to be put across, the study shifts into a discussion about what other forms of communication we consider as texts outside the straight-forward definition that is encompassed in the above definitions of discourse. Therefore, a text like a film text makes its meaning through the synchronization between visual and audio resources. Therefore, a description cannot be considered complete if it focuses on language only and overlooks or discards other semiotic modalities that accompany language such as music, movement, rhythm, gesture and gaze, body posture, cinematography, which function in a different way from language but which are just as important in the meaning-making process, and which are very significant in the way the text influences the viewers' reaction to the activities depicted.

Multimodality is grounded within the framework of discourse analysis. Therefore, it is to this that the study turns.

2.4 Multimodal Discourse Analysis

Cameron (2001:123) considers discourse in two senses which are interrelated. First, in the linguist's sense of 'language in use' and secondly, from a social theorist's sense of 'a form of social practice that constructs the objects of which it purports to speak'. McCarthy (2007), on the other side, extends the definition of discourse to refer to it

> as the study of language independently of the notion of the sentence. This usually involves studying longer (spoken and written) texts, but, above all, it involves examining the relationship between a text and the situation in which it occurs.

McCarthy (2007: 48)

Scollon and Scollon (2003:2) echo the same sentiments but specifically naming it 'Discourses in place' or 'signs in place', as they purport the fact that signs give off much of their meanings because of where they are and what they are doing 'in place'.' And this phenomenon, according to the Scollons is referred to as 'emplacement', a point that will be discussed at length at a later stage of this study. A classic example is that of a 'female/male' sign on public restrooms below.

Figure 2. 3: Restrooms

This means that if a sign such as the one in Figure 2.3 above is attached to a bathroom door, it serves as a text because even though it is not long, or spoken, or written, its aim is to communicate a certain message to the users of the restrooms. This is supported by the notion raised by Cameron (2001) that discourses are 'contextually conditioned'. If the same sign was placed in a different situation such as on a bedroom door, it would have a totally different meaning. Therefore, the latter part of the definition holds true to discourse than the former part.

When researchers study a text for discourse, they are said to be doing discourse analysis. What one gathers from the quotation is the fact that for any researcher who wants to conduct discourse analysis, they are advised to immerse themselves into the day to day dealings of the cultures being investigated but again drawing from their own experiences of doing things in some cultures. Hence most of them have had to opt for ethnographic studies because they will afford them an opportunistic exposure into communities' ways of communicating in different settings.

Discourse manifests itself in many ways since it involves different ways of speaking about something hence Kress and Van Leeuwen (2001) support Iedema's (2003) notion that

> Multi-semiotic practice, in its analyses of representations recognition to semiotics other than language, links the potential of the different semiotics deployed to how they affect (enable and constrain) interaction and the formation of subjectivity
>
> Kress & Van Leeuwen (1996/2006: 39)

Many of their observations are confirmed by the work of Baldry (2000) and Kress (2003) whose interests rest on "the multimodal nature of contemporary society where they recognise that meaning is often made through a confluence of an array of semiotic resources. Images, gestures, and sounds often deployed alongside language in semiotics or used on their own to give off meaning." What this recognition implies is that the process of meaning making in a text has aa multiple of facets to be considered and also multimodal; multifaceted because the process of interpreting meaning is not a straightforward one. It is achieved through complex and versatile means such as incorporating other discourses which blur the boundaries between them.

Iedema (2003:33), views the term multimodality as a term that

> was introduced to highlight the importance of taking into account semiotics other than language-in-use, such as image, music, gesture, and so on. The increased ubiquity of sound, image, film, through TV, the computer and the internet is undoubtedly behind the new emphasis on interest in the multi-semiotic complexity of the representations we produce and see around us. Moreover, this development is accompanied and rendered more complex by yet another. Apart from our increased reliance on meaning making other than 'language-in-isolation' (as in the mass-produced book), we are faced with sound and image taking over tasks associated with the role of language since the invention of the printing press, and thus to some extent displacing language.
>
> Iedema (2003:33)

Although this assertion may be true to a certain extent, but language has always been used alongside other semiotic resources even in its oral form. For instance, dress sense, colour, norms and traditions, gestures and body language always accompany oral language while images, font types and sizes and writing styles have always been a part of writing since the dawn of typing.

Following Halliday's notion of language being a semiotic mode and the fact that any semiotic mode has to represent three communicative metafunctions, namely the ideational metafunction, the interpersonal metafunction and the textual metafunction, these have had a bearing on Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996/2006), Scollon and Scollon's (2003) social semiotic framework of visual grammar. In their arguments, they suggest that the three metafunctions of linguistics be extended to visual communication.

Iedema (2003: 38) further postulates that 'multimodality centres around two issues, namely; the de-centring of language as favoured meaning making; and the re-visiting and blurring of the traditional boundaries between roles allocated to language and other elements that are featured in any given text'.

From the excerpt, there is a profound sense that as is the case that meaning making is constantly negotiated in language, the same applies to signage as it cannot be assumed that the meaning conveyed by the sign maker is interpreted and understood by the receiver of the message in the same manner. This is also echoed by Flower (1994:56) who suggests that writing a text can be looked at in terms of construction as reproduction where readers actively create meaning by three means: selecting, organizing, and connecting information from texts, a process that is strongly influenced by culturally based expectations and prior knowledge (Spivey, 1987).

Even though Prior and Hengst (2010: 7) postulate that a vast body of research on multimodality has given us valuable insights but they hastily argue that the research "has primarily been taken up as an issue of the composition of artifacts rather than engagement in processes, of representational forms rather than situated sociocultural practices (see Norris, 2004; for an exception)". According to Prior and Hengst, "multimodality focuses on multimodal objects rather than multimodality as situated activity. Attention to multimodal production and reception is limited; analysis of 'reading', for example, does not examine the concrete practices of readers but rather infers these processes from the objects".

In echoing Prior and Hengst's postulations, Fairclough (1995:188), posits that "whereas linguistic analysis shows how texts selectively draw upon linguistic systems (again, in an extended sense), intertextual analysis shows how texts selectively draw upon orders of discourse – the particular configurations of conventionalised practices (genres, discourses, narratives, etc.) which are available to text producers and interpreters in particular social circumstances…".

It is therefore, against this backdrop that this study swiftly moves to a much broader and a more dialogically encompassing description of linguistic landscape: semiotic mobilescape.

2.4.1 Towards a Semiotic Mobilescape

Taking a view articulated earlier about Jaworski and Thurlow (2009:2) who allude to the fact that as much as their research is on written language in place, they have chosen not to call their book 'Linguistic Landscapes' because they are keen to emphasise the extent to which written discourse interacts with other discursive modalities which include nonverbal communication, visual images, architecture, and the built environment. For that reason, they consider 'linguistic' as only one element for the construction and interpretation of place, although they do not intend to diminish the importance of language, As alluded to earlier on, they regard all landscape as semiotic. They follow

Scollon and Scollon (2003) in making a qualified distinction between semiotic and non-semiotic spaces.

According to them, semiotic landscape refers to any (public) space with visible inscription made through deliberate human intervention and meaning making. Baker et.al. (2008) also echo this by highlighting Wodak's (2000, 2001) postulation that

> Every text (e.g., an interview, focus group discussion, TV debate, press report, or visual symbol) is conceived as a semiotic entity, embedded in an immediate, text-internal co-text as well as intertextual and socio-political context (the four-level-model' of context in DHA; Wodak, 2000, 2001).
>
> Baker et al. (2008: 279)

Bearing in mind this definition of what a text is makes it evident that all the definitions spelt out here have some significant bearing on the study that has been undertaken except for two discerning features.

Firstly, in refuting the sociological ideology on the conceptualisation of space as geographically fixed containers for societies and thereby confining linguistic resources to particular spaces, this study follows Sheller and Urry (2005) who introduce us to the notion of the mobility paradigm. According to the two proponents, who also draw from Fairclough's (2009) postulation that "this happens in light of the heightened economic and political reorderings of post-industrial or advanced capitalism, intense patterns of human mobility, the mediatization of social life […], and transnational flows of information, ideas and ideologies […]'' that translate into large-scale hegemonic processes such as '*democratisation, commodification, technologization and mediatization of social life'*. We are, therefore, compelled to view the conceptualization of space differently as this imposes new mobility paradigms such as virtual and imaginative travels.

The mobility paradigm acknowledges the multiple theorizations of mobilities to embrace the actual movement of social actors; mobility heightened by the actual and physical movement of objects and movement facilitated by digital platforms; and the transportation of information and images on local, national and global media.

The mobility paradigm advocates for 'deterritorialisation' and rests upon the networks of connections that move beyond spatial boundaries. In this sense, the mobility paradigm considers both the people and materialities to be on the move. It is against this backdrop that the study considers taxis also playing a critical role in physically transporting commuters, together with their

cultures and in the process, disseminating information beyond the taxi spaces. To echo these sentiments, Shohamy and Gorter (2009) postulate that:

> The fast-emerging virtual spaces, the internet and cyber spaces introduce a whole new dimension of these displays, open to all everywhere and anywhere, without the need to be physically be present, whatever "physical presence" means in the current era. Technology is therefore playing a major role in the growing attention to representations in public spaces given the variety of facilities for documentation feasible nowadays with digital cameras and devices, widely available and accessible.
>
> Shohamy and Gorter (2009: 1)

Ben-Said (2011) prefers to call these texts as 'ephemeral/transient' or 'mobile structures' signs, while Sebba (2010), on the other hand, prefers the term 'discourses in transit' or 'transitory, mobile texts within the linguistic landscape' because of their non-static nature.

Secondly, following on a vast body of research which seeks to emphasise the manner in which written discourse is co-deployed with other discursive modalities such as visual images, nonverbal communication, architecture, and the built environment (Jaworski & Coupland, 2010; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001; Harvey, 2006) , this study also seeks to analyse not just the written language but all the modalities that are displayed in the inscriptions to be studied and therefore considers 'semiotic' instead of 'language' as a more encompassing term. According to Appadurai (2006: 589), language is one aspect of LL studies that has received much attention to an extent has been bestowed upon written language in LL studies that Appadurai (2006) suggests that 'the suffix *-scape* in the five dimensions of global cultural flows namely (a) *ethnoscapes,* (b) *mediascapes,* (c) *technoscapes*, (d) *financescapes*, and (e) *ideoscapes*

> 'allows us to point to the fluid shapes of these landscapes, shapes that characterize international capital as deeply as they do international clothing styles. These terms with the common suffix *-scape* also indicate that these are not objectively given relations that look the same from every angle of vision but, rather, that they are deeply perspectival constructs, inflected by the historical, linguistic, and political situatedness of different sorts of actors: nation-states, multinationals, diasporic communities, as well as substantial groupings and movements (whether religious, political, or economic) and even intimate face-to-face groups, such as villages, neighborhoods, and families.
>
> Appadurai (2006: 589)

Therefore, building upon these arguments, as can be seen in the topic of this study, the study also argues for a terminological deviation that will conjure up not just the fluid essence of the semiotic resources and materialities in question but also refute the considerations of the conceptualization of space as a static entity. It makes a case for space as a mobile entity and therefore suggests the term

'M*obile*scapes' as more appropriate than 'Landscape'. Although linguistic landscape is the overarching framework within which this study is premised, the newly-coined term, '*Mobile*scapes', will be used extensively and exclusively throughout this study henceforth to refer to an inquiry into the semiotic nature of mobile trajectories and it too, we suggest, should be considered a branch within the Linguistic Landscape (LL) framework but with a specific focus on a 'landscape' characterized by mobile discourses.

As a point of departure, it is also imperative to take note of the major criticism levelled against earlier enquiries of LL concerning their methodologies. Hence subsequent studies tapped into various approaches by employing a confluence or hybridity of approaches that are closely linked to Discourse Analysis which include Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics because all communication is understood to realize ideational, interpersonal and textual metafunctions through Kress and Leeuwen's et.al., (2001) Reading Images; the Scollons' Discourses in Place; Scollon and Saint-Georges's Mediated Discourse Analysis; Stroud and Mpendukana's Material Ethnography of LL; Fairclough's concepts of Interdiscursivity and Intertextuality and many more; in order to provide a relevant and theoretically focused methodology approach of LL.

On the same breath, people, just like texts, index their generic structures, by extension their identities, through the employment of language manifestations and other semiotic resources and materialities.

2.5 The Material Culture and Identity

Aronin (2012: 181) suggests that 'studies in material culture can help us understand how materialities create and modify multilingual reality, being instrumental in shaping and re-shaping identities of both individuals and communities'. This is premised on Bronner's (1985) definition of material culture, as cited in Aronin (2012). According to Bronner, material culture is defined as

> the array of artefacts and cultural landscapes that people create according to traditional, patterned, and often tacit concepts of value and utility that have been developed over time through use and experimentation" (Marshall 1981: 17). These artifacts and landscapes, according to Marshall, objectively rep-resent a group's subjective vision of custom and order, and thus are "a mirror of culture, a code, from which the researcher can infer beliefs, attitudes, and values'.
>
> Bronner (1985: 131)

To exemplify this definition, the taxi industry itself is a perfect example in that it came into being

solely due to the fact that during the apartheid era, black people were forcibly segregated by the Group Areas' Act of 1950 from other races and therefore, had to walk long distances to go to work and get services from the neighbouring urban areas since these areas were solely earmarked for one specific race to live and work. Although the act was repealed in 1991 and races are supposedly at liberty to integrate, we still encounter a huge concentration of the use of taxis in areas that were previously demarcated for blacks and coloureds with minimal use of taxis in areas that are still predominantly white. This is solely due to the fact that the only discriminating factor is an individual's economic muscle to buy property in areas that were previously demarcated for the whites and unfortunately, while the economy is still in the hands of the whites and a very small minority elitist black and coloureds, this pattern will persist. The bulk of the latter two communities is still lagging in terms of playing a huge role in the economy of the country despite of the economic interventions such as the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) and the African National Congress (ANC) having been in power for more than 25 years.

Furthermore, although there are strides by the current government to develop these previously marginalised areas, the progress is at the snail's pace as former homelands are not developed accordingly and therefore, people are again forced to leave their areas and go to big cities such as Gauteng and Cape Town to seek for jobs. Even those that are already in the cities are prohibited by the provincial bylaws to integrate into the white communities except for a few informal settlements mushrooming closer to these areas. For example, Masiphumelele in Fish hoek and Imizamo Yethu in Hout Bay are two classical examples of the areas in question. But the number of taxis operating in these areas is minimal due to the small clientele that is in need of the service. This, therefore, explains the trajectory of the continued traditional value and utility of these artefacts 'taxis' in the said areas.

Echoing Bronner (1985), Aronin (2012) explicates that

> The realm of material culture which permeates human life and is its core and ineluctable constituent includes materialities that are found in homes and work places, public spaces and technological sites. It embraces furniture and home utensils, keepsakes, cosmetics and medications, food and books, mon-uments, stellas and buildings, roads and events, cityscapes and other spaces. Phenomena which are not tangible and may not immediately thought of as material are also included in material culture rubrics – these are sound waves, smells, vents and procedure involving temporal ordering. … and embraces a wider scope of phenomena: objects and spaces, complemented by music, and rhythm, smells, and time patterns. Materialities are dynamic, changeable, movable, portable and modifiable'.
>
> Aronin (2012: 181)

This, then means even the mere structures of the houses in South Africa and the world over where racial discrimination was practiced, are a permeation of these traditional practices. For example, some houses still bear either an additional small structure with one bedroom or two and a toilet or in the absence of this additional structure, a toilet with an outside entry door is attached to the main house. The additional structure was solely meant for use by a maid. The toilet attached to the main house, on the other hand, was solely meant for use by the maid and the garden boy during the apartheid era so that they could not use the same toilet as their masters. This, even though they were responsible for the cleaning of those toilets that were inside the main house. These toilets are now referred to as extra storage rooms for keeping gardening tools and other materialities that cannot find space inside the house.

This classical example does not only display the permeation of the new constitution in terms of enacting an individual's freedom to exercise a choice between sleeping over at work and commuting from home but it also extends our understanding of the discursive construction of the Semiotic Mobilescapes of Cape Town. Like Ben-Rafael et.al. (2006: 9 – 10), we concur with the understanding of it being 'a site where identities are constructed and promoted, and in which language and other materialities are used to achieve these ends', hence Cameron (2001) posits that

> Whatever else we do with words, when we speak we are always telling our listeners something about ourselves.
>
> Cameron (2001: 170)

It is evident in our previous example that even the terminology that was used during the apartheid era, where the additional structure was originally termed 'maid's quarters' while recently, it is referenced as a 'granny house' or a 'guest room', depending on the class of the property, was used to connote racial tensions and the current terminology is now used to display adherence to constitution as evidenced from the sporadic acts of racism. Cases of people such as Sparrow and the likes of Adam Catzavelos who was recently prosecuted for using the k-word slur while in Greece bear testimony to this fact because he acted oblivious to the notion that uttering of racial slurs is punishable in South Africa irrespective of whether one might be outside of the boundaries of the country.

It is in this light that Burdick (2012: 10-11) alludes to the fact that in the past, language was discursively treated and academically theorized as linked with ethnicity, place, and identity, whereas in our days, language is often treated today as skill, choice, or added-value.

Hence Cameron (2001) alludes to the fact that

> Current ways of understanding social identity and its relationship to discourse are rooted in the idea that the selves we present to others are changeable, strategic, and jointly constructed. We use the resources of language to perform a variety of social identities, geared to the situations we find ourselves in and the ways we are socially positioned by others. But we can also use language to construct and project a coherent, more durable personal identity. This involves showing that we are, in a very basic sense, autonomous agents and that we have temporally continuous life histories, biographies without gaps.
>
> Cameron (2001: 172)

Much as language is being treated as skill, choice, or added-value, previous theorizations of linking language with ethnicity and identity cannot be completely ruled out of the equation. Given the plethora of languages that societies are exposed to in post-modernization, one is at liberty to exercise the choice in projecting a particular identity at a given time. Therefore, a change in a person's identity is wholly reliant on the context they are in because as psychology claims, we all want to have a sense of belonging. Depending on the context and how we want to be perceived by our interlocutors, the selves we present to others continuously change.

Let us take an instance of a baby born into this world without any knowledge of a language or norms of a particular society. The baby might be born into a Chinese family in China, but if it is raised by an African family in any part of Africa, will the baby grow up drawing upon discourses that are prevalent in a Chinese community or an African society? We have many examples of people who were brought up by a different race from their own, who seem to draw upon different discourses from those used by their ethnic group and in a black South African context they are referred to as 'coconuts'. This has nothing to do with their gender but everything to do with their upbringing or the ideologies they inherited from the closest societies they were brought in.

Furthermore, the debate emanates from research pioneered by Butler's (1990) notion of performativity, in which she argues that 'humans enact gender through activity rather than simply reiterating something previously given' (Cameron, 1997: 328). Therefore, the study echoes Cameron's sentiments that men and women share the same spaces and are therefore, members of the same cultures in which a large amount of gender discourse is constantly being produced and consumed. They do not learn, and then instinctively reproduce ways of speaking 'appropriate' to their sex; rather, they are exposed to a much wider spectrum of meanings that are gendered and again attached in rather multifaceted ways to diverse ways of speaking, and they, in return, produce their behaviour in the light of those meanings.

Iedema (2003) postulates that:

> "In each of these areas, the rules as to 'what goes with what' and 'what can signify what' are constantly challenged and changing. Challenges and changes to the established representational order have of course always affected how we make meaning, but in our time, they appear to have graduated from the margins to become persistent features of common representational practices.
>
> Iedema (2003: 23)

In traditional terms, gender binarism assumes that when a girl is born, their masculinity in appearance will be female-like, character traits, mannerism, dressing up, naming and their heterosexual attraction to males will all converge to conform to the cultural or conformist rules of what signifies that the person is female. But as Iedema puts it, these are constantly being challenged and changing. With globalization at close proximity to everyone due to technology and media sources, the exposure of the multifaceted ways of doing things from other cultures around the world that comes with it and is then bestowed on individuals, diversifies the enactment of gender performativity even further in so much that the world has come to terms with the fact that individuals can exercise a choice between being male, female or a person of other gender. This is witnessed through progressive thinking around the issue through, for instance, the establishment of gender-neutral lavatories in public spaces or official forms that display expressions of gender variance.

Hence Scollon and Scollon (2001: 242-258) attest to the fact that 'the discourse systems of gender cut across culture and generations, corporate culture and professional specializations. As a subject of discourse research, the study of gender discourse is relatively new. Most of what is available for analysis is based on patterns of discourse within American society, and as a result, in what follows we will again need to restrict ourselves primarily to American discourse'. Then the question we need to ask ourselves is whether the claim that they make applies to our South African context as they rightfully say, 'it is premature to speculate on how widely discourse systems might be distributed throughout the cultures of the world'. It is against this restriction to American discourse that this essay hopes to make a point concerning our South African context due to issues related to the effects of colonization on the African continent and globalisation.

Firstly, since identity encompasses an array of factors, gender can also be considered an act of identity. Therefore, Butler (1990) posits that gender, is performative. Therefore, in her phrase 'constituting the identity it is purported to be', it is clear that the word 'purported' delineates identity as something that is bestowed upon an individual within the confines of a regulated framework. Like gender, identity is something that is constantly demonstrated, consumed, and then inherently acted

out. It is not necessarily something that people were born with. Butler also claims that ‘feminine' and ‘masculine' are not what we are, nor traits we have, but effects we produce by way of particular things we do: ‘Gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a rigid regulatory frame which congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a "natural" kind of being' (Butler, 1990: 43-44). Taking an instance of a baby born as a girl but growing up amongst boys, many a time the girl ends up doing things that are known to be done by boys ‘naturally'. By so doing, she ends up inheriting a label of being called a ‘tomboy' or a ‘lesbian' or any of the derogatory names that are aimed at labelling her as an outcast with regard to the natural way of being.

Another instance is that of a South African celebrity who is called Somizi Mhlongo. We can gather from the pictures below that the makeup, the dress code (the dress instead of a trouser), his mannerism, the colour of his hair, the accessories, are typical ways of speaking associated with women. But the question is; do all these make him a woman? This particular example of Somizi Mhlongo ‘extends the traditional feminist account whereby gender is socially constructed rather than ‘natural’, famously expressed in Simone de Beavoir’s dictum that ‘one is not born, but rather becomes a woman' (Cameron, 2012: 63).

The fluidity in gender identities, and the associated behaviour in which those identities are acted out in the public is acknowledged. Butler posits that gender is socially controlled by rather rigid social norms, she does not reduce men and women to robots, automated by their early acclimatisation to repeat practices. Instead, she considers them as conscious agents who often times are selective in their choices and may in spite of what it may cost them socially, transgress, subvert and resist those norms. This is why society sometimes, through the media and in direct actions, questions the motives and backgrounds of people like Somizi and the rest of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) community or women who have management styles that are attached to men in running corporations or vice versa, or end up taking drastic measures such as ‘corrective’ assaulting, raping and killing those whose identity is considered different from our ‘normally’ or ‘naturally’ perceived manners of performing gender.

As Tannen (1990) observes in her book, it is due to the differences between competitive/cooperative and report talk/rapport talk that these cultural assertions find their way into the hearts of men who tend to keep issues close to their chests and this misnomer translates into huge statistics of men committing suicide and homicide. Somizi's example has also helped us demonstrate that there is a

vast difference between sex and gender and that gender is truly constructed rather than natural after all, masculinity and femininity co-exist in the same person.

Secondly, Wodak and Benke (1997) regard studies of gender-specific variation as often contradictory. They attribute this to the author's implicit assumptions about the difference in the conceptualisation between sex and gender, the methodologies employed and the samples used. In their view, they consider many studies to have a total disregard for the context of language behaviour and have often referred to the speaker's biological sex as the sole basis for conducting their analyses. And this seems to be the drawback with the Scollon's (2001) research. Scollon and Scollon (2001) posit that

> Whereas sociolinguistics traditionally assumes that people talk the way they do because of who they (already) are, the postmodernist approach suggests that people are who they are because of (among other things) the way they talk. This shifts the focus away from a simple cataloguing of differences between men and women to a subtler and more complex inquiry into how people use linguistic resources to produce gender differentiation. It also obliges us to attend to the 'rigid' regulatory frame' within which people must make their choices – the norms that define what kinds of language are possible, intelligible and appropriate resources for performing masculinity or femininity.
>
> Scollon (2001: 181)

This can be seen in instances where driving a taxi is considered to be a male job and not suitable for females because of patriarchal reasons that a female cannot drive a big vehicle such as a taxi. Again, females were not considered for commentating on sports activities, but these notions are slowly changing pace as we see few females in the sports-commentating arenas and more and more females employed to drive buses, while some own and drive their taxis.

2.6 Commodification of Languages and Spaces in a Semiotic Mobilescape

Drawing from the notion that every instance of language is ideological, whether that of self-stylization; of enacting cultural aesthetics or power, all these are surmountable to the exchange value, which changes to economic value, that we attach to every instance of language use, thereby turning these instantiations into commodities.

Following Appadurai's (1986) notion of commodity candidacy and the world of scapes and cultural flows; Kelly-Holmes' (2010, 2014), Heller (2003) and Leeman and Modan's (2009, 2010) arguments on how language and associated cultures are commodified to sell cities and businesses, it

will be argued, signage and/or language use constitutes what Kelly-Holmes (2000: 70) calls a fetishized commodity so that "its utility or use value has become secondary to its symbolic value".

In the advent of globalisation, with the growing importance of language, English has often been associated with what Orman (2008) and Gorter (2006: 4) call the 'MacDonalisation' of the linguistic landscape, a concept referring to the domination of English as a language of socio-economic mobility and transnational trade. In their study on the impact of official language zoning and language vitality in Zambia, Banda and Jimaima (2017) show that in multilingual contexts of Africa, just as is the case with English, languages do not stay 'fixed' in the zones allocated to them official government legislation.

Many LL studies have focused on the commodification of language. Basing their research study on the streets of Washington DC's Chinatown, Leeman and Modan (2010) looked at how material manifestations of language are 'shaped and constrained by other facets of the built environment' (Leeman and Modan, 2010: 182) to 'sell the city'. Additionally, Heller (2010: 103) conducted a review on competing views between 'who defines what counts as legitimate and commodifiable language, over what counts as such, and over who controls the production and distribution of linguistic resources', focusing on tourism, marketing, language teaching, translation, communications and performance art sites. Taking an instance of call centres, Heller explains that language and/or accent in the call centre industry is a skill that potential employees have to acquire in order to position themselves for the jobs and a skill that employers seek from potential employees. Therefore, based on these assertions, this study hopes to show that not only English should be considered for commodity candidacy but other languages also, but African languages to be more specific.

While much of the existing research on the South African transportation and specifically the taxi industry has explored the history behind the violence in the taxi industry its effect on social and economic factors of the country, there has been almost non-existent research or much less emphasis on understanding the LL of the industry. If we concur with Blommaert's (2013: 21) understanding of a semiotized space 'as a material force in social, cultural and political life', then this understanding can help us realise how the mobility of the taxis can have adverse or beneficial effects in 'mobilizing' or bringing an end to the never-ending violence in the taxi industry throughout the country and beyond the borders into neighbouring countries. This is a significant omission because if taxis are regarded as mobile texts, they are therefore, discourse-producing activities that are pivotal in helping

to shape a city is and can play a crucial role in producing a commercial ontology of a city or a country.

2. 7 Spatialisation and Place Making

With the advent of technology, a great emancipation that has happened within the social sphere of communication is substantially heightened through 'virtual' and 'imaginative' travel, being combined with unexpected ways with physical travel (Sheller & Urry, 2006: 207). Echoing Jacquemet's (2010: 62) argument, Jaworski (2013: 7), for example, links the emergence and spread of transnational spaces to trans-idiomatic practices that 'are the result of the co-presence of digital media and multilingual talk exercised by deterritorialized/reterritorialized speakers'. Due to the numerous impacts that social media and the idea of mobility have had on consumer spaces, the chapter will in retrospect strive to delve into the notion of space making in relation to the theory of the 'mobility turn', begging for a dichotomy between considering some spaces as fixed, geographical containers of social processes and as phenomena that encapsulate the effects of the cross-pollination of these social practices in the advent of globalization and the new media forms. Because of contact amongst social actors, whether virtually or physically, and of the actual materialities being on a constant move through digitization or being carried by people whether openly, clandestinely, or inadvertently, spaces are also considered to move. And, if our consideration of culture involves ways of perceiving, thinking and feeling, due to the exposure presented to us through new forms of media, technologies of communication and information circulation and travelling, cultural appropriation is also bound to emerge. In such instances, social actors usually shift boundaries in terms of their cultural and linguistic activities, which bring to bear a translation into changes in what we consider as static places. As such, places too, do

> change and shift shape over time as new building constructions, transport systems, and patterns of migration alter the physical, cultural and linguistic landscape of the site.
>
> Stroud and Jegels (2014:180)

Therefore, building upon current work on Linguistic Landscapes that reviews theorizations of space (Sebba, (1999); Sheller & Urry ([2006], cited in Jaworski, 2013); Stroud and Mpendukana, 2009, Scollon and Scollon, 2004, among others)'s, the chapter illustrates that discourse in public space fulfills not just one, as pronounced in the first paragraphs, but multiple meaningful functions at once. Some of these functions include how the concept of thematization helps discourse consumers perceive signs, as a manifestation of discourse. Signs, too, do very different things in space.

Therefore, the chapter will then ponder into an expanded approach to space making as a social construct, moving from a vantage point that seeks to include manifestations of culture, which are seen as intricate explanations of complexities of humanity and life.

In their introductory chapter to *Introducing Semiotic Landscapes*, Jaworski and Thurlow (2010) posit that:

> But landscape as a way of seeing is not to be confined to the mediated representations of space in art and literature. It is a broader concept pertaining to how we view and interpret space in ways that are contingent on geographical, social, economic, legal, cultural and emotional circumstances, as well as our practical uses of the physical environment as nature and territory, aesthetic judgements, memory and myth, for example drawing on religious beliefs and references, historical discourses, politics of gender relations, class, ethnicity, and the imperial projects of colonization – all of which are still present today and consistently reproduced in, for example, contemporary tourist landscapes (Massey, 1994; Cosgrove, 2008 [1998]; Crouch, 1999; Cartier and Lew, 2005; Osborne, 2000).
>
> Jaworski and Thurlow (2010: 3)

Therefore, based on these postulations, this study will, therefore, draw on some of these novel theories which consider the eclectic approach which considers the static nature of spaces on the one hand, and the world that is constantly on the move, on the other, documenting some discernible cultural practices in the South African taxi industry.

2.8 Performative Identities

According to Pavlenko and Blackledge (2010), due to globalisation, consumerism, explosion of media technologies, the postcolonial and post-communist search for new national identities, the shifts and fluctuations in language ideologies and in the range of identities available to individuals have become particularly visible. It is against this backdrop that Cameron (2001) alludes to the fact that

> Current ways of understanding social identity and its relationship to discourse are rooted in the idea that the selves we present to others are changeable, strategic, and jointly constructed. We use the resources of language to perform a variety of social identities, geared to the situations we find ourselves in and the ways we are socially positioned by others. But we can also use language to construct and project a coherent, more durable personal identity. This involves showing that we are, in a very basic sense, autonomous agents and that we have temporally continuous life histories, biographies without gaps.
>
> Cameron (2001: 172)

Therefore, our understanding of performative identities emanates from a notion of identities that are changeable and strategic due to our linguistic performances. Cited in Pavlenko (2004:23), Piller (2001) exemplifies this by positing that in various settings languages function differently. Piller postulates that they 'function as markers of national or ethnic identities, as forms of symbolic capital or as markers of intercultural competence.'

Blommaert (2005; 2008) has succinctly noted how the enacting of identities is in fact organised into particular forms of meaning potential, thereby likening identities to genres. Blommaert points out how a particular type of an event is recognizable through an arrangement of specific multilingual resources which are habituated into multiplexes of communicative-formal features by community members. In this sense, Blommaert forces us to equate genres to identities as the two both draw on semiotic resources organized into conventionalized ways of being that are recognized by community members.

But key to this comparison between identities and genres, are two important conclusions that support Cameron's postulations. Firstly, the same can be expected about multilingual identities in terms of their changing state, they too can never be stagnant because multilingual draws on the multiplicity of the linguistic resources to perform various identities. Secondly, the changeability should be regarded as a strategic move drawn upon in order to achieve a particular goal. And thirdly, the first two are highly dependent on conventions agreed upon by all the community members. For instance, performing a specific identity for a community that does not share the same understanding of the identity will be tantamount to nothing or stupidity. Again, one pulls on a particular linguistic strategy if they feel the strategy will resonate and appease the community members, hence Nelson Mandela once said, 'if you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk in his language, that goes to his heart'. Blommaert (2003) points out how genres can be regarded as important spaces which help in the creation of new social processes and cultural innovations, themselves offering new theories of knowledge or cultural forms for the formation and expression of particular types of identity.

This compels us to consider a multilingual that draws on all the available linguistic resources to formulate and present a completely blended identity. It is through conventionalized ways of speaking and writing that characterise this report as thesis instead of a police report. According to Blommaert's postulation above, we are able to categorize it as such due to certain features and are also in a position to know that only people of a certain academic base can be the suitable audience that this report is aimed at.

And Gee (1996), cited in Blommaert (2009), echoes these sentiments by postulating that

> Discourses are ways of being in the world, or forms of life which integrate words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes and social identities, as well as gestures, body positions, and clothes. A Discourse is a sort of identity kit which comes complete with the appropriate costume and instructions on how to act, talk and often write so as to take on a particular social role that others will recognize.
>
> Gee (1996: 127)

In line with the foregoing remarks, this study would like to suggest that we do not look at identity as a fixed way of being but consider that a multiplicity of materialities that are in play in projecting one's identity. This, therefore, means that a multilingual individual can project various identities, no one identity can be bestowed upon such an individual due solely to their nationality. Hence Cameron (1999) sums it brilliantly by postulating that 'language using is an act of identity'.

2.9 Chapter Summary

In conclusion, from the above review, contemporary theories view context as socially constructed. From this angle, texts cannot be detached from their contexts as they are constructed through a variety of linguistic interactions that take place. This is because texts are believed to live off from and also feed into broader social discourses within which they are created (Gee 1999, Kress 2001). Considering an informal context about a football match may be created through informal ways of speaking between fans while a formal context about the same match over a TV show may be created by the mechanics of conducting a panel discussion. Therefore, it is sufficed that an analysis of text should include an analysis of context.

Given the fact that context operates at various levels, starting from the immediate linguistic/semiotic context (or co-text) to the level of culture, every discussion should consider not only the other texts related to the one at hand and context in terms of the physical setting and social relations), but also the institutional and socio-cultural environment within which that text operates as it will be argued later on that it is all of these contexts that an individual is constantly confronted with that primarily play a pivotal role in bringing to life the context of culture over a period of time. And this context of culture ends up building on the moral fibre of an individual to an extent that they cannot divorce themselves from specific ways of doing things that are ultimately known to be synonymous with a particular group of people, thereby characterizing them.

Additionally, the employment of concepts such as intertextuality, interdiscursivity, semiotic remediation, entextualization and many more should be considered as a way of delving into historical forces that have shaped the contexts in question. This is especially so in the light of two factors: the fact that the South African emancipation is still in its infancy and the context of culture summarized in the preceding paragraph. Therefore, it can be hypothesized that much of the people's ways of doing things and languaging are still entrenched in the apartheid regime, whether unwillingly or out of choice, despite the acclaimed South African constitution and the many laws that have been passed to redress the inequalities of the past. Alternatively, the languaging can be seen as a strategic move for people to divorce themselves and their language practices from the legacies of the apartheid regime.

Furthermore, research on the LL of the South African landscape through the lens of taxis is almost non-existent, except for an abstract that was presented by Dr N. Sibiya at a Conference of Southern African Folklore Society on the 4th of September 2013, held at the University of Cape Town with the hope of getting feedback in order to pursue the topic in a published paper. The abstract was titled 'Idioms in Transit: IsiZulu Idiomatic Expressions Used in the Durban Metro and Pietermaritzburg Taxi Industry'. Therefore, this proposed study aims to add to the little body of research investigating the South African linguistic landscapes from the taxi industry's perspective.

Therefore, borrowing from the words of a book by Shohamy and Gorter (2009), this study seeks to 'expand the linguistic landscape scenery' by way of incorporating a study of inscriptions adorned on South African taxis and a focus of other materialities used in this industry to give off any meaning, either that of identity or any other thing.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

To respond to the research questions highlighted in Chapter 1, a detailed qualitative analysis of semiotic mobilescapes in Cape Town, South Africa, was carried out. Unlike in traditional sociolinguistics which concerned itself with the spoken language modes, in semiotic landscape, languages used in signs form the pivot of the analyses of these sociolinguistic situations. There is a growing awareness that globalization and the advent of technology are rapidly altering not only our interpretations of meanings, purposes and contexts of languages displayed and their representation in public spaces but also our notions of space making and other various perspectives.

In this vein, our view of LL research has histrionically transformed as research on LL seems to encompass facets of other tangent disciplines such as semiotics, education, geography, politics, tourism, education, urban planning, economics and many others. Instead of LL research being concerned with the vitality of ethnolinguistic groups in particular study areas, pinpointed as one of its shortcomings in earlier studies, the chapter will outline some of the caveats of LL at great length. This is done with the view of seeking to understand how all of these intricacies help shape the ecological spaces they are displayed in. All these need to be factored into LL studies to get a holistic understanding of a study.

Therefore, as an overarching, guiding research methodology – an ethnographic approach - is presented in this chapter. The chapter starts by historicizing LL research, with its caveats, with the whole intention of positioning the ethnographic approach as a branch within the LL studies. Coupled with the ethnographic approach are the design elements that include sampling of participants, digital survey items and unstructured interviews were carried out.

3.2 Methodology

Great criticism has been levelled against methodological issues pertaining to LL research. Ben-Said (2011:63) posits that ‘a large number of studies have consistently followed a systematic observational approach whereby the visual data was analyzed from the investigator’s perspective

(i.e. etic) and subsequent conclusions were then made as to the degree of multilingualism of the environment investigated'.

Firstly, in defining the unit of analysis, Ben-Said (2011) has observed that there were concerns around which signs within a survey area were analyzed. He points to a few studies. In his survey conducted in Montreal,

> Backhaus (2005a; b; 2006; 2007) counted all signs, but only recorded and analysed the ones that contained at least one language other than Japanese. Ben-Rafael et al. (2004; 2006) sampled twenty to thirty government signs and seventy to hundred private signs at each site they investigated. Cenoz & Gorter (2006) analyzed a complete inventory of the signs in the two shopping streets. The sampling was also determined according to specific domains such as religious institutions. Schlick (2003) analysed between 45 and 69 shop signs and shop-front advertisements in every city she included in her study. In many of the studies, pictures of signs were coded according to linguistic and semiotic features, such as the number of languages and the specific languages used, the order and font size of the texts in the different languages, and the amount of text in each language.
>
> Ben-Said (2011: 66)

To counteract this shortcoming, the current study, on the other hand, looks at the signs from two major taxi ranks, namely, the Cape Town and Bellville Taxi Ranks, which are central in feeding into the various areas across the Western Cape. Taxis depart from these two ranks and transport passengers to areas as far as Worcester, Paarl, Wellington, Somerset/Strand, Franschoek, Fishhoek, Durbanville, Malmesbury, Clanwillian, Saldanha, Vredendal, Muizenberg, Vredenburg, Swelendam, Botrivier, and surrounding areas that are closest to the city as depicted in Figure 3.1 below graphically mapped-out routes showing the various taxi routes accompanied by a list of the main taxi ranks from Cape Town.

No particular features were considered in choosing the taxis. Every taxi that has an inscription, whether in a form of a language, picture or a combination of both, forms part of the study, irrespective of whether the inscription is of a dialogic nature or dialectic nature. This emanates from Bakhtin's (1981) view that all language use is dialogical. This simply means that the existence of texts always come as a response to prior texts. In other words, when we decide to speak, we do so in response to something that has been communicated before, whether in written or spoken mode, and not in a vacuum, thereby also expounding Paulo Freire's view that language use is never neutral.

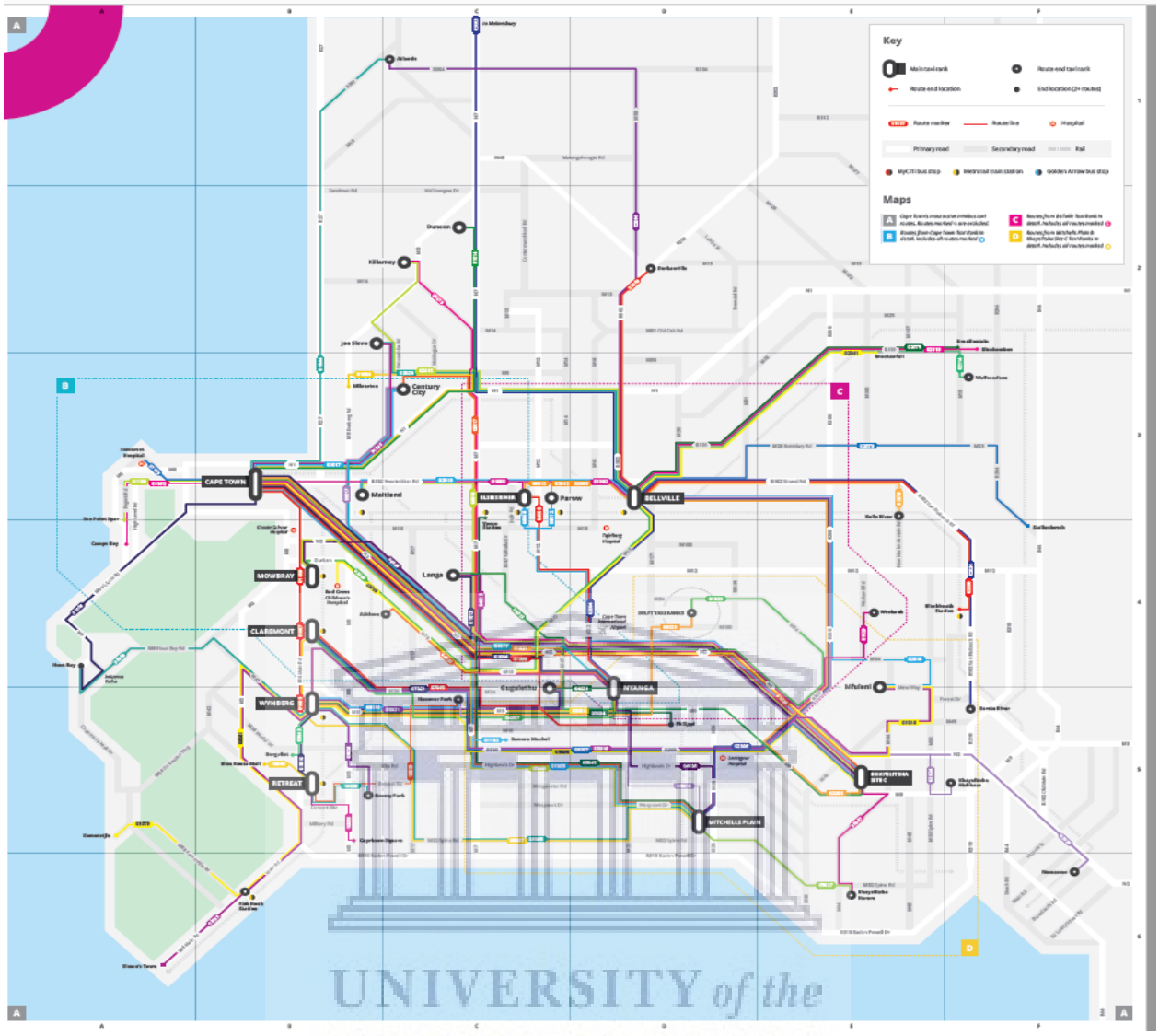


Figure 3.1: Graphic Representation of Cape Town's main taxi ranks and routes

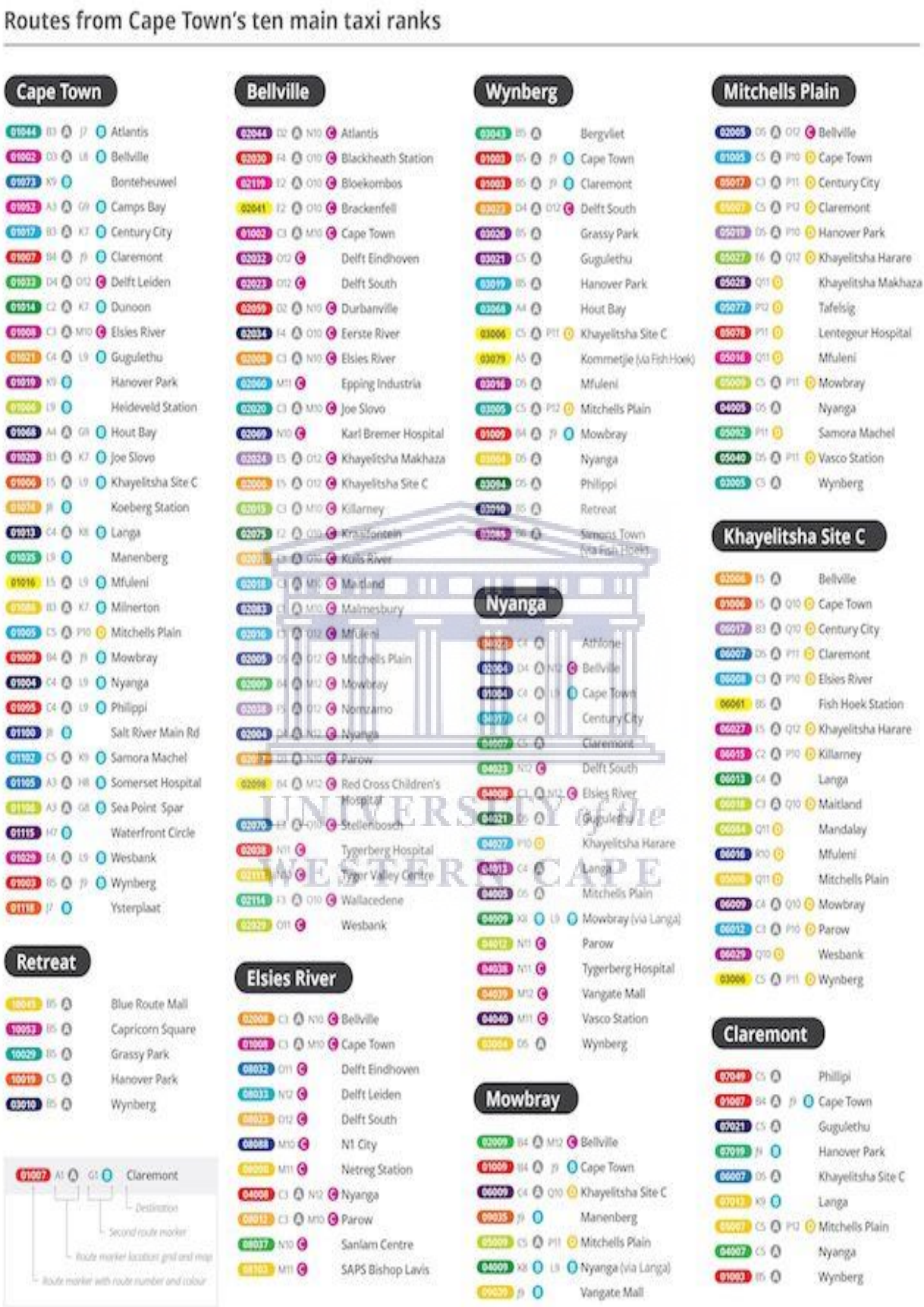


Figure 3. 2: Cape Town's main taxi ranks and routes

Second, is the issue of sampling of the survey areas. Gorter (2013) highlighted a considerable number of research projects such as that of

> Rosenbaum et al. (1977) and El-Yasin and Mahadin (1996) whose analysis of the signs took place in one central shopping street (in Israel and Jordan, respectively) and Cenoz and Gorter (2006), who compared two central shopping streets, one in Friesland and one in the Basque Country, Spain. Barni's (2006) study has also been pinpointed as he surveyed a whole neighbourhood: l'Esquilino, a multiethnic neighbourhood in the Italian capital, Rome. Then Ben-Rafael et al. (2004; 2006) sampled in eight different eographical sites in which Jews, Arabs or both Jews and Arabs reside, constituting a sample of the socio-geographical diversity of Israel. Likewise, Huebner (2006) identified fifteen neighbourhoods in central and suburban Bangkok, Thailand, which reflect some of the linguistic diversity of the city. A given stretch of the main street in each neighbourhood served as the survey area. The survey areas were determined using randomly chosen postal codes and addresses. Every survey area consisted of one side of a street on which a selected address was located, confined by two intersections.
>
> Gorter (2013: 5)

But, as explained earlier, due to the ephemeral nature of the unit analysis, this study hopes to sample from two centralized spots that will enable the elimination of these shortcomings.

In order to respond to the research questions highlighted in Chapter 2, a detailed qualitative analysis of linguistic landscapes in Cape Town's two main taxi ranks was carried out. This was based on an approach developed by Ben-Rafael et al. (2004; 2006) and Cenoz and Gorter (2006). Due to the fact that the linguistic landscape investigations span a few years, this study started off in an explorative nature. An investigation was conducted by taking random pictures of taxis that I met on the roads around Cape Town. The results indicated that isiXhosa and English were the most visible even though their occurrence was of varying degrees, with isiXhosa being the more prevalent of the two languages. This could be attributed to the fact that isiXhosa is the dominant African language in the Western Cape, with the majority of people constantly migrating largely from the Eastern Cape. Moreover, since there is a perception that the taxi industry is associated with people with limited formal (Western) education, both from the owners' and the drivers' perceptive, it is comprehensible that due to the legacy of the apartheid regime, people from the homelands were provided with less opportunities for education, hence the large migration to the big cities such as Cape Town way after 1994. Even though this misperception still exists, the landscape is slightly changing as more and more people consider it a lucrative way of making money. On the other hand, many languages of the minority groups were lacking in the survey, only a few traces of Sesotho as the second most noticeable African language was represented.

3.3 Research design

Echoing Ben-Said's views is Backhaus (2007:65), who purports that 'if one needs to guarantee a sound data collection procedure, two fundamental points need to be taken into consideration, namely the determination of the survey items and the geographic limits of the survey area'. Therefore, taking this into account, the study finds it difficult to confine itself to a particular area because of the ephemeral nature of the study units involved. Even though one might decide to consider Cape Town to be the survey area, the free movement of taxis coming in and out of the province adds a dynamic element in terms of the study area. It is because of this that even though the findings cannot be generalized to other areas other than the ones being studied but can only make some observation to the general LL of South Africa.

Ben-Said (2011:62) posits that in order to know enough about 'whether a code preference is based on geopolitical indexing or sociocultural associations, interpreters look for evidence outside the signs themselves'. Based on the arguments outlined above, Ben-Said (2011) concludes that 'data triangulation permits LL researchers to convey a more comprehensive and illustrative account of the complexities of multilingual contexts but also helps to circumvent methodological hurdles in collecting multilingual data'.

It is against this backdrop that this research will therefore employ qualitative approaches. These will be employed with the view to determine the basis for the multimodal discourse analysis of the LL, in which the linguistic, audio (kinds of music played) and images will constitute the text/discourse to be analysed.

3.3.1 A Case for Ethnographic Research

Taking cue from previous research conducted on linguistics landscape, one would realize that there has been great development over time since its inception. As the first widely recognized pioneers of the LL, Landry and Bourhis (1997) are reported to have investigated perceptions of the linguistic landscape. Various multilingual settings around the world were focused on as study units. Even though most of the studies on LL focus on multilingual spaces, some studies involved a minority language. Others' focus was based on the role of English as a global language. The studies took their perspectives from sociolinguistics, pragmatics, and discourse analysis.

The studies carried out do not differ in the type of multilingual settings and the perspective chosen only, but they also differ in relation to the methodologies being employed. Without understanding

the challenges to employing certain tools, subsequent studies may fall into the same trap of repeating the same mistakes. The question of theory-method linkages is the central methodological issue articulated by Vygotsky (1997a). He argued for a deep theoretical framework that must have an alignment with compatible objects and methods of inquiry, and that which would be guided by social needs and a desire to add to the body of the knowledge that already exists.

Therefore, semiotic remediation as discourse practice is highly appropriate to be regarded as the motivation of inquiry, for selection and arrangement of methods and means of analysis. According to Prior, Hengst, Roozen and Shipka, 2006) cited in Prior and Hengst (2010: 1), semiotic remediation 'draws attention to the diverse ways that humans' and nonhumans' semiotic performances (historical or imagined) are re-represented and reused across modes, media, and chains of activity'.

In his book, *Superdiversity and Linguistic Landscape*, Blommaert (2012) summarizes the main methodological problem of ethnography as was previously stated to be dependent on

- 'data drawn from a bounded set of human encounters in real life space and time but the outcome is an epistemologically genred collection of texts: recordings, fieldnotes, and later a published paper or a monograph.
- as soon as the 'data' enter the genre-machines of academic writing, the fundamental contextual sharedness is erased and replaced by a discursively constructed distance between the ethnographer and his or her 'object
- the sharedness of time-space, of language and of event structure gives way to a unidirectional, textual relationship in which the ethnographer is no longer an interlocutor alongside the information
- the shared time-space in which it emerged is erased and replaced by a timeless present – something that Fabian calls the 'denial of coevals' and identifies as a major epistemological problem hampering any ethnographic claim to general validity and generalization.
- much of what comes under the label of ethnography lacks theoretical and methodological sophistication and is exposed to the same age-old criticism

Blommaert (2012: 29-30)

In encompassing all these shortcomings highlighted above and ensuring that they are eliminated, Blommaert offers that a relook at history as a real category of analysis could be sought through longitudinal ethnography. To do this, terms such as intertextuality, interdiscursivity, semiotic remediation and entextualization, could help explain the relation between present texts and their histories. These might be histories of use, abuse and evaluation of textual materials (e.g. Bauman & Briggs 1990; Fairclough 1992; Silverstein & Urban 1996; Silverstein 2005; Blommaert 2005; see Johnstone 2008: chapter 5 of a survey and discussion).

Therefore, as Blommaert (2012: 33) extends the notion that an encounter with text compels us into an understanding that text 'encapsulates or resemiotizes an extended historical itinerary of action, practice, narrative, authorization, certification, metonymization, objectivization and technologization or reification' as graphically represented in Figures 3.3 and 3.4 below:

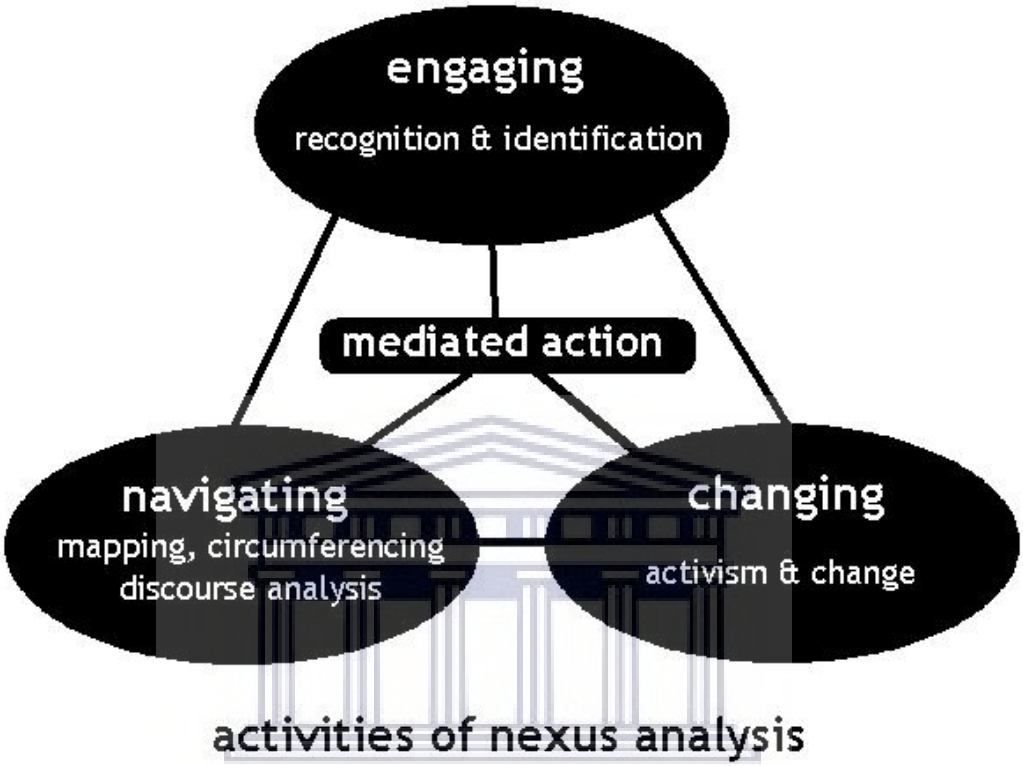


Figure 3. 3: Three activities of a nexus analysis.

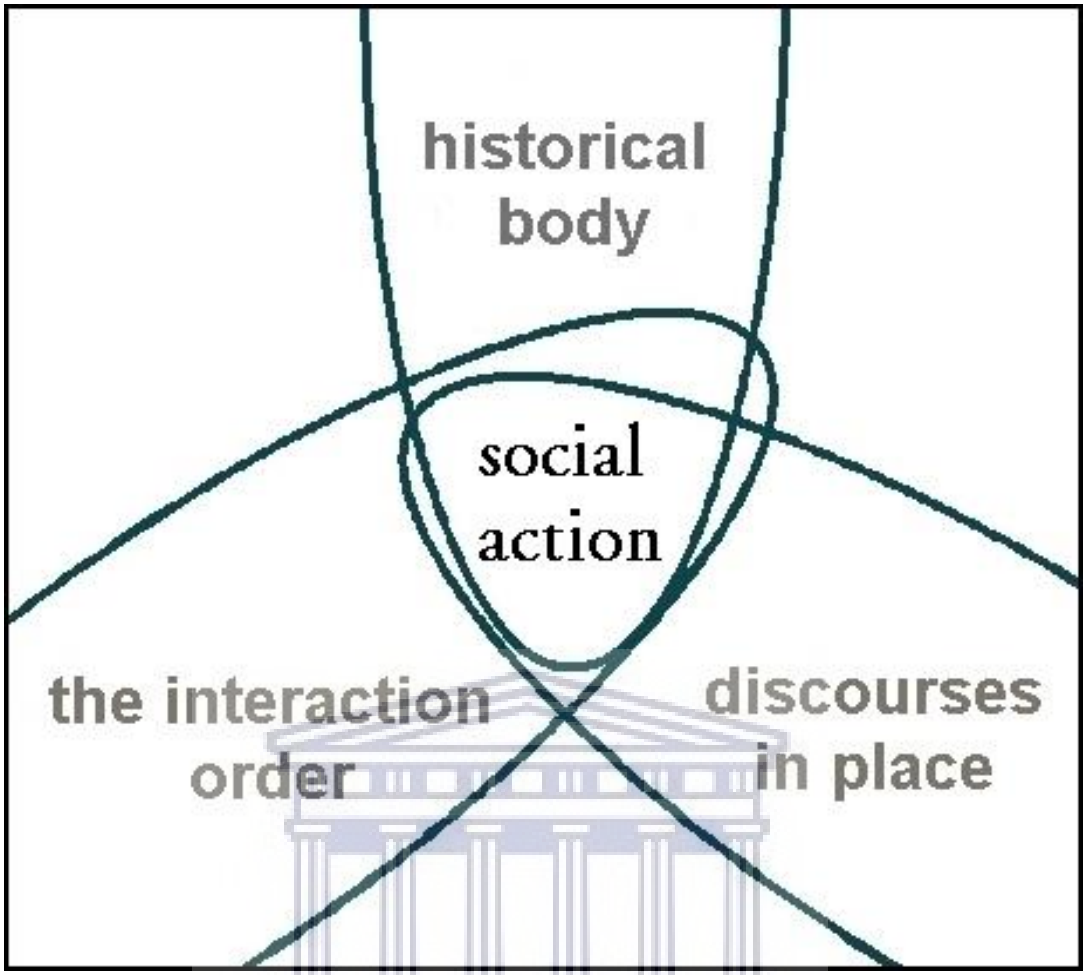


Figure 3. 4: Social Action

A Social Semiotic Analysis of Mini-Bus Taxis as Mobilescapes in Cape Town calls for the same methodological tool kit that these related approaches use. A combination of longitudinal ethnographic methods of data collection (observation, interview, recording of activity, collection of texts and artifacts) with interpretive forms of analysis (triangulation, close reading; grounded theorizing; data reduction by coding; data manipulations by re-arrangement, isolation, and re-contextualization; reflexivity) is employed.

Having outlined the framework within which this study encompasses, the next section deals with some methodological issues that are discussed in detail to circumvent most, if not all, the hurdles outlined in the section above. These will be discussed on the basis of examples of these studies and in relation to curbing specifically the four caveats observed by Ben-Said (2011) in conducting an LL study, namely: 1) Difficulties in defining the unit of analysis; 2) Fixed versus transient nature of signs; 3) Sampling and representativity and 4) lack of data triangulation.

3.3.2 Data Collection Methods

Of great importance are caveats outlined by Ben-Said: 1) Difficulties in defining the unit of analysis; 2) Fixed versus transient nature of signs; 3) Sampling and representativity and 4) lack of data triangulation. It is therefore, against this backdrop that this section of the research hopes to discuss how each of these shortcomings will be counteracted or rectified in order to ensure that the research is as comprehensive as can be in its findings, even though Ben-Said is very quick to admit to the fact that 'achieving a comprehensive representativity of all the street signs within a given environment is a colossal task which has been rarely achieved in LL research (to the exception of large-scale studies such as Barni and Bagna, 2009, as cited in Ben-Said 2011: 64).

But Ben-Said is also quick to admit that substantial financial resources are required where large scale studies involve geo65 referencing (i.e. mapping satellite data with LL data) for large-scale studies requires. Therefore, he recommends 'to pre-define the areas investigated in order to minimize inconsistent findings which result from a lack of rigorous data collection procedures' (Ben-Said 2011: 65).

Secondly, Ben-Said (2011: 66) alludes to the fact that 'collecting data from only one street or large avenue as performed in several LL studies (Edelman, 2006; Cenoz & Gorter, 2006; Rosenbaum et al., 1977) is again not devoid of methodological hurdles as limiting the data collection to an exclusive street, not only excludes other areas of the cities, but also makes the study weak in terms of the city's holistic representation'. Since taxis are mobile and not static like buildings, this problem was curbed by not confining the collection of signs to the two main taxi ranks mentioned above. Arbitrary measures when random encounters with taxis called for camera shots.

Moreover, to counteract these shortcomings, visual data was collected in the form of digital photographs of the inscriptions and it was coupled with unstructured interviews.

3.3.3 Data Triangulation Methods

Survey area is an important feature that characterizes earlier LL research studies as the intention was to map language use to a specific area. While cognisant of Backhaus' (2007) postulation in relation to challenges pertaining to study areas, namely, the determination of survey area(s), survey items, and the linguistic properties, the study could not be confined to a specific street, township or town due to the ephemeral nature of the inscriptions. After all, whether, one encounters an inscription on a taxi in Khayelitsha, the same inscription can be encountered in the Cape Town CBD 30 minutes

later, or in another province the day after, maybe adorned on the same taxi or on a different one as will be exemplified in the forth-coming chapters. This is especially so in the advent of globalisation, which repudiates the notion of physical geographical delineations of areas but considers spaces to be on the move too due to the free flow of information aided by transport, bodily moves and technology.

Therefore, the question of study area(s) in this narrow sense is immaterial for this study.

Data, in the form of digital pictures of taxi inscriptions, as well as interviews of taxi owners and drivers were collected over a period of more than two years around Cape Town, with specific concentration points of taxis such as taxi ranks and filling stations being the focal points of data collection.

Ben-Said (2011:65) brings to the fore the question of lack of data triangulation, where the observation in many studies has been such that 'visual data by itself is treated as sufficient to provide full evidence of the linguistic situation of the contexts investigated', citing very few studies that have been triangulated. Added to this is the fact that data is analysed using etic approach as opposed to emic approach. Etic approach, according to Ben-Said (2011) is an approach whereby data is analysed from the researcher's perspective as opposed to emic approach, where conclusions are reached with the assistance of other methods other than exclusively on signs. Therefore, the following sub-sections will deal specifically with how data will be triangulated in the current study, starting with a look at photographs.

3.3.3.1 Photographs

Digital pictures were shot from around 200 taxis over a period of two years, with a much-focused period during the December rush, from the 13th to the 22nd of December, a period when the flow of taxis is at its peak due to December holidays. The latter group of taxis not only encompassed taxis that operate within the confines of the Western Cape, but they included some of the taxis that ferry passengers to the local areas during the year but also travel to other provinces during the holidays. They included taxis from other provinces such as the Eastern Cape, predominantly, the Northern Cape and Gauteng.

Photographs were taken throughout the two years and over the Christmas holiday season, since most of the taxis ferry passengers to different destinations outside Cape Town for their holidays. During the Christmas holidays, the researcher would be based at the One Stop Engen garage alongside the

N1 near Kraaifontein. This is particularly so because the garage will enable data collection at its most prolific stature since most of the taxis, if not all, stop at this particular garage to fill up for various long-distance trips. The garage was also a viable stop because it also eliminated the chances of being selective in data collection and thereby leaving out some taxis coming from the urban periphery of Cape Town. The spot did not only curtail the questions of representation and the challenge with fixed versus transient nature of signs, but it also helped in shortening the time frames for collecting data.

Drawing from the researcher's own experiences, after the 22nd of December, most of the taxis do not come back and this gave the researcher a great opportunity to shift the focus to those that are travelling locally because they cannot make it in the long distances due to their mechanical conditions. Therefore, from after the 25th of December and throughout the year, an endeavour was made to take photographs from the Cape Town taxi rank and the Bellville taxi rank because these are the two biggest ranks that feed into various dwelling points of the city and to rural towns. This ensured that most of the taxis were taken into consideration rather than a once off event where some taxis might not be travelling to towns outside Cape Town. In each of these sites, a total of about 30 digitised inscriptions was captured.

In addition to the collection sites, some of the digitised photographs were taken randomly during the researcher's travels. meaning that the research studied about 300 photos altogether.

Based on the assertion by Gal and Woolard (eds. 1995; Gal 1989), as cited in Blommaert (that:

> Every text incorporates, reformulates, reinterprets or re-reads previous texts, every act of communication is grounded in semantic and pragmatic histories which are not simple and linear, but complex, multi-layered and fragmented. Texts generate their publics, publics generate their texts, and an analysis of 'meanings' now has to take into account a historiography of the context of production, the mechanisms and instruments of production and reception, ways of storage and remembering.
>
> Blommaert (1999: 5)

That, together with the fact that there are different theories that the study will be drew from, it is clear that there is an array of theories involved in this investigation, therefore, no one theory would be able to answer the objectives of this investigation. Therefore, the study will employ multiple perspectives in the analysis of data.

According to Kress and van Leeuwen (1996), there are three areas of representation that could be looked at in order to bring out systematically what is communicated by means of visual images and

visual design. These are 1) the structure of the visual image; 2) the events that take place and those that are involved and 3) the conditions associated with the events; and finally, the relationship between the image and the viewer. They continue to mention four tools that can be used to analyse the structure of visual images and these include 'the placement of elements on the horizontal axis (left to right); the placement of elements on the vertical axis (top to bottom); the framing of images; and the salience, that is to say, the prominence given to the images.,' (Stenglin and Iedema: 195 – How to analyse visual images: A Guide for TESOL teachers).

3.3.2.2 Unstructured Interviews

An important point made by Iedema (2001) is that resemiotization rearranges meanings from one mode to another which is different, and it does not necessarily introduce exact likeness but does so in ways that are metaphoric. Cited in (Iedema 2001:36), Halliday (1985) and Olson (1994) add that 'printed written text is harder to negotiate, not only because the writer is generally not present to answer questions or change formulations, but also because written registers are generally more abstract and generalizing than spoken ones'.

It is against this background that apart from the visuals, in the form of photographs that were taken with a digital camera, attitudinal data was collected from the South African taxi owners and/or drivers as informants through unstructured, one-on-one or small group interviews in an effort to bridge the discrepancies alluded to by Iedema. These were conducted in a narrative fashion, which was designed to investigate their perceptions of life in general, and specifically of their own as depicted on the taxi signs database.

In addition to language ideologies and attitudinal factors, interview *questions will relate to the history, socio-cultural, economic, political, etc. factors behind particular linguistic and visual/image choices, and where and why they are placed at particular spots.* This is in line with Zabrodskaja (2001:460), who acknowledges the fact that 'there is an important relationship between the linguistic properties of a sign and the linguistic background of the sign writer'. Therefore, some of the questions include: origins of the business owner, business history, significance of the business inscription, involvement of the owner in creating the sign, which will delve into questions of language position, script size, layout, images, colours, language choice in terms of the communicative function of the message, social convention/expressing self/expressing identity, and their academic acumen. Due to the ephemeral nature of the signs to be studied, means will be made to capture the contact details of the owners in order to secure appointments with the interviewees

and interviews will be limited to 10% of the unit of analysis, a percentage which translates to around 20 informants representing the taxi owners and/or taxi drivers.

Secondly, in 1968, Barthes announced ‘the death of the author' and 'the birth of the reader', declaring that 'a text's unity lies not in its origin but in its destination' (Barthes 1977, 148). This view is echoed by Kallen’s (2008) study of the Dublin linguistic landscape. This simply means that a landscape needs to be thought of as mutually constructed, by both the creators of signs and the targeted audience of those signs. It was therefore imperative that 20 taxi commuters were also interviewed in order to evaluate how they interact with the inscriptions on the taxis. The commuters were randomly chosen. Some were interviewed while they were in a particular taxi to establish whether they use particular taxis as their first preference due to any considerations or they randomly get into a taxi that is readily available to load passengers, while others were picked randomly and interviewed without any relation to any of the considerations laid out for the first group.

3.4 Ethic Statement

As per the university rules, because the interviews in the study were conducted with real people, the proposal was accompanied by an ethical clearance application form in 2014 and examples of consent forms that were provided to the informants for their participation are appended at the end of this research. Juffermans (2015: 59) argues that “everything put up in public is offered to the public and may be read and interpreted by anyone”, however, Juffermans (2015: 59) also argues that the inscriptions adorned on taxis in this case, are located “in the borderland of what is public and private”.

Participants signed forms affirming informed consent. In a nutshell, participants were not coerced or manipulated in any way to participate without their consent. All participants were requested to read the contents of the forms and where barriers to reading were applicable, the researcher had to explain before the participants could sign the forms. Upon showing keenness to participate and after signing, they were furnished with copies of the signed consent forms.

In most cases, verbal permission was given by taxi owners and/or drivers who felt there was no need to sign forms. Additionally, in cases where interviews were not conducted or the driver participated without the approval of the owner and yet the mobile inscriptions were taken and analysed in the study, the signs encompassed have the number plate of each vehicle cropped out to uphold confidentiality of the vehicle owner as most of the inscriptions captured are the same.

3.5 Chapter Summary

Above, arguments were presented in favour of and against the notion of longitudinal multidisciplinary ethnographic methodology as the overriding methodology since space is theorised as agentive and arbitrary non-neutral and on the basis of historical body. The longitudinal ethnographic approach affords us the opportunity to look at changes over the years or fluctuations in certain time frames of sign making and propels us to regard these fluctuations as systemic social actions that should be regarded as layered-simultaneous outcomes of different histories of people, communities and activities in ever-changing compositions – they become uniquely informative chronicles of complexity' (Blommaert 2013: 138). And if we pay attention to these dynamics and attend to them before they manifest themselves into violence, we could curb the scourge of killings and inform policy making pertaining to transport legislation.

It is against this backdrop that in analysing the historical trajectories of signs – the employment of a diachronic approach to the analysis of signs in this study is imperative as synchronic approach attends to the present moment. Coupled with ethnography is the actual methods used for data collection. The chapter has discussed the use of photographic data, interviews and participant observation. The chapter ended with an ethic statement. The next chapter is the first analysis and discusses data on meaning making and place making.

CHAPTER 4

TOWARDS MEANING-MAKING AND PLACE- MAKING

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings in relation to meaning and place making. Earlier studies in Sociolinguistics tied a language to a specific community, meaning that it considered a language as something that belonged to a particular speech community, hence older sociolinguistic traditions such as dialectology was the dialect-geographical map. Therefore, it was easily determinable to associate the preponderance of languages and specific ways of talking – dialects and distinctive ways of pronouncing a language - accents – with particular countries, areas, and/or social classes. These had largely trivialized the history behind the systematic movements of a people and their materialities which had been on a constant rise even before the emergence of the apartheid era and the new forms of media and the internet. It is against this backdrop that this chapter puts into perspective the adherence to this misnomer but to a lesser degree due to the fact that even though the apartheid laws sought to confine groups of people within specific areas, walking and transportation, as detected in Chapter 2, were still prevalent during the apartheid era. With the advent of the abolishment of the apartheid laws, criss-crossing of language practices and materialities has heightened even more. Let us now consider how deeply entrenched that the linguistic-community binary bestowed upon a people by the Group Areas' Act of 1950 is within the country.

4.2 Towards Place Making – Performing the local

4.2.1 Who lives here?

Recent literature on spatialization negates the old sociolinguistic adage of regarding the function of discourse solely from a language-geographical relationship perspective that emanated in the 19th century, linking 'a language' with 'a community' and thereby considering space as a fixated phenomenon. Despite the immense proliferation of cultures across the globe through consumer culture which is also further expedited by social media and the notion of mobility, it is also arguable that although geographical delineations of nation states are blurred in the advent of global mobility, traces of traditional cultures can never be removed from social actors. Specific traditional and cultural elements will always be traced back to their origins and thereby associated and bounded to specific places or groups of people.

Furthermore, the origins of a certain activity will still tell us something about that place, no matter how globalized it may seem. Hence it is never heard of that when alluding to something that originates, say in South Africa, such as the Vuvuzela, we hear people in South Africa talking of a South African-inspired Vuvuzela. They just refer to it as Vuvuzela. But it will be most appropriate to use such a term when making reference to a Vuvuzela from another country. The same goes for Japanese-inspired restaurants when they are in other countries and many more instances of use. Therefore, locality still remains crucially relevant in our discussions of place making. Therefore, the study echoes Blommaert's (2012: 10) opining that 'Indeed, even in sociolinguistic work that sets out to challenge nation-state monolingualism, languages are sometimes still conceptualized as bounded systems linked with bounded communities (Heller 2007, Moore, Pietikanen and Blommaert 2010, Urla 1995)'. It is against this backdrop that this chapter first delves into the notion of meaning and space making that is confounded to the physical realm of place by making reference to activities that are only synonymous with the taxi industry in the South Africa because the signs are a proliferation of new expressive and hedonistic definitions of a cultural representation of the lived life. This, it will do tapping into the notion of theming – drawn from the concepts of "McDonaldization" and "Disneyization" (cf. Scollon and Scollon 2003).

Sociology has taught us to associate particular ways of being and seeing with a specific group of people. For example, when we find ourselves in need of a cab and our first encounter is with black cabs or Britain flag-clad cabs as in Figure 4.1a below, we are certain that we are in England.

Figure 4.1a: England

When we encounter a white Mercedes Benz with a 'Taxi' sign on top, then we know we are in Germany.

Figure 4.1b: Germany

An encounter with trucks with heaps of luggage, ferrying people would tell us that we are in Madagascar as in Figure 4.1c below:

Figure 4.1c: Madagascar

A ride on a tuk-tuk tells us that we are in India. See Figure 4.1d below, while a scene as in Figure 4.1e will inform us that we are Uganda.

Figure 4.1d: India

Figure 4.1e: Uganda

The same applies when we find ourselves in some parts of Lesotho where travelling by car is near impossible. Although there are minibus taxis in the country similar to the ones used in South Africa, certain parts of Lesotho are not accessible by car. Therefore, horses are used as an alternative mode of transport as in Figure 4.1f below. In some instances, depending on the user, some people opt to use their horses even when they go to town to run certain errands, maybe as a way of saving money or just for the fun of it. This is where we can encounter a horse being tied up next to a shop or an automated teller machine (ATM).

Figure 4.1f: Lesotho

But when we find ourselves in the midst of many 16-seater minibus taxis as in Figure 4.1g below, we are certain that we are in South Africa.

Figure 4.1g: South Africa

Therefore, all these modes of transport are synonymous with their respective countries. Even in cases where enculturation may have taken place, there are other factors that signify the origins of the activity. For instance, one might be confused as to where they are when they see the yellow cabs as in Figure 4.1h and 4.1i, apart from other factors, the model of the car will help differentiate between the yellow cabs in Nigeria and those found in New York.

Figure 4.1h: Nigeria

Figure 4.1i: New York

Blommaert (2012: 3) recognizes that 'within every spatial scope, signs have a form of agency: they order, request, ask, demand or inform people within that spatial zone. … public space is never uniform because the signs in public space demarcate areas and audiences, some of which are vast while others are microscopic'. Drawing from sociolinguistics, earlier studies of Linguistic Landscape too, looked at signs in densely populated multilingual cities and based on the publicly visible written language, immediately concluded on the linguistic stratification of a people who lived at a particular place (Landry & Bourhis, 1997; Gorter, 2006; Backhaus, 2007; Ben-Rafael et.al., 2006; Barni & Extra, 2008). Drawing from this dimension, a study based on inscriptions adorned on taxis around Cape Town such as the ones in Figure 4.2a – 4.2e, would have led us into believing that isiXhosa, English, Sesotho, Afrikaans and isiZulu are the only languages spoken in Cape Town.

Figure 4.2a: Sesotho

Figure 4.2b: English

Figure 4.2c: IsiXhosa

Figure 4.2d: IsiZulu

Figure 4. 2e: Afrikaans

This, despite the results published by Statistics SÁ (StatsSA) in 2012 painting a completely different picture that illustrates that all official languages exist in different proportions in every province in South Africa, with the Western Cape (WC) in particular, being no exception.

First Language	WC	EC	NC	FS	KZN	NW	GP	MP	LP	SA
Afrikaans	2 820 643	683 410	606 225	340 490	161 876	309 867	1 502 940	289 446	140 185	**6 855 082**
English	1 149 049	362 502	37 842	78 782	1 337 606	120 041	1 603 464	124 646	78 692	**4 892 623**
IsiNdebele	15 238	14 854	6 023	10 008	111 657	43 988	380 494	403 678	104 283	**1 090 223**
IsiXhosa	1 403 233	5 092 152	60 187	201 145	340 832	190 601	796 841	48 993	20 275	**8 154 258**
IsiZulu	24 634	31 634	8 501	118 126	7 901 932	84 835	2 390 036	965 253	62 424	**11 587 374**
Sepedi	8 144	14 299	2 431	7 395	20 555	83 999	1 282 896	372 392	2 826 464	**4 618 576**
Sesotho	64 066	158 964	14 136	1 717 881	79 416	201 153	1 395 089	138 559	80 299	**3 849 563**
Setswana	24 534	12 607	373 086	140 228	52 229	2 191 230	1 094 599	71 713	107 021	**4 067 248**
Sign language	22 172	42 235	3 933	32 910	48 575	14 924	52 744	8 932	8 230	**234 655**
SiSwati	3 208	2 020	648	2 246	8 347	12 091	136 550	1 106 588	25 346	**1 297 046**
Tshivenda	4 415	3 663	1 083	2 592	4 309	16 255	272 122	12 140	892 809	**1 209 388**
Xitsonga	9 152	3 092	1 201	8 039	8 936	127 146	796 511	416 746	906 325	**2 277 148**
Other	127 117	36 893	12 385	15 935	77 519	60 872	371 575	39 639	86 322	**828 258**
Total	**5 675 604**	**6 458 325**	**1 127 683**	**2 675 777**	**10 153 789**	**3 457 004**	**12 075 861**	**3 998 726**	**5 338 675**	**50 961 443**

Table 4.1: Languages spoken in the different provinces of South Africa

As can be seen, added to the twelve official languages that are represented in every province, is other additional languages that are not considered official even though the proportionality in the prevalence of these languages can be accounted for in the discussion to ensue. First of all, the table illustrates that in the Western Cape, Afrikaans is a dominant language, followed by isiXhosa, English, Sesotho and isiZulu. Therefore, with Cape Town being declared the second most populous city in South Africa, after Gauteng, it cannot be that the speakers of the rest of the other languages reflected in Table 4.1 cannot be accounted for on the basis of the non-visibility of their languages in this space. Numerous other factors come into play here and it is these factors that have a huge bearing on the visibility or non-visibility of particular languages.

What this brings to the fore is the fact that in any given context, history has a huge bearing on the present in terms of what and how things are done. Borrowing form Blommaert's (2012) postulation that signs draw from history, in the South African context too, the apartheid system has a direct link with the spatial, educational and career constructions that the country is sitting with due to the Group Areas Act of 1950 and other related laws. Due to the fact that black and coloured Africans were driven out of the cities, denied entry into certain institutions of higher learning to keep their education levels very low, the ramifications of this dark past have translated into the vast majority of black and coloured people venturing into informal businesses such as the taxi industry. As a result, it can be concluded that not all speakers of the different ethnic and western languages are represented in the signage seen in the taxi industry. Although the landscape in the taxi industry has slightly changed, it is one of the industries where the majority of players (owners, drivers, and etc.) are considered to have low education levels, hence they resorted to the taxi industry. Therefore, for those who are illiterate, they use their first languages. But for those who have some form of education, they have a choice to use their first languages or English. For instance, there are many that come from isiXhosa or Sesotho-speaking background who have opted for the use of English in their inscriptions for various reasons.

This then proving the postulation that messages in the public space are never neutral, social stratifications, power relations and hierarchies are always at play (see Stroud & Mpendukana 2009). It, therefore, becomes eminent that we do not take for granted the visibility of languages in any given space to only represent the linguistic repertoire of a people in that space. Instead, research over the years has informed us that in multilingual settings, social actors have an array of material and linguistic resources to employ in order to put particular meanings across. Since these meanings have a direct relationship with reoccurring topical issues, habitual events at certain places (traditions),

things, cultures, foundational qualities of life, varied ideologies that societies perceive of themselves and of others, it is these individual private choices that project individuals and their lifeworlds in a public space to communally create a superdiverse space that is mainly characterised by violence as the superordinate theme in the taxi industry. This study will also show that the other themes come into being in response to the superordinate one – violence.

Although the StatsSA results reflect the use of these languages at first language level only, most of the South African citizens are multilingual as urbanisation and lately, the new dispensation has allowed for the cross-pollination of languages. This means many citizens, especially black South Africans, can manage to express themselves in more than one language even though their expression in the different other languages can be made in varying degrees. This can also be evidenced in the taxi industry space through, for example, the production of signs that are written in English even though the producers are not first language speakers of English. Hence Blommaert (2012: 11) postulates that 'individuals are seen as bringing very different levels of personal commitment to the styles they speak … of course this applies to the written uses of languages'. Therefore, although 'languages are sometimes still conceptualised as bounded systems linked with bounded communities (Heller 2007, Moore, Pietikanen, and Blommaert 2010, Urla 1995)' (Blommaert, 2012: 10), this can be regarded as emblematic of group belonging, notwithstanding the fact that individuals belong to various groups and this manifests itself in the employment of varied linguistic repertoires. It is these that we endeavour to delve deeper into.

Therefore, as can be seen from the discussion above, the semiotic landscape of an area can have a sociolinguistic diagnostic value in determining which language(s) can be found in an area. And the one encounter or recursive use of certain languages compels researchers to pay particular attention to the various forms of content evident in the signage, something that the next section hopes to delve into.

4.3 Meaning and Place Making through the Theming Lens

4.3.1 A Bloodied Industry

Lukas (2010) posits that every space bears the example of a theme or narrative that provides an overarching conceptual purpose of that space, meaning that the significance of that space may sometimes be established by its function. In other words, we know a taxi rank because in that space we are able to get a taxi that would ferry us to a particular destination. We cannot expect to see a train or an aeroplane stationed next to a taxi even though the three are conceptualized as modes of

transport. But, because the train can only travel on a track and the aeroplane needs huge demarcated tarred spaces for take-off while a taxi can drive on tarred or untarred road, that is impossible. The same cannot be said about buses and taxis as the two modes of transport use tarred or untarred road for mobility.

Drawing from this postulation, let us consider Figure 4.3a – f. In the South African context, the word 'taxi' has become synonymous with violence. Not even a single month goes by without a news report on bloodshed caused by taxi rivalry over lucrative routes. Much of the studies and news reporting that are based on South African taxis are primarily concerned about the taxi wars. Dugard (2001) and Sekhonyana and Dugard (2004) have written extensively about the history behind their operations, the wars and general governmental interventions since their inception but at the centre of their investigations lies the taxi violence.

Figure 4.3a: Taxi driver shoots two commuters, allegedly over R1 change

Figure 4.3b: CT taxi violence claims two lives

Figure 4.3c: Cops monitoring Centurion violence

Figure 4.3d: Nearly a dozen bullet taxi rank after casings collected after fatal Tembisa shooting

Figure 4.3e: Mamelodi taxi strike leaves thousands stranded

Figure 4.3f: KZN taxi massacre in 2018

Borrowing from literature that concerns itself with the theming of parks, restaurants, casinos and the like, where theming, according to Webster's 1913 dictionary, refers to 'a unifying idea that is a recurrent element', while Lukas considers a theme as 'the use of a narrative or story, like the Wild West, to spatially organize that space, … and to encourage various patterns of consumption that often focuses on fitting the consumer in with the larger stories or narratives of the space' (Lukas, 2013: 1), the recurrent nature of the violence that is prevalent in South Africa's taxi industry becomes second nature because it remains unchanged over decades since its inception. And due to its prevalence, it gives an impression that a violent activity may erupt at any given moment.

Although the constant violence is not deliberately meant to dictate consumer behaviour in this instance as is the case in theming of parks and the like, but it definitely tells a story that encourages

patterns of consumption. Hence many people do not use taxis at all as their mode of transport. It is mainly those commuters who come from areas that do not much options in terms of transport that are compelled to use taxis. For some, it is a matter of choice. Through the violent characteristic of the taxi industry as distributed over the social media, the internet and news reporting, tourists do not use private taxis at all. And 16-seater minibuses and other bus sizes that are owned by hotels to ferry tourists have been distinctively adorned with hotel names and peculiar colours that are emblematic of those hotels in order to easily distinguish them from private taxis as in Figure 4.4.

Figure 4.4: Southern Sun Hotels

As Blommaert (2012: 51) puts it, 'different modalities have different affordances and different semiotic scope (audiences) spatial scope (where the sign is put up)'. The black colour and the adorned name and emblem of the hotel make the vehicle distinct amongst other vehicles of its character as most of the taxis come in white. Due to the fact that most taxi owners cannot afford to change the colour after buying the vehicle, the hotel has opted for a totally opposite colour. These also afford tourists to easily identify the vehicle when parked amongst other tourist vehicles at a tourist destination. Moreover, the adornment of the name and the emblem mean that no private passengers can hop into this bus as the destination points to a pre-determined route and back to the specific hotel only.

Moreover, signs have a historical dimension to them. Due to the fact that the oppressed South African communities used extensive violence to fight against the injustices of the apartheid regime, something that is still prevalent to this day when communities want their plight to be heard by the

current government despite the fact that the political party in power is headed by black South Africans. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that the same violent tactic was and is still being used amongst black people instead of bilateral communication even in the taxi industry. In fact, according to Dugard (2001: 5), opines that taxi violence 'that racked informal settlements in the Cape Peninsula between 1990 and 1992 was ostensibly related to commercial competition over routes between two taxi organisations, the Langa, Guguletu and Nyanga Taxi Association (Lagunya), which represented the more urbanised African operators'. And Dugard continues to posit that 'the reality however, was more complex with the taxi conflict providing a springboard for the state-sponsored destabilisation of African communities in a region where there was no Inkatha presence'. This can only mean that violence is so entrenched in people's minds that they cannot think of any other option to make their grievances heard. This is also exacerbated by the government in that it only acts when the violence has intensified.

Therefore, given the background, one would expect that the feud can manifest itself through different semiotic signs that draw on different historical dimensions. Let us consider Figure 4.5.

Figure 4.5: Dlula kulondlu kuyafiwa

In this sign, text co-occurs with visual and we can infer that the text supports the visual. We want to believe that without the accompaniment of the text, the visual may not be interpreted in the same manner or some elements in the interpretation may be missed.

The textual inscription directly translates into: ‘Pass that house because it’s dangerous’. Upon the first encounter with the inscription, there are possible meanings that can be presumed arising from questions such as ‘what house is the producer of the sign referring to’, especially when there is no house visible in the picture? Who is being addressed, the horse or the people who might read the inscription or the taxi owner himself, serving as a reminder whenever he is nearer that house? But the most important of all is why the producer of this sign chose to use the modalities present in the sign. In trying to answer these questions, we can start off by looking at the language used in the inscription. The inscription is in isiXhosa, a language that is an official language in South Africa and predominantly spoken in the Eastern Cape (see Table 4). The language appears to have a different semiotic scope from the visual sign in that not everyone can read and understand isiXhosa. Therefore, it is obvious that the sign selects audiences that are able to read the written language of isiXhosa as its addressees and it also tells us that the person addressing them is also conversant in isiXhosa.

The visual, on the other hand, demarcates a more encompassing semiotic scope as compared to the text. Based on our visual repertoire (Blommaert, 2012), our skills and competencies will help us decode the use of a horse as having many connotations. One may look at the Western culture and presume that a horse is associated with gambling. Therefore, considering the instability in running a taxi business due to on-going violence, the taxi owner might have likened this uncertainty to gambling through the representation of horse riding. Gambling is a win-win situation, there are no guarantees given that one may win. An interpretation from Native American perspective may consider the horse to represent power. While this may the case, but due to the fact that the interlocutors are using an African language, it only makes sense to think of an interpretation along the symbolic importance of a horse from a South African perspective. A horse is considered the most important animal because of its dual functions. First and foremost, it affords mobility for people as it can enable people to reach areas that are not accessible through other modes of transport. Therefore, a horse forms part of lobola for a bride in order to mobilise the father of the bride. Secondly, just like Native Americans, Africans also consider a horse as a symbol of power because a man without a horse in his household is not respected. Men regard their horses in high esteem. They ensure that they are dressed up properly and taken care of at all times. Moreover, a horse is considered the most spiritual of all animals. A horse can detect negative spirits from afar in so much that if it senses the negative spirit, it will vehemently resist going past the dangerous spot. It would rather turn.

Furthermore, the background in the sign helps us conclude that the man on horseback is not in an urban area, but rather in an area where there is no restraint of a city's bylaws.

According to a website 'Pure spirit'

> The **horse** is a universal symbol of freedom without restraint, because riding a **horse** made people feel they could free themselves from their own bindings. Also linked with riding **horses**, they are symbols of travel, movement, and desire.

As can be seen, it is difficult to understand the meaning of the sign as it stands without finding out from the producer. Taking cue from Hult's (2009: 94) plea that knowing what takes place in the production of signs 'may also prove to be an especially illuminating perspective since there is a story behind every object in any linguistic landscape'. Hence it was imperative to enquire from the owner, referred to here as Respondent 1, through conducting an interview. Moreover, it is always advisable to pair Linguistic Landscape studies with ethnography to curb some of the caveats of earlier studies that tended to analyse visual data from the researcher's perspective and subsequent conclusions taken as true.

It was established from the interview that the owner has alluded to the fact that he originates from the Eastern Cape and that he is of Xhosa descent. His horse is in the Eastern Cape as it is not possible to rear a horse in Khayelitsha due to limited space, other municipal laws and societal factors. He mentions that he loves his horse as much as he loves his taxi. He equates the two as his favourite modes of transport. The taxi is mostly used in the transportation of people to conduct business whereas the horse is mostly used when he is in the Eastern Cape to run his errands. As he explains, his horse is synonymous to the taxi in the sense that both are controlled by a driver and if the driver is not vigilant enough, either mode of transport can be confronted with dire consequences.

On a semiotic level, the inscription headlines a picture of a man on horse-back, pointing towards a forthcoming area. Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996), define co-occurrences as multimodal signs and showed that different modalities of communicating appear alongside one another. These may include words, shapes, colours, and etc. but all having different meaning affordances. One can presume that the area pointed at is the one that needs to be avoided. Due to its topmost position, the linguistic inscription becomes salient as compared to the picture.

Considering Lemke's (2012:13-14) argument that 'experience of life is itself heterogeneous, across media and genre as we move from one encounter to another', the study shifts the focus to Respondent

1's taxi with a different inscription a few months after Figure 4.5 was taken. Figure 4.6 came into being.

Figure 4.6: Zijikile izinto

The inscription has a picture of a dog that is seemingly being chased by a rabbit, something which is odd as normally, dogs are reared to catch rabbits in the rural areas. On its own, the picture could lend itself to different interpretations as they say 'a picture is worth a thousand words'. The headline 'Zijikile izinto' translates into 'things have changed', and it becomes apparent that the message that is analogously captured in the visual is intensified by the inscribed caption. Upon interviewing the taxi owner, he mentioned that he never commissioned the sign maker but chose from a pool of pictures that were readily made. He mentioned that he liked the picture because it resonates with his upbringing in the rural areas and therefore, reminded him of those days when he was growing up. He mentioned that he was actually fascinated by seeing a dog being chased by a rabbit, something that he found odd as he feels that it can never happen.

In his ethnographic analysis of speech acts in a Korean neighbourhood in Oakland, California, Malinowski (2008) considers signs as 'mutually constituted by individual intention and social

convention' (2008: 116) and finds that 'social actors or linguistic landscape actors authors 'are not always aware of all the meanings their signs give rise to'. As he notes, 'seemingly intentional meanings can in fact remain hidden to the writers of signs, arising instead from larger historical processes that have become sedimented into practices of literacy and technologies of design' (2008: 124). Given the animosity that prevails in the taxi industry as characterised by Figures 4.3a – 4.3e, the one interpretation that the picture might lend itself into can do with the fact that those who were after the sign maker have now fallen prey to the sign maker. The sign maker also alluded to the fact that most of his counterparts confronted him about the meaning behind the sign, thinking that the sign maker was directed at his enemies. Therefore, the owner was giving them a warning that he is unfazed as he is prepared to face anyone. It could also relate to the issue of changing sites, where the use of all these semiotic materials are employed to show a sense of pride as his situation of being poor has changed as he is now able to drive his own taxi despite the fact the fact that he is not educated.

Figure 4.7 reaffirms the same sentiments brought up by Figure 4.6 but through an analogy of different animals. A cat is being chased by a hen. The pictorial is captioned by 'kutshintshwa amacala' which also translates into 'changing sides'.

Figure 4.7: Kutshintshwa Amacala

The use of animals reveals something about the producers of these signs. Considering Blommaert's (2012) allusion that signs do not tell us something about the historical dimensions only, but they also draw directly from history, we are then led to believe that the two signs may also draw from history, where the semiotic materials are repurposed in the now to create new meanings that relate to the apartheid system being abolished wherein blacks are in the driver's seat in terms of leading in government. As a consequence, blacks are on their way to being moneyed like white people as wealth is synonymous with the whites, hence recently, the use of 'mlungu' (white person) makes reference to anyone who is wealthy irrespective of their race.

But what really stands out is the creativity that the producer of the signs has shown whereby the owner transforms verbal arguments that always prevail within the taxi industry over lucrative routes or other personal issues into multimodal signage. The representation of predator - prey can fit perfectly either for the taxi industry or for the new dispensation. Furthermore, the choice of predator – prey representation can mean that the producer grew up from the rural areas such as in the Eastern Cape, growing up herding animals and using dogs to chase rabbits for meat while herding animals.

Upon realizing that some signs were not commissioned by taxi owners/drivers, an interview was scheduled with the sign maker, Mr Jola of Jola Signs, who seems to have produced most of the signs encountered in this study. It became apparent that he designed the two signs - 4.6 & 4.7 with the intention of alluding to the new government dispensation where he realises that opportunities are at everyone's disposal to advance themselves. He hoped to sell the signs to those who shared the same sentiments or celebrating the new developments brought about by the new dispensation. But to his dismay, he realised that consumers attached different meanings that were relevant to their own situations.

Given the calamitous killings and accidents affecting actors within the South African taxi industry, one is stunned to see a growing number of active players throughout the country when one would expect people to shy away from the industry altogether. But Manglos (2013: 176) postulates that 'various aspects of religiosity can protect against the negative consequences of stress and positively impact subjective well-being in turn (Clements and Ermakova 2012; Krause and Ellison 2003; Krause and Van Tran 1989; Lim and Putnam 2010; Pargament 1997:306; Schieman et al. 2006; Sherkat and Ellison 1999). Manglo (2013: 176) goes on to state that 'there is anecdotal evidence that miraculous experiences may function as critical moments enhancing personal religiosity, particularly when they occur in the midst of stressful situations'.

It is to this discussion that we now turn, starting with Christianisation of space.

4.3.2 Christianization of Space

According to Stats SA's Community Survey 2016, the distribution of religious beliefs in South Africa is as follows:

Religion	**Number of people who affiliate**
Christianity	43 423 717
Islam	892 685
Traditional African religion	2 454 887
Hinduism	561 268
Buddhism	24 808
Bahaism	6 881
Judaism	49 470
Atheism	52 598
Agnosticism	32 944
No religious affiliation/belief	5 964 892
Other	1 482 210
Do not know	704 358

Table 4.2: Religious Affiliations in South Africa

According to StatsSA, the general household survey of 2013 revealed that 84.2 % of South Africans affiliate to Christianity while only 5% affiliate to ancestral, tribal, animist or other traditional African religions (Statistics SA, 2013). Let us then consider Figures 4.8 and 4.9 below.

Figure 4. 8: Thanks God!!!

Figure 4. 9: Inako into entle uphuma eNazarete

Given the eminent killings in the taxi industry, research tells us that it is human nature that when adversity presents itself to us, we are compelled to confront challenges that are too big for us to resolve and Lena Verdeli and Lisa Miller (2003) focus on two very different factors in resilience: community and spirituality. Therefore, it only makes sense that due to the overwhelming affiliations to Christianity and the long-established history of religious acculturation of the people of South Africa, some of the biblical-based discourses are bound to find expression and space in the LL of the taxi industry as seen in Figures 4.8 and 4.9. Space here is constructed with imbued meanings of the owner or composer who establishes new context in the space through forms of personal markers related to spirituality because one would have expected for these discourses to be confined in church. On the contrary, the religious belief systems are pushed beyond domains that are traditionally capitalist and profit making - the taxi industry.

Both the signs have appropriated biblical materials. But in Figure 4.8, it is clear that God has the superpowers to solve the challenges that the owner must have experienced, of which he became triumphant for him to feel compelled to thank God. At first glance, the inscription could be attributable to the fact that the owner has managed to buy himself the vehicle or it could be related to the country having been able to accomplish democracy after decades of hardship. Or it could be related to anything that does not necessarily affect the owner personally.

Figure 4.9 makes direct reference to a statement taken from the bible which translates into ‘There is a possibility that good things can come from Nazareth’. In the bible, Nazareth is a place mentioned in John 1:46 where Nathanael is quoted as having asked, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" and Philip said to him, "Come and see”. In response to these annihilations related to Nazareth, in Luke 1:26, Gabriel, the angel, was sent by God to Nazareth. The statement has a biblical allusion since it refers to Nazareth, as depicted in the Bible. But in essence, the inscription means that there is a possibility that good things can come out of the least expected people as Jesus of Nazareth was initially known as a carpenter. Therefore, people could not believe that he was capable of doing miracles. In the same token, the appropriation has close affinity with a long-held view that the taxi owner in Figure 4.9 alluded to the fact that he was looked down upon by other taxi owners because his previous vehicle was old and his counterparts had given up hope that he would ever buy a new vehicle as indicated. Therefore, based on those misperceptions, when he finally made it, he chose to send this message to all those who spoke ill of his progress in the taxi business. As such, the biblical statement has been resemiotized in that there is an apparent shift of meaning from the context of a church to that of the taxi industry and personal lifestyle (Iedema, 2003).

Although it can be deducted from the biblical appropriation that the owner is a staunch Christian who has strong belief systems in the relationship between the prophecies of the bible and real-life situations, but on the same breath, the resemiotization of the Christian scripture can also be seen as a manipulative marketing strategy for the taxi owner. In *Exploring Semiotic Remediation as Discourse Practice,* Hengst and Prior (2011: 1) define the word *Remediation* to “point to ways that activity is (re)mediated – not mediated anew in each act – through taking up the materials at hand, putting them to present use, and thereby producing altered conditions for future action”. Therefore, by using the biblical material to serve a different purpose of being a marketing strategy, the owner authenticates his business and projects himself as ‘Christian’ and thereby signals the presence of God in his business dealings so as to bestow hope and faith to his customers, especially given the scepticism and fear that some people hold towards taxis because of their tarnished image due to a history of accidents. As a Christian customer, one would feel settled in dealing with another Christian. Hence Pennycook (2009: 308) states that “our linguistic landscapes are the products of human activity not merely in terms of the signs we put up but also in terms of the meanings, morals and myths we invest in them.”

Therefore, both the signs strengthen the argument that signs are metaphoric instances created out of a prolonged use among people (Kress, 2010) and due to shared socio-cultural histories of sign-makers and consumers pertaining to Christianity, it becomes easier for these signs to strike a chord.

In keeping with the discussion, StatsSA shows that affiliation to ancestral beliefs comes second after Christianity. Therefore, the next section looks at the extent to which the appropriation of traditional belief systems materialities find expression in the taxi industry.

4.3.3 Ancestral/Traditional Affiliations

The general household survey of StatsSA in 2013 revealed that 5% of South Africans affiliate to ancestral, tribal, animist or other traditional African religions. Contrary to the 5% data presented, data collected for this study presents an avalanche of pictorial and written signage as compared to other categories of signage and this can also be witnessed in the figures 4.10 and 4.11 below. Both the signs use clan names in their repurposed in the endeavour to show gratitude for their achievement.

Figure 4.10: Ilinge Lamampondo

To start with, the producer of Figure 4.10 gives us an impression that buying the vehicle is a second attempt, but the attempt is attributed to the 'Mpondo' clan. The direct reference to the family name (clan name) highlights the use of a collective and therefore positions the owner as a person who respects both the dead and the living because the 'Mpondos' that he makes reference to could be the living ones or the ancestors.

Figure 4.11 below is a direct word of gratitude to the taxi owner's clan name - Ndayeni. It can be detected that Figure 4.8 and 4.11 below both give thanks to a supernatural being even though, respectively, one makes reference to God and the other, to ancestors. Another interesting dimension that can be read from the two signs is the fact that the languages used on each sign reverberate with each belief system. Although English and the African languages can be interchangeably translated, it becomes interesting to see each sign speaking the language that resonates with the respective belief system, even though there are concepts that are not translatable to English. For instance, the clan names are but one example because they do not exist in any other language except the original one.

Figure 4.11: Enkosi Ndayeni

Therefore, in the same breath, as is the case in the discussion of Figures 4.8 and 4.9 above, the enactment of the traditional utterances is repurposed as the utterances are lifted away from their traditional oral use, where one usually taps into ancestral sayings when celebrating, mourning or in performing any traditional activity that depicts strong emotions of the user. Therefore, it can be concluded that the use of clan names projects the taxi owner as a traditional person who believes strongly in his African traditions.

On the other hand, the 5% of traditional affiliations could also be attributed to the background provided in preceding chapters, wherein religious affiliation is still matched with education levels. It could also mean that people some people were raised in the rural areas, so they might not have equal levels of education as is the case with those who grew up in urban areas since in the absence of education, formal schooling can be experiential in the urban areas. Consequently, it is either traditional practices or Christianity are still entrenched, or the combination of both is practised. Bearing in mind that the education level of most people who are in the taxi industry is very low, it could explain why the avalanche of signage associated with traditions and the combination of the two belief systems.

Even though one might superficially look at these inscriptions as a form of identification or a sign of pride on the part of the owner, I see them as manipulation of such discourses by doubling up to suit the taxi owner's ideological and individualized 'marketization' strategies. This is largely due to the fact as much as only 5% of people have indicated their affiliation to traditional practice, some tribes are well known for strict inclinations to their traditional practices, the use of clan names being one such practice. Therefore, the fact that the signage draws into clan names could have been used as a marketing strategy to lure potential customers who have close affinities with the clan names in order for them to use the taxi services of the 'brother/sister'.

On the one hand, it could mean that the 5% is a representation of people who were open about their affiliation without fear of being judged. This has close ties with the fact when Christianity was introduced to the Africans, they were coerced to forfeit their traditional practices because they were deemed barbaric. In both Sesotho and isiXhosa, derogatory terms such as 'majakane' and 'amaqhoboka' respectively are prevalently used. The 'majakane' concept is a derivative of the verb 'jaka', which simply means 'to visit' while 'amaqhoboka' refers to something that is easily 'penetrated'. The terms were coined to refer to communities that were the first to accept Christianity as it was advocated for by the missionaries.

In the Sesotho context, these communities were associated with the bishops as if they were visitors in their own land. In the isiXhosa context, the communities were likened to something that can be easily penetrated since the teachings on Christianity hastily changed their normal traditional ways of performing social practices and they easily adopted and adapted to a cultural lifestyle that was completely new. The two terms are nowadays repurposed to refer to those who are educated as opposed to those who have no schooling background. After all, Christianity and Western education were both introduced by the missionaries. Even though the ideology that traditional practices are barbaric and highly associated with witchcraft is still entrenched in many of the people's minds, there is a tendency for people to practice both. As can be seen, because the subject was a subordinate in terms of social, political, economic, or military status, the missionaries, together with the settlers managed to appropriate the African cultures.

Therefore, next section delves into the notion of cultural appropriation looking at inscriptions that have a convergence of both the Western, Christian and traditional belief systems.

4.3.4 Enmeshment of Beliefs

Semiotic remediation rests on the notion that discourse is representational of history and as such, making discourse as dialogic. As an extension of centuries of racism, genocide and oppression, cultural appropriation, according to Rogers (2006) allows for one culture to adopt or steal icons, rituals, aesthetic standards, and behaviour of another culture. Let us consider Figures 4.12 to see the extent to which it shows multiple affiliations to two different religions - Christianity and the traditional belief systems.

When breaking down the inscription, 'Inqaba' translates to a fortress which in this case makes reference to God as taken from the bible whereas the 'Jali' refers to the taxi owner's clan name. It is evident that the owner considers the taxi as his family's only hope, to an extent that it is equated to God. But paramount is the hybrid use of both Christianity and the clan name as two vastly different systems of religion. What this tells us is what Rogers (2006) calls cultural appropriation. According to Rogers (2006: 477), cultural dominance as a form of cultural appropriation is 'the use of elements of a dominant culture by members of a subordinate culture in a context in which the dominant

Figure 4.12: Inqaba yama Jali

culture has been imposed onto the subordinate culture, including appropriations that enact resistance'. This can be traced back to colonialization and the apartheid regime that fostered Christianity unto the habitats of the African continent, negating their traditional belief systems as barbaric. Therefore, the inscription spells the extent to which Christianity is so entrenched or internalised in other people that they can no longer distinguish between the two belief systems especially now that South Africa is a free democratic country that affords individuals free choice to practice their preferred religions.

The inscription corroborates the results from StatsSA in Table 2 which stated that 704 358 people who declared that they do not know which religion they are affiliated to because the hybrid use of the two cannot be attributed to either one of the two religions. Worth noting is the fact that due to the imposition of Christianity, the inscription spells out clearly that the producer practices both the religions as his upbringing cannot be erased completely in his social activities. Although one may look at the use of both the religions as a form of displaying one's identity, it could also be seen as a tactic to reduce both the cultures to a function of economics as both of them are evacuated from their expected normal occurrence, i.e. the church and traditional gatherings.

On the same breath, the hybrid use of both the religions could be seen as a form of on-going resistance towards the oppressors and their values and their ideologies in trying to indicate to them that although Christianity was deeply entrenched in Africans over decades, they have not lost their sense of identity. Therefore, they regard the two on equal footing, as powerful as the other. In this vein, 'appropriation of elements of the dominant culture by subordinated groups can denaturalize the dominant culture's representational systems and/or can provide the possibility of a form of agency' (Rogers, 2006: 485). This is evident in this case as the taxi owner has appropriated the dominant culture's religion for financial gains, a phenomenon that has gained momentum here in Africa, where churches themselves are the new forms of generating money.

Although the first part of this chapter argued for prehistoric ties between language and place, Burdick (2012: 1) contests that 'while such an atavistic association is no longer as widely held, an urban landscape can still be said to be both palimpsest of past and present influences, trends and constraints, and at the same time a site of transformation, agency and power'. It is the use of the word 'widely' that compels us to still consider a perspective of spatial construction through geographical-language boundedness, on the one hand. On the other hand, the production of space, in the advent of the internet and social media, compels us to see it as linked to the production of language, hence Sebba (2010) speaks of 'discourses in transit'. Therefore, the next section looks at the mobility turn in the discursive construction of space.

4.4 The 'Mobility Turn' in Spatialization

In extending our understanding of the discursive construction of space as a phenomenon where language is accompanied by other semiotic resources and is heavily involved, we are compelled to look at the impact that the Internet and social media has had over the years to displace the boundedness of languages to particular spaces but bring about the flow and fluidity of discourse. A bizarre example of hobos[1] from vastly distant areas is displayed in Figure 4.13 below to highlight the stupendous impact that the new information communication technologies have had on user participation. One would think that due to their destitute state, owning a mobile device that will allow them access into this similar discourse may be the last thing they would yearn for.

[1] The word 'Hobos' is used in its sense of referring to homeless people and not necessarily the other negative connotations that carry superiority over other social classes.

Johannesburg

Pretoria

Cape Town

US

Figure 4. 13: Hobos displaying a similar inscription

The same applies to the taxi industry in that the internet, which has grown more rapidly than any technology, has served as a source of inspiration to the inscriptions in Figure 4.14.

Drawing again on the notion of semiotic remediation, Prior and Hengst (2010: 6) call for 'a dialogic approach to semiotics that calls for attention to the range of semiotics that are present and consequential in interactions rather than taking single-mode analyses (of talk, of writing, of gesture, of visual image) as autonomous communicative domains'. Oblivious to the call, the taxi owner managed to adorn an inscription that satisfies it all.

To start with, it becomes apparent that the inscription on the taxi was inspired by Frank Sinatra's motivational quotation on 'success' even though animated in Figure 4.15.

Figure 4. 14: Success is the best revenge, with a paragraph

Figure 4.15: Success is the best revenge

The same quotation is (re)mediated by intertextually adorning it on the taxi in Figure 4.14 above. To add to this, the main message from the quotation is reified by a picture of someone climbing a ladder to indicate that they are striving for success. These are coupled with the narrative – 'Don't worry about those people who hurt you or tried to hold you back you just keep climbing improving yourself looking good and doing your best that will hurt them more than anything they did!'. Therefore, the inscription cannot be analysed in isolation from the pre-historic activities that prevail within the taxi industry. Since Prior and Hengst (2010: 7) postulate that 'remediation not only focuses attention on the laminated heterogeneity of semiotic means but also on the location of any interaction', the adornment of the inscription on the taxi gives us the latitude to link the inscription directly to the war-torn space of the industry where negativity is the order of the any day and therefore, jealousy will prevail. Therefore, the taxi owner has drawn inspiration from the quotation that is found on the internet.

The added narrative and the picture to the quoted inscription - help not only to remediate the quotation in completely different use but also reifies the abstractness of the quotation. The narrative places the quotation within the historical trajectories of the taxi industry, projecting the semiotic chains of discourse production, reception, representation and distribution from both the ends of the internet, with the jealousy discourse from the taxi industry forming the base.

By so doing, the taxi owner makes the quotation his own. But it does not end here. As Prior and Hengst (2010: 7) posit that semiotic materials 'project forward to near – and long-term futures', we are then able to conjecture that not everyone in the taxi industry is hostile as the rampant killings and general behaviour always drive us into making generalisations about the industry. But the same inscription could culminate to other forms of discourse such as disciplinary hearings if there is an individual who might want to challenge the taxi owner, a disciplinary hearing which will culminate in taking notes, notes which will be used in intervening in the matter. Such a hearing could also culminate in a general meeting for all the members where the code of conduct could be read and emphasized or because of it coupled with other squabbles within the industry could be referred to the mother body structure - the South African National Taxi Council (SANTACO) for intervention. This way, the discursive chain of these activities is also perpetuated by the mobility turn – the process by which different linguistic resources are in motion across various courses of time and space (cf. Blommaert, 2010; Johnstone, 2010). Otherwise, if it was not for these infights, which SANTACO (see their website - https://www.santaco.co.za/santaco-history/) blames on industrialisation, also promulgated by the apartheid land act, there would be no need of the emergence of SANTACO

which was formulated in September 2001 and the fights in the taxi industry would not be as widespread across the entire country as showcased in the first section of this chapter.

Furthermore, it is due to the phenomenon of the 'mobility turn' (Sheller and Urry, 2005) that we also come across taxis owned by two individuals coming from distant places adorning the same inscription as in Figure 4.16, alluding to what Respondent A said about the fact that the inscription in Figure 4.6 was readily made and therefore, it was not directed to anyone in particular.

Figure 4.16: Zijikile Izinto

The first taxi operates in Khayelitsha where the second one operates in Malmesbury, an area in one of the rural municipalities of the Western Cape - the West Coast.

Furthermore, of paramount interest within the shift towards the 'mobility turn' is the fact that the message conveyed by an inscription adorned on a taxi that is travelling in Khayelitsha is no different to the one being conveyed by the taxi transporting people in Malmesbury. Given that taxis are constantly on the move, even if one of the taxis can be seen transporting commuters in the Eastern Cape or in Gauteng, the message will remain the same and the spaces remain the same irrespective of where they are going. Therefore, the discourse that is produced in the taxi industry, thereby produces altered conditions of use because the same quotation can be referenced in say, during a counselling session. But the circumstances will be totally different.

Last, but not least, I want to argue the fact that taxis themselves, whether adorned with inscriptions or not, should be regarded as mobilescapes. Borrowing from Sheller and Urry (2002: 212), who postulate that 'multiple mobilities embrace movements such as walking and climbing to movement enhanced by technologies, bikes and buses, cars and trains, ships and planes … '. Therefore, in making a case for automobility within the mobile paradigm, Sheller and Urry (2005: 207) opine that 'the growth of such information and communication technologies is allowing new forms of coordination of people, meetings, and events to emerge … And materials too are on the move, often carried by these moving bodies whether openly, clandestinely, or inadvertently'. Considering that taxis too are vehicles used for ferrying people to various destinations as a form of business, a matter which will be dedicated to a chapter of its own later on, we are then compelled to consider them as mobilescapes that move texts on them with them in their own right.

Moreover, due to the recurring incidents that involve fatal accidents, bad mannerisms and the infighting throughout the industry in the South African context; this shared knowledge manifests itself into securing the continuity of culture (Moriarty, 2015). Most of us hold some nasty ideologies, discourses and practices about the South African taxi industry, and these compel us to read the taxis themselves as a dangerous means of transportation that may have several consequences. Some of these include people who may be forced to stay away from using taxis for their travelling needs or a mere driving alongside a taxi may compel some motorists to react either positively to their 'demands' on the roads if one does not want to engage in an altercation or one may react negatively based on generalisations we make because of their misdemeanour on the roads. Therefore, normativity or ought-ness (Blommaert, 2012) compels us into habitual and expected practice in so much that if a taxi driver acts in a manner that is out of the ordinary, we are again driven into interpretive over-drive.

Urry (2005: 22) has argued for an understanding of 'dwelling cars' which may involve a number of activities such as responding to calls to conduct business, office work, or leisure. I would like to argue that this understanding also affords us an opportunity to be exposed to other semiotic resources that one might have not been able to encounter or come into contact with if it were not because of the mobility of a taxi. While in a taxi, one comes across other semiotic resources in the form of billboards advertising various products, public signs bearing street names or discourse in the form of discussions that normally ensue out of another activity or making commentary based on what was aired on the radio; themselves being activated into a state of mobility as the taxi is en-route its

destination because once a commuter gets to their destination, the conversation may or may not continue.

Added to this is the fact that taxis create a space where commuters are turned into rule-following humans. There are set rules that govern the taxi industry. For example, every taxi accommodates four commuters at the back seat but if it happens that oversized people are occupying the seat, it is a non-negotiable that four people should fit on that seat. The confinement into the taxi space also makes commuters susceptible to other mobilities such as communicable diseases which add to the already existing chaotic juxtaposition of various networks if a commuter is harbouring a life-threatening disease or just normal fever or Tuberculosis. A case in point can be the restrictions promulgated on taxis to ferry no more than70% people per trip during the Covid-19 lockdown. Other than that, the co-presence of social actors in a taxi could lead to other networks.

Due to the mobility of taxis, gesture and other built-in ways of communicating such as indicating to the left or right, stepping onto the brakes to display an intent to stop, or displaying the reverse lights, all play a pivotal role in communicating with other motorists or commuters. A taxi driver does not have to verbalise his/her intention to change lanes or when making a turn towards a particular direction.

Therefore, in a nutshell, all the inscriptions and other materialities linked to the taxi industry articulate and reify the sociocultural formation of the taxi industry that is offered to consumers as hostile throughout the country.

4.5 Chapter Summary

We live in a fast-paced world that is characterised by global and local shifts that include the social, cultural, political, and economic transformations, together with the impact of the internet and media on the reorganisation of information, knowledge and expertise. With the advent of mobility in the form of technology, this chapter has shown that there is a great emancipation that has happened within the social sphere of communication by discussing findings on how the concept of spatialization is produced in the semiotic landscape of Cape Town.

In this chapter, we have looked at how the inscriptions in the taxi industry create space, stressing the refuted notion of nation-state monolingualism as having no place in spatialization theories. The fact is, languages are sometimes still regarded as closely linked with specific communities (Heller 2007, Moore, Pietikanen, and Blommaert 2010, Urla 1995). It was against this backdrop that the chapter

discussed findings pertaining to the existence of certain languages as depicted from the inscriptions on taxis around Cape Town as the belief is that their display in the public domain gives us a glimpse into some of the languages that exist. This was corroborated with the publication of the Census results which bore many more languages.

But most paramount is the fact that Appadurai (2006: 585) opines that 'we are now aware that with media, each time we are tempted to speak of the global village, we must be reminded that media create communities with "no sense of place' (Meyrowitz, 1985).

The findings have also revealed the extent to which in the process of producing spatialization, human practice is enacted upon, following the words of Harvey (2006) who problematises the conceptualization of space. Added to this problem is the phenomenon of the mobility turn which due to globalisation, regards the world and all that exists in it as being on the move. Therefore, the chapter looked at the consequences brought about by the mobility of the internet in influencing some of the inscriptions adorned on taxis and how some of the inscriptions themselves could tap into the past, the present and probably influence a chain of activities that inform future practices to demonstrate that human practice is deterritorialised and decentred without spatially fixed geographies. The chapter ends off by looking at the extent to which the taxis themselves, as mobile materials, are interconnected to other mobile systems to create space through the fluidity and liquidity of information that may only be synonymous with the industry or one that exposes commuters to adverse social experiences that could be remediated elsewhere.

In a nutshell, given the analysis discussed above, indeed it can be concluded in the words of Blommaert (2013) that signs do:

> demarcate spaces, cutting them up in precisely circumscribed zones in which identities are being defined and enacted, forms of authority can be exerted, ownership and entitlement can be articulated – a complex range of social, cultural and political effects results from the semiotization of space.
>
> Blommaert (2013: 20-21)

But critical to the discussion of space making and meaning making is the notion of the 'things' we use to make these meanings, a subject that Olsen (2003: 87) questions 'why has the physical and 'thingly' component of our past and present being become forgotten or ignored to such as extent in contemporary social research?' It is at this juncture that the next chapter delves into a discussion on the notion of material culture in a mobile space because Banda and Jimaima (2015: 6) posit that the

notion of material culture ‘foregrounds human interaction with the material world in which sign-making is not just about written language or visible objects in place’.

CHAPTER 5

MATERIAL CULTURE IN A MOBILISED SPATIALIZATION

5.1 Introduction

Building upon current work on Linguistic Landscapes that reviews theorizations of space (Sebba, 1999; Sheller and Urry 2006 cited in Jaworski, 2013; Stroud and Mpendukana, 2009, Scollon and Scollon, 2004, among others's), this chapter would like to argue for an approach to space as a social and mobile construct, moving from a vantage point of global cultural flows as encapsulated in globalization. With the advent of global flows, wherein media and human mobility are considered as two major diacritics, space has entered the realm of the absolute. This is said against the perception that when humans move, whether as migrants or merchants, they do not leave their languages, values, behaviours or their cultural repertoires behind. Based on this backdrop, as the previous chapter extended the analysis of semiotic trajectories 'in space/place' to a much wider spectrum of the 'physical environment' by interpreting 'space/place' in less restrictive ways that are contingent to geographical use of language, this chapter hopes to encompass other infinite forms of materialities, espoused through the burgeoning domain of research called 'material culture' (Aronin, 2015).

The last decade or so has seen an increasing attention being given to the notion of material culture and its application in several disciplines associated with the study of material culture: history, archaeology, geography, ethnography and many more. This is largely a response to changing views on research related to Linguistic Landscape (LL) and social semiotics in multilingual settings. The research argues for the construction of meaning and communication in LL to encompass all facets of an environment of multilinguals to not only have a confined focus on linguistic materialities but also on the manifestations of the use and production of material artefacts. As Aronin (2015: 2) posits, 'the field of material culture of multilingualism … goes beyond the static public signs on the streets, and in other open spaces, extending to the private sphere, and embracing the entire range of materialities'.

This chapter will then delve a little deeper into the notion of global cultural flows with specific foci on material culture, looking at how material manifestations such as cultural artifacts are creatively employed to give the South African taxi industry landscape some form of meaning. This is coupled with a concluding section on a strong focus on the mode of invisible and intangible forms of material culture: talk. The concept of orality embodies en*registerment,* 'the process whereby speech practices

are socially predictable as they are aligned to repertoires belonging to specific ways of communication (Agha, 2003; 2005).

Different perspectives in looking at the linguistic manifestations follow through in subsequent chapters. Chapter 6 is dedicated to how linguistic manifestations help express self-stylization and identity formation while Chapter 7's focus is on the economic value of the employment of linguistic manifestations as an element of commodification.

Extensive research on linguistic manifestations has been conducted under the banner of Linguistic Landscape but the notion of material culture 'has been a subject of study in ethnography and sociology. It is only recently that materialities have been introduced as a subject of interest in multilingual studies' (Aronin & O Laoire, 2007, 2012). It is to this focus of materialities that the study turns, starting with a look at glocalisation through cultural flows which account for transitions of materialities beyond spaces.

5.2 Glocalization through Cultural Flows

In the wake of globalization and especially with the birth of democracy in the South African context, we see the binary oppositions colonial economy bequeathed us 'global' vs 'local'; South vs North, urban vs rural, being delineated and South Africa becoming to Africa what America is to the world. Giddens (1990: 64) defines globalization as 'the intensification of world-wide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa'. Therefore, we need to understand how materialities, both local and global, in the form of images, people, information, money, technology and ideas are carried through into the South African context. It is through this observation that the concept of cultural flows was coined in anthropologist Arjun Appadurai's (1990) essay 'Disjuncture and difference in global cultural economy'. As Appadurai claims, these flows travel through national boundaries, they form hybridity that splits cultural boundaries and people join 'imagined communities' and live beyond the place they were born and raised. Sennett (1994) equates the circulation of blood in the body to an understanding of how cultural flows influenced the design of urban spaces in 'planners sought to make the city a place in which people could move and breathe freely, a city of flowing arteries and veins through which people streamed like healthy blood corpuscles' (Sennett, 1994: 256). Due to the cross-pollination of ideologies brought about by communities converging into one space, social change is eminent, hence most LL studies, because they are concerned with multilingual spaces, have had a keen interest in exploring social change in these hybrid communities.

In extending the explanatory power and broadening the scope to the study of linguistic/semiotic landscapes, Aronin and O Laoire (2012) outline what they call material culture of multilingual landscapes in which everyday life objects as well as "physical items, produced by humans as well as events and spaces interconnected by local and global mentality, culture, tradition and social life" (p. 3) become critical components in linguistic/semiotic landscape studies. Mobility is placed at the centre of this interconnectedness of societies which brings about social change.

Drawing from these postulations, we will consider Figure 5.1.

Figure 5. 1: Zijikile Izinto & Kutshintshwa Amacala

Although the two inscriptions in Figure 5.1 were introduced earlier as Figure 4.6 and 4.7 in Chapter 4 to echo Lemke's (2012:13-14) argument that experience of life 'is itself heterogeneous across media and genre as we move from one encounter to another', we extend that discussion on meaning making and space making by showing that indeed our experiences of life are heterogeneous. These heterogeneous lifestyles are characterised by Aronin and & Ó Laoire's, (2012: 1) call for a focus on 'materialities that are linked with the ways of life in … homes, places of work and socialisation and time-spaces of wider society'. And, in the advent of globalisation, mobility, whether happening through physical bodily travel of humans, transport, media or technology, is at the centre of that heterogeneity. Paramount to the discussion of the movement of a people is the fact that when they do move, they do not leave their life experiences and material culture behind. Hence Appadurai (1996: 31) sees globalization 'as a fluid and dynamic phenomenon tied to worldwide migrations (both voluntary and involuntary) and the dissemination of images and texts via electronic media'.

The mere fact that the producer of these signage chose to use animals to anchor the written inscription and express the underlying message that denotes a change in circumstances related to taxi industry, speaks volumes about the producer's background. Banda and Jimaima (2015: 648) note that 'rural and urban cultures may produce and consume signage differently' since there are vastly different semiotic materials in the two spaces. Based on this postulation, taking cue from traditional practices in the rural areas, men use dogs to chase rabbits as the latter is consumed as food. And on the second inscription; a hen gives chase to a cat and this is done with the aim of reinforcing the written inscription that denotes change. Therefore, the use of the animals can be a creative graphical analogy that sharply expresses the major change the taxi owner refers to in relation to the taxi industry. In this sense, the use of animals is metaphoric or analogical because the message underlying the inscriptions does not necessarily relate to animals. Therefore, following Giora's (1993: 591) argument that 'analogies are not functional in text comprehension, rather, they impair recall and inhibit processing' and she goes on to state that 'while analogies do not facilitate comprehension, they seem to contribute to the aesthetics of the informative texts'. This postulation may be premised on the thinking around the uptake of a text being highly dependent on other factors such as knowledge, experiences, skills, capacities, and goals that consumers bring into the encounter.

Furthermore, 'rituals and events associated with objects/material are also included in material culture studies as way to account for how the materialities reflect the identity, individual and group values: ideas, morals, ethics and standards,' (Aronin and O´ Laoire 2012: 3). Because of the multilingual scope of the country and that of the province, dogs can be said to be material culture associated with traditional hunting and the hen and the cat associated with other cultural happenings. For instance, as much as the latter are considered domestic animals, depending on cultural backgrounds, a cat is a source of food while other cultures consider it for catching mice only. The hen is solely reared for food and for performing traditional rituals. For instance, in traditional African culture, if someone wishes to make a sacrifice or a prayer to their ancestors and they do not have enough money to buy all the necessities, chicken, especially white ones, are used to perform the ritual. This is done with the view that the person acknowledges what needs to be done and it is a prayer to the ancestors to pave way for the person to access the necessities needed for the performing a particular ritual. For another person, the chicken is solely reared for food even though lately, ordinary people and farmers rear them for economic reasons.

Again, depending on different individuals' cultures, even though rabbits are popularly known to be a source of meat for many, a group of Basotho people whose clan name is 'Bafokeng', use a rabbit

as their totem. Therefore, according to culture, there is a strong belief that there is divine affinity between an individual and their totem animal. It is as if people are inexplicably drawn to the animal and vice versa and they regard the totem animal as an important symbolic object to get in touch with specific qualities found in the totem animal. Therefore, in this instance, for the 'Bafokeng' clan, they are not allowed to kill a rabbit. Therefore, the inscription could come as a delightful adornment to indicate that the taxi owner is in control of whatever situation when it could happen that earlier, s/he was confronted with a dire situation.

Secondly, depending on which language is used, a dog or rabbit is named differently depending on the speaker or interlocutor. Interestingly, all four animals have names that are closely related in the African languages, echoing Appadurai's (1996: 31) postulation that 'cultural impositions are not necessarily only from the West'. Therefore, it is clear in this case that globalization of the material culture - the written inscription and the use of animals – did not happen at a global scale but also at a local one. This explains why a different taxi would adorn a written inscription without anchoring it with a picture as shown in Figure 5.2.

Figure 5.2: Zijikile Izinto

Moreover, the use of isiXhosa in the signage also indexes that the taxi owner is of Xhosa descent or that some commuters are of Xhosa extraction. There is compelling evidence which argues that in multilingual societies, the choices in language use should not be implicitly regarded as 'a direct reflection of the relative status of various ethnolinguistic groups within the community (Backhaus, 2007: 145). Rather, as Woolard (1998) puts it, seeing or not seeing a language on public signage,

together with the type of text, what the text is about and the way the 'what' is organized, is a display of that community's public and private ideologies.

StatsSA's (2011) results indicate that the one language that is mostly spoken in the Eastern Cape is isiXhosa. And due to compelling evidence that the Western Cape's greatest in migration is from the Eastern Cape, this information therefore, helps us conclude that the producer of the signage is also from one of the rural areas of the Eastern Cape as he can relate to the analogies inscribed on the taxis. Moreover, the speculation is supported by findings that confirm 'the continuation of strong primary migration streams between the Eastern Cape and municipalities in the Western Cape (Jacobs & Du Plessis, 4 July 2016).

Furthermore, Moxey (2008: 132) posits that 'the focus on materiality de-centres constraints by written language in particular because perception allows us to 'know' the world in a way that may side-step the function of language'. In other words, Moxey suggests that "the mediating role of language deprives us of access to the past and thus prevents us from ever knowing it …". Although this may be true in some instances, we want to argue that it cannot be universal in all situations. Let us consider Figure 5.3 as compared to Figure 5.4.

Figure 5.3: 3rd Born

Figure 5.4: Mr Moyikwa

Since Figure 5.3 is what Aronin and O´ Laoire (2012) call a language-defined object, it becomes easier for us to tap into the history or in knowing the number of taxis the owner has without having to ask. On the other hand, with respect to Figure 5.4, our own knowledge of the fact that the inscription bears an earlier model of the Toyota taxi called Siyaya, helps us interpret where the journey of the taxi owner began. If it was not for that knowledge, that interpretation would not have been possible. The same happens to Figure 5.3. If it were not for the scripted language, the picture would not have meant anything. It would have been open to many other interpretations other than the fact the one signified by the owner.

Moreover, the use of the title 'Mr.' in Figure 5.4 further accentuates the convergence of material culture of consumerism in that the English title coupled with an African surname brings together English semiotics and the local semiotics. It can also be looked at as an attempt to equalize the local and the global material culture as it appeals to the local and global audience alike.

Although the dissemination of these images and written texts happened at a local level in this instance and thereby creating localized globalization (Robertson,1995), there are instances of cultural hybridization instantiated by global flows. For an example of this, let us consider Figure 5.5. The inscription bears a pictorial inscription that hints on the juxtaposition of global cultural flows.

Figure 5. 5: Gupta Family

Aronin and O´ Laoire (2012) consider material culture as a channel of discourse adding to writing and speech. It complements and modifies verbal communication. Although not much has been written on the inscription, the picture gives off various affordances. Firstly, it can be understood that the producer of the inscription sends his 'imaginary' views about the Gupta family, reading from mediatized allegations levelled at their intense involvement in the day-to-day running of South Africa as a country to an extent that a commission of inquiry was formulated to inquire how extensive their involvement in the state capture could have benefitted them and crippled the entire nation in return. Therefore, for example, the taxi owner in this particular case, seeks to 'annex the global into their own practices' (Appadurai, 1996: 4), a process which Appadurai calls Indigenization or glocalization (Lin, Wang, Akamatsu and Riazi, 2002) to assert the ideology that the family's intention was to build their own country within the peripheries of South Africa. Alternatively, the inscription could be taken to show the attitude and ideology that the producer (taxi owner) has towards the family especially in the context of their foreignness as they are not considered to be citizens of South Africa although they were afforded the status, even though it was highly questioned. Their foreignness which is derived from 'people coming over seas' is exemplified by buildings that are positioned against the backdrop of a sea as there are two opposite sides to the inscription. Therefore, due to the chaos caused by the family, the inscription, in a way, informs the family that it is time to go back home. Aronin adds that decisions are not made by delving into searching for all the information that can be available, Rather, their rationality is limited by 1) the

information they have, 2) the cognitive limitations of their minds, and 3) the time available to them to make decisions (2108: 34).

It is against this backdrop that we may also conclude that the South Africans are a welcoming society that embraces globalization and the integration of people that it brings with it but on the same token, they are a society that is unforgiving to foreigners if they seem to undermine them as a society. Hence, they have recently been characterized as xenophobic towards expatriates due to recent spades of xenophobic attacks.

Equally important is the observation made by Aronin (2018: 34) that some materialities fill in our senses of sight, hearing, taste, touch, or smell, and many artifacts trigger feelings and emotions, thus activating the feature of 'affective understanding'".

5.3 Affectivity through mobile semiotics

Affectivity, according to Aronin (2013: 183) is a concept that includes "the state of being susceptible to emotional stimuli, a complex and usually strong subjective response, such as love and hate". Because love and hate are two very abstract concepts that have an emotional inclination, language plays a pivotal role in expressing them. In the absence of language, demonstrating love such as in having an affectionate kiss and many other intimately sensual activities are engaged in. But modernization has exposed people to different other ways of expressing these emotionally charged concepts through activities such as temporary or permanent bodily paintings in the form of tattoos, the food they eat to enact their belief systems or attitudes such as in eating oysters and many more activities.

Quoted in Aronin and O´ Laoire (2012: 34), Schlereth, (1985b) postulates that 'another very important role of material culture is that materialities "stabilize the experience", and continues to mention that some artifacts 'trigger feelings and emotions, thus activating the feature of "affective understanding". This may evoke reminiscent thoughts and promote or eliminate motivation. Notable also is the fact that the inscriptions in Figure 5.3, both bear affective connotations. Using Hartmann's (1965) approach and his hierarchy of affectivity, researchers strive to understand emotive energies discharged by properties and objects, let us consider Figure 4.5.

The adornment of the horse, the consistently used isiXhosa to headline the pictures, brings to light the love that the taxi owner has for his horse and for his upbringing in general. The adornment of

the horse on the taxi demonstrates the closeness and the deep love that the taxi owner has for the horse as Aronin (2013: 186) posits that 'the place and time-space trajectories of artefacts speak volumes to a researcher'. Equally, the fact that the picture of the horse has been adorned on the taxi equally testifies the love that he has for the taxi vehicle as he spends most of his time in or with the taxi.

But Jaworski's (2013: 2) opines that as researchers

> 1) our own attention structures are limited and limiting; 2) we are always biased in our interpretations (cf. Gal and Woolard's 2001) well-known claim that in linguistic anthropology there is no such thing as a 'view from nowhere'); 3) we cannot always be sure of the 'principalship' (Goffman, 1981) and the intentions behind the emplacement of specific signs;
>
> Jaworski's (2013: 2)

Therefore, the taxi owner's views also have to be taken into consideration. As a result, an interview was conducted with the owner of the taxi, referred to henceforth as Respondent A in Extract 1, about the two inscriptions as can be seen that it is difficult to understand the meaning of the sign as it stands without finding out from the producer. This was also done with a view from Hult's (2009: 94) plea that knowing what takes place in the production of signs 'may also prove to be an especially illuminating perspective since there is a story behind every object in any linguistic landscape'.

It was gathered that the taxi owner confirms most of the speculations made above. This becomes evident in the interview held on the 7th of July 2016 where he mentioned that he owns the horse in the picture even though the horse is in the Eastern Cape. By displaying the horse on his taxi, he tries to capture the two most important modes of transport he owns and loves dearly. As explained in the extract below, taken from an interview conducted with the owner of the taxi at the Cape Town taxi rank, he explained that he is the man on horse-back and he is giving instructions to the horse to just pass without looking elsewhere because at times it is not safe to stop.

Extract 1

Interviewer: *Ingaba kutheni ukhethe ukubeka ihashi emotweni yakho?*
Why did you choose to adorn the picture of the horse on your vehicle?

Respondent A: *Lihashe lam eli, kodwa lisekhaya emaXhoseni, eEastern Cape. Lelona ndilisebenzisayo xa ndigodukile. Ndaqhela ndisengumfana womXhosa*

ndisakhula ukukhwela ihashe. Sisithuthi sam xa ndisekhaya. Kaloku, kukho indawo ezingafikelelekiyo ngemoto, ngoko ke, ndisebenzisa lona. Naphandle koko, imoto ndiyiqhuba unyaka wonke xa ndilapha eKapa. Ndathatha le foto ndathanda ukuba ndiyibeke kule taxi yam ukwenzela ukuba ndihlale ndilikhumbula xa ndilapaha eKapa. Ndilithanda ngendlela ekhethekileyo. Ndim lo okhwele ihashe.

The picture of a horse adorned on the taxi is mine but it's in the Eastern Cape. That's the one I use when I'm at home. I got used to riding a horse while I was still a Xhosa youngster. I consider it as my means of transport when I'm home. The thing is, there are areas that are not accessible by vehicles so, I use it. Apart from that, I drive a vehicle the entire year when I'm here in Cape Town. I took a photo of my horse and adorned it on my taxi to keep string memories of it when I'm here in Cape Town. I love it dearly. That's me on horseback.

Interviewer: *Kuyavakala. Kodwa, yintoni le ubhekiselele kuyo ngale foto? Khona uthetha nabani?*

What is it you're pointing at in this photo? Who are you talking to?

Respondent A: *Kulo msebenzi wetaxi, uyayazi nawe ukuba umkhweli angakhwaza noba kuphi ukuba ummisele, engahoyanga ukuba kuyamiseka. Ngendlela efanayo, ihashe lam ndilighelise ukuba lingahambi noba kuphina ngoba akulunganga kule mihla.*

In the taxi industry, you know that commuters can stop the taxi at any time, despite of how conducive or whether it is permissible or not. Likewise, my horse has been accustomed to not stopping anywhere as it is not safe to do so these days.

What can be gathered around this interview is the fact that one can see the transition between the use of the two modes of transport as determined by the taxi owner. For the owner, the horse and the taxi are synonymous. The horse is used as a means of transport when the owner is in the Eastern Cape while the taxi is used primarily for business purposes. Upon being asked why he preferred to keep the horse in the Eastern Cape while it could also help with transportation, he mentioned that he cannot bring his horse to the Western Cape because it is an urban area. He would struggle with

feeding and its safe keeping because he does not have enough space at his house in Khayelitsha. Apart from this, the confinement of the horse in the Eastern Cape allows the taxi to be used solely for business while the owner pursues other errands that need transportation. This is to guard against any breakdown eventualities that might occur while the taxi is in the Eastern Cape as fixing the vehicle could be a struggle due to the ruralness of the province. Attaining vehicle parts, to travelling long distances in search of spare parts can be a near impossible task.

Moreover, for someone who has never had an encounter with the utilization of a horse as a mode of transport as is the case in the rural areas would not be able to decipher the adornment of the picture of the horse on the rear screen of the taxi in question and to get an in-depth knowledge about the history of the taxi owner. But with this kind of experience, the consumer of the text is in a position to understand the text and this maps with Bakhtin's chronotope which postulates that space-time relations become meaningful if social actors can tack onto them their knowledge, experiences, memories, and emotions'. The latter can only be activated through our attunement to the contextualizing cues with reference to our embodied memory of past events and actions (Bakhtin, 1981: 252). Jaworski (2013) echoes these sentiments by positing that

> In terms of *nexus analysis*, the noticing (or not) of the poster (its uptake) is thus dependent on the knowledge, experiences, skills, capacities, and goals that social actors bring into their encounter with this particular instance of *discourse in place*, their *historical bodies*.
>
> Jaworski (2013: 5)

Therefore, this gives an impression that the same inscriptions cannot be interpreted in a similar manner by someone coming from another country if they do not have the background information related to the South African taxi turf wars.

However, the interview around the adornment of the horse on the taxi refutes Blommaert's (2013: 33) argument that 'human semiotic action could only be observed at the moment of occurrence but needed to be analyzed in terms of 'cycles of discourse'. Evidently, to understand the significance of the horse, one needed to go back into the history of the owner and also back to the Eastern Cape.

But also notable is the question of what sort of space will be projected if the same taxi was to be seen in the Eastern Cape or anywhere in the country during the December holidays for example, or whenever the owner visits home. The chapter now turns to the question of mobility.

5.4 Taxis as Mobile Materialities

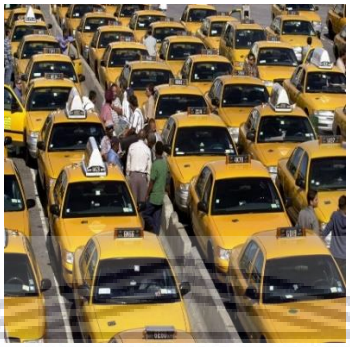
Before the advent of the mobility paradigm, a number of traditional studies suggested that space was static or immobile (Sheller & Urry 2006; Jaworski's 2013). In other words, we know that we are in the different countries as inscribed under each picture below once we are confronted with say, yellow cabs; trucks carrying people; Tuk tuks; Black cabs; Mercedes Benzes; Minibuses; Motorcycles; people on horseback or any other mode of transport as captured in Figure 5.6 below.

What is notable is that every mode of transport tells us something about the economy of its country. For instance, the culture of using horses in Lesotho emanates from the country's mountainous landscape which makes other areas of living inaccessible by automobiles. Therefore, horses and donkeys are the only modes of transport that are used for essentially all the travelling. Again, the use of hand signals in Johannesburg as pictured in Figure 5.7 is for stopping a taxi in Johannesburg, in South Africa. This also projects the many areas in the periphery of the Johannesburg city centre as it was known as an economic hub of South Africa until a recent report in the Global Financial Centres Index (GFCI 24) by Z/Yen Partners and china Development Institute that has declared that the spot now belongs to Cape Town (published on 14 September 2018 by Pillay).

Trucks in Madagascar

Motorcycles in Uganda

Yellow Cabs in New York



Yellow Cabs in Nigeria

Tuk Tuks in India

Black cab in London

Mercedes Benz in Germany

Minibuses in South Africa

Basotho on horseback

Figure 5. 6: Taxi Cultures in some parts of the world

Figures 5.7 below affords us illustrative examples of the metaphorical sense of the mobility of spaces.

Figure 5. 7: Identical Pictures of 'Zijikile Izinto'

The two inscriptions are exactly the same but at the same time different in the sense that they are adorned on two different taxis. While the first inscription in Figure 5.8 was discovered first, upon coming across the second one, it dawned on me that the two taxi owners could not have coincidentally thought of capturing the change they were experiencing in exactly the same pictorial. This led to a discovery that some of the inscriptions are readily made by a merchant who sells them to the taxi owners and taxi drivers. Therefore, this also highlights the fact that the merchant taps into his experiences and the ideologies that prevail within the taxi industry and makes money out of these experiences.

So, as can be seen, the discussion above echoes Aronin (2013: 188) who alludes to the fact that

> Artefacts are active voices which represent our attitudes and behaviour; in a multilingual, heterogeneous community, they convey the particular linguistic and cultural group voice, and of course individual voices within a certain public sphere. Material culture underlies oral linguistic communication, because through it the interlocutors may perceive the clues for each other's points of view, beliefs, origins, and values and shows what the sensibilities of the interlocutor are.
>
> Aronin (2013: 188)

5.5 Chapter Summary

The discussion in this chapter has illustrated how spaces are given meaning by social actors' practices of not just 'languaging' but also through the use of other semiotic materialities.

Considering Aronin's (2012: 181) postulation when he mentions that 'studies in material culture can help us to understand how materialities create and modify multilingual reality, being instrumental in shaping and re-shaping identities of both individuals and communities', the next chapter explores the phenomenon of identity constructions within the confines of material culture as Swales (1998: 20) opines that 'genres: orchestrate verbal life'.

CHAPTER 6

TOWARDS A PERFORMATIVE IDENTITY OF THE TAXI INDUSTRY

6.1 Introduction

In communicating through the use of language, Danesi (2009) has observed that the kind of language we use in communicating messages depends very much on the setting and the interdependent social roles of the people interacting. Due to the fact that humans are social creatures, and at the centre of socializing lies communication, an individual is exposed to a panoply of social settings throughout his/her life. Therefore, when finding oneself in a particular social setting, humans constantly have to learn what languages or behaviours go with each of the setting - social roles scenarios they are presented with and through recurrent instances of acquired belief systems, values, practices and artifacts, this instinctively develops into an ordered way of life – culture. We say 'instinctively' because there are no written rules that an individual becomes habituated or enculturated in.

Since enculturation is a life-long process and people in modern day society are constantly on the move, physically and virtually so, they inevitably come into contact with new cultures that seem to challenge the encultured norms and acculturation takes place. This is so because they have to adapt to the newly adopted cultures of the host societies they find themselves in for them to function 'appropriately' as members of those societies. Hence there is a theory that considers media and migration as two major, and interconnected, contributors to identity construction. This is so because most people do not want to be challenged in relation to the manner in which they conduct their daily lives. Otherwise, they tend to feel insecure and feel a sense of a societal misfit and if circumstances allow, they would either decide to move or adapt the cultural traits of the new society for functional purposes. As such, when individuals and societies adapt to their newly learnt ways of doing things, they become acculturated into the new societies. The adaptation of the new culture is blended with the old, and choices are made as to what to adopt and what to leave out. Their choices are in part based on the economic value of the item chosen and what we see as discourse readers are individuals and/or societies that strive to distinct themselves from the rest. This act of seeing economic value in something is defined as commodification, a topic that will be dealt with in-depth in the next chapter. And the act of distinguishing oneself/societies and other semiotic materials can be seen as an act of performing one's identity. It is through allegiances to certain cultural norms that enduring competencies, beliefs, attitudes and motives result in a multiplicity of an individual's identity. It is

therefore the aim of this chapter to pay particular attention to the extent to which taxi owners and drivers employ both the linguistic and the material cultures to portray the multiple and different, ethnic, regional, national and transnational identity affiliations that account for multicultural and multilingual discourses displayed in the taxi industry in Cape Town.

6.2 Performative Identity

Cameron's (1999) suggestion that language using is an act of identity, which is often taken to mean that the language users' ways of speaking reflected the identities they already had, might hold true in the South African context, to a certain extent. This is partly due to segregation of ethnic and racial groups during the apartheid era under the Group Areas' Act of 1950. Through this perspective, a person's identity was seen as something that was one entity that was unchangeable. It was presumed as something that is acquired early on in life and an individual would possess it forever afterwards. And this identity was only associated with a specific area known to have been habituated by a speech community. As such, an adage that language and place have always had primordial ties and therefore, the combination of the two indexes a group's or nations' identity will hold true.

A case in point becomes evident from the extract below where, emanating from a normal transaction of ordering a meal, a conversation between myself and the attendant at KFC took a completely different route and ensued as follows:

Mathapelo: *Molo sisi!* (Good afternoon)
KFC Attendant: *Molo sisi!*
Mathapelo: *Ndicela iStreetwise Two papa esine side-breast*. (I would like to have Streetwise Two papa, with a side-breast).
KFC Attendant: Sibe yione? (One?)
Mathapelo: Yes, dear.
KFC Attendant: *UngumXhosa kanti*? (Are you Xhosa?)
Mathapelo: *Utsho ngoba?* (Why ask?)
KFC Attendant: *Bendicinga awungomXhosa.* (I thought you were not Xhosa).
Mathapelo: *UmXhosa umbona ngantoni?* (What characterizes a Xhosa?)
KFC Attendant: *Mna abantu bathi ndingumShona*. (Most people say I am Shona).
Mathapelo: Then, *kufuneka ubafundise ukuba yaphela into yokujonga umntu ngokwebala lakhe ube sewucinga ukuba ngumXhosa okanye ngumShona. Sikhululekile, so kufuneka neengqondo zethu zikhululeke.* (Then it means you need to educate them and make them understand that one looks at a

person's complexion can no longer be confined into an ethnic or racial identity such as one being Xhosa or Shona. We are a free country so our minds must also be liberated).
KFC Attendant: *Hayi, andiva kabuhlungu xa besitsho.* (I don't feel offended when I'm likened to Shona people).
Mathapelo: *Anditsho nam but ya phela loo nto. Xa ndikubona, ndibona nje umntu.* (I am not suggesting that you do but that came to an end. When I look at you, I just see a person).
KFC Attendant: *Ndiyakuva.* (I hear you).
Mathapelo: *Enkosi ke* dear! (Thank you dear!)

This conversation took place on the 31st of November 2018 when I went to KFC at N1 City. What is paramount here in this conversation is the ideology presented by the KFC attendant that people think that she is Shona, due to her dark complexion, even though she did not spell it out in explicit terms. I also fell into the same trap of initiating our conversation in isiXhosa, due to the fact that it is taken for granted that every individual of African descent in the Western Cape should be Xhosa-speaking, not unless their complexion tells that they are too dark or too light to be able to express themselves in isiXhosa, let alone be of Xhosa descent. Due to the fact that I am also dark in complexion, she concluded that I cannot be of Xhosa descent, so she was surprised that I addressed her in isiXhosa. In essence, by using isiXhosa, I was linguistically performing a Xhosa identity through language, but that identity which seemed to be contradicted by my dark skin complexion. Distinguishable shades of a black complexion place people in different African countries other than South Africa. Hence the lady could not associate my accent with my complexion. At the same time, I was stylizing a different identity from the assumed one by the KFC attendant, but also from my Sotho identity, which I use at home and elsewhere. In the same breath, although taxi owners and drivers have their ethnic identities, due to their migration to urban areas such as Cape Town where they integrate with other ethnic groups, with time they too end up stylizing different identities through language (multilingual) choices and material culture such as playing Hip Hop or Mbaqanga and icons on the signage.

For instance, in the context of Cape Town, Figure 6.1 cannot be met with the same questioning as could be the case for Figure 6.2 because the inscription in Figure 6.1 is written in isiXhosa, while the inscription on Figure 6.2 could be regarded as misplaced because it is written in Sesotho. This is so because apart from the fact that isiXhosa is considered an official language of the Western Cape while Sesotho is not, it is also a dominant African language in the Western Cape. As exemplified in the extracted conversation above, once a language is afforded officialdom and is regarded as

dominant, other languages of the minority groups tend to be erased in that particular space in the minds of the consumers of the discourses in that space.

Figure 6.1: isiXhosa inscription

Figure 6.2: Sesotho inscription

These misperceptions have been proven wrong on so many occasions. Even though the Group Areas' Act might have succeeded in separating the indigenous people according to their ethnic groups and thereby entrenching ethnocentrism as a divide and rule strategy, the intermingling between the ethnic groups always happened because they lived alongside each other. Moreover, the very people who imposed these laws used the services of the locals for cheap labour. In the midst of it all, socialization took place and translocal identities were constructed due to cross-pollination of languages and cultural practices. That is why for instance, the Sesotho language has borrowed many concepts from the Afrikaans language because sections of the Basotho were integrated into the Afrikaans community in the Free State; while another group of the Basotho nation coming from the East side of South Africa is more affluent with the Nguni languages (isiXhosa and isiZulu) due to co-habiting and their proximity to these two speech communities. In their case, some words have been borrowed from these two Nguni languages.

Furthermore, migration which came because of migrant labour in the mining sector, also played a pivotal role in bringing communities coming from those segregated areas within South Africa and from other African countries together. Due to the fact that there was no common language amongst them, these communities adapted communicative practices that they were in contact with and

adopted multilingual and multi-ethnic repertoires which bore a creole called 'Fanakalo'. Therefore, the migration that happened during the apartheid era and the post-apartheid laws which allow for freedom of social mobility within the country, nullify the notion of drawing conclusions about one's or the nation's identity in relation to language. Rather, due to intermingling of ethnic groups, history has taught us that identity should be considered as diverse and changing according to circumstances, 'something people are continually constructing and reconstructing in their encounters with each other and the world' (Cameron, 2001:39). This, emphasizing Leeman and Modan's (2010) postulation that in multilingual societies, it is an individual's choice to draw upon the different regional, national, linguistic and even ethnic affiliations depending on their interlocutors.

6.2.1 Performing Ethnic/Traditional Identities

The next biggest wave of migration in South Africa happened with the advent of the abolishment of apartheid in the mid-90s. Although the emancipation of a people of South Africa in post-apartheid era has brought with it a lot of integration, the ethnic/traditional norms and values that were enculturated during the apartheid era are still entrenched in the minds and practices of the people. As such, even though the definition for acculturation superficially places its focus on the adoption of practices and values of a majority culture by a minority culture, but it also puts emphasis on the retainment of the distinct ethnic culture of the minority society. Little et. al.'s (2013: 327- 328) *Introduction to Sociology* defines 'ethnicity as a term that describes shared culture - the practices, values, and beliefs of a group. This might include shared language, religion, and traditions, among other commonalities.' It is against this backdrop that Figure 6.3 below is regarded as a typical example of an individual performing an ethnic/traditional identity.

Figure 6.3: Hata Buhle Ketso o tla fihla mo oyang

Upon interviewing the owner of the taxi, who is a very young man in his early twenties, who happened to inherit his father's taxi business after he was gunned down due to taxi violence, it became apparent that taxi owners intentionally and/or unintentionally use other forms of identity construction such as material culture and nonmaterial culture to stylize and perform their identities. The inscription is written in Sesotho and it loosely translates into 'Take it slow Ketso, you'll finally reach your destination'. The destination in this case is used figuratively to mean that the taxi owner will eventually achieve what he set out to achieve as his ultimate goals. Even though there are a few typographical errors in the written version of this signage, the use of Sesotho in the signage emphasizes the very notion of ensuring that the taxi owner was determined to entrench his ethnic identity rather than using isiXhosa as a dominant language.

Furthermore, as was mentioned in the background section of this study that the interest in this topic was ignited by a panoply of the signage on taxis that were going to the Eastern Cape, it was upon investigating whether taxis in other provinces throughout the country bore similar signage that I discovered that this is a regional practice.

6.2.2 Performing Regional Identities

Drawing from an earlier postulation that regarded language and place to have always had primordial ties, the South African constitution also exacerbated the already entrenched ideology wherein provinces were given the liberty to choose provincial languages in an effort to promote multilingualism. Although this proclamation was done in good faith but due to the fact that the proclamation on provincial language policies was made very early on into South African democratic state, the only African language that was considered official in the Western Cape was isiXhosa. IsiXhosa still remains the only African language that is bestowed officialdom in the Western Cape even after more than 25 years into democracy. This, despite the great influx of people coming into the Western Cape due to bursting tourism levels, infrastructure and business alike. And this further entrenched the notion that every individual person of African descent who is able to converse in isiXhosa is of Xhosa descent.

The extrapolation of the conversation between myself and the KFC attendant bears testimony to this fact as I addressed the attendant in isiXhosa but can communicate in several other languages. Hence, I always regard myself as an African because I am not of Xhosa descent, I am actually of Sotho descent. But my contact with the isiXhosa language has enabled my near-first language speaking of isiXhosa. This essentially enables me to perform Xhosa ethnolinguistic identity without detection. In the same breath, taxi owners who come from different linguistic and social backgrounds acquire social skills and cultural repertoires. They tap into these experiences and selectively deploy the resourceful skills in response to the opportunities and challenges they face to stylize different identities through language (multilingual) choices and material culture. With the advent of globalization and English being considered a global language and physical boundaries between different nation states having been intricately blurred due to globalization, technologization, marketization and neo-liberal economies, societies still do reflect and sustain their monoglot ideologies. One would expect to see an avalanche of taxi signage in English but this is not the case. Even though the officialdom of isiXhosa in the Western Cape is an acknowledgement of the existence of this ethnic group in its majority, Figure 6.4 paints a perfect example of a people who do not feel at home when they are in the Western Cape as extrapolated in Chapter 7. Therefore, although they live transnationally because they are integrated into the Western Cape, they still maintain very close ties with their ancestral homelands.

Figure 6.4: Usagoduka Na?

Figure 6.5: Huguenot Tunnel

As mentioned in the introductory paragraph of this section, many studies have alluded to the fact that texts are always in dialogue with prior texts. Hence there is a saying that no text can be in a position to claim originality. Drawing from the socio-historical discourses that place people of African descent who reside in the Western Cape in other parts of the country, it is therefore not surprising that one comes across inscriptions such as the one in Figure 6.4, wherein the inscription on the taxi reads 'Usagoduka na?'. It basically translates into 'Do you still go home?'. It headlines a pictorial of the outbound side of the Huguenot Tunnel in Cape Town. Figure 6.5 is the actual picture of Huguenot Tunnel that the artist must have downloaded from the internet and captioned for the adaption of the signage. It can be depicted from the pictorial that the tunnel is considered the entry and exit points for Cape Town. The latter has been carefully chosen as the signal puts more emphasis on the outbound traffic lane of the tunnel, as it would not make sense to have the inscription headlining the inbound side of the tunnel.

As such, the producer's ideology that Cape Town is not home but just a place of work for them to most isiXhosa-speaking people becomes evident. Otherwise, Figure 6.5 would not make immediate sense without prior knowledge of this history. This is no different from Johannesburg, where most people used to go as migrant labourers. Even in nowadays, Johannesburg is still considered the economic hub of South Africa because it attracts people from other provinces across the country who come to better their lives. As a result, it attracts people from all walks of life and ethnolinguistic backgrounds. When places of work close during the holidays, most people go back to their homelands. This is where taxis and other modes of transport come into play.

Furthermore, unlike in *Khumbulekhaya*, the reality programme aired on SABC 1, the question posed is not necessarily meant to transport those who cannot afford to go back home; it is a marketing strategy used by the owner to inform potential clients that although the taxi is in Cape Town, it doubles up as a long-distance transport for those who want to travel outside Cape Town. Consequently, it lures potential clients into travelling to any place outside Cape Town, wherein the taxi owner will make more money. Moreover, although many taxi owners may have integrated into the Western Cape, they still regard their ancestral homelands as their homes. In fact, the intensity and frequency of their integration into the province varies extensively. There are those who regard the Western Cape as their permanent home.

Moreover, the segregation by the Group Areas' Act of 1950 did not only affect the linguistic but also the cultural crisscrossing because culture has very close affinities with place in the South African context. Since humans acquire culture through enculturation and socialization, people living in different places or different circumstances acquire cultures associated to those circumstances. As such, most of the problems of misconceptions between South African people grow from deep misunderstandings of one group solely due to this segregation. For instance, in his article published in News24 on the 12th of October 2011, Dlanga questions the origins of the wide-spread misconception that Xhosas are liars. Therefore, the fact that the adorning of the signage on taxis is much prevalent in the Eastern Cape and the Western Cape could be attributed to this stereotyping. The fact that this practice is mostly prevalent in the two provinces with KZN following, could also be attributable to the almost non-existent research on taxi signage in South Africa. This, despite the advent of technological explosion and the media making us enter into an altogether new condition of neighbourliness, creating communities with 'no sense of place' (Meyrowitz, 1985).

6.2.3 Performing National Identities

It is common practice that every nation prides itself with who they are and deploy different resources to narrate the country's ethos. In most cases, countries use their national flags to symbolize their ethos. South Africa is no different. For instance, Figure 6.6 represents the South African flag. Because the country is rich in diversity and history, it prides itself with this diversity.

Figure 6.6: The South African Flag

As Brownell, the designer of the flag, outlines in his 2015 PhD dissertation, the different colours in the South African flag depict convergence and unification as embodied in the rainbow characteristics due to its varied ethnicities and cultures the country embraces. According to the Department of Arts and culture, there was unanimous agreement that the flag should hold no official symbolism due to the country's diverse cultures and turbulent history. Therefore, the meaning behind each of the colours is left to individuals to interpret. Some interpretations take the green to symbolize the richness of the land in terms of its flora and fauna; the black to symbolize the African community; the gold to symbolize the wealth of the country in relation to its minerals; the blue to represent the endless opportunities that South African has to offer; the white is interpreted to stand for white supremacy and apartheid; the red to symbolize the bloodshed in the country's various wars and conflicts, hence the red colour has to be on top when the flag is hanged horizontally but if hanged vertically, the red colour must be on the left. This could represent the transition from the dark past to a South Africa that is alive with possibilities.

As with most countries, the national transport carriers are embellished with national flags as a branding strategy for many countires like in Figure 6.7 below.

6.7a: South African Airways **6.7b: British Airways**

Figure 6.7: National Flag Carriers

It will be noted that since 2017, a new proclamation required that a) the standard colour of the vehicle is white and b) stickers depicting the south African national flag are displayed on the vehicle in accordance with sub-regulation. The proclamation further prohibits any other paint jobs and advertising on a vehicle. The colour and the stickers are featured on taxis to help create a brand identity around taxis in South Africa, similar to taxis in other parts of the world. Transgressions to these proclamations are liable on conviction to a fine or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding three months. Therefore, taxis as exemplified in Figure 6.8 come with a sticker of the flag on either side of the vehicle from the manufacturer.

The taxi associations agreed to the adornment of the national flag as they understood that it was used for branding purposes. With branding comes easy identification of a taxi as opposed to a private vehicle operating outside the taxi industry such as in Tourism or as a panel van for ferrying goods of a particular company. Lash and Urry (1993), argue that service-driven economics have become more and more dependent on symbolism, imagery and design as Kress and Van Leeuwen (2001: 46) realized that these were 'fully capable of representation and for communication'.

Figure 6.8: The sides of a taxi embellished with national flag colours

Therefore, branding the taxi with a national flag clearly communicates that the vehicle is licensed in South Africa as a taxi. Although it can drive outside the borders of South Africa, it cannot operate as a taxi outside the borders not unless it has the necessary cross border permit that allows it to do so. Even with this paperwork, it is not allowed to join the local taxis but can only ferry the passengers to the pre-determined destination. For instance, it can only enter into another country with passengers if it has been hired to ferry a family for funeral purposes. Because of its use in the country of origin, it can also not be considered for personal family use. Due to the vehicle's association with it being manufactured solely for transporting people in the South African taxi industry, it becomes difficult to drive this type of vehicle for personal use especially for big families. Even if one may buy it without the flag, using it can be met with a lot of challenges both within and outside the borders of South Africa. For example, traffic cops would always mistake it to a taxi because although they are expected to adorn the national flag, there are those which still operate the vehicles without adorning the national flag as in the example in Figure 6.9 and 6.10.

Even though taxi owners agreed to the adornment of the national flag for branding purposes, their biggest challenge pertained to the prohibition on advertising as they felt that the proclamation infringed their constitutional right to generate funds through other means such as advertising as seen in Figure 6.9.

Figure 6.9: Jive

As can be seen in Figure 6.10, in its state, the taxi cannot be placed to any country as, apart from the little extended piece of the flag that is left on the body of the taxi, nothing else can help locate the taxi as belonging to South Africa because of the advertisement.

Figure 6.10: 50L A Day

Even if the national flag was still intact, the advertisement would cloud it and it would have been difficult to locate it as it would be lost in the midst of the advertisement (see Figure 6.11). The situation can be exacerbated further by the colour schemes that are closely related to the colours of the flag.

Figure 6.11: My Body, My Choice. No Condom, No Sex

Paramount here is the fact that although most taxi owners seem to oblige to the prohibition of adorning advertisement, it looks like government bodies such as municipalities who are in fact liable for effecting adherence to the prohibition of advertising on taxis are exonerated from the promulgation especially when government intends to drive a critical national message that has great potential to create adverse results that could taint the identity of a society. This is said against the backdrop that both the pictures were captured towards the end of 2018. For instance, Figure 6.10 bears testimony to a provincial catastrophic drought that eminently affected the City of Cape Town. The water crisis peaked during mid-2017 to mid-2018. Water levels stood 15 and 30 percent of total dam capacities. Therefore, in a bid to curb water usage, the City of Cape Town municipality implemented significant water restrictions such as each household being allowed to use 50 litres of water per day, failing which, stringent tariffs for exceeding this water restriction would translate into huge fines and ultimately disconnection to water usage.

The same applies with the advertisement on urging societies to the use of condoms in a bid to curb the scourge of HIV infections in South Africa (see Figure 6.11). This is said against the backdrop that, according to several studies, South Africa has a staggering 7.7 million people living with HIV and this number is considered the highest in the world. While the distribution and accessibility of male and female condoms were made available at various outlets such as hair salons, petrol stations, shops, hotels, truck stops and at secondary schools, surveys still indicated that their use was non-

optimal. Therefore, the advertisements on taxis also proved viable as, according to Transaction Capital, 'minibus taxis represent 75% of all transport to work, schools and universities in South Africa'. Due to its mobility, the semiotic nature of the travel industry is key since the service rendered is simultaneously consumed with the semiotic context embedded within the industry. Therefore, the adornment of the advertisement would then reach 69% of the households that use taxis in South Africa and more due to transfer of information from individuals and other forms of media.

Therefore, it is evident that the government breaks its own rules in fighting epidemics and catastrophic challenges that can tarnish the national identity of the country and its people. The taxis help in distributing these national narratives or discourses that are aimed at all the communities. But all this also explains why the adornment of the private signage that this study is concerned about is mostly at the back, with very few adorned on the front side of the taxis.

But postmodern/post-structural research studies have proven beyond doubt that, like texts, 'current ways of understanding social identity and its relationship to discourse are rooted in the idea that the selves we project to others are changeable, strategic, and jointly constructed. This is because we use the resources of language that are at our disposal to perform a variety of social identities, geared to the situations we find ourselves in and the ways we are socially positioned by others' (Cameron, 2001). Due to the ideology that people that are originally coming from the Eastern Cape and other provinces are considered as refugees in the Western Cape, as the then premier of the Western Cape, Helen Zille's tweet in 2012 that referred to Eastern Cape pupils attending Western Cape schools as education refugees'. Therefore, their engagement with their ancestral homelands is very intense and frequent. Therefore, they are regarded as living transnationally.

It is against this backdrop that the next section deals specifically with taxis that employ a myriad of material and linguistic resources to perform transnational identities.

6.2.4 Performing Transnational Identities

The advent of human mobility has certainly produced a discontinuity in the traditional way of understanding identity because through the intricacies of socialization, cultural diversity and multiplication of viewpoints and allegiances also come into play. Hybridity in cultures came as a result of the increased mobility of capital, people, culture, and entertainment. People construct identity repertoires through their relative acquisition of identity building resources such as social skills and cultural repertoires. These are selectively deployed to negotiate boundaries and cultural

repertoires. It is the rigid regulatory frame that Cameron alluded to earlier that compels us into ascribing nationality between British and Americans not solely due to skin complexion but through accents and choice of words within that same language. But if we are to consider the inscription in Figure 6.12, we cannot arrive at the same conclusions.

Figure 6.12: Caution!! I learned to drive on my PlayStation

Given the perceptions linked to the fact that Africa is not a European continent and so, English is considered a foreign language, one would not expect to come across a taxi with an English inscription. But due to globalization and diffusion, Figure 6.12 exemplifies that English has crisscrossed the boundaries and made its way into the African continent, and to South Africa to be specific. The inscription alludes to learning the skill of driving from a PlayStation, a device that has also been made accessible by global trade. The impression created by the inscription justifies the negative perceptions that commuters and the communities at large hold about the driving competencies of the taxi drivers. Blommaert makes an argument that ideological constructs such as quality, value, status, norms, functions, ownership and so forth guide the communicative behaviour of language users as 'they use language on the basis of the conceptions they have and so reproduce these conceptions' (2006: 242). Therefore, the question of normativity is key here.

It is against this backdrop that one understands that, depending on sociocultural contexts of normative uses of language(s), an individual would tap into a hybrid of these afore-mentioned ideological constructs and identities to use semiotic resources intelligibly to achieve certain communicative ends. Once these are presented habitually, an individual is considered to have

performed that identity. In the advent of mobility and globalisation, where urban contexts facilitate the learning of new resources from repertoires in contact, it becomes difficult to ascribe a specific identity to a particular nation. Therefore, the question of choice plays a key role because as Cameron (1997: 49) points out, the performative model 'obliges us to attend to the "rigid regulatory frame" within which people must make choices - the norms that define what kinds of language are possible, intelligible, and appropriate resources for performing certain identities'. Given this background, it suffices to concur with Blommaert's (1999) reference to Gal and Woolard's postulation that just every text makes reference to other texts that come prior to it even though this may not necessarily be straight-forward but complex and multi-layered to display traces of the other texts. Let us consider Figure 6.13.

The use of English in these inscriptions does not necessarily reflect that the owners of these taxis are coming from an English-speaking background. In fact, our study revealed that all the owners are coming from an isiXhosa-speaking background. However, the use of the language on the taxi enables the owner/producer to claim affiliation to the English-speaking social identity, which in South Africa is associated with elite business. In South Africa, like many parts of the world, English is considered a lingua franca for those that do not share a common language.

Figure 6. 13a **Figure 6.13b**

Figure 6.13: Various inscriptions in English

The use of English is thus seen as selecting the widest possible audience as the drivers alluded to the fact that their target market is not solely people that speak isiXhosa only, but those who speak other

languages such as the expatriates. But since they are not familiar with their languages, they are not in a position to address them in their respective languages. For them, English is the only language that mediates their communication. In this sense, it becomes evident that the English language is commodified in these signals since the taxi owners have realized the economic value of the language in business and have therefore appropriated their English identity for the benefit of making money. This is so because during interviews, all of them were much comfortable when the interviews were conducted in their vernacular language instead of English. And the typographical error in Figure 6.13b bears testimony to this fact. This also has points back to the national identity of the designer of the sign because if the producer was an English-speaking person, they would have detected the error. But since both the producer and the designer are of African descent, they could not detect the error.

Moreover, the use of English in these signals may also reflect the multilingual stature of the taxi owners even though the English nationality cannot be ascribed to them. Since English is considered one of the official languages in South Africa and the fact that it is also considered a global language puts the language at every individual's disposal for them to easily acquire and adopt as they see fit. The languages, choice of words and other materialities can be said to reflect the values, beliefs, attitudes and social identities of the producers of the signs and or the owners. Therefore, its display on the taxi signals can be attributed to the taxi owners having been in contact with the language and having adopted traits associated with the language and therefore, performing a hybrid transnational identity.

Similarly, social identities and ethnolinguistic identities can be performed through linguistic choices. Let us also consider Figure 6.14.

Figure 6. 14: Ufike Bethetha Ngam, Wathini Wena?

This figure offers a typical example of inscription that shows us that the owner of the taxi is performing a transnational identity because the traditional rural identity is blended with the western or urban identity. The inscription depicts a man, even though the setup is that of an interview, posing a question to a woman. But the one question asked has no relevance to a formal interview that is being depicted. The question translates into: 'You arrived while they were gossiping about me, what was your contribution?' The question reduces the subtitle of the inscription to an instance of questioning people that were involved in the gossiping, with the main aim of confronting the gossipmongers. Although traditionally, women folk especially from the rural areas used to be wildly associated gossip mongering, it may be presumed that the violence in the taxi industry starts with gossips since gossip mongering has lately become popular even in the urban areas. That is why we have publications of unconfirmed stories mostly about celebrities under gossip columns in the media and these are making a killing. According to researchers from the University of California-Riverside, three-fourths of the gossip from their respondents was neutral, while negative gossip was twice as prevalent as positive gossip and gossip overwhelmingly was about an acquaintance and not a celebrity. Therefore, the violence in the taxi industry could be as a result of these unresolved gossips. Gossips may come as a result of jealousy that seems to reign supreme in the industry especially when an individual shows progress in term of buying more taxis or does not take sides in their meetings.

In this regard, in the advent of globalisation, where one moves around through different social, cultural and spatial environments, identities become fluid and less understood. We end up attributing in simplistic terms, such labels as African Americans, Indians of African descent, African Asians and many more in an effort to subscribe to distinguishing people through normative frameworks of reflecting one's original ethnicity and their place of birth or citizenry, at the expense of profound analysis of linguistic/semiotic performance of multiple identities. This is so given the fact that identity formation of immigrants or refugees, in the words of Helen Zille, centres around ethnicity as a crucial aspect.

When joining and integrating with the host society, people coming from other provinces do not hastily drop the values and practices that were assimilated from a young age and instantaneously become socialized into the rules and institutions of the host society. This is even more so in the case of the Western Cape where segregation of the communities according to racial divide is still rife. Since taxi owners in question are mostly coming from black communities who mostly reside in the Cape Flats, when an individual joins a new society, they usually join family members or people of their own race or ethnicity because human mobility has repercussions on family and racial relations. But due to the continued segregation happening in the Western Cape, it may take a while, say for an African man coming from the Eastern Cape, to be in contact and therefore be socialized and institutionalized into the practices of white men wo are living on the opposite end of Cape Town. Therefore, the man will still practice values acquired from the Eastern Cape or their province of origin.

The old Sesotho adage that 'monna ha a lle, ke nku' plays a pivotal role in silencing men in many instances. The proverb directly translates into 'a man is a sheep, therefore, he cannot cry'. This is why most African men come across as calm, which often times results in them committing suicide due to stress levels because they do not air their views. Therefore, to see a man portrayed in this fashion depicts him as performing the other gender, confirming the idea that 'people do perform gender differently in different contexts, and do sometimes behave in ways we would normally associate with the 'other' gender' as extrapolated above.

Essentially, there is a rural rather than urban gender identities being performed by proverbs and sayings even though the visual paints an urban background, where the conversation looks formal by the look of the dress sense of the participants, especially the man who is even holding a pen to mimic someone who is taking notes of the discussion they are having. But the content being discussed does not fit a formal/office agenda where a meeting can be held just to establish what the next person role

was in a gossip that was making the rounds. Gossip mongering and confrontations are synonymous with rural discourse.

Adding to the performance of rural identities in urban spaces is Figures 6.15 below.

Figure 6. 15a **Figure 6. 15b**

Figure 6.15: Rural Identities

Figure 6.11 translates into 'things have changed' while Figure 6.12 translates into 'sides are being changed'. But in essence, the two inscriptions bear the same meaning, that of the person who used to be hunted becoming the pursuer. As can be seen from the inscriptions, the use of animals to conjure up these messages reveals something about the producers of these signs. It will be noted that in the preceding paragraph it was mentioned that it is very odd that a dog can be chased by a rabbit in Figure 6.15a as dogs are normally used to pursue and catch rabbits for a meal in the rural areas. The same applies to Figure 6.15b. it is an awkward scenery to see a hen chasing a cat as the opposite is always the case. Since there is no rearing of chicken in the townships due to limited space and other urban factors, someone who grew up in the urban areas cannot makes sense of these representations since they have not lived these experiences.

Paramount here is the creativity that the producer of the signs signifies by tapping into lived experiences and turning them into analogies that creatively depict the animosity that prevails in the taxi industry. The fact that the two inscriptions did not just manage to conjure up the verbal animosity into multimodal signage, but also the two inscriptions depict animosity between rival taxi

associations (dog and a rabbit) and the animosity that prevails within a single taxi organisation (cat and a chicken) is a brilliant idea. Dogs and rabbits do not co-habit while cats and chicken do co-habit but they are not the best of friends. The analogy can therefore only mean that the producers of these inscriptions either emanate from the rural areas such as the Eastern Cape, the rural areas of the Western Cape or any other rural province in the country. And it is also a creative move for the producer to use analogies that the taxi owners/drivers can associate with as it is a well-known phenomenon that most of the African taxi owners/drivers that reside in Cape Town come from outside of the Western Cape province.

6.3 Towards A Forced Identity

Even though numerous sociological studies vouch for different performances of identities as being dependent on choice, they simultaneously fail to highlight the detrimental results of colonization on African countries and their traditional value systems. In the plethora of concepts coined to illustrate the adoption of culture, the research is silent on the adoption of the western culture that was forced down on people through colonization. Instead, a westernized term that seeks to pose this atrocity in a positive light is used – modernization.

Fairclough (2003) opines that discourses as imaginaries may also come to be inculcated as new ways of being, new identities, or 'the process of changing the subject can be thought of in terms of the inculcation of new discourses' and Christianization would be a perfect example here. Fairclough (2001:5) defines inculcation as 'a matter of people coming to 'own' discourses, to position themselves inside them, to act and think and talk and see themselves in terms of new discourses'. Let us again consider Figure 4.9 which has a biblical inscription taken from John, Chapter 1, Verse 46 – Inako into elungileyo ukuphuma eNazarete?

It is widely documented that the colonization of the African continent in the 16th century was often done alongside cultural imperialism by deliberately imposing their cultural values on locals due to their misguided misperception that the locals were uneducated and were therefore in need of European governance, dress, religion and various other cultural practices. One particular example that is prevalent in the taxi industry concerns Christianity as a religion. The inculcation of Christianity upon African societies who believed in their various traditions was entrenched and the demise of traditional practices came with the rhetoric that those who practiced them were barbaric. Since most of the practices of the missionaries were seen to be modernizing traditional practices, many were forced to adopt these cultural practices. Therefore, even today, despite huge numbers of

people who consider themselves as Christians, there is a huge divide between the two groups. Due to this divide, new concepts were coined to characterize those who adopted the European religion and negated the traditional ways. The Sesotho concept is 'lejakane', translating into 'a visitor' while the isiXhosa concept is 'amaqhoboka', translating into 'someone who is penetrated'. Both the terms are derogatory in the sense that they demean locals who have adopted European practices. Therefore, the inscription may as well be taken to despise those who thought the taxi owner would never make it in the industry despite the fact that they practice Christianity. Instead of supporting him, they looked down upon him.

Moreover, it needs to be borne in mind that the actual verse comes in the form of a question but the taxi inscription comes in a form of a statement. As explained in Chapter 4, this is a deliberate move to respond indirectly to those who did not support the taxi owner as Prior (2003: 172) opines that 'each participant in the writing process also consults, draws on, takes text from, responds to, and argues with other texts'.

Even though the inscription has been adapted to suit the context of the taxi industry, the owner displays a Christian identity in that s/he would not be able to adorn the scripture if s/he was not familiar with it, let alone adapt it.

Therefore, the notion of performative identities is in line with Cameron's (1999) notion of self-stylization (Cameron 1999; Johnstone 2008; Blommaert 2007). The notion of self-stylisation is particularly important for taxi owners as business managers who have to continually re-invent themselves and their taxis as business enterprises in the face of stiff competition.

6.4 Gendered Identities

Building upon a discussion that makes reference to identity ideologies between male and female folks, gender, as a form of identity, becomes a critical aspect to delve into. Cited in Duranti (1997), research by Elinor Ochs and her team of researchers from Southern California conducted in the 1980s, concretizes the phenomenon that fathers are the least likely and mothers are the most likely to be problematizes. Let us take an instance of Figure 6.16.

Figure 6. 16: Mosadi o sokodisa jwalo ka inyathi

The inscription is written in the Sesotho language, one of the official languages in South Africa. It literally translates to 'the Inyathi taxi is just as problematic as a woman'. Blommaert (2005) posits that performing an identity is dialogical in the sense that in order for it to be established, it has to be recognised by others.

The inscription does not only tell us something about the sexuality of the producer of the sign but also the ideologies that men, especially those in the taxi industry, generally hold against women. Therefore, this may as well explain the limited number of women who operate taxis as clearly a woman taxi driver would have to be at the receiving end of the ideologies as all negative comments directed at women will be her burden. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that the problematic nature of the taxi called Inyathi is paralleled to that of a woman.

Figure 6.17 gives an illustrative example which cements this attribution and the same ideology can be read off from the sign.

Figure 6. 17: Geza, Kodwa Ungalibali Unyawo Alinampumlo

The sub-title accompanying the picture of a couple that seems to be at odds with each other is derived from an isiXhosa idiomatic expression that directly translates into 'carry on with your silliness, don't forget that a foot has no nose'. But it actually simply means 'carry on with your silliness/stubbornness or untoward behaviour, but don't forget that you cannot predict what the future holds'. Since the male in the sign looks worried due to his lineage to his chin but the female does not look perturbed by what might be transpiring between the two of them, it is safe to conclude that the inscription is directed to the female. So, in essence, the male regards himself as best compared to other male folks.

Furthermore, Scollon and Scollon (2003) allude to the fact that a person who does not read a book written in English is indexed as an outsider by the very choice of language in that book. Considering the language used in both the inscriptions above, which is isiXhosa, one can summarily concur with the Scollons's assertion to a very limited extent in that the inscriptions are directed to those that can read isiXhosa and more importantly enabling performance of isiXhosa identity or affiliation to the Xhosa culture. But most importantly, in relation to the inscription with an idiomatic expression, encoding the language of the inscription only will not suffice, an added advantage of making meaning of the idiomatic expression, and such an accomplishment thereby consequently helps one

declare oneself as a member of the isiXhosa speech community, even though this is but one affiliation among many.

On the same breath, the preferred use of isiXhosa may not necessarily be viewed as a reflection of resistance to or inversion of the British colonial history as the taxi owner is actually a citizen of South Africa, where isiXhosa is recognised as one of the official languages after the democratic dispensation. It may neither be viewed as a reflection of resistance to the forces of globalisation because isiXhosa is the third most spoken language in the Western Cape. But that the use of isiXhosa is reflective of the multiple identity options available to South Africans. In other words, the taxis become a site at which multiple identities are performed and consumed.

Therefore, performing an identity is also not static. Considering the assertions made above and the detailed analysis which proved that although some inscriptions seem to conform to the normative ways of vehicle branding while others seem to lack the moves synonymous with advertising, it clearly shows that the notion of transgressive emplacement has no place if we are to take the notion of self-identity seriously. All in all, what this study pre-empts is a situation where maybe as time passes by, the boundaries for most of the research on genre theory will also be blurred or become extinct; individuals, like advertisements, will tap into their many facets of experiential life and give off a flowery display of their identities using language, materials such as the taxis, their bodies and everything else they are about in a manner peculiar to them only and they employ various semiotic signs to help them get the message across. As Stroud and Mpendukana (2009) postulate, these may include gestures, scents, tastes, textures, sounds, diagrams, graphics, images, index, map, symbol, words and 'essentially all of the ways in which information can be communicated as a message by any sentient, reasoning mind to another' (2009: 88). He extends his explanation by stating that 'this will be achieved by including metalingual contextual clues, e.g. the nature of the medium, the modality of the medium, the style, e.g. academic, literary, genre fiction, etc., and references to, or invocations of, other codes, e.g. a reader may initially interpret a set of signifiers as a literal representation, but clues may indicate a transformation into a metaphorical or allegorical interpretation'.

6.5 Identities in the advent of the New Media

As a people, communication has always been at the centre of our social beings. For businesses, print media, television and radio helped transmit the intended message around products and services that a business specialized in and advertising performed this task. In the advent of the abrupt upsurge in

the use of social media for all things communicable, the traditional platforms have taken a back seat when it comes to advertising. While celebrities were featured in advertisements to portray products and therefore, lure potential clients, celebrities have taken ownership of their lifestyles by using social media platforms to promote their brands and brands have been forced to sign lucrative contracts with celebrities as their brand ambassadors so that they can endorse the brands' products. In this manner, personal lifestyles such as economic, political and social issues are conflated with brands so that people and brands cannot be detachable. This conflation gave birth to the new advertising norm.

The upsurge in the use social media has not affected celebrities only but it is also constantly driving more and more ordinary people into sensational stardom, sometimes for unethical reasons. And in the pursuit for new content to ensure relevance in the social media space, the new content is taken to represent new resources that are relevant and appropriate for this particular platform. The employment of the new resources does not necessarily translate into the old or known identity being abandoned but the new resources are employed solely for online identity. It is this new content and the selective manner in which it is presented that is attributable to mobile identity construction that is likened to online identity. And this section is interested in unpacking the online identity in the taxi space. Therefore, let us consider Figure 6.11.

Although one may argue that the inscription on the taxi is not appended on social media, this chapter would like to argue that both the platforms are characterized by their mobility which has the advantage to reach masses. Moreover, the inscriptions on both the platforms are not necessarily directed to an individual, it is up to an individual to consume the message and act on it. Several factors may compel one to consume the message and this could include those who resonate with the message, those who want to challenge it because it encroaches on their own ideologies or it could be for any other reason. In the same breath, the inscriptions on the taxis attract several consumers, some within the taxi industry itself and beyond the boundaries of the taxi industry as exemplified in the next chapter.

The disadvantages of social media are usually not related to the applications or services themselves, but to the images they create and the people who use them. Not all people follow good manners on social media, the feelings of others are hardly always considered. You can be bullied on social media, you can grieve your mind there and get criticism. You can get nasty messages from completely unknown people. A person who doesn't know you, knows nothing about your life can contact you and hurt you with their words. At worst, you can be targeted and get reviews from many people.

You can be bullied for no apparent reason at all. You don't have to do anything wrong to be subjected to malice. The world is a cruel place. On social media, not all people are really kind.

On social media, your personal and private information may spread uncontrollably, without your permission. Some take time out of real encounters, real interaction situations. Some can go before school, hobbies and rest. In Some, you may experience sexual harassment. Especially recently, a lot of cases have emerged in the public where young people and even children receive nasty sexually tinted messages, suggestions and pictures. You can be scammed on social media. People can present something completely different. There are people in Some who lie about their age, gender, and in this way, try to get another person to believe the invented truth.

6.6 Chapter Summary

And it has been witnessed in the detailed analysis of the signs in this study that the inscriptions on the taxis are entirely about the inner most feelings of the taxi owners and/or drivers. They are therefore using the sides of the taxis as a strategic communicative platform to: 1) voice their feelings around certain issues that are pertinent to their own lives; 2) voice their pride for their impeccable achievements, given their social and educational backgrounds. As a result, they are thereby enacting their legitimacy of presence and of activities, activities which are considered as appropriate resources for identity construction.

Therefore, what this chapter did was to negate theories based on earlier studies of LL that primarily assumed that the vitality of languages in a landscape relates directly to the status of ethnolinguistic groups within the community; or looking at languages as symbols for indexing the ethnicity and cultural authenticity or as an essential marker of nation-state and heritage identity (Backhaus, 2007). Rather, in modern day multilingual societies, we consider identity as a fluid process that is largely dependent on the setting and the interlocutors at any given time. Therefore, in performing an identity, one's choices are in part based on the economic value of the item chosen and how one can employ those economic resources in pursuit to distinguish themselves from the rest, the economic value that is itself indicative of public and private ideologies. Therefore, it is apparent that the taxis in question, their bodies, their history, gestures, scents, tastes, textures, sounds, images, index, map, symbol, words and 'essentially all of the ways in which transfer of information between interlocutors can be communicated as a message, as alluded to by Fairclough (1993:), are perfect examples of material culture used in identity construction.

Nonetheless, material culture does not function solely for identity construction but can also play a pivotal role in other functions. In fact, Arjun Appadurai (1986) in his 'social life of things', reminds us of the 'capacity of objects to slip in and out of different roles – from commodity to gift and back again – during the course of their existence' Moxey, 2008: 133). Several studies note the ways in which art objects in the form of commodities and commodity signs (Appadurai, 1986; Goldman, 1992) or clothing (Rubenstein, 1995) are used by individuals and groups to articulate and project identities. Therefore, in extending our view of identities painted in this chapter, the next chapter delves specifically into the notion of commodification to show how semiotic materialities are juxtaposed to perform various functions.

CHAPTER 7

COMMODIFICATION OF CAPE TOWN'S MOBILESCAPES

7.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to use the prevalence of the semiotic materialities discussed in Chapter 5 as a springboard to explore the extent to which these have been represented and appropriated through the lens of commodification. With the growing influence and upsurge of globalisation, neoliberalism and late/new capitalism, language has been placed at the centre of key sectors of production and consequently, of consumption. The concepts are seen to privilege English as the only language that has permeated and criss-crossed both physical and virtual boundaries across different states (Ruddy and Tan, 2008; Price, 2014; Duchene, Heller & Pujolar, 2012), hence English is regarded as a global language, alongside German, Chinese, Japanese (Sharma & Phyak, 2017). This status bestows some economic value to English. Consequently, there is growing interest to treat communicative skills in English as a commodity, where a particular standardized form of English is exchangeable for jobs or particular accents are preferred, creating thus a distinction between speaking right and speaking wrong. As a result, Leeman & Modan (2010) postulate that several recent LL studies, such as Cenoz & Gorter, 2006; Heubner, 2006; Ben-Rafael *et al.*, 2006, have shifted away from looking at the prevalence of a language as a direct reflection of the relative status of various ethnolinguistic groups within communities but have noted the use of English as an index of sophistication, cosmopolitanism or modernity.

Following Appadurai's (1986) notion of commodity candidacy and the world of scapes and cultural flows; Kelly-Holmes' (2010, 2014), Heller (2003) and Leeman and Modan's (2009, 2010) arguments on how language and associated cultures are commodified to sell cities and businesses, this chapter intends to show, how taxi owners in South Africa use not just English, but particularly African languages and socio-cultural materials as commodities to attract consumers. Consequently, due to the use of socio-cultural materialities, the chapter also shows that although some of the inscriptions require specific cultural knowledge to decipher, they still constitute part of an assemblage of commodified multimodal signage in the design features of a mobile taxi. Such signage and/or language use, it will be argued, constitutes what Kelly-Holmes (2000: 70) calls a fetishized commodity so that "its utility or use value has become secondary to its symbolic value". Since the languages used on the signage are commodified, it is argued in this chapter that the taxi (the vehicle)

itself becomes a commodified mobile space, that is, the taxi itself is commodified or marketed for consumption.

7.2 Commodification of South African Indigenous Languages and Cultures in the Taxi Industry

With an upsurge of globalisation, English has often been associated with what Orman (2008) and Gorter (2006: 4) call the 'MacDonalisation' of the linguistic landscape, a concept referring to the domination of English as a language of socio-economic mobility and transnational trade. This is said against the backdrop that, according to Sharma and Phyak (2017: 3), neoliberal ideology is seen as 'giving English the status of a 'world' language and, simultaneously, categorizing local varieties and linguistic resources as having less symbolic and economic value (McCarty, 2003; Skutnabb-Kangas & Heugh, 2012)'. Although this may be true to a certain degree in most environments, the case is not universal in all contexts of language use, as illustrated in the examples below where local South African indigenous languages are increasingly being commodified.

Let us consider Figure 7.1, for example, which was taken at a Khayelitsha taxi rank in Cape Town. Although isiZulu is not one of the official languages in the Western Cape Province, the sign is written in isiZulu and it translates into 'Don't meddle into my affairs, focus on yours'. The utterance is normally used in contexts where one experiences challenges caused by another individual meddling in the other's matters. However, the issue is that this not only shows the displacement of isiXhosa, the only official African language of the province (and two other official languages: Afrikaans and English) in terms of commodity candidacy (Appadurai, 1986, Banda and Mokwena, 2019; but also shows the mobility of African languages across regional and cultural boundaries. In their study on the impact of official language zoning and language vitality in Zambia, Banda and Jimaima (2017) show that in multilingual contexts of Africa, just as is the case with English, languages do not stay 'fixed' in the zones allocated to them in official government legislation.

Figure 7.1: Bheki ndabazakho uyeke ezam

If this were the case, the inscription in isiZulu would not have existed in the Western Cape. This is said against the backdrop that although according to the 2011 results of StatsSA, isiZulu is regarded as the most frequently spoken language in South Africa's households, spoken by 27.7% of the population, followed by isiXhosa, sitting at 16%, isiZulu sits at only 0.434% in the Western Cape. This, indeed clearly indicates that when people move to new habitats, they do not leave their languages behind and immediately adopt the new linguistic repertoires of the new habitus, but they move along with their languages and use them in various spaces as they see fit, whether it be in their purest forms or in hybridised ways, as time passes by. The hybridised form comes as a result of the language contact situation, in which the languages in place congregate.

Furthermore, in their introductory section of an edition titled 'Discourses of endangerment', Heller and Duchene (2008: 3) claim that the ideology of linguistic minorization as depicted from the numbers above and language endangerment resonates with hierarchical and normative theories of language and they premise the origins of language endangerment with linguists and anthropologists who use the field 'as a place to affirm expertise and professional, technical knowledge but also to legitimize their disciplines in terms of the social relevance of their fields'. And the notion of

linguistic minorization seems to be at play in this scenario because despite the affirmed vitality of isiZulu in South Africa by StatsSA, the language is deemed to be a language of the minority in the Western Cape, in so much that learners that are coming from an isiZulu-speaking background are not afforded tuition in the target language at their schools of enrolment. In the Western Cape, they are forced to take isiXhosa, English or Afrikaans at home language level.

Furthermore, Kelly-Holmes (2000: 70) opines that language can be seen as a fetishized commodity if "its utility or use value has become secondary to its symbolic value". She gives the example of advertisers not translating 'foreign' words, which results in the mystification of the language concerned, as its communicative value is rendered inconsequential compared to its visual value (Kelly-Holmes, 2000: 72). This, despite some of the presuppositions made by many earlier LL studies such as 'the target audience of a given language consists largely of people who can read and/or understand that language' (Leeman & Modan, 2010: 183). Given the presupposition, the adornment of this inscription would then have meant that a large population of the Western Cape would have been able to read and understand it and yet the proportions of the vitality of isiZulu in the Western Cape as spelt out by the Census results would nullify this assertion but support the idea of linguistic fetishization.

It therefore, is befitting to look at the use of isiZulu in this particular case as an instance of fetishized linguistics because given the almost non-existent number of people who can read it, it becomes evident that the inscription was not necessarily used to communicate something related to business and as alluded to by the driver. He was not concerned about how many people would be able to read or understand the inscription. He used it as a way of asserting himself, after all, he could not express his inner most feelings in isiXhosa because he did not know the language. Therefore, it becomes evident that the use of isiZulu in the above inscription is summarily for its symbolic value.

However, on the same breath, considering that both isiZulu and isiXhosa, the only official African language in the Western Cape, are closely related Nguni languages with a high degree of mutual intelligibility, there is a high likelihood that most isiXhosa speakers will easily decipher the meaning as proven in the extract below.

Extract B

Interviewer: Ingaba uyayilandela into ebaliweyo kuletaxi?

Can you follow what is written on this taxi?

Respondent A: Ewe, utsho ngoba isisiZulu, because ndingumXhosa mna?

Yes, is that because it is Zulu and I am Xhosa?

Interviewer: Ithethuk'thini?

What does it mean?

Respondent A: Ibhekisa kwababantu abathanda indaba zabantu, ufike umntu ephendulana nento engamfuniyo, eyenze yakhe. So, loombalo okhalima abantu abanjalo.

It points to people who like to poke their noses in other people's matters. You'll find a person responding to something that does not concern them, neglecting his. So, this inscription reprimands such people. The respondent concurs with the translation given earlier, explaining that it is directed to those who like to poke their noses on other people's matters so that they can back off. Therefore, this proves that even though the respondent is coming from an isiXhosa-speaking background, they are able to understand the inscription and its intended message.

Therefore, even though isiZulu, according to political regimes, may not be regarded as a commodity in the Western Cape due to its non-official status, the inscription proves that the language has crossed the boundaries and has eventually been commoditised. According to Appadurai's (1986: 16) terms, "commodity" is used in the rest of this essay to refer to things that, at a certain phase in their careers and in a particular context, meet the requirements of commodity candidacy. It must be borne in mind that language has always been regarded as a dynamic commodity that is not static or stagnant as it forever changes depending on who uses it, under what circumstances, and to achieve which purpose. It, therefore, in the process of it being used constantly, travels, revolves and takes shape to suit the user and the circumstances at any given point in time. And, with globalisation being at the epitome of every social stratification, and English seen as playing a very crucial role in the manifestations of globalisation, the material manifestations of language adorned on taxis in and around Cape Town refute this phenomenon when looked at from a South African perspective. This study would like to argue against the monopoly of commodity candidacy on two fronts. First, with regard to considering English as the only language with political economy and second, with regard to US or western domination of the world, without considering practices elsewhere.

Taking note of an inscription that meets commodity candidacy in the Western Cape is Figure 7.2 below, which has the inscription written in isiXhosa. The inscription literally translates into 'fresh milk reaching its perishable state forms the basis for sour milk'.

Figure 7.2: Ukonakala kwebisi kulunga kwamasi

The statement is a newly coined expression that emanates from a proverb *ukonakala kwenye, kulunga kwenye 'the good may come out of a bad situation'*. Therefore, the newly coined expression takes the form of the proverb in terms of meaning but uses concrete instances of social life activities or events. The proverb simply means that something negative always yields some positivity in a way. And both the expression and the proverb mean the same thing. In this instance, the inscription does not necessarily fulfil an ideational function as it does not index any particular information related to the business as the business has nothing to do with milk, whether in its fresh or sour state. Instead, the inscription has a symbolic function for it modernizes the traditional language in order for it to be accessible to the youth and other people that can speak isiXhosa but are not necessarily coming from an isiXhosa-speaking background. This, the driver insinuated against the backdrop of realizing that as a democratic country, we are no longer living in silos in terms of our ethnic groups, although there are dominant cultures in every environment.

Furthermore, Leeman and Modan (2010) postulate that with the decline of Fordism through the mid-20th century, most cities embarked on strategies such as commodification of culture and the commercialization of space in an effort to shift to service-based economies. In doing so, cultural

artifacts were bundled together with the services of businesses in an effort to attract customers and display cities as authentic and exotic. Zukin (1995: 3) defines 'the intertwining of cultural symbols and entrepreneurial capital' as symbolic economy. Like Figure 7.2 above, Figure 7.3 also offers a typical example of this postulation.

Figure 7.3: Mosia Motobatsi

According to Crawford (1992), cited in Leeman and Modan (2010: 186), commodification of culture sees 'the transfer of qualities between culture and commodity as reciprocal, not only does culture provide added value to commodities, but those commodities impute economic value to the culture". The cat in this picture should be interpreted as a totem because it is captioned with the clan name of the owner of the taxi. Respondent C alluded to this fact upon questioning, citing that clan names are a major part of one's ethnic identity in the African culture. The owner of the taxi added that one's clan name does not only help in terms of one's identity but also tells the next person more about an individual due to social generalisations that are taken to characterize people according to their clan names. For example, it is common knowledge that the 'Basia' (Basotho clan honouring a cat as their totem) are people who will do anything in their power to ensure that they survive, just as a cat is believed to have nine lives because it does not die easily. Therefore, when dealing with a Mosia, one needs to be wary of being scammed. But most importantly, the respondent mentioned that apart from

adorning the signage for identity purposes on the part of the taxi and a display of pride for having achieved phenomenally in terms of affording to buy a taxi, the adornment of the clan name on the taxi was aimed at attracting potential commuters who might share the same clan name and those who are coming from a Sesotho-speaking background as there is great likelihood that they would rather choose the services of another Mosotho as opposed to someone coming from an isiXhosa-speaking background. Therefore, the adorning of the clan name has been juxtaposed as branding.

This becomes more eminent during peak holiday seasons such as during the December holidays when people have to seek transport to take them to their places of origin such as in the Eastern Cape or anywhere outside the Western Cape province. When the taxis transport people to their provinces, the owner has to employ some business strategies in order to attract customers. The owner has to get passengers through his own networking means, unlike when it transports people locally where it queues at a taxi rank for its turn to load passengers. Therefore, during the holidays people who share the same clan name tend to opt for a taxi owned by someone they have a better association with, whether the owner of the taxi is regarded as a relative because of sharing a clan name.

Clan names offer close family ties between people even if they do not know each other. This happens to an extent that in most African clans, people of the same clan could not marry each other as it was traditionally considered an act of incest and consanguinity. This is done against the backdrop that if they do, the risk of their offspring developing autosomal recessive disorders increases due to inbreeding. Consequently, people feel much more at home when being transported by a taxi owner or driver who shares the same clan name as them as opposed to a different clan name. Therefore, in commodity terms, the relaxed, feel-at-home kind of experience consumed by commuters surpasses the actual consumption of a service that could have been rendered by any taxi.

In the wake of cities trying to market themselves for tourist attractions in order to get more revenue, some research studies have revealed that ethnic diversity is commodified in other initiatives that actually divorce the ethnicity from its social context so that a city or neighbourhood may be seen as distinct for its supposedly vibrant, cosmopolitan and authentic environment (Urciuoli, 2003; Leeman & Modan, 2008). Consequent to the fact that cultural artefacts, in the form of clan names, have been removed from their social context - orality, but are permanently adorned on the taxi through technology, leads to an erasure of the inequalities that prevailed pre-1994 when African languages were not afforded a display in the public domain. If the clan names remained in the orality space, they would hardly be heard, let alone, be known by outsiders who are not members of these particular speech communities. As can be witnessed in this instance, to confirm the words of Crawford (1992),

in commodifying culture, value is also transferred to the culture as its adornment as public signage makes it known instead of it staying in the periphery. Therefore, the relationship is reciprocal.

On the same breath, even though this embellishment on the taxis happens on private signage, without the interference of the country's government, when looked at from a tourist's point of view, the adornment helps bring to life the South African mission of a rainbow nation through its core values of the constitution which aims to uphold its multiracial and multicultural society. This, despite the provincial language policy of the Western Cape not considering languages such as Sesotho as one of its official languages.

Therefore, underlying the commodification phenomenon, whether it be that of culture, language or space, the inscriptions are juxtaposed for branding as a marketing strategy. Leeman and Modan (2010: 186) state that 'This intertwining of culture, services, products and experiences, and the use of one to sell the others, is utilized in the marketing of all kinds of goods and services, as well as entire neighborhoods and cities'. On a micro level, owners, drivers, commuters and the audience at large, hardly make reference to the taxis using the owner's name which is usually inscribed on the side of the passenger door. Instead, they refer to taxis using these inscriptions to identify them.

Therefore, the idea of branding also comes into play, even though this was not initially intentional on the part of the owner. This is the case even in private vehicles even though in their cases, individuals do it intentionally as a form of branding from the word go. Instead of relying on municipal number plates, owners opt to adorn their private vehicles with self-selected number plates that might come in a form of a sentence, as in Figure 7.4 below; a name; an abbreviation; an acronym or anything the owner fancies. The rationale behind this practice is to set the owner's vehicle apart from the rest of the pack, which boils down to, identification, in lay man's terms; branding, in commercial terms; and identity, in sociolinguistics terms.

Figure 7.4: I do me – WP

Taxis are no different. All in all, it can be seen that the language on the inscriptions reveals the owners' ethnic background, in part. Therefore, the inscription functions on a symbolic economy scale since the transfer of qualities between the culture (the clan name) and the commodity (transportation service) is reciprocal.

Moreover, even though the taxis might be deployed to ferry commuters on a route that could be dominated by isiXhosa-speaking community such as Khayelitsha, it cannot be that the inscriptions are read by the Khayelitsha community only. Due to the mobility of the taxi, the uptake of the inscription is not confined to that specific community only. It may cross a tourist's view or any other person who may not necessarily be able to read isiXhosa, Sesotho or isiZulu as the results of Census 2011 revealed that only 24.72% of the Western Cape residents can communicate in isiXhosa.

This, notwithstanding the fact that speaking any language as one's home language does not necessarily translate into being an avid reader of that language as Leeman and Modan (2010: 183) negate the notion that 'many LL researchers seem to presuppose that the target audience of a given language consists largely of people who can read and/or understand that language'. Given the historical background of the country as a whole pertaining to the education levels of black South Africans and lack of development of the African languages even in the current stage, it is a sure case

that the literacy levels in isiXhosa are way too low as compared to the statistics of the spoken mode of the language itself.

But of paramount importance is the fact that the inscriptions are just ordinary assertions written in vernacular languages. Despite who each utterance is directed to, the utterance ‘is not used to communicate any semantic content that one might need in order to conduct a service encounter’ (Leeman and Modan, 2010: 104 but what Kelly-Holmes (2010, 2005, 2017), calls linguistic fetishization. Linguistic fetish, according to Kelly-Holmes (2017: 135), refers to the phenomenon of using languages for symbolic (fetishized) rather than utility (instrumental-communicative) purposes in commercial texts. Figure 7.5 below, offers an illustrative example of linguistic fetish.

Figure 7.5: Ngena Nowa nendlu yakho

The inscription has appropriated a biblical verse as extracted from an isiXhosa bible. It translates into ‘Go into the ark, Noah, you and your whole family’. Therefore, it can be concluded that the adornment of the utterance on the taxi is solely aesthetic. Furthermore, the word ‘business’ in the translated version of the utterance does not necessarily refer to the transporting business per se, but actually refers to personal issues that are outside of the business arena. It becomes evident that the utterance is redeployed across another site of engagement and therefore, repurposed or resemiotized

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Also notable is Leeman and Modan's (2010: 183) postulation that 'many LL studies implicitly assume that the ratio of languages in the landscape is a direct reflection of the relative status of various ethnolinguistic groups within the community'. Backhaus (2007) posits that

> The city is a place of language contact, (…) the signs in public space are the most visible reminder of this. LL not only tells you in an instant where on earth you are and what languages you are supposed to know, but it (…) provides a unique perspective on the coexistence and competition of different languages and their scripts, and how they interfere with each other in a given place.
>
> Backhaus (2007: 145)

The claim is primarily based on earlier studies of LL that assumed that the vitality of languages in a landscape is a direct reflection of the relative status of ethnolinguistic groups within the community or looking at languages as an index of ethnicity and cultural authenticity or as an essential marker of nation-state and heritage identity (Backhaus, 2007), adding the argument for English as a global language and indigenous languages as tools for ethnolinguistic identity. As this claim may be true since these representations do not completely disappear from the scene and are also still applicable in monolingual settings, the same sentiments cannot hold true in multilingual environments.

Recent LL research studies (see Kallen; Sebba; Coupland; Dray; Pennycook; Piller; Jaworski, 2009 and many others) have begun to move away from a predominantly quantitative to more qualitative, ethnographically oriented studies of 'language in place' that are extensively suggesting that the degree of prevalence of a language in a particular site does not necessarily correlate with the liveliness of its speakers. Figure 7.6 below offers one typical example of this as it is not necessarily representative of the ethnolinguistic identity of the owner of the taxi but should be seen as an instantiation of global cultural flows. Paramount to this discussion is the fact the owner of this taxi is a coloured gentleman. Results from StatsSA (2011) indicate that the number of the coloured individuals who reside in the Western Cape outweighs the number of any other racial community, with coloureds sitting at 48.8%; black Africans, 32.85%; whites, 15.72%; Indians or Asians, 1.04% and others, 1.61%. Furthermore, in terms of linguistic vitality, Afrikaans is the topmost language that is spoken in the Western Cape, sitting at 49.70%, followed by isiXhosa at 24.72% and then English at 20.25% and most coloureds are associated with speaking Afrikaans as their home language.

Taking Backhaus' claim, one would have expected that the inscription would be in Afrikaans. But Leeman and Modan (2010) posit that in multilingual societies, it is an individual's choice to use whichever language depending on their interlocutors. And, it is these choices of private and public actors that create panoply of cityscapes that are adorned with various material manifestations of different languages. Anthonissen (2009: 1) suggests that there is a noticeable language shift among so-called coloured people with most families having made 'deliberate choices to change the family languages from Afrikaans L1 to English L1'.

Figure 7.6: Get rich or die trying

The inscription is based on a title of an album by 50 cents. 50 cents is a popular African American hip hop musician and since hip hop music is characterised by years of struggle that one hopes to change by producing music to alleviate poverty. It can be taken for granted that the owner is a great fan of 50 cents but during interviews but given the age-old racial segregation of the apartheid era, it become difficult to see it as a fan-related relationship. One may argue that South Africa has a compelling number of hip-hop artists coming from all walks of life. The taxi owner made it apparent that he does not know much about the black South African hip-hop artists. As he explained, he was introduced to American hip-hop from a young age. Every individual has the liberty to exercise choice, whether in music, language use or any commodity. But given the voluminous research on the notion of the coloureds' 'racial hostility towards Africans or the sense of shame that suffuses' (Adhikari, 2006: 468), it becomes difficult to accept that this choice has no ideological inclinations.

The strong allegiance of the coloured communities to African American rap strengthens the strong belief within the coloured communities that there is blood lineage between them and African Americans, the world over even though Adhikari (2005) sees it as assimilationist aspirations. Echoing Adhikari's sentiments is Hammett (2009), who, although focusing on high school student identities in South Africa postulates that their identities are informed by local context and globalisation. He asserts that students appropriate and give new meanings to the cultural flows they use to frame their identities.

As can be seen from the inscription, this assertion is in no way different. It is a culmination of historically-created racial tensions that exist between the black and coloured communities, emanating from the apartheid regime's laws such as when the Coloured Labour Preference area in 1954 legislated that 'no African person could be offered a job if there was a Coloured person to do it' (Ross, 2010: 2). That mentality is unfortunately still entrenched in many people. With the ANC winning the 1994, 1999 and 2004 elections, new laws and the 'rainbow nation' narrative exacerbated the continuing salience of race as racial categories of the apartheid era have become the basis for post-apartheid 'redress' (i: 1) wherein the Transformation Act considers only three categories: black women, the disabled and Indians. On the flipside of things, coloureds feel that the brown colour does not exist in the rainbow colours. Therefore, they feel they were not considered white enough during the apartheid era but equally not black enough in post-apartheid era, hence there was speculation that the overwhelming majority of the coloured community voted for the National Party in the 1994 elections.

A recent interview of the leader of the G@TVOL CAPETONIAN, Fadiel Adams, bore vivid testimony to these allegations during an interview by eNCA on the 18th of July 2018 when he articulated that 'Racism is practiced against us daily. You are too brown for a job or a house … . We swapped a white oppressor for a black one". Therefore, the mandate of the movement is that 'we want all the people not born in Western Cape pre-1994 to sell their assets and go home. We are sitting with an issue in the Cape Flats where our community, so-called "coloured people" is becoming poorer as the result of the influx from the Eastern Cape to the Western Cape, with people coming and taking". He cites a lot of politically motivated issues that cement the animosity that prevails between the two communities due to the fact that they do not regard themselves white enough, or black enough (Adhikari, 2005). This emanates from an 'analysis by means of both the admixture and linkage models in STRUCTURE revealed that the major ancestral components of this

population are predominantly Khoisan (32-43%), Bantu-speaking Africans (20-36%), European (21-28%) and a smaller Asian contribution (9-11%), depending on the model used (de Wit, 2010: 1).

As research shows that during the apartheid era in South Africa, the forceful imposition of Afrikaans as a language of learning and teaching led to the 1976 youth riots, it can be concluded that it is a deliberate choice that family languages of the coloureds have changed from Afrikaans to English. Equally, the change is neither a case of finding an alignment to global trends that regard English as a global lingua franca wherein Jaworski (2013: 6) postulates that 'recent studies have noted the use of English as an index of sophistication, cosmopolitanism or modernity (e.g. Cenoz & Gorter, 2006; Huebner, 2006; Ben-Rafael *et al*., 2006)'. Instead, due to the rhetoric around languages and education, the change should be viewed in terms of post-apartheid legacy wherein families are beginning to realise that learning in Afrikaans is too limiting as we are now into the whole notion of the world being a global village. According to globalisation trends, learning in Afrikaans can be seen as a decisive action for one to ostracize themselves from being a global player. The recent upsurge in riots which include #RhodesMustFall at the University of Cape Town and the rhetoric around decolonisation of education in many other institutions of higher learning which sought to redress the legacies of the apartheid, bear testimony to this fact.

Moreover, considering the monopoly of the economy which dictates terms when it comes to opening a business, it becomes a cumbersome exercise for some people given the historical background of South Africa laid out in the introductory chapter. It is apparent that those who were marginalised during the apartheid regime and have no schooling background, struggled to open formal, reputable and sustainable businesses within the short space of time after South Africa became a democratic country despite the playing field having been levelled through programmes such as BEE. They are compelled to informal localised businesses such as spaza shops, running a taxi business, running stalls and other miniature businesses as these are not economically viable businesses, hence they are not regulated by government. This is why we see an influx of people of an Indian descent, especially the Somalis, taking over the spaza shop business country wide. Apart from the economy being in the hands of the middle class, the challenge of conceptualization of a business, funding, and processes such as registration would prove to be a mammoth task as these would pose a challenge to the illiterate. Therefore, it becomes apparent that due to the bloodbath in the taxi industry, which some research blames on the unregulated state of the business, could also act as a catalyst in barring other people from considering it a viable business.

Furthermore, it can be detected that the inscription is adorned on a Siyaya. The inscription on the taxis commensurate with the time that 50 cents released the album in question. Due to the fact that most taxi commuters shy away from the Siyayas due to their slow pace on the roads as compared to the Quantums, the taxi owner has to use strategic means to attract customers. Therefore, commodifying the taxi by adorning an inscription that resonates with what is current in social life – music by 50 cents; coupled with the use of English that is seen as a symbol of sophistication, modernisation or cosmopolitan can prove beneficial to the owner in trying to position his taxi in the contested space.

Lastly, given all the signs discussed thus far, one would be certain that the sign makers targeted largely people who could read/or understood them. While this may be true to a very limited extent in the Western Cape context, the sentiment can hold true in the Gauteng province, where all eleven official languages and other non-official languages prevalently co-exist, thereby making it easier for an individual to be conversant in more than one language, notwithstanding the variability from the home language speakers. The use of isiZulu in Figure 7.1 and Sesotho in Figure 8.3 are typical examples of this. It can be concluded that the use of isiXhosa and English in the rest of the inscriptions cannot be ostensibly viewed from only one perspective; that of an individual's right to exercise choice of language use in a multilingual society. On the contrary, as discussed in this chapter, it can be seen that the languages used on the signs gained their meaning from extra-linguistic phenomena such as political, historical and/or economic interests that led to their creation (Scollon & Scollon, 2003).

As discussed above, the change in the sitting government's language policies has had a bearing on the ways these social actors are encouraged to either use African languages such as isiXhosa, Sesotho, isiZulu as seen in the inscriptions above or otherwise discouraged to use Afrikaans, just as the regulations of the apartheid government had suppressed the use of African languages and heightened the use of Afrikaans by means of divide and rule. Therefore, it can be seen that the inscriptions on Figure 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, and 7.5 have their inclination more towards the indigenous African languages; languages that were previously marginalised by the government of the apartheid era but given officialdom status in the new dispensation.

Aligned to Appadurai (1986); Jaworski's (2013); Heller (2010); Leeman and Modan's views of the definition of a commodity, and the sorts of things they regard as commodifiable, the next section looks at how not only languages but also typefaces are commodified.

7.3 Aestheticizing Typefaces: Fonts as Semiotic Material

Leeman and Modan (2010: 192) postulate that 'the aesthetic nature of orthography can also be capitalized on through font design'. They add font size and, sign colour as some of the elements that should be considered in commodification of language and space. A stark comparison between the signage in Figures 7.7 and 7.8 below reveals significantly marked differences in signage practices between the fourth (the Siyaya) and the fifth generation (the Quantum) taxis in terms of the typefaces used in the inscriptions and the location of a sign. Most noteworthy is the fact that, the former generation of taxis tended to have signage that is mostly written on the rear windshield of a taxi, with a few written on the sides of the taxis and a very small number with inscriptions on the top-most part of the front windscreen or the upper most front part of a taxi.

Although the same style of writing ordinary sarcastic or ordinary statements that seem to address an unknown audience is maintained in most instances, unlike in the fourth-generation taxis where signage is written in relatively white, simple clear-cut, formal Roman typeface prints against a dark background of a rear windshield, the fifth-generation taxis' signage comes with an incorporation of bright, colourful, less formal typefaces and larger, decipherable font sizes, with the accompaniment of pictures, as seen in Figure 7.8 below and through the rest of the inscriptions to follow henceforth.

Figure 7. 7: Old Font Types

Figure 7. 8: Latest Font Types

Following Jaworski's (2013) notion that when a local language is adorned without having been translated, its predominantly symbolic and authenticating role becomes a language to be looked at rather than a language to be read. Jaworski's assertion holds for those cannot read and understand the languages inscribed on the signs above as they can be drawn to the pictures and the colours without getting to grips with the essential message of the inscriptions. The same applies to the inscriptions in Figure 7.8 because even though one can read the inscriptions, the bright colours and the adornment of pictures lure the audience to look at the inscriptions first before getting interested in what the inscriptions are about. In fact, in some cases, due to the adornment of the pictures, the picture tends to be more salient than the worded inscription even in cases where the written inscription headlines it, as in the case of 'Kutshintshwa Amacala' where the cat is chased by the hen. This becomes even more apparent in cases where the font type looks the same. Take an instance of

the inscription: ‘Lathitha Ilanga Lamabhele’ in Figure 7.8. The font type is exactly similar to that of the inscriptions found in Figure 7.7 but due to its pink colour, the inscription is much more attractive than the inscriptions in Figure 7.7. This is also exacerbated by the clear adornment of a borderline drawn on the rear windscreen with a picture resembling a head of a rabbit at each bottom end of the borderline.

A look at the varied typefaces in the inscription: ‘Ta-bong’s luxliner’ is also a spectacle. Although the typefaces are not exactly the same in the word *Ta-bong’s* as opposed to *Luxliner* and *Uthule wena (If you need peace, get married),* the fact that they all adorn almost the same shade of green makes the inscription aesthetic. The same can be said about the stark distinction between the two following inscriptions: *Bheki ndabazakho uyeke ezam* as opposed to *Aah! Malambe’dlile!* Both are declarative statements that ought to be punctuated accordingly to conjure the sentiments in the statements but only the latter is punctuated with exclamation marks and apostrophes at the right places to mark the shortened version of the statement. This is not the case in the former statement even though an apostrophe ought to appear after Bheki.

Besides aestheticizing the font types, it becomes apparent that the font types also help accentuate the inner feelings of the producers of signs. The more formal the typefaces, the tense the feelings of the producer of a sign; and the more colourful, bright, bolder typefaces, the happier the feelings that are evoked. But commodification does not end with languages and these other design elements outlined here only; space can also be commodified. Therefore, the next section looks at how spaces/places, in the form of taxi vehicles themselves are commodified.

7.4 Commodified Siyayas and Quantums

According to Jaworski (2013) considers the role of linguistic and other semiotic resources as being pivotal in defining space or creating a ‘sense of place’. To exemplify this, a particular spot without any name can become notable due to an event such as an accident and from then on, that particular spot will be notable as it will be given a name; ‘an accident scene’ that will be cordoned by police lines, prohibiting entry by natural citizens to avoid tampering with evidence; it will be honoured by the family of the deceased on an annual basis, depending on cultural differences. But if the deceased are coming from the African cultural background, family members will slaughter an animal as a sign of repatriating or calling the spirits of the deceased so that they can rest peacefully in their graves but if the deceased are coming from a coloured and/or white background, every anniversary is

celebrated with a prayer and a bouquet of fresh flowers placed on a cross. Therefore, the space becomes holy.

Likewise, the linguistic and the design elements that were discussed in the sections prior to this one, are adorned on taxis. Therefore, the taxi vehicle themselves become spaces that are commodified because it is through the actions of the social actors who come in the form of owners, drivers, marshalls, commuters, other fellow motorists that taxi vehicles are regarded as spaces. For instance, the inscriptions in Figure 7.9 below and many others can only be understood in the context of the taxi industry as they are synonymous with the taxi industry only in the sense that the taxi industry is notoriously known for its violent nature. The turf wars amongst taxi associations; the killing of innocent commuters due to negligent nature of driving and/or during their wars; the derogatory language used by taxi drivers amongst themselves or towards other motorists and commuters; their misdemeanour in general; are all characteristic of the taxi industry.

Therefore, it is not surprising to come across most of the inscriptions that are negative in their sentiments. This, to an extent that even inscriptions that are not necessarily violent in nature are taken to be violent when read at face value. A case in point is the inscription 'Msunu', which is a derogatory term in isiXhosa, and I was taken aback when I came across it even though it could be expected. I shyly asked the driver who willingly explained that the term is not necessarily derogatory but it is a shortened version of the owner's clan name. He continued to explain that the owner inscribed the word deliberately in order to obscure meaning and ignite debates around the derogatory term. Because taxis operate in a violent space, it is befitting to see inscriptions that speak the violent language that can only be expected in that violent space.

The opposite is also true about inscriptions and/or owners/drivers who are down to earth in terms of their personalities. Since the expectation associated with the taxi industry is always negative and violent, it becomes unusual to encounter a different personality. Therefore, our interpretation and understanding of these inscriptions is not 'a view from nowhere' (Jaworski, 2013) but is highly dependent on our experiential and conditioned ideological knowledge built through successive and overlapping engagements of how taxi owners and drivers interact with their own immediate environment.

Figure 7. 9: Inscriptions with negative connotations

Unlike other spaces that are regarded as mobile even though they cannot physically move, but their mobility makes reference to their changeability (Jaworski, 2013), the spaces created through the taxi vehicles are both literally and metaphorically mobile. Firstly, they are literally mobile as the taxi vehicles themselves can move from Point A to B. In their constant movement, they tend to be infectious in that all those who work in the taxi industry share similar practices, hence there is a saying that all taxi drivers were born of the same mother. All the features that characterize the taxi industry spelt out above can be read and experienced throughout the country, irrespective of which pole of the country one is at. Moreover, the inscription of the vehicles is practiced throughout the country as can be seen in Figure 7.10 below, where the first inscription is from a taxi in the outskirts of Cape Town whereas the second one is taken from the Free State.

Figure 7. 10: Taxi Inscriptions Across SA

Secondly, they are metaphorically mobile. This follows Jaworski's notion mentioned in Chapter 4 of this study where he regards places themselves as mobile, therefore they are expected to change and shift over time. This change can also be seen in the transition of the practice of inscription writing from the fourth-generation to the fifth-generation taxis, where the stature of the inscriptions has tremendously changed in terms of the culturally new way of branding vehicles by way of incorporating inscriptions that satisfy both the ideational and symbolic functions of language use; exercising their democratic right of a free-spirited use of African languages as legislated in the constitution.

Even though these spaces are seen as literally and metaphorically mobile, what remains distinct is the fact that the core meanings that they carry through the inscriptions do not alter due to changed environments. For example, a taxi carrying a particular inscription can be seen, say in Cape Town the one day, and in the Eastern Cape the next day. Key to the discussion is the fact that the message and the meaning carried through that same inscription will remain the same irrespective of its environment.

7.5 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, we have stressed the role of social actors in collaboration with linguistic and other design elements as key in commodification. We have refuted the notion that not only the English language can always be at the centre of commodification but other languages as well, depending on environments, and in our case, African languages.

In this manner, the said inscriptions bring about a revalorization of African languages as Pennycook (2010: 595) postulates that vernacular languages were formerly associated with out-of-date and archaic values such as backwardness but are now becoming languages of 'authenticity' and 'roots' and thus claim for themselves an identiary role both in many spaces, the taxi space in our instance, and in the cities, they are found at. Moreover, we have also shown that politics has a huge bearing in encouraging, regulating, suppressing or discouraging social actors to use their indigenous languages to commodify their spaces.

Furthermore, it can be detected from the discussion above and the display of signs that the issue of incorporating other promotional elements to normal utterances in a current piece of writing or speech is not a new phenomenon. The findings resonate with Pavlenko's (2005) view who observes that in multilingual settings, language choice and attitudes have very close affinities with political arrangements, relations of power, language ideologies, and interlocutors' views of their own and others' identities. Therefore, in closing, I would like to sum the discussion above with a quote from Chandler (2003) who postulates that:

> Texts are instrumental not only in the construction of other texts but in the construction of experiences. … Indeed, we may argue that we know no pre-textual experience. The world as we know it is merely its current representation.
>
> Chandler (2003: 121)

But the opposite is true.

CHAPTER 8
CONCLUSIONS, CONTRIBUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Introduction

This chapter draws some general conclusions about the Cape Town Taxi Industry's linguistic/semiotic landscape and summarizes the key results. It is pivoted on the notion that the study of language on signs should not be confined only on the straightforward understanding of LL as 'the language of public roads, advertising, billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings signs combines to form the linguistic landscape of a give territory, region, or urban agglomeration' Landry and Bourhis (1997: 25), but also be conceived as a perspectivised, ideological representation of space as every instance of language use is ideological. Therefore, a myriad of other possible historical considerations, whether social, cultural, political, economic or otherwise, should be drawn upon, as they are an integral part of the subjective material manifestations of language displayed on any landscape.

8.2 Conclusions

What follows is specification of the findings that sought to address exactly this phenomenon of language use being ideological and hegemonic in nature, with particular foci hinged on the research objectives and their accompanying questions. The seven questions are clustered into four categories as there seems to be relational associations between them and these are clustered as follows:

8.2.1 Place and Meaning Making

This study was aimed at looking at the prevalence and regionalization of languages and images to establish what these tell us as consumers. Following several recent LL studies, (such as Cenoz & Gorter, 2006; Heubner, 2006; Ben-Rafael *et al.*, 2006) that have shifted away from looking at the prevalence of a language as a direct reflection of the relative status of various ethnolinguistic groups within communities but have noted the use of English as an index of sophistication, cosmopolitanism or modernity, in the same vein, this study has also come to realize that in multilingual societies, the choice of language and signage is fundamentally inclined to a host or myriad of factors that include economic, socio-cultural, ideological, attitudinal and political. This is even more so in a country that has just come out of a political turmoil, coupled with one leg of the transportation industry that was also at the epitome of stirring the very political turmoil into being. In essence, the whole notion of

these ideologies that social actors imbue in the social scene throws away, to a certain extent though, the credibility of studies that are still stuck in the prevalence of a language(s) as a direct reflection of the status of ethnolinguistic groups. We say to a certain extent because the research findings have highlighted the fact that languages are still conceptualized as bounded systems linked with bounded communities.

Paramount to this study is the resemiotization/remediation, not only of signs but also of modes in the form of space. Jaworski and Thurlow (2010) concur with the notion highlighted by numerous other authors such as Harvey (1989, 2006), Lefebvre (1991) and Massey and Jess (1995) who recognise space as not only physical but also socially constructed, which necessarily shifts absolutist notions of space towards more communicative or discursive conceptualizations (1991:6). They mention three types of space, namely *conceived* space, *perceived* space and *lived* space, terms that were coined by Lefebvre (1991). It is against this backdrop that this study has defied the normative expectations and spatial boundaries instantiated by non-official languages of the province when they are regarded as official languages of the country.

Also, key to this discussion is Prior and Hengst's view that semiotic remediation, 'points to ways that activity is (re)mediated – not mediated anew in each act – through taking up the materials at hand, putting them to present use, and thereby producing altered conditions for future action' (Prior and Hengst, 2010: 1). Therefore, the study has shown that the use of taxi spaces is being put to a different unconventional purpose by airing the owners' or drivers' inner voices about their sense of pride, their fears, egos, their knowledge base pertaining to politics and about life in general; something that we normally encounter through different media platforms such as newspapers, books, television, radio broadcasting, mobile phones, the internet and talk and gesture. Therefore, in essence, what could have been mediated through the afore-said media amongst the producers and the receivers is mediated through a different medium: the taxi spaces. This is attributed to a number of factors which include:

- The only defining factor in using the afore-mentioned platforms is the inability to write. Most taxi drivers and owners have very little education background and cannot therefore access these platforms.
- Consequence to this, the lack of platforms to air their views is constrained by lack of education.

- The inscriptions are addressing various respondents such as commuters, their enemies and the general public. Therefore, it is not possible to hold conversations with other people that are far from the speaker if we do not have access to other media platforms.

Furthermore, the study has also concluded that the involvement of the government has a huge bearing in stirring the use of certain languages over others and on the choices that social actors make in using languages that are at their disposal.

8.2.2 The Material Culture of Things

Also, notable in the findings of this study is the fact that the successful uptake of any landscape is largely dependent on various factors that the reader brings into the landscape. These may come in the form of knowledge, experiences, skills, capacities, and goals. The use of particular hand signs to indicate where one is going, especially in Johannesburg, is a classic example that can either lead one to the correct destination or find themselves totally lost. On the same token, the use of minibus taxis in the South African context is completely different from the use of Tuk Tuks in India or yellow cabs in New York or Mercedes Benz in Germany in that the physical body of the vehicle used for ferrying commuters in South Africa is distinct, coupled with markings that are enforced by the bylaws of the country to distinguish itself from other vehicles that are used either for private purposes or for other means of business. The mere existence of the minibus taxis in their thousands spells out clearly that we know that we are in South Africa as opposed to being in different countries that are also characterized by their transportation modes. Added to the existence of the taxis are behavioural patterns of those operating in the taxi industry because they are also discernible and only synonymous with the industry itself.

Being a brother's keeper also plays a pivotal role in the taxi industry in that they inform one another in case of roadblocks or traffic jams. Therefore, the use of oral languages is also taken into consideration when looking at the issue of material culture. Vulgar language, disguised as clan names, is a norm in the taxi industry, hence the study has come across inscriptions that could be interpreted as vulgar language. Otherwise, the adornment of clan names is much more prevalent in the taxi industry to show the connectedness of the taxi owner or driver with their ancestral being. Not only are clan names adorned on taxis to show inclinations to traditional cultural practices but music played on radio stations that broadcast in predominantly specific languages, are also tuned into.

The music and the specific radio stations that taxi drivers tune into are in sync with their home languages. And this has been exemplified by certain slogans that are famously used in specific radio shows or coming from a particular song such as Hip Hop that have found space in the adornment of certain taxis even though these inscriptions have attracted different interpretations because of the different space in which they find themselves.

With the abolishment of the old taxis, the government proclaimed that all taxis were to carry the national flag of South Africa and every new taxi comes from the manufacturer bearing the flag. Although the move was met with hostilities from the taxi operators due to the fact that the proclamation stopped them from adorning advertisements, the issue of adorning the national flag was welcomed as the felt that it resonated with their national identity.

It is against this consideration of the dialogicality of all texts and the material culture of things that this research has also moved from this premise and has consequently shown that in the advent of power struggles, local politics, and competing claims of space, even semiotic landscapes drawn from scapes such as the taxi industry or rural areas should be viewed as subjective representations rather than objectively constructed spaces.

8.2.3 Commodification of African Languages

Moving from the foregoing statement in the sections above, one such leg that creates dialogism in language use is the government. As such, Leeman and Modan (2010) have observed that all cities are governed by municipal bodies, whether through regulation, investment, suppression, negotiation or neglect, but that involvement has proved to have some bearing on the ways that social actors are encouraged or discouraged to write (on) the landscape.

Consequently, most linguistic landscape (LL) research is concerned with language policy and planning within the field of sociolinguistics. As such, Banda and Mokwena (2017) foreground the fact that in most of the LL studies 'English has been portrayed in linguistic landscape literature as the definitive language of commodification'. With an upsurge of globalisation, English has often been associated with what Orman (2008) and Gorter (2006: 4) call the 'MacDonalisation' of the linguistic landscape, a concept referring to the domination of English as a language of socio-economic mobility and transnational trade. This is said against the backdrop that, according to Sharma and Phyak (2017: 3), neoliberal ideology is seen as 'giving English the status of a 'world' language and, simultaneously, categorizing local varieties and linguistic resources as having less symbolic and economic value (McCarty, 2003; Skutnabb-Kangas & Heugh, 2012)'. Although this

may be true to a certain degree in most environments, the case is not universal in all contexts of language use, as illustrated in this research where local South African indigenous languages are increasingly being commodified. Taxi owners particularly in South Africa, use not just English, but particularly African languages and socio-cultural materials as commodities to attract consumers. For instance, the study has come across some inscriptions that are just ordinary assertions written in vernacular languages. They are 'not used to communicate any semantic content that one might need in order to conduct a service encounter' (Leeman and Modan, 2010: 104 but what Kelly-Holmes (2010, 2005, 2017), calls linguistic fetishization. Linguistic fetish, according to Kelly-Holmes (2017: 135), refers to the phenomenon of using languages for symbolic (fetishized) rather than utility (instrumental-communicative) purposes in commercial texts. Kelly-Holmes (2000: 70) opines that language can be seen as a fetishized commodity if "its utility or use value has become secondary to its symbolic value".

In particular, the discussion brought into the spotlight the fact that although the vitality of IsiZulu in South Africa is generally enormous but the same cannot be said of the use of IsiZulu in the Western Cape. As such, its presence in the landscape of the Western Cape is relegated to a state of a fetishized commodity because given the almost non-existent number of people who can read the language, it becomes evident that the one inscription was not necessarily used to communicate something related to business. However, it can also be said that it allowed the owner to express himself in a language that would allow him to express his inner most feelings. Thus, even though isiZulu, according to political regimes, may not be regarded as a commodity, officially, in the Western Cape, its presence in the landscape of the Western Cape proves that the language has crossed the boundaries and has eventually been commoditised.

Moreover, the fact that cultural artefacts, in the form of clan names, have been removed from their social context - orality, but are permanently adorned on the taxis through technology, leads to an erasure of the inequalities that prevailed pre-1994 when African languages and material culture were not afforded a display in the public domain. The inscriptions are juxtaposed for branding as a marketing strategy by incorporating other promotional elements such as aestheticized typefaces to normal utterances in a current piece of writing or speech is not a new phenomenon.

Finally, the linguistic and the design elements that were discussed throughout the study, are adorned on taxis. Therefore, the taxi vehicles themselves become spaces that are commodified because it is through the actions of the social actors who come in the form of owners, drivers, marshalls, commuters, and other fellow motorists that taxi vehicles are regarded as commodified spaces. The

taxi industry is notoriously known for its violent nature due to turf wars amongst taxi associations; the killing of innocent commuters due to their negligent nature of driving and/or during their wars; the derogatory language used by taxi drivers amongst themselves or towards other motorists and commuters; their misdemeanour in general; and many more. All these characterize the taxi industry as taxi industry leaders alluded to 'lack of respect for their passengers and their attitude to other road users are characteristics of taxi drivers that must change if the taxi business is to grow' (published online on the 6 November 2007). Consequently, the adornment of ordinary sayings which may or may not be relevant to, or understood by, the target audience, brings to the fore the notion of linguistic fetishization to bear since the form of these sayings take precedence over content.

8.2.4 The Construction of Identities

Aligned to the discussions on place and meaning making, commodification and material culture, all these instantaneously draft a substantial skeleton to the objective which relates to the construction of identities. The study alludes to the use of different languages and material culture such as the taxis themselves, radio stations, music, clan names, the national flag and many more materialities at their disposal on display to enable taxi owners to perform multiple identities, be they ethnic/traditional, regional, national or global or a blend of more than one of these. The study also highlights the government's involvement in entrenching the assumed language choices by the people. The upheaval imposition of the use of Afrikaans during the apartheid era and the diminishing use of Afrikaans by especially the coloured community in the new dispensation has drawn such a stuck comparison over choosing English, is a typical example. The use of English has gained prominence over Afrikaans because the government of the day considers English the language of government and business. Therefore, people align their skills with the needs of the country. Furthermore, the use of English in black-owned taxis does not necessarily identify them as people of European descent or English being their first language but that is a choice they make due to either realizing that not every commuter or audience can understand the taxi owner's home language. Due to the fact that South Africans associate knowledge of English with literacy, some want to position themselves and prove to everyone that not everyone associated with the taxi industry is 'illiterate.' The reasons can be many as every single use of language is ideological and hegemonic.

Moreover, in an effort to encompass previously marginalised languages in each province, the South African Constitution of 1996 (Act No. 108 of 1996) made a proclamation that allowed provinces to adopt their own language policies and legislation and the province of the Western Cape adopted a Western Cape Provincial Languages Act, 1998 (Act No. 13 of 1998). Afrikaans, English and

isiXhosa were the only languages proclaimed as official languages of the province. It is against this backdrop that every black person, except for expatriates, in the province is assumed to be of Xhosa descent.

Although these might be true to a certain extent, the study has in essence concluded that identity is performative, hence a choice in language using is an act of identity. In the advent of globalisation, where technology plays a crucial role in bridging the distances between two countries, language use can no longer be considered the most accurate indicator of an individual's ethnolinguistic background but should be considered indicative of their public and private ideologies. As Danesi's (2009) has observed, the kind of language we use in communicating messages depends very much on the setting and the interdependent social roles of the people interacting. This means that it can no longer suffice to pin a language to a particular nation. What this means is that because of the different repertoires of language registers, an individual can have multiple, fluid identities, highly dependent on the setting or who the person interacts with.

8.3 Contributions of the Study

The study contributes to the development of the theorisation of Linguistic Landscapes by repudiating some of the claims made based solely on Western urban contexts and not considering rural contexts such as those found in African contexts by extending the theory of spatialization through local and global mobilities.

Second, the study contributes to studies on LL in transit by expounding on the South African mini-bus taxis as mobilescapes, on which the mobility of semiotic resources displayed for consumption. The other contribution relates to material culture and cultural studies, which a new addition to LL enquiry. The study not only showed the impact of language and cultural contact, it also highlighted the use of material culture in the form of popular sayings taken from the internet and African culture, and use of clan names, African proverbs and indigenous African artefacts in the taxi signage.

This study also contributes to language policy and planning studies by showing some shortcomings of policy pronouncements in which languages are 'zoned' and fixed to regions. For example, Sesotho and isiZulu are not official languages in the Western Cape Province, and yet they are found on signage on minibus taxis.

The taxi industry has a violent history. Therefore, another contribution of this study concerns itself with conflict studies within the taxi industry. The study showed that some taxis had messages of violence on their signage.

8.4 General Conclusion and Future Research

The discussions in this study, framed as the investigation of the semiotic mobilescape as depicted on the taxi industry in Cape Town have highlighted the concept of landscape as ideological representation that has drawn our attention to the symbolic considerations of language display that have helped shape the landscape that is otherwise provincially painted as though only three languages exist in the province of the Western Cape. This is even more worrying considering that Cape Town is a big tourist destination and for tourists to come with the expectancy of a diverse country that South Africa is, through its globally-lauded language policy, only to come across three languages, with isiXhosa being side-lined in some cases (see road signs), is a complete prejudice. It is even more disturbing given the fact that many of the taxi drivers may not necessarily access the English used on the road signs.

Whilst the government plays a humungous role in demarcating both public and private spaces by painstakingly privileging and accentuating the currency of certain languages at the detriment of others, in-migration of people from rural provinces into cities such as Cape Town and Johannesburg has seen an upsurge in blurring those delineations. This, the government does through the adoption of a provincial language policy that endorses only one or a few African languages added to the two previously advantaged languages. This, it achieves by using these marginalised languages with a total disregard for policies that brusquely force people to divorce themselves from their own languages especially when other alternative measures such as interpretation can be tapped into to facilitate communication.

Given the paucity of the study of signage in the taxi industry, we can therefore remain open to future constellations and see how this practice of the inscriptions in the taxi industry may move through some institutionalized discursive regimes as changes in hegemonic processes such as democratization, commodification and technologization (Fairclough, 1992a) have a huge bearing on heteroglossic constructions of text genres and ways of doing things. As a result, these play a crucial part in the invention of newer places as it has been promulgated that places are constructed and experienced as material ecological artefacts and intricate networks of social relations.

Paramount to the study is the recognition that 'language is not at all at the centre of all communication' (Iedema 2003: 39), but a recognition of meaning and of language as multimodal. The multiplicity of modalities is brought about by changes in our political, social and economic power as multilingualism has proven that the local (and global) political economy (Gal, 1989) or the linguistic market (Bourdieu, 1991) of a particular language is tantamount to an individual's linguistic choice, itself affected by the three strands of power which permeate all domains of language use.

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APPENDICES: Ethical Form

University of the Western Cape
Department of Linguistics
Doctor of Philosophiae Dissertation
Research Consent Form

Consent Forms (Focus Group) 2014

INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR PhD THESIS

Date: 03 October 2014

Study Title or Topic: **Investigating the semiotic mobilescape as depicted on taxis commuting in Cape Town: A Semiotic Landscape Approach**

Researcher: Mathapelo Matsabisa, PhD candidate, Linguistics Department, University of the Western Cape.

Purpose of the Research:

I, Mathapelo Matsabisa, am a PhD student in the Department of Linguistics, at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa. For this degree, I seek to investigate the language on public signs as depicted on taxis in Cape Town.

Specifically, the study will seek

(i) To determine the extent to which regionalization of languages is (a) maintained, (b) reproduced and (c) contested when making meaning and constructing the LL of Cape Town;
(ii) To determine the sociohistorical materialities that producers and consumers of signage tap into when designing signage;
(iii) To determine and explore how these materialities are employed for the purposes of commodification;
(iv) To explore how identities are constructed and promoted through the messages.

These objectives will help to analyse how the interaction of consumers, business owners, sign-makers and policy formulators lead to the production of the language on the public signs (linguistic landscapes) of these study areas, given such factors as the regionalization of language, mobility and circularity of language, and the social-history of the social actors and the place. It also entails an examination of the kind of and the placement of signs in time and place for all the study areas.

My supervisor is Professor Felix Banda in the Department of Linguistics, University of the Western Cape, South Africa. He can be contacted on +27 823621100 or fbanda@uwc.ac.za.
My contact details are as follows: Mathapelo Matsabisa, Linguistics Dept., UWC, phone: +27847003452 or mathapelo.matsabisa@gmail.com
I would therefore like to request that your focus group form part of my research study. If this permission is granted, the following will be required of you, as a group:

- As a participant, you will be required to answer questions about language in the public space in terms of language choice/use on signs, placement of signs, size, quality and their usefulness.

- You will have to look at some digital images of signs/artefacts which I will present to you and for each sign/artefact, you will be expected to answer questions or provide meanings.
- You will also be asked to explain how much/often you rely on the signage and the type of signage to navigate your landscapes
- The data obtained will be analysed to understand the social structuring of language, social-economic bearing on the materiality of sign, policy and emplacement, resemiotization (stages of meaning-making) and re-contextualization of semiotic resources (language, images, inscriptions), mobility of semiotic resources and social historical factors which give rise to such signs and language choice. Also, the presence or absence of the 'oral-scape' in LL.
- Each interview session will last for approximately 20-30 minutes.

Voluntary Participation: Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may refuse to answer any question or choose to stop participating at any time.

Withdrawal from the Study: You can stop participating in the study at any time, for any reason, if you so decide. Should you decide to withdraw from the study; all data generated as a consequence of your participation will be destroyed.

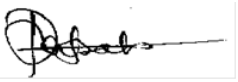
Confidentiality: All information you supply during the research will be held in confidence and, unless you specifically indicate your consent, your name will not appear in any report or publication of the research. Your data will be safely stored and only the researcher will have access to this information.

Legal Rights and Signatures:

I _____ consent that I have read and understood the nature of the study and therefore wish to participate in this study entitled: **INVESTIGATING THE SEMIOTIC MOBILESCAPE AS DEPICTED ON TAXIS COMMUTING IN CAPE TOWN: A SEMIOTIC LANDSCAPE APPROACH** by Mathapelo Matsabisa. Further, I am aware that I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

Signature _____ **Date** _____

Participant

Signature  **Date 03 October 2014**

Researcher

University of the Western Cape
Department of Linguistics
Doctor of Philosophiae Dissertation

Consent Forms (Individual Interviewees) 2014

INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR PhD THESIS

Date: 03 October 2014

Study Title or Topic: **Investigating the semiotic mobilescape as depicted on taxis commuting in Cape Town: A Semiotic Landscape Approach**

Researcher: Mathapelo Matsabisa, PhD candidate, Linguistics Department, University of the Western Cape.

Purpose of the Research:

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Specifically, the study will seek

(i) To determine the extent to which regionalization of languages is (a) maintained, (b) reproduced and (c) contested when making meaning and constructing the LL of Cape Town;
(ii) To determine the sociohistorical materialities that producers and consumers of signage tap into when designing signage;
(iii) To determine and explore how these materialities are employed for the purposes of commodification;
(iv) To explore how identities are constructed and promoted through the messages.

These objectives will help to analyse how the interaction of consumers, business owners, sign-makers and policy formulators lead to the production of the language on the public signs (linguistic landscapes) of these study areas, given such factors as the regionalization of language, mobility and circularity of language, and the social-history of the social actors and the place. It also entails an examination of the identities mapped out through signage.
My supervisor is Professor Felix Banda in the Department of Linguistics, University of the Western Cape, South Africa. He can be contacted on +27 823621100 or fbanda@uwc.ac.za.
My contact details are as follows: Mathapelo Matsabisa, Linguistics Dept., UWC, phone: +27847003452 / +27729701517 or Mathapelo.matsabisa@gmail.com

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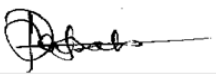
Participant

Signature  **Date 03 October 2014**

Researcher