

The semiotic signature of transformation of political parties in  
South Africa: A multimodal analysis of selected  
Democratic Alliance texts.



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**Student:** Tamsyn Lynn Hendricks

**Student number:** 2957634

**Supervisor:** Professor B. Antia

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**ABSTRACT**

Social semiotics (Halliday, 1978 and van Leeuwen, 2006) makes us acutely aware that social communication like public speaking often takes place through non-verbal modes (such as images, and bodily attributes), in combination with unique but socially motivated meanings that can be read from language. A broadened view of the resources for communication consequently sees semiotic potential in the essence and practices of individuals and organizations in society. Specific social, cultural or historical situations have relevant meanings that can be made or read from ways of being, doing, saying and so on. In a sense, then, social organizations such as political parties can be seen as entities that are embodiments of semiotic signatures which can be 'read'. This broad semiotic view has, unfortunately, been slighted in much of the work in political discourse analysis (PDA). PDA examines text and talk of politicians and organizations (van Dijk, 1993; 2002). All too often, the emphasis in PDA is on themes such as power abuse and manipulation strategies communicated in text and talk, thus, the sayings of political parties, rather than the doings, goings-on, and beings of these parties. One of the consequences of the narrow focus in PDA is that the heuristic value of semiotic resources associated with political parties has remained untapped in studies of how these parties may have transformed over time to become more inclusive. In South Africa, although transformation is a theme around which all political parties seek to gain and do gain political capital, there has been little attention to the use of social semiotics to study how the parties themselves may or may not be transforming. To do so, a multimodal political discourse analysis is clearly required. This thesis adopts a social semiotic perspective to study how the Democratic Alliance (and its forerunner organizations) may or may not have transformed over time to become more inclusive. The objectives are as follows:

1. To analyse any changes there have been in the anthroponyms (person names), and toponyms (place names) and/or autonoms (self-labels) in documents associated with the DA and its predecessors over time.
2. To describe any changes there have been in languages employed in documents associated with the DA and its predecessors over time.

3. To determine any changes in the ‘entities’ and other multimodal elements depicted on campaign posters, billboards and other publicity material of the DA and its predecessors over time.

The thesis draws on notions in multimodality, onomastics, political discourse analysis, and corpus linguistics to do a diachronic analysis (over two time frames) of a corpus of ‘texts’ of the Democratic Alliance.

In terms of onomastics, the study reveals that across two time frames the percentage of racially white anthroponyms associated with the party dropped by 18,3%, while black anthroponyms increased by 13,8%; female anthroponyms increased by 16,4%. In terms of languages, from time frame one to time frame two, more languages were attested and were used for more substantive (rather than merely symbolic) purposes. Finally, people depicted in the party’s publicity material have evolved, from a focus on white males dressed in suits to females (white, African, and coloured) and people dressed in ways that communicated a diversity of religious persuasions. It is in these changes that the study identifies the semiotic signature of transformation of the DA and its predecessor organisations.



## **KEYWORDS**

Transformation, Political Parties, South Africa, Democratic Alliance, Political Discourse Analysis, Social Semiotics, Onomastics, Multimodality, Language Choice, Corpus Linguistics



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**DECLARATION**

I declare that *The Semiotic Signature of Transformation of Political Parties in South Africa: A Multimodal Analysis of selected Democratic Alliance texts* is in my own words, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university and that all sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete reference.

Name: Tamsyn Lynn Hendricks

Date: November 2017

Signature: .....



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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background to the study:**

The country now called South Africa has a history characterised by clashes of culture, violent territorial disputes between the European settlers and indigenous people, and other racial and political tensions (Sisk, 1995). The Union of South Africa was created in 1910 following the defeat of the Boers in the South African War (1899-1902) (Ross, 2008). It was in this post-colonial era (1815-1910) that power resided with a white elite based in Cape Town, and “differentiation on the basis of race was deeply entrenched” (Ross, 2008:5). However outside Cape Town, isolated Blacks, Khoisan and Boers populated the country whilst attaining little to no power in the political and economic sphere.

Between the years 1910 and 1948 the influx of settlers solidified the British presence and administration in the country. Under British rule, a pattern soon emerged whereby English-speakers became highly urbanised, and “dominated politics, trade, finance, mining, and manufacturing, while the largely uneducated Boers were relegated to their farms disregarding other cultures and races” (i.e. Blacks, and Khoisan) (Ross, 2008: 174). The English-speakers dominated the political, economic, and other social spheres causing various tensions between English-speakers and other groups. For example, the Land Act sought to have white people (offspring of the British and Dutch colonialists) owning and occupying 90 per cent of the land, even though they constituted only 20 per cent of the population, and only 8 per cent of South Africa’s available land was for the blacks. This Land Act formed a cornerstone of legalised racial discrimination against the non-white groups in the country (Ross, 2008).

In 1948, the Republic of South Africa was created and the dominion of the British Empire came to an end, and along with that came a constitution and a shift in power from the British to the Afrikaner or descendants of Dutch settlers (Sisk, 1995). In terms of politics, from 1948 to 1994, the country was dominated by the Afrikaner who officialised and institutionalised racial segregation and white minority rule known as apartheid (Ross, 2008:181). According to Badat (2010), social, political and economic discrimination and inequalities of class, race, and gender in institutional and spatial settings have profoundly shaped South African systems. Different structures (administrative, educational, residential, and so on) existed for the white minority

and black majority populations during colonial and apartheid times. Socio-economic opportunities, like all else, were racially determined and only limited to certain class and gender divisions within work and study places (Adam & Giliomee, 1979; Sisk, 1995 and Marais, 2011).

For example, in the 1910 elections, only white males were allowed to vote (Stultz, 1974). Under apartheid legislation (1948 – 1994), very few people of coloured and Asian decent were able to vote in the 1948 elections, and Africans had been excluded altogether since the late 1930s (Adam & Giliomee, 1979:177).

In politics, black people and women were banned from forming or participating in any sort of political formations or liberal movements. Those political parties that existed had to operate underground and in exile. Membership of political parties and formations such as the African National Congress (ANC) and Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) was largely based on racial and ethnic lines (Sisk, 1995, p. 129).

It is evident that the old apartheid constitution only made provisions for white people, and created a deeply divided society that discriminated and disadvantaged blacks, women, and people with disabilities in many spheres of life such as education, health, politics and sport (Stultz, 1974 and Venter, 2014).

After decades of armed struggle, and international opposition to apartheid, during which military and political support was provided to the non-racial African National Congress (ANC), South Africa became a multiracial democracy in 1994.

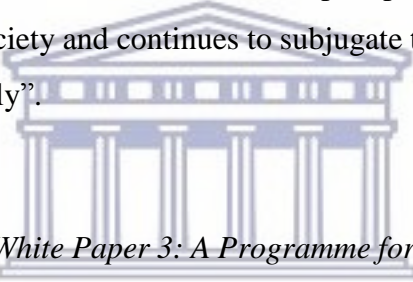
## **1.2 Transformation agenda:**

In South Africa, transformation has become a catchphrase for promoting and implementing change. It is evoked in a variety of discourses in the public sphere to discipline politicians, or employed by politicians themselves to score political points. Transformation has been used to mean virtually any goal, practice or mindset: from reconciliation, relevance, quality, responsiveness and accommodation, alignment to national objectives, rights, representation, participation, benefaction, redressing inequalities, and ownership. Transformation has been used to influence or to assert various views, opinions and actions. According to De Vos (2010 n.p), transformation “has become a buzzword that is much debated about and much abused,

but few people explain what they mean when they use the word. Like motherhood and apple pie, it is assumed to be an unqualified human good”.

Transformation appears to be a term that is both used as a means and a goal. It may mean different things to different people. Some have understood it as meaning compromise, or a live and let live situation; others interpret it as calling for a complete overhaul of the social, political and economic structures that supported the apartheid system (Cloete, 2013; Palmer & Uys, 2012). Transformation is used virtually in all public spheres: economy and business, politics, legal administration, employment in the public sector, sports, higher education, and so on.

Writing from the standpoint of constitutional law, De Vos (2010 n.p) defines transformation as follows: “a dismantling of the structures which still help to perpetuate the disgraceful racial and gender inequality in our society and continues to subjugate the majority of South Africans – both economically and socially”.



The document, *The Education White Paper 3: A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education*, argues that transformation “requires that all existing practices, institutions and values are viewed anew and rethought in terms of their fitness for the new era” (Council of Higher Education, 1997:5). Chapter Two, sub-section nine (9) of The Constitution of South Africa provides the context for defining a new era where it disapproves of discrimination irrespective of the basis of such discrimination: “race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth” (Constitution 1996, 2(9):1-5).

The Transformation Charter for South African Sport (2012) defines transformation in sport as “a process of holistically changing the delivery of sport through the actions of individuals and organizations that comprise the sport sector to ensure:

- Increased access and opportunities for ALL South Africans, including women, persons with disabilities, youth, children and the elderly to sport and recreation opportunities.
- The socio-economic benefits of sport are harnessed.

- The constitutional right to sport is recognized” (SASCOC, 2012:6).

It is easy to see from these conceptualizations of transformation how various dimensions of this multidimensional concept may be evoked, interpreted and analysed. In this research, transformation will be viewed from the perspective of participation which refers to inclusiveness in the democratic space. Inclusiveness will be defined as the places, languages, names and other markers associated with membership of an organization.

Obviously, South Africa’s historical context offers an explanation for the pervasiveness of transformation as a theme in public discourse. This history of inequalities, which, according to many analysts (Badat, 2010; Banda & Mafofo, 2014; and Egglestone, 2014) continues to exist, and the practically unlimited or contested meanings of transformation, have made this notion of transformation a topical issue in the political discourse of South African political parties. While cautioning against too narrow a view of what constitutes political discourse, who the relevant actors are, and what the relevant settings are, van Dijk (1993, 2000) describes political discourse in part as the text and talk of professional politicians and political parties in the public sphere in relevant contexts describable as political. Text and talk associated with “cabinet meetings, parliamentary sessions, election campaigns, rallies, interviews with the media”, among others, would exemplify political discourse (van Dijk, 2000:14). When politicians and political parties are doing politics, or acting politically, they are attempting to achieve political goals, “such as making or influencing political decisions that pertain to joint action, the distribution of social resources, the establishment or change of official norms, regulations and laws, and so on” (van Dijk, 2000:14).

In South Africa, and for the reasons mentioned above (inequalities, and the different takes on what transformation means), transformation is a favourite theme and subject in political discourses. It serves as a means to legitimize decision-making or to accuse the “other” party of ineptitude; both of these act as strategies by politicians and political parties to ultimately present face to the electorate and to sway them one way or the other.

Thus, the ruling African National Congress (ANC) defines its mission as the “fundamental transformation of the South African economy in order to empower black people, especially Africans, to eliminate poverty and the extreme inequalities generated by the apartheid system;

generate productive employment opportunities for our people at a living wage and ensure balanced South African economic employment” (African National Congress, 2013 n.p).

The Democratic Alliance (DA) makes use of transformation in a different way to sway and “educate” voters by making them politically conscious of what the ruling government is failing to achieve (Sisk, 1995; Bertelsmann, 2003; and Sindane, 2010). The DA markets itself as an advocate for an “equal and open society”, a party that strives to not only better the standard of living for the citizens, but also to transform the country to the kind of society envisioned in the Constitution (Democratic Alliance, 2000). For the party, transformation seems to lie in uplifting the rule of law. In fact, the DA contested the notion of transformation used by the ANC in 2010 when its then leader (Helen Zille) claimed that the “ANC’s definition of transformation was not in the best interests of the country and what they promised it would change”. The DA has criticised the ANC for not being strong on transformation and has alluded to corruption, power abuse, and unfairness as practices of the ANC that invalidate the ideals of transformation. There is a clear rivalry and competition for power between these two prominent political parties in the country, and especially close to election times (Bertelsmann, 2003; Sindane, 2010).

The claims and counterclaims around the different facets of transformation in the political discourses of politicians and political parties have been analysed by linguists (Egglestone 2014; Sindane 2010; Bojabotsheha & Maloi, 2014). Many of the studies suggests that transformation discourses in the texts of the ANC are used to degrade the apartheid system and to glorify the current democratic dispensation (Bojabotsheha & Maloi, 2014). The discourses also tend to overcompensate for the achievements of the past and do not particularly focus on the current socio-economic struggles that society is currently facing (Mafofo and Banda, 2014).

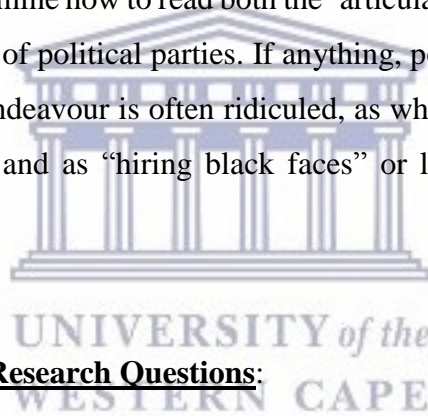
### **1.3 The Statement of the Problem:**

In their work on transformation in political discourses of politicians and political parties, many linguists and other scholars have been primarily interested in the contents of text and talk. Some of the relevant research analyses have focused on the linguistic strategies employed in the speeches of political organizations and leaders regarding, especially, what the ANC has or has

not achieved, and whether or not democracy has made profound change or difference in the country (Bojabotsheha & Maloi, 2014; Edigheji, 2007; and Dwivedi, 2015).

While studying the contents of text and talk, the focus sometimes falls on strategies of positive self-representation and negative other-representation. It is often the case that only the context and rhetoric of text and talk are used to study political parties. This content and rhetoric of text and talk are used to state the party's own position in terms of transformation within their own political party and towards greater inclusiveness. In other words, while political party discourses have been studied from their overt articulations of transformation-related issues, there is very little multimodal discourse research on how the political parties themselves may or may not have transformed. As a result of the above, the potential "richness and complexity of semiotic production and interpretation" (van Leeuwen, 2006, p. xi) has not been widely applied to the study of how South African political parties may or may not have transformed.

There clearly is a need to determine how to read both the 'articulate' and 'inarticulate' evidence or signature of transformation of political parties. If anything, potentially interesting elements of how to approach such an endeavour is often ridiculed, as when the Democratic Alliance is described as a "white party" and as "hiring black faces" or labelled with a "rent-a-black" identity (Lekunya, 2008).



#### **1.4 Aims, Objectives and Research Questions:**

In this thesis, a diachronic analysis of documents associated with the Democratic Alliance and its predecessor organizations is carried out from the standpoint of how the semiotic resources employed in these documents (membership lists, campaign material, media statements, speeches, etc.) may or may not be indexical of the party's transformation towards greater inclusiveness.

The specific objectives are as follows:

1. To analyse any changes there have been in the anthroponyms (person names), and toponyms (place names) and/or autonoms (self-labels) in documents associated with the DA and its predecessors over time.
2. To describe any changes there have been in languages employed in documents associated with the DA and its predecessors over time.



3. To determine any changes in the ‘entities’ and other multimodal elements depicted on campaign posters, billboards and other publicity material of the DA and its predecessors over time.

Correspondingly, the research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What semiotic potential is associated with any changes there have been in autonoms (self-label), anthroponyms (person names) and toponyms (place names) linked to the DA over successive time periods?
2. What semiotic potential is associated with any changes observed in languages employed in the party’s text and talk over successive time periods?
3. What semiotic potential is associated with any changes in the “entities” and other multimodal elements depicted graphically on the party’s campaign posters, billboards and other publicity material over successive time periods?

## **1.5 Overview of chapters:**

The thesis has six chapters. Chapter one presents the background to the study, the statement of the problem, objectives, and research questions. Chapter one allows the reader to understand why the researcher has chosen to investigate this topic.

Chapter two has two parts. The first part presents a review of literature relevant for contextualizing and guiding the study. This part provides a background account of the Democratic Alliance and its predecessors, and presents studies on transformation and political discourse in the South African context. The second part provides an account of the relevant theories and literature surrounding political discourse analysis, social semiotics, multimodality, code-switching and onomastics.

Chapter three describes the methodology. This chapter presents the methodological paradigm, and shows why certain methodological approaches were chosen to answer the research questions. The chapter describes the data required, and how they were collected and analysed.

Chapter four presents findings related to the first two research questions. It discusses how any observed changes at two time periods in organisational names (or autonyms), personal names and place names in the corpus may be read from the lenses of transformation. The chapter also presents results of any changes observed over time in the languages of the party's documents. It discusses the semiotic potential of the changing profile of language in the documents of the party and of code-switching. By drawing together findings from these two datasets, the chapter suggests how different sources of data are contributing to a composite semiotic signature of the DA.

Chapter five addresses the third research question and offers multimodal analysis of how the DA presents itself to the public in billboards, logos, posters, etc. The analysis allows for inferring the semiotic potential (from the standpoint of transformation) of the various representations of the DA and its predecessors over time.

In the concluding chapter six, a summary of the study is offered and its implications for doing a political discourse analysis are highlighted. This is done against the backdrop of van Dijk's point that "PDA will only be accepted by political scientists if it has something to offer, preferably something that political scientists would not otherwise (get to) know – at least not as well – through other methods, such as polls, participant observation or content analysis" (van Dijk, 2000:37).

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **2 LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.1 Chapter overview:**

The following chapter provides background information on the political party chosen as case study, then presents the literature and theoretical frameworks that are relevant to addressing the research objectives. The various frameworks that the researcher presents show that political science and political discourse analysis favour the use and analysis of language, but ignore the crucial meaning potential of semiotic resources other than language. Work by van Dijk (2000), van Leeuwen (2008) and Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) is drawn upon to affirm that there is a need for a broader semiotic approach to analyse political texts and transformation in organisations.

#### **2.2 The DA and its Predecessor Organisations:**

The Democratic Alliance (DA) has been chosen for analysis to show how a political party may or may not have transformed (in terms of participation) because the Progressive Party (the original predecessor) was described as a pre-dominantly “white” party (Swart, 2003:2). The party has been labelled with this “white” identity until present, even though the DA are constantly claiming to be a racially diverse political party.

The initial party, the Progressive Party (PP), broke away from one of the two major parties. The two major parties going into the 1948 elections were: the United Party (UP) and the National Party (NP) (Stultz, 1974). The United Party (which had been in government) believed government should relax regulations which sought to prevent black people from moving into urban areas. Whilst seeking to maintain white dominance, the UP argued in favour of gradually reforming the political system so that black South Africans could at some point exercise some sort of power in a racially integrated South Africa (Adam and Giliomee, 1979). In contrast to this ideology, the NP advanced the notion of strictly enforced segregation between the races and total disempowerment of black South Africans. With regards to election tactics, the NP

was extremely explicit in exploiting white fears while campaigning in the 1948 election. The NP won the elections. Liberal members of the UP, who felt that coalitions with smaller parties with the same vision for gradually reforming the political system would be beneficial and still allow them to maintain seats in parliament, decided to break away to form a new party in 1959, the Progressive Party (PP). The PP at the time, because of minor strongholds they had in parliament and in the country, was considered to be passive in terms of their political communication. Even though their intentions of equality and freedom were “leftist” at the time, maintaining their seats seemed more important than branching out to become an aggressive political opposition (Selikow, 2000).

As mentioned previously, the Progressive Party (PP) was formed in 1959 under the leadership of Jan Steytler. The party was recognized as the opposition to the ruling party (NP) at the time because they fought against the apartheid regime. The party mainly consisted of white males who were mostly English speaking (Swart, 2003). The PP defined its role in politics as the only party in a ‘whites-only parliament’ to fight for equal rights for blacks, coloureds, whites and Asians at the time (Swart, 2003). The PP had a liberal and anti-apartheid ideology and they were considered ‘leftist’ because they fought to protect the freedom of individuals (Stultz, 1974). The PP was a regional party which had few strongholds nationally. It had 12 MPs, of which eleven were from the merger with the UP and one a Native Representative Member (Selikow, 2000). After the election in 1961, only one member, Helen Suzman, was voted in and maintained that one seat for 13 years.

Jan Steytler was party leader until 1970, when the PP merged with the Reformed Party (RP) to form the Progressive Reform Party (PRP). The new merger was led by Harry Lawrence and Harry Swarz until 1975 (Sisk, 1995).

The PRP was formed in 1970 when members of the UP left to form the Committee for United Opposition. Upon the formation of the Progressive Reform Party (PRP), the merger allowed the party and its members to focus on opposing the ruling party. The PRP had a short life in the political domain before merging with the Committee for United Opposition, NP and UP. This was due to upcoming coalitions which were intended to increase their position in politics and the public (Stultz, 1974). Even though the PFP was predominantly a white male party, the leader, Colin Eglin, maintained the ideologies of the PP and PRP of being anti-apartheid and clamouring for a Constitutional reform. The fight for equality in the country and the protection

of individual rights was a long battle. The PFP was the only opposition to the NP government during apartheid (Adam and Giliomee, 1979). The PFP supported the ideology of equality for all South Africans irrespective of race, colour or creed (Adam and Giliomee, 1979). The successors of Colin Eglin, Frederik van Zyl Slabbert along with parliamentarian Helen Suzman and other members of the 'whites-only' parliament was the only 'whites' to speak out against the apartheid regime (Swart, 2003). The PFP was a regional party with strongholds in the Cape Province at the time maintaining up to 25 seats in parliament (South Africa Yearbook, 1982). In 1988, Zach de Beer became the PFP leader. He negotiated with the Independent Party (IP), the New Democratic Movement (NDM) and the PFP to form the Democratic Party (DP). These coalitions of small white reformist parties created an opposition to the ruling government, an opposition that sought to abolish apartheid (Sisk, 1995).

The new merger was a success for parliamentary opposition. In the 1970s and early 1980s, the PFP maintained one seat in parliament until increasing its seats to seven. However, in the 1989 general election, the DP won 33 seats, gradually increasing in number after the 1996 election, when new leader Tony Leon introduced a more aggressive approach to opposition politics.

Zach de Beer, Dennis Worrall and Wynand Malan were the party's leaders until 1994, when Tony Leon became the sole leader of the party (Leon, 2009). The DP remained a white male dominant party which had tremendous strongholds and representatives in the Cape Province, now known as the Western Cape (Leon, 2009). The guiding ideology of the Democratic Party was liberalism, an ideology that has a strong tradition in South African culture (Sisk, 1995: 141). The DP's ideology stresses the primacy of the individual, rather than the organic concepts of "volk", nation, or ethnicity (De Beer 1991, interview cited in Sisk, 1995:142). Sisk (1995) adds that in addition to supporting classical tenets of liberalism, outlined in the DP's 1989 election manifesto, the party also emphasized national reconciliation and nation building. To give political expression to these ideas, the primary plank in the DP's constitutional platform was federalism. After the 1999 election, the DP became the official opposition to the ANC led government. The DP decided that the best way to protect and strengthen South Africa was to build a strong opposition that is able to restrict the one-party dominance of the ANC (Leon, 2009).

The Democratic Alliance (DA) was formed in 2000, when the DP reached a merger with the Federal Alliance and the New National Party (NNP). On 26 November 2006, Tony Leon

rejected nomination for the leadership. In 2007, Helen Zille was elected and became the first female leader of the DA.

In November 2008, the DA was re-launched as a party that delivers for all (DA manifesto, 2008). It was accompanied by a new logo to symbolise the party's diversity. This re-positioning created a newfound favour with voters in the 2009 elections (EISA, 1999). The DA maintained a stronghold in the Western Cape and rebranded itself as a national party.

The above review shows the metamorphoses undergone by the organisation now known as the DA. In 2013, the chairperson of the DA's Federal Council, James Selfe, made the following claim about the growth and diversity of the party:

*Under Helen Zille's leadership we have become the most diverse party in the history of South Africa, growing from 1.9 million votes to just over 4 million, an unprecedented growth of 33.7%. This growth is a direct result of Helen's unrelenting focus on building the DA and her heartfelt desire to create a genuinely better life for all South Africans* (Selfe, 2013).

It would be interesting to find other kinds of semiotic evidence to support or to even contradict this claim.

### **2.3 Political Discourse and Political Discourse Analysis (PDA):**

Political discourse is identified by its actors - professional politicians or political institutions at local, national and international levels. From an interactional point of view, van Dijk (2002) asserts that we should include recipients and consumers (such as the public, media, voters, non-voters, etc.) in political communicative events as they are also involved in the political process. Al-Faki (2014:180) defines political discourse as the written or spoken language, verbal and non-verbal, used in politics to steer the emotions of the audience to affect their opinions and attitudes. Evidently, language remains a central point of political discourse analysis (PDA).

Political discourse usually combines its topics with those from other societal domains (education, economics, sport etc.) and is usually future-oriented. Wodak (1989) states that "political language is the way of conveying meaning and is obscured by the speaker's intentions and ideologies that are not always overt". In essence, the events, actions, debates, documents, speeches, proposals, manifestos, and campaign posters are material that constitute as political discourse and are consumed by participants in the societal domain within a political context (Wodak, 1989; van Dijk, 2000).

Political Discourse Analysis (PDA) focuses on the analysis of political discourse. It critically deals with the reproduction of political power, power abuse or domination through political discourse. Political Discourse Analysis (PDA), like discourse analysis, is a form of content analysis. Discourse analysis shows how specific actors construct an argument and how this argument fits into wider social practices (Fairclough, 1995).

According to van Dijk (2000:24), “once we have analysed the particular properties of political contexts, political discourse analysis in many respects will be like any other kind of discourse analysis”. The specifics of political discourse analysis therefore need to be seen in the relations between discourse structures and the political contexts of their use. The condition is that such structures and strategies must be “functional in the adequate accomplishment of political actions in political contexts” (van Dijk 2000:25). Such actions may include: lobbying, criticising the opponent, election campaign, party propaganda, seeking to broaden the membership base, governing, legislating, and so on. Another condition for “legitimately” speaking of PDA, is that it should offer political science insights it would otherwise not obtain using its traditional methods of inquiry. According to van Dijk (2000:37), “PDA will only be accepted by political scientists if it has something to offer, preferably something scientists would not otherwise (get to) know – at least not as well – through other methods, such as polls, participant observation or content analysis”.

What distinguishes political discourse analysis from other research found in political science, is the combination of social theory and linguistic theory (Fairclough, 1992; Wodak, 1989). There is also an emerging argument for a more integrated semiotic view of public and political communications which combine analyses of a range of sign-based systems (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). Although certain features will, and must remain, constant in the field of political discourse, central to this is the role of language and language structure, and other semiotic resources cannot be ignored.

In political discourse analysis, political actions, as detailed above, become the basis for analysis of discourse samples at a variety of levels: topic (what politicians say about their policies, their opponents, themselves); textual schemata (argumentation structure, warrants for argument, opening and closing); local semantics (polarization, e.g. positive self-presentation and negative

other-presentation, disclaimers: “I have nothing against them...but”); lexicon (words which are used to describe us vs. them); syntax (using deictic pronouns in a biased way, especially the first person plural subject or possessive pronouns (we/our)). These levels have “many implications for the political position, alliances, solidarity and socio-political position of the speaker, depending on the relevant in-group being constructed in the present context” (van Dijk, 2000:34). These linguistic formations in political discourse can be realized for the analysis of power, abuse, transformation and domination. Such evaluations are characteristically divided. For example, the “we” can be evaluated and represented as democratic and “they” as not, “our” soldiers or those who share our cause are freedom fighters, those of the “others” are terrorists (van Dijk, 1995). Indeed, most studies of ‘political language’ focus on the special words being used in politics to convince and influence the audience (Al-Faki, 2014).

By investigating only the political discourse of text and talk produced by politicians and political actors in the political process, we are not considering certain other meanings that are hidden in images, gestures, names, or places where they campaign, and this can be said to be shortcomings of ‘doing a PDA’ in the traditional sense.

#### **2.4 Social Semiotics and Multimodality:**

Halliday and Hasan (1989) define social semiotics as the study of meaning considering other modes of meaning which are outside the realm of language. Lemke (1990) sees social semiotics as attempting to unite the study of human behaviour, especially meaning-making resources (language, music, food, dance, images, colours, public spaces, and so on) and as having (potential) social value and significance (van Leeuwen, 2005). Social semiotics sees semiotic potential (that is, possible meanings) that can be made with given resources in specific contexts.

This view of communication is a broad one that obviously goes beyond the narrow conception of language as being the mode par excellence for communicating, and that alerts us to other modes through which social meanings can be made. Indeed, van Leeuwen notes that “social semiotics is also a practice, it is oriented to observation and analysis, to opening our eyes and ears and other senses for the richness and complexity of semiotic production and interpretation, and to social intervention, to the discovery of new semiotic resources and new ways of using



existing semiotic resources” (van Leeuwen, 2006, p. xi). The latter point is particularly relevant to this research, as I seek alternative or often ignored material upon which to base political discourse analysis specifically, new or untapped semiotic resources for analysing how a political party may or may not have transformed over time.

Semiotic resources are defined “as the actions and artefacts we use to communicate, whether they are produced physiologically – with our vocal apparatus; with the muscles we use to create facial expressions and gestures, etc. – or by means of technologies – with pen, ink and paper; with computer hardware and software; with fabrics, scissors and sewing machines, etc” (van Leeuwen, 2006: 3).

On this view, it is not only language or its many aspects (accents, vocabulary, rhetorical style, and so on) that are potentially socially significant; virtually every action or object can be drawn into social communication. There is socially significant semiotic potential in the manner office furniture is arranged; in the material (glass or brick) used as office ‘walls’; in the names of persons with whom one is associated; in places people go to or do not go to; in the manner they approach themes; in the languages they choose to use or not to use; in the colours they identify with; or in what entities are depicted in publicity materials and how these entities are positioned. With these objects and actions, institutions (e.g. political parties) can express who they are, what they are doing, how they want to be related, and so on (van Leeuwen, 2006).

Furthermore, Scollon and Scollon (2003) argue that signs (verbal and non-verbal) and symbols take a major part of their meaning from how and where they are placed, and thus they propose that signs are all around us and are part of our daily life in all sorts of discourses; even our bodies and appearances at a particular place and time take up meaning and have semiotic potential. Thus, apart from words and/or language, there are a range of socially meaningful resources into which meaning can be read. The notion of semiotic potential, like semiotic resource, suggests that these actions and objects by themselves may not be meaningful (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). These potentials are realised within a social framework of representation and interpretation. It is interesting from the standpoint of my research that the notion of semiotic potential of a given resource can be historically shaped. In other words, the actual semiotic potential of person-names or place-names today may be informed by past uses or non-use of such names. According to van Leeuwen, “an actual semiotic potential [may be] constituted by those past uses that are known to and considered relevant by the users of the

resource, and by such potential uses as might be uncovered by the users on the basis of their specific needs and interests” (van Leeuwen 2006: 4).

By using the method of political discourse analysis for my research, I will adopt a social semiotic view of political communication. While paying attention to traditional text meanings (as in themes, self-presentation strategies), I will be particularly interested in the semiotic potential of non-traditional semiotic resources like place-names, person-names, language choices, images and so on for communicating possible changes in the identity of the Democratic Alliance. The social perspective or framework is transformation (in the sense of inclusiveness) in the South African context. This task therefore, warrants a brief review of work in multimodality.

Multimodality refers to the diversity of semiotic resources of various kinds that co-occur, interplay and get deployed in the work of textual meaning-making (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Multimodality can be used as a technical tool aiming to highlight the meaning-making processes we do at all times to create and exploit various semiotic potential in texts (Idema, 2003). As seen earlier, from a multimodal or multisemiotic perspective, one would emphasize that language-in-use does not occur on its own; it is integrated with and dependent on other forms of meaning-making (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). The analysis of posters, billboards and other publicity material of the Democratic Alliance warrants the use of the grammar of visual design outlined by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006).

Interestingly, from the perspective of my study, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006:47) suggest that visual structures “produce images of reality which are bound up with interests of social institutions within the images are produced, circulated and read. They are ideological”. The purpose for my study would then be to determine if an ideology of transformation will be evident in the visual structures of images on materials of the DA. Kress and van Leeuwen apply Halliday’s three metafunctions (ideational, interpersonal, and textual) to the analysis of images. In terms of the ideational metafunction, the question is asked about the people, places, and objects that are depicted. From the perspective of my study, the corresponding question will be: has there been a change over time in, especially, the people (and possibly the places) or participants represented on posters, billboards, and other publicity material of the DA (and its forerunner organisations)?

But the mere depiction of persons does not exhaust all of the possible meanings that can be made. The interpersonal metafunction invites us to consider the nature of social interaction between depicted persons and the viewers of the image. Depending on a variety of considerations (eye contact, poise, and so on), depicted persons may communicate a sense of distance or proximity. If people of certain ethnicities or races that have not traditionally appeared on materials of the DA are now found to appear on such materials, the question one would then ask would be whether such persons are included as active participants with which a relevant sub-population of not all population segments are expected to actively identify with.

Other meanings can equally be derived from the textual metafunction. Based on Kress and van Leeuwen's visual grammar, meaning can be read into the arrangement or composition of entities depicted on images. Saliency, a subsystem of composition, considers the 'weight' of how eye-catching the represented participants on an image are. Saliency can be realized through foregrounding of a represented participant, the size of the participant relative to other participants on the image, colour and so on. For my study, if a represented social participant (a person of a given race or gender) who has traditionally not appeared on DA materials is found to appear at a later stage but in the background, meanings around the extent of transformation could be read.

Another interesting subsystem of composition is framing, which uses continuous flows and junctures (e.g. spaces between represented participants) to analyse how integrated represented participants are. Of course framing is a matter of degree, but the relative absence of framing stresses group identity, its presence signifies individuality whether 'new' represented social participants. Information value is the third compositional subsystem, and it analyses what meanings can be read into the 'zoning' of represented participants on the image. This can equally be applied to textual data (e.g. messages in different languages) incorporated into an image. In vertical zoning (left-right), old/given information is placed on the left, while new information is placed to the right. There is also the centre – margin zoning. According to Kress and Van Leeuwen for "something to be presented as Centre means that it is as the nucleus of the information to which all the other elements are in some sense subservient. The Margins are these ancillary, dependent elements (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006:196). Should this form of composition occur in my data, it should be interesting to see what is placed at the centre of the composition, using a transformation lens.

Also of interest is the work on a grammar of colour (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Colour is a mode because it is a developed or codified resource for making meaning or signs in a social group (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006:346). There is meaning potential in the choice of one or the other colour. The notion of semiotic potential of colours is underscored when Kress and van Leeuwen (2006:355) note that colours, like other signifiers, “carry a set of affordances from which sign-makers and interpreters select according to their communicative needs and interests in a given context. In some cases their choice will be highly regulated by explicit or implicit rules, or by the authority of experts and role models. In other cases, for instance in the production and interpretation of art, it will be relatively free”. Inspired by Halliday’s metafunctions of language, Kress and van Leeuwen see colour as having an ideational function (“they denote specific people, places and things as well as classes of people, places and things” Kress and van Leeuwen 2006:347). In terms of interpersonal function of colour, they write: “Colour is also used to convey ‘interpersonal’ meaning. Just as language allows us to realize speech acts, so colour allows us to realize ‘colour acts’. It can be and is used to do things to or for each other, e.g. to impress or intimidate through ‘power dressing’, to warn against obstructions and other hazards by painting them orange, or even to subdue people” (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006:348). Colour also has a textual function, helping for instance to provide coherence. It is a resource for constructing textuality through colour cohesion and contrast in the layout of the graphic text over time (van Leeuwen 2011:2). Bateman (2014) reviews the analytical framework of van Leeuwen (2011) and states that “in order for colour to function as a signifier of identity, attention is drawn to the supporting discourses in which socially sanctioned “authorities” such as designers, politicians, artists’ etcetera, state or enact particular colour choices but also the meanings that are to be associated to those choices” (Bateman 2014:3).

The multimodal tools that Mafofo and Banda (2014), Molokomme (2009), Kelleher (2014), van Leeuwen (2008) and Iedema (2003) use for analysis studies the interaction, relationship and interpretation of elements of a multimodal text within a particular context. They found that the compositional elements such as the placement of certain languages, the use of colours, genders, religious symbols and races represented, the positioning of text or the angle of the camera shot, was socially meaningful and relevant to a particular context. Thus, the visual grammar makes a range of resources available to allow the realization of different meanings that can go beyond the use of analysis of written and spoken language.

From the above, it is clear that multimodal analysis offers political discourse analysis a rich source of interpretation. Besides images and general language words used to make socially significant meanings, proper names are also worth exploring as socially meaningful resources.

## **2.5 Onomastics:**

According to Hough (2013), onomastics is the study of names of all kinds such as those of people, places, landscape features, buildings, organizations, and institutions. Names are interesting for what they tell us about ourselves and about the people who share or have shared the world with us. Hough (2013) states that the choices we make in giving names to our children, pets, etc. reflect the things that are important to us and at the same time the things we make decisions about. Thus, the names used in texts do not merely function as a means of referring to places or persons. They can be used strategically to construct an “ideologically preferred reality” (Galasiński and Skowronek, 2001:58). Names can reveal, among other things, a person’s cultural heritage, nationality, and economic standing (Hough 2013). In this sense, a name can be a blessing or a burden if one’s life chances are partly determined by the background clues conveyed by it (Bosch and De Klerk, 1996).

Kadmon (2000:2) explains that there are some distinctions and categorisations in onomastics. Some of the most prominent distinctions in onomastic studies include the analysis of allonyms (a variant of a name), anthroponym (proper name of a person or a group of people), toponyms, also referred to as choronym (proper name of a geographical or administrative unit of land), ergonym (name of product or brand), chrematonym (proper names of social events, institutions, and organizations) and lastly, ethnonym (proper name of an ethnic group).

Significantly, Galasiński and Skowronek (2001) state that in public and political discourse, “onomastic material is widely used as a means of aligning oneself with preferred ideologies or sets of preferred representations of reality”. Basically, names of all kinds therefore have a socially relevant semiotic potential and they are worth paying attention to in the analysis of social meanings, ideologies or social changes. Many scholars have viewed critical onomastics as the study of names for social analysis (Batoma 2009; Price and Price 1972; Lea 1992 and Pärli 2011). These studies have adopted this perspective to study society, ethnic groups, organizations, experiences, and historical happenings, attitudes towards life and other people,

cultural ideas and values. Ahmad (2008) found that negative affect words were noteworthy when Islam and Muslim were articulated in his diachronic corpus of texts. Measuring the changes in polarity of sentiments that are articulated about a target community shows that names have a socially indexical function (Ahmad, 2008). Therefore, names serve a potential interest to the analysis of transformation (in the sense of participation) of a political party.

## **2.6 Code-Switching and Language Mixing:**

Code-switching is “a language phenomenon in the behaviour of multilingual speakers – in other words, it is the consequence of being bi/multilingual” (Auer, 1998). Simply put, code-switching is “the use of two or more linguistic varieties in the same conversation” (Myers-Scotton, 1993) and it involves the selection by “bilinguals or multilinguals of forms from an embedded variety in utterances from a matrix variety during the same conversation” (Myers-Scotton, 1993). This study will be using the term as both intra-sentential and inter-sentential switching. Blom and Gumperz (1972) proposed that the functions of code-switching could be analysed in terms of situational and metaphorical switching. Situational switching can be noticed when a speaker’s change of code reflects societal norms. There is a “change of participants, settings or topics” (Blom & Gumperz, 1972:410). In contrast, metaphorical switching happens when speakers “use a code to convey referential meanings and symbolic connotations” (Blom and Gumperz, 1972:417). This can be seen in various degrees of involvement, objectiveness, or a power struggle. Blom and Gumperz (1972) assert that situational switching reflects conventional linguistic expectations and usage of a community, whereas metaphorical switching allows speakers to explore the contextualised meanings of a code in order to convey certain kinds of covert messages. Of course, it cannot always be assumed that switching from one code to another can be compartmentalized in non-permeable ways.

The semiotic potential of situational code-switching for a political party can mean a recognition that its participants and settings have changed or diversified. Similarly, the semiotic potential of metaphorical code-switching for a political party can convey interpersonal meanings of symbolic subtexts, associations, and/or undertones.

To use another typology, code-switching in classrooms is said to have several functions, such as interpersonal, affective/emotional and solidarity meanings, the translation of and/or

repeating of the same information in different languages, and providing complementary information (that is, different pieces of information in different languages) (van Der Merwe & van Der Merwe, 2006; Milroy & Muysken, 1995; Arthur, 1996; and Lin, 2008). In political discourse, the semiotic potential of each situational and metaphorical switching can be interpreted on a sliding scale, with the symbolic solidarity function being the weakest on the transformation scale. An example of this can be seen in political greetings or attempting to mobilise the crowd with the usage of “Amandla!”. The strongest on the scale would be different pieces of information in different languages because it would signal that the audience is portrayed as being competent in several languages, just like the speaker who also seeks to portray that same image. In between both would be code-switching as translation.

Baker (2006) explains that “marked code-switching happens when people more deliberately use code-switching for social, political or economic purposes – this is referred to as a marked choice of language” (Baker 2006:109). Baker further asserts that code-switching does not happen randomly, and that there is usually a purpose and logic in switching between languages. However, unmarked code-switching refers to “an unexpected change in the languages employed in the interaction, this can be an indication of attitude during the conversation” (Baker, 2006). Again, one can be critical of such neat categorisations because they assume a certain ontology of languages as separate entities in the experience of all users.

In political discourse, marked code-switching can be expected to be dominant. There are three functions of code-switching identified by C. Baker<sup>1</sup> (2006) which one can expect to find in political discourse. Firstly, there is the function of communicating friendship, desire, to identify and affiliate with. The use of the listener’s stronger language in part of the conversation may indicate deference, wanting to belong or to be accepted. The second function shows the social distance between a speaker and a listener. Baker (2006) explains that the speaker may switch to a language of power to indicate that s/he is of different status and has less affiliation with the listener. Lastly, code-switching indicates a change of attitude during the conversation, for example, a greeting may be expressed in one language, and business in another (Baker, 2006). These functions can clearly be seen in the manner in which language use helps politicians to portray different identities. Banda (2005) suggests that code-switching may also serve as a

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<sup>1</sup> There are two different authors in this work that share Baker as a surname and whose work was published in the same year (2006). To distinguish the difference, the use of initials are implemented.

means of portraying various identities. Pavlenko & Blackledge (2004:19) define identity as “social discursive, narrative options offered by a particular society in a specific time and place to which individuals and groups of individuals appeal in an attempt to claim social spaces and social prerogatives”. Thus, Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) propose three types of identities: assumed, imposed, and contested. Viewing identity as discursive means that language use can serve to construct a particular identity which a politician wishes to assume. Tang’s (2008: 9) study of code-switching in political campaigning discourse in Taiwan shows how “in campaign situations, by converging to people’s code(s), politicians attempt to draw potential supporters’ attention and momentarily to create the social solidarity, particularly the integration of a society or a particular ethnic group”.

It is worth noting that in assuming that identity, the politician may be contesting a previous identity imposed on him or her. This is related to Bhatt’s (2008:24) point “that code-switching can invite social actors to break free from inherited systems of social practices and engage in meaning making processes, drawing on cultural resources to take on new practices”.

Sebba (2012) has drawn attention to the phenomenon of code-switching in written texts. He calls this phenomenon ‘mixed language writing’. Unlike in spoken language, it can be assumed in written texts the main type of switches would be of the marked type. Given the potential functions of code-switching, analysing a corpus of texts of the DA for languages used could have interesting semiotic potential, from the standpoint of transformation which is understood as participation (and participants or addressees). In support of this potential, Bhatt’s (2008) conclusion in his study of language mixing and identity representations in India is instructive. Bhatt (2008:199) says that “code-switching, as linguistic hybridity, is a third space where speakers (readers/writers) (re-)position themselves with regard to new community practices of speaking and writing. It is in this space that (speakers/)writers, as well as (hearers/) readers, are presumed to have the capacity to synthesize, to transform: code-switching serves as a visible marker of this transformation”.

## **2.7 Chapter summary:**

This chapter has provided background on the history of the political formation now known as the DA. It has also reviewed studies on transformation-related discourses of political parties in South Africa, from which it is evident that the focus has been on the contents of text and talk, and the theme of how the parties themselves are transforming has generally been neglected in



linguistic studies. To obtain a framework for analysing the latter theme using relatively neglected semiotic resources, the chapter presented theoretical accounts of political discourse (analysis), social semiotics and multimodality, onomastics and code-switching.



## **CHAPTER THREE:**

### **3 METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Chapter overview:**

The chapter will describe the study's methodological paradigm as well as the approaches employed to collect, process and analyse the data.

#### **3.2 Methodological Paradigm:**

This study uses both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Whereas the first objective requires a quantitative approach, the second and third objectives require qualitative approaches.

Qualitative research concerns itself with “human beings, interpersonal relationships, personal values, meanings, beliefs, thoughts, and feelings. The qualitative researcher attempts to attain rich, real, deep and valid data and from a rational standpoint, whereby the approach is inductive” (Leedy, 1993:143). On the other hand, quantitative analysis is a numeric collection and analysis of data. Quantitative analysis can be defined as “research that uses numbers as evidence to make a decision, interpretation, and to gain understanding of statistical results from a particular phenomenon being studied” (Johnson, 2008).

For the qualitative part, the study draws on van Dijk's (2000) account of political discourse analysis, which will be supplemented by multimodal discourse analysis. It may be recalled from the section on literature review that features of discourse (e.g. at topic, lexical, syntactic levels) needed to be seen or shown as supporting political action in political contexts for one to have done political discourse analysis, rather than discourse analysis generally. Banda and Mafofo (2014) assert that multimodality refers to the “diversity of semiotic resources of various kinds that co-occur, interplay and get deployed in the work of textual meaning” (Banda and Mafofo 2014:4). Significantly, multimodal discourse analysis (MDA) is an interpretive paradigm which emphasises the “de-centring of language as a favoured tool of meaning making modes in our semiotic system” (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). Therefore, meaning can be

drawn from modes other than the use of language through the implementation of various multimodal tools (informational value, salience, framing, colour etc.). In relation to Halliday's (1989) social semiotic approach to language, MDA can be used to model the meaning potential in words, sounds, and images as sets of inter-related systems and structures concerned with both text and context.

For the quantitative part, corpus linguistics is used. Baker (2006:1) defines corpus analysis as the "use of large bodies of naturally occurring language data shared on computers to uncover linguistics patterns, which enable us to make sense of the ways that language is used in the construction of discourses". She points out further that corpus "frequencies can be used to uncover the existence of discourses in text. Word list frequencies can be helpful in determining the focus of a text, but must make presuppositions about the ways that words are actually used within it". This agrees with Biber's (2010) point that corpus based research actually depends on both quantitative and qualitative techniques. He further explains that "association patterns represent quantitative relations, measuring the extent to which features and variants are associated with contextual factors. However qualitative interpretations are also an essential step in corpus based analysis".

### **3.3 Data types:**

The data required in this study consists of two types: textual and non-textual data. Following van Dijk's (2000:24) description of examples of political discourse, the textual data collected consisted of campaign speeches, parliamentary speeches, debates and membership lists that were produced by the DA and its predecessors. The non-textual data relate to graphic/visual representations in campaign posters, flyers, billboards, manifestos and other documents of the current DA and its predecessors.

The diachronic corpus of data covers a period of 26 years. The researcher divided the material according to two time periods:

1. 1989 - 2007 (Democratic Party (DP))
2. 2008 - 2015 (Democratic Alliance (DA))

Although it would have been useful to be able to go back to 1959 when the Progressive Party was founded, enquiries made by the researcher at the offices of the DA and in libraries did not

turn up documents dating back to the days of the Progressive Party, Progressive Reform Party and the Progressive Federal Party. Although this is a shortcoming, it may also be noted that it is within the 26 year period (1989 –2015) that many of the changes have taken place in this political formation. Recall the view by Selfe (2013) concerning Helen Zille’s role within this period:

*Under Helen Zille’s leadership we have become the most diverse party in the history of South Africa, growing from 1.9 million votes to just over 4 million, an unprecedented growth of 33.7%. This growth is a direct result of Helen’s unrelenting focus on building the DA and her heartfelt desire to create a genuinely better life for all South Africans. (Selfe, 2013).*

It is within this period (2008 – 2015) that the party moved from being a regional party to a nation-wide party and the official position to the ruling party (ANC) (Leon 2009).

### **3.4 Data source, size and sampling:**

The data (textual and graphic) were collected from several sources: offices of the DA, the internet, private collections of individuals and those captured by the researcher (flyers, photographs of billboards), and public archives/libraries. Since the data are both textual and graphic in nature, the researcher will express the size in two different ways. Firstly, for the textual data, the researcher ensured that for each time frame there was a minimum of 50,000 word tokens provided. As selection was constrained by what was available, the researcher used convenience samples. According to Farrokhi & Mahmoudi-Hamidaba (2012), a convenience sample is used when a sample is “taken from a group you have easy access to. The idea is that anything learned from this study will be appropriate to the larger population in which the study is based on”. Effort was however made to obtain data samples that were representative of the various text types, e.g. membership lists, manifestos, texts of campaign speeches, parliamentary speeches, newspaper reports, etc.

With respect to the graphic or visual data, although a convenience sample was also employed, effort was made to have a minimum of 20 records (flyers, pictures of billboards, etc.) across the respective time frames. Table 1 presents an overview of the different types of material obtained and the total number of word tokens in the respective time frames.

Types of documents:	Time Frame 1 number (and total number of word tokens):	Time Frame 2 number (and total number of word tokens):
Speeches:	35 (32,500 tokens)	35 (52,211 tokens)
Membership lists:	1 (339 tokens)	1 (407 tokens)
Manifestos/reports:	2 (19,909 tokens)	4 (38,453 tokens)
Photographs of billboards:	0 (0 tokens)	6 (63 tokens)
Photographs of campaign posters:	8 (71 tokens)	5 (40 tokens)
Logos/slogans:	3 (3 tokens)	1 (5 tokens)
Total number of texts and tokens in time frame:	49 (52,822 tokens)	52 (91,179 tokens)

*Table 1: Overview of document types in corpus.*

### **3.5 Preparation of the collected data and analysis related to objective one:**

A corpus analysis tool, AntConc, was used for the quantitative processing of data. This software generates frequencies, word lists, and concordances also referred to as key word in context (KWIC), concordance plots, and clusters and collocates (Tang, 2011). As texts had to be in electronic form to be analysed, the researcher typed up or scanned (using Optical Character Recognition) all texts that were not obtained electronically. Before texts were imported to AntConc, they were manually annotated with some relevant information.

To facilitate counting, the researcher placed a 'p' before every toponym (place name) that was mentioned in each text. Only toponyms linked to the DA or its predecessor organisations were taken into account, not toponyms referred to in the speeches in conjunction with the activities of other political organisations. With regards to anthroponyms, the first and second names in the text were presented as one word, preceded by a 'd' to facilitate processing. Thus, Helen Zille became dHelenZille. Similarly, only names associated with the DA and its predecessor organisations (as contextually determined) were taken into account, not references to names linked to other organisations. This annotation made it easier for the researcher to identify anthroponyms in the word list generated by AntConc.

Identifying the autonyms (self-labels) of the political organisation over time did not need any queries to be processed through AntConc. These names are documented in various archival sources, which the researcher consulted. Processing of autonyms was done qualitatively.

Apart from the data related to autonyms, all of the obtained textual data were converted to a “.txt” format, then imported into the environment of AntConc in folders representing the different time periods. The main query that was run on AntConc was the keyword list. A keyword list acts as a signpost for analysts. Explaining why they are there and what they do can lead to interesting and unexpected findings (P. Baker, 2006). A keyword list was chosen because the most common types of keywords are proper nouns, which have meaning potential.

To analyse toponyms in the context of research objective one, the researcher used geographical dispersion comparing the political geographies of toponyms of both corpora. Toponyms identified were displayed on political/administrative maps of South Africa to reveal any geographical broadening of the party’s reach over time. Broadening could be across urban/rural areas or across provinces traditionally associated with certain racial demographics. Data such as these would be semiotically read as meaning that, for example, in time frame two the party’s geographical penetration or reach has changed (to become more inclusive or less inclusive).

With respect to the analysis of anthroponyms, although the names people bear do not necessarily give away their ethnic or racial belonging for a host of idiosyncratic naming practices, name changes or choices as a result of marriage, religion, socio-political expediency etc.), the researcher attempted to use personal knowledge/cultural knowledge and a resource on South African names (Campbell, 1996) to assign identified names to ethnic/racial groups, specifically, black, coloured, White, Indian, and Other. The frequency of occurrence of anthroponyms per ethnic/racial category was determined, and the frequencies in the two time frames compared. The same process was conducted for names related to gender. The results were then discussed in terms of any shifts that may have taken place with respect to demographic and gender groups with which the party is associated. A shift in the direction of greater inclusion would be regarded as evidence or signature of semiotic transformation.

To analyse the party’s autonyms over time, the results were collected manually and analysed qualitatively. The researcher decided to present the change in autonyms over time in the form

of a timeline – depicting the relevant changes in the name, the meaning potential of names, and the party’s mission in a given historical context.

### **3.6 Processing and analysing data for objective two:**

Objective two seeks to analyse the semiotic potential related to changes in the various languages that were employed in the DA’s texts over time. The analysis of data for this objective was done qualitatively.

In order to identify the changes in the languages in the respective time frames, the researcher read through each text that was collected to identify the ones that were exclusively in one language (English, Afrikaans, an Nguni language) and texts which had a mixture of languages for each time frame. During the identification process, the researcher colour-coded and highlighted any instances of languages other than English in the texts. Following this process, the researcher counted how many texts in each time frame were exclusively in English or in Afrikaans, and how many of the texts had a mixture of languages.

In terms of interpretation, we would say that semiotic transformation towards greater inclusiveness has taken place if in time frame one the majority of the texts were in one language, but in time frame two it is not one language that has the majority of the texts but there are texts that make use of more than one language, or there are texts in languages that had not previously been used.

For the texts with code-switching, the interpretation would be that, semiotically, transformation towards greater inclusiveness can be said to have taken place if:

- a. In the texts of time frame one, there were very few code-switching instances compared to time frame two;
- b. In the texts of time frame one, the languages involved in the code-switching were only limited to English and Afrikaans, but in time frame two other Nguni languages are included; and
- c. In the texts of time frame one, the most common function of code-switching is the symbolic one (greeting, etc.) but in time frame two, there are various substantive types of information in different languages along with their translations.

The comparative and interpretive analysis above of the texts would mean that from time frame one to time frame two there is evidence of transformation, progressing and showing a more inclusive, interpersonal, and openness to diversity in the texts of the DA.

### **3.7 Processing and analysing data for multimodal analysis to address objective three:**

Objective three seeks to analyse the semiotic potential of multimodal material (campaign material, billboards, posters, etc.) that the DA and its predecessors produced over time. The various graphic representations chosen for this objective - billboards, campaigning posters, and logos - were obtained from the PFP, DP and DA only as the researcher was unable to obtain any material pre-dating the PFP. Once the researcher collected the necessary material, she sorted it in terms of time frames.

Various multimodal parameters such as representation of people, placement and colour, and the meaning of messages were chosen to highlight whether transformation has occurred or not. These parameters will highlight the significant changes between the texts in time frame one and time frame two. If there are various changes in, for example, who is represented, how and what message is represented on the billboards and posters over time, the interpretation would be that the party is opening up and being more inclusive towards the public.

The first approach in analysing the semiotic potential of this multimodal material will focus on the people who are represented. Effort is made to account for the changes that have occurred in the depiction of persons, from the material of time frame one to the material of time frame two. Of particular interest are changes in the race, gender, age, dressing and religion of depicted individuals.

The second approach in analysing the semiotic potential of this material will focus on, among others, changes in placement of individuals, and in the colours employed in the multimodal materials. As noted in the previous chapter, colours are a resource that can be used to do things, for example to represent people, places, ideas or things. They can also be used to communicate intended relationships, to warn, to appeal, to subdue, and so on.

Changes in colour in publicity material over time can have meaning potential from the standpoint of transformation because certain colours incite and evoke particular meanings



within a social and cultural context. In analysing the logos and other multimodal material, the researcher uses the prominent kinds of meanings with which colours have been associated, e.g. 'red' with 'aggression' and 'anger' (van Leeuwen, 2011), and compares the interpretation of the various meaning potentials of the choices that the DA has made use of and how this influenced their identity over time.

The last approach to investigate the changes in the multimodal material that the DA has produced over time, is the investigation and strategic use of messages that are relayed on the campaigning material over time. The researcher will firstly compare and contrast the various messages that have been used on the various campaigning material collected.

The messages on the material are compared and analysed in terms of length and meaning potential – exploring the various actions they evoke in the reader and what the change in messages symbolise from a standpoint of transformation. Therefore the processing and analysing of the data for this investigation considers the campaigning posters, leaflets, and billboards collected in time frame one and time frame two.

### **3.8 Chapter summary:**

This chapter presented various aspects of the study's methodology. It described the study as having both qualitative and quantitative aspects relevant to the different objectives. It also described how the various kinds of data were collected, processed and analysed. It was seen that to address objective one on onomastics, the quantitative approach required corpus queries using AntConc. For objective two on language choice and code-mixing, a qualitative approach was required, as was also the case for objective three on multimodal analysis. For each data type, the way the analysis would be interpreted to address the relevant objective was also described.

## **CHAPTER FOUR:**

### **4 ONOMASTIC MATERIAL AND LANGUAGE CHOICE**

#### **4.1 Chapter overview:**

In this chapter, I approach the first objective of this study, which is to analyse the semiotic potential of any changes there have been in the anthroponyms (people names) and the toponyms (place names) associated with the DA over time, as well as in the autonoms (self-labels) of the DA and its predecessors. In this chapter, I also analyse changes in the various languages employed in the texts of this political organisation over time. This chapter will address the semiotic potential of language choice, which can easily be seen and used to triangulate or corroborate the findings of onomastics at a level of transformation.

#### **4.1.1 The Semiotic Potential of Anthroponyms:**

In chapter 3, person names (anthroponyms) that were ‘harvested’ from membership lists, speeches, and parliamentary lists of members were placed in the time frames to which these lists and documents belong: time frame one (1989 - 2007) and time frame two (2008 - 2015). Using personal knowledge as well as insights from a database of South African names and their gender and ethnic classification (Campbell, 1996), the researcher classified the names according to the ethnicity they are associated with according to gender.

“Ethnicity-indexical” names or names associated with different ethnicities were classified as “black”, “white”, and “coloured”. The label of “other” was used for “Indian” sounding names and names that could not be assigned to a particular South African ethnic group. With regards to gender, names were classified into “female”, “male” and “other”. The latter group was for unisex names that could not otherwise be classified.

Figure 1 provides a screenshot from AntConc displaying results of a query for person names.

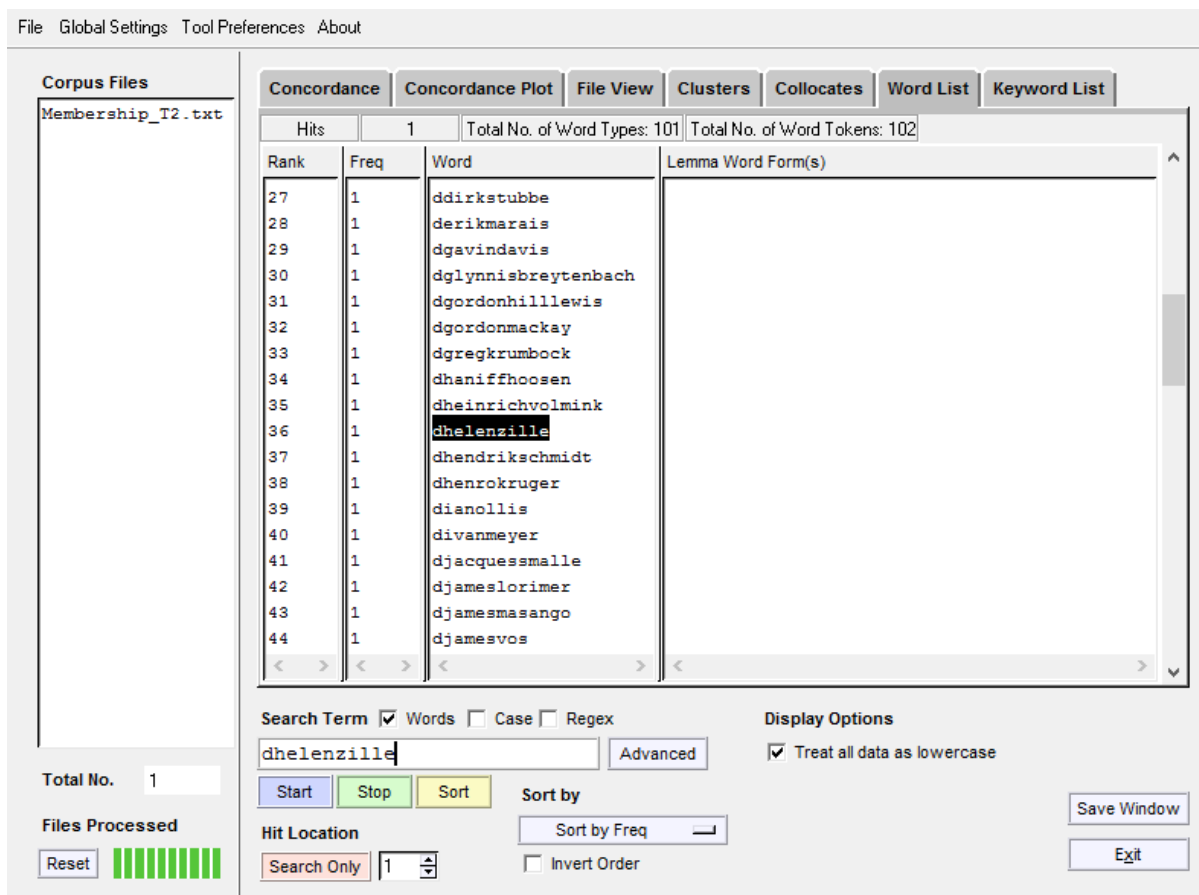


Figure 1: Screenshot of query results for person names.

AntConc queries for person names were facilitated by manually inserting the letter ‘d’ before each name in the data preparation stage, and merging first and second names. In figure 1, the highlighted name, ‘dhelenzille’ (that is, Helen Zille) would be considered a white sounding name; ‘dwilmotjames’ (that is, Wilmot James) would be considered a coloured sounding name; ‘dlindiwemazibuko’ (that is, Lindiwe Mazibuko) would be a black sounding name. Apart from personal knowledge and the resources I used, I also consulted widely where I had doubts. Consulting was very important as, in principle, anyone can bear any type of name.

#### 4.1.1.1 The representation of ethnicity indexical names:

Let us consider anthroponyms from the standpoint of ethnicity. Figure 2 allows us to see what changes have taken place in the person name (ethnicity) associated with this political formation over the two time frames.

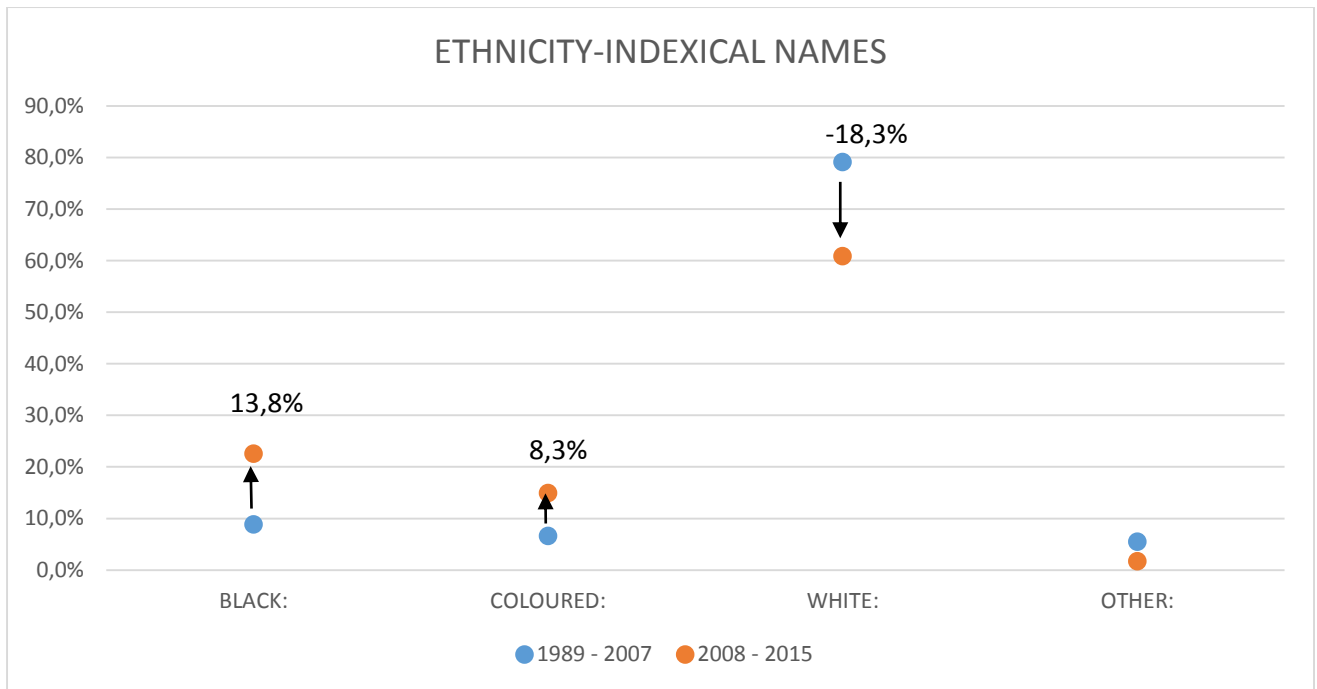


Figure 2: Graphic representation of the ethnic distribution of anthroponyms associated with the DA and its predecessors over time.

Figure 2 shows that in time frame one the majority (79.1%) of the party's members had white-sounding names. The number of black-sounding names stood at 8.8% and coloured-sounding names came up to 6.6%. It may be recalled that in time frame one (1989 - 1994), black and coloured people were still largely excluded from political activities and could not participate officially.

We see from figure two that, in the second time frame, the number of white sounding names has dropped by 18,3 per cent from 79,1 per cent to 60,9 per cent. In other words, white sounding names have a negative growth percentage of -18,3 per cent. The number of black sounding names has increased by 13,8 per cent, from 8,8 per cent in time frame one to 22,6 per cent in time frame two. The number of coloured sounding names has increased by 8,3 per cent, from 6,6 per cent in time frame one to 14,9 per cent in time frame two. What these figures suggest is that, although still white dominated, the party is opening up to other demographics. We see this clearly in such names as Lindiwe Mazibuko (erstwhile Parliamentary leader) and Mmusi Maimane (current leader). It would be interesting to determine whether other data sets corroborate the change observed here. Let us consider the data set on gender.

#### 4.1.1.2 The representation of gender indexical names:

The semiotic potential of anthroponyms from a transformation perspective cannot only be seen from ethnicity. Gender is also important, considering that before the advent of democracy in South Africa in 1994, merely 2,7 per cent of parliament consisted women (Pitamber, 2015). Let us consider Figure 3 below.

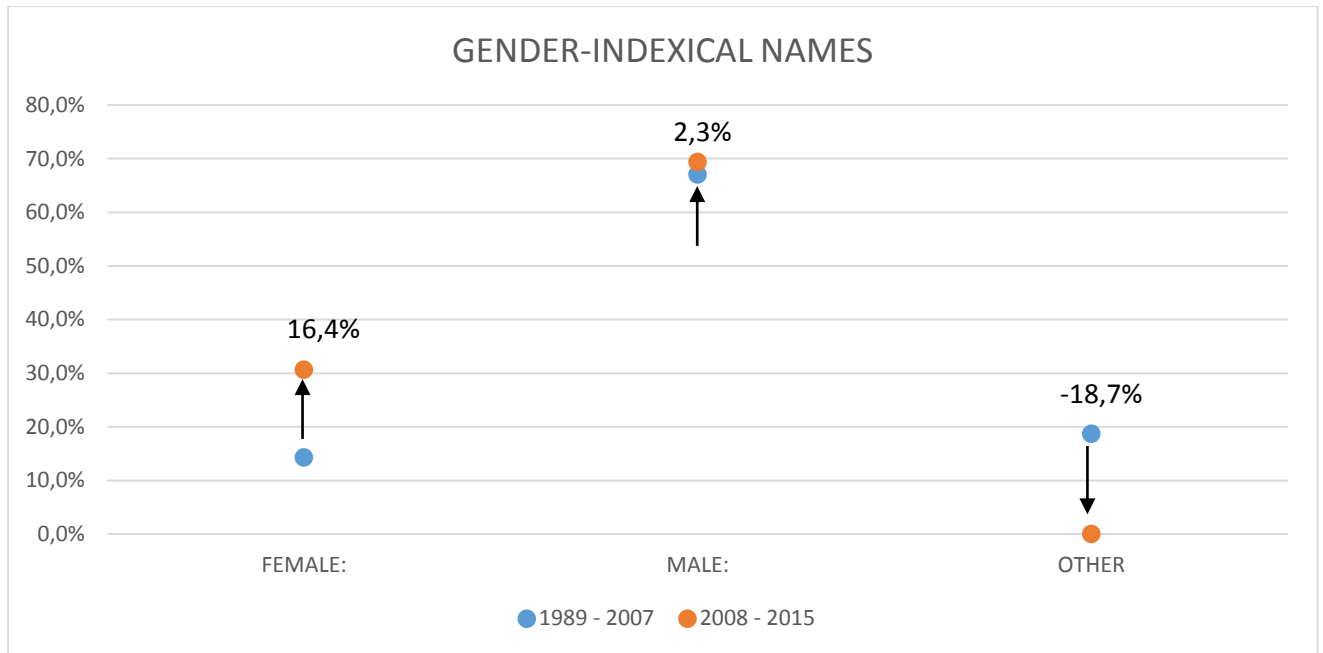


Figure 3: Gender in the DA and its predecessors in the respective time frames.

Figure 3 shows that, even though the party is still male dominated, from time frame one to time frame two, the growth rate of women membership in the party is more than that of men – increasing by 16,4 per cent in time frame two. Note that ‘other’ represents names that could not be classified because they were unisex sounding (e.g. Jade, Alex, Bobby, Shannon, etc.). It would seem that, even though relatively small, the increase in the number of females in the party may have contributed to women occupying more prominent roles in the leadership of the party. At one point, the four most important offices of the party were (going to be) held by women: presidential candidate (Mamphela Ramphele), party leader and premier of the Western Cape (Helen Zille), parliamentary leader (Lindiwe Mazibuko) and mayor of Cape Town (Patricia de Lille). It can therefore be argued that these female names communicate an organisation that seeks to transform from a past of male-dominated leadership and membership to one which seeks to encourage and support female leadership and membership. Such an

interpretation is consistent with semiotic signatures of transformation read into the ethnicity. Let us turn to toponyms to see if there is corroboration of these other signatures.

#### 4.1.2 The Semiotic Potential of Toponyms:

Toponyms, or place names, may be considered symbolic signs or signifiers that are strategically used to promote a certain ideology and meaning (Pärli, 2011). They are therefore potentially meaningful in certain contexts. In the South African context, it is instructive to recall that, under apartheid, some parts of the country were considered ‘white’ areas, whereas others were seen as ‘black’ homelands. Figure 4 presents a political/administrative map of South Africa between 1910 and 1994. Figure 5 presents the country’s administrative map post 1994.

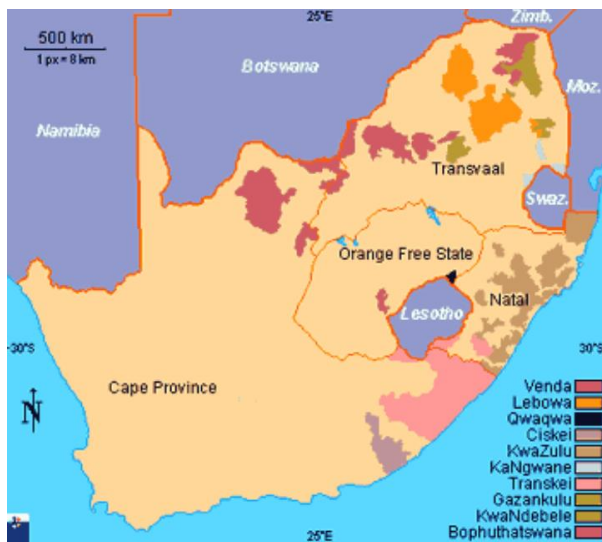


Figure 4: Divisions in South Africa (1910-1994).



Figure 5: Divisions of South Africa (1994-present).

As figure 4 shows, South Africa consisted of four provinces between the years 1910 and 1994. These provinces were known as the Cape Province, Natal, Orange Free State, and the Transvaal. At the time of this ‘old’ South Africa, there were ten ethnically based homelands, which were created for the black population (Berry, 1996). The homelands are depicted in the key in Figure 4. They were created under apartheid as the traditional ‘tribal’ areas to which all members of the black population were allocated and in which the black population would have “rights” (such as voting) which they were denied in “white” South Africa. White South Africa at the time consisted of the Cape Province and Orange Free State (Berry, 1996).

In Figure 5, South Africa is divided into nine provinces (post-apartheid). Due to the segregation of the past, the majority of the ‘black’ population groups remained in the areas depicted in Figure 4 and some migrated to other provinces. The census of 2012 indicated that the majority of the black population resides in the Eastern Cape, Kwa-Zulu Natal, Mpumalanga, Limpopo, Gauteng, and the North West provinces. In figure 4, these provinces fell under the Cape Province, Transvaal, Natal, and minor areas of the Orange Free State. Other demographics such as whites, coloureds, and Indian/Asian reside in the Western Cape, Northern Cape and the Free State – which were previously identified as the Cape Province, and the Orange Free State in figure 4 (Statistics South Africa, 2012). It is against this backdrop that any remarkable changes in the distribution of toponyms in documents of this political organisation become significant.

Figure 6 below shows how place names were sourced from the corpus of texts. Given that other words and names would be on the list, it was important to annotate the data beforehand. Filtering the data by the annotated letter ‘p’ produced results easier.

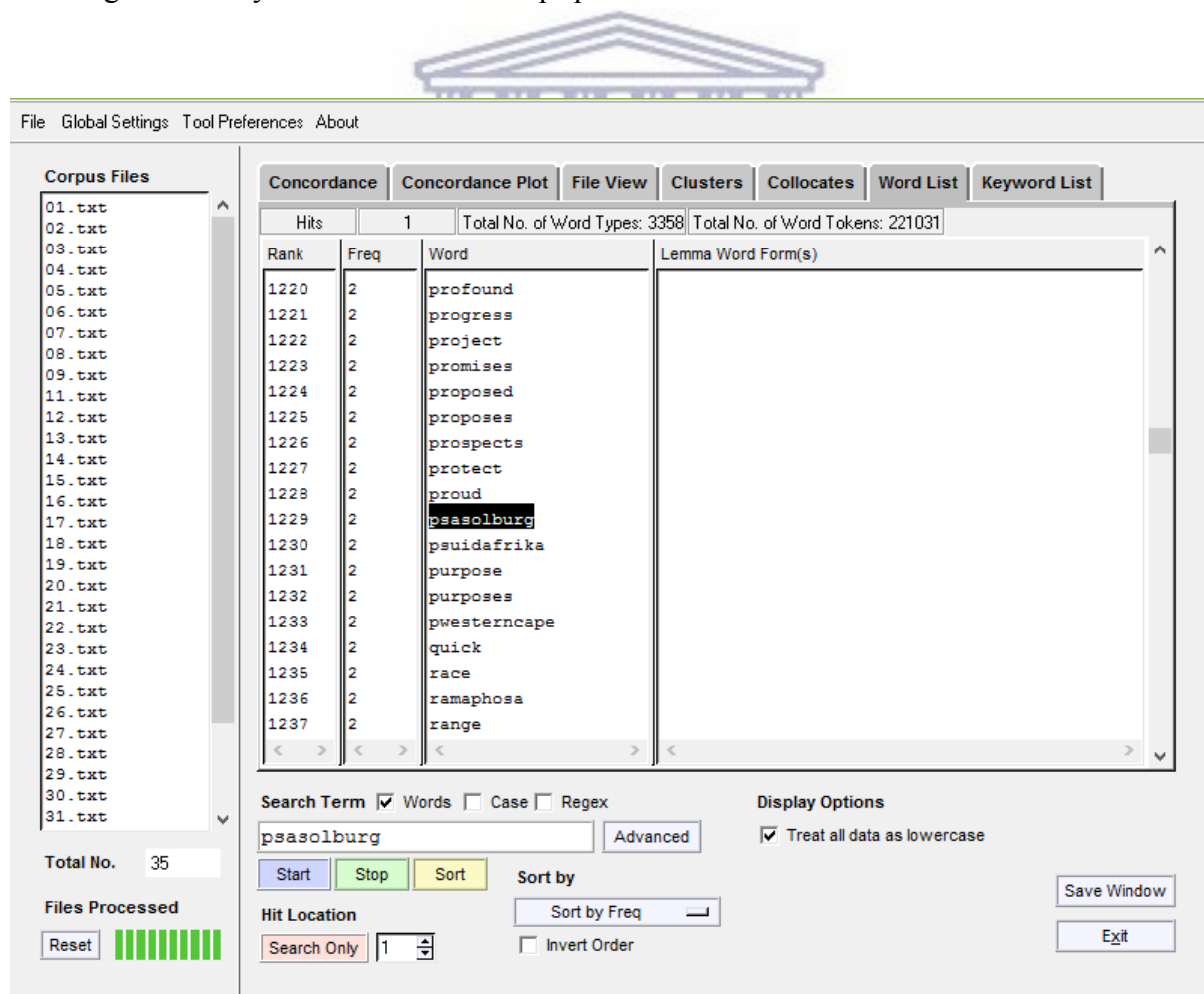


Figure 6: Depiction of time frame one toponym frequency displayed in AntConc.

In time frame one, the toponyms with a high frequency include Cape Town (21), Stellenbosch (3), Vredenburg (3), Cape Grace (4), Parliament (44), Cape Flats (9), Kimberley (4), Upington (2), Sasolburg (2), Vryburg (2), and Bloemfontein (3) – all ‘white’ areas that were located in the Cape Province. There is also mention of Eastern Metropolitan (2), Port Elizabeth (6), and Mafikeng (3), which were populated and classified as ‘black’ areas. Of the 169 accounts of toponyms that were mentioned in time frame one, 83 (49,1%) were black areas and 86 (50,8%) were white areas.

In time frame two, of the 192 accounts of toponyms, 105 (54%) were black areas and 87 (45,3%) were white areas. This denotes a substantive increase in the DA’s efforts to transform and have a more nationalized approach. The high frequency toponyms include the ‘white’ areas in the Cape Province (87) which is now known as the Western Cape, Northern Cape, Free State, and parts of the Eastern Cape, in Figure 7 (below). However, the overall frequency of ‘black’ areas is 105, slightly more than the frequency of the ‘white’ areas. These areas are (or fall under) Limpopo, Port Elizabeth, Kwa-Zulu Natal, Madibeng, Johannesburg, Soweto, and Gauteng which were classified as ‘black’ areas and known as the Transvaal, Natal, and small parts of the Cape Province (see figure 4). Figure 7 provides a graphic representation of the frequency distribution of place names across both time frames.

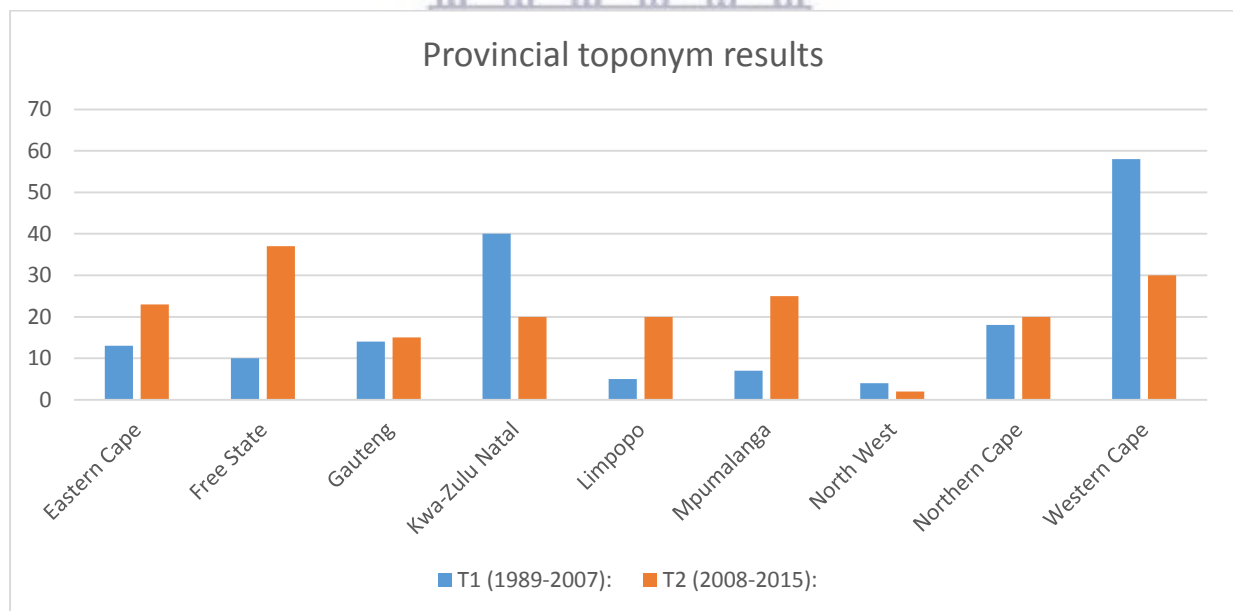


Figure 7: Depiction of frequency of toponyms in provinces (post-apartheid) for the respective time frames.

Figure 7 clusters all toponyms around the post-1994 provinces, allowing us to see changes in the place names occurring in documents of the political formation being studied. Figure 7 shows that in time frame two, places in the Eastern Cape, Free State, Limpopo and



Mpumalanga seem to feature more in documents of the party than was the case in time frame one.

The increase is 10% in the Eastern Cape, 27% in the Free State, 1% in Gauteng, 15% in Limpopo, 18% in Mpumalanga, and 2% in the Northern Cape. In contrast, toponyms associated with the Western Cape in particular, the birthplace of the party, have dropped sharply (28%) in time frame two compared to time frame one. These figures could be read at several levels. For instance, the drop in figures for the Western Cape could indicate an aspiration to a more national status; the increases in the Eastern Cape, Limpopo, and Mpumalanga could indicate greater interest in, or a reaching out to, black communities.

Figure 8 below uses the map in Figure 5 to group the provinces in Figure 7 into traditionally 'black' versus 'white' South Africa in order to provide provincial toponym averages across time frames.

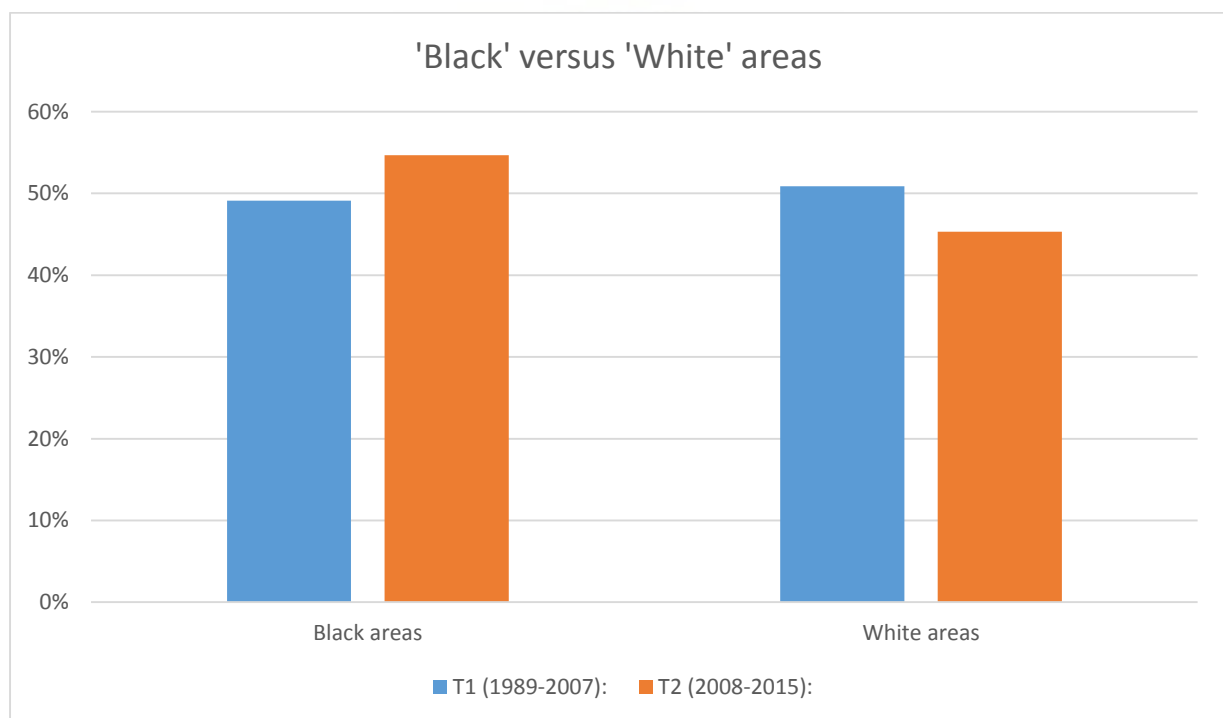


Figure 8: Classification of toponyms into demographic areas in respective time frames.

As Figure 8 shows, from time frame one to time frame two, there is a 6 per cent increase in 'black toponyms' and also a 6 per cent drop in white toponyms. Although marginal, the change in toponyms appears consistent with changes in both ethnicity- and gender-indexical anthroponyms.

### 4.1.3 The potential of Autonyms:

Every organisation, entity, or community has and needs an autonym. Political organisations strategically choose labels that represent their organisation, the members, and the party's ideologies, or what the party stands for, in other terms. Indeed, current theories and studies about political parties emphasize the importance of parties as producers of political brand names which are both valuable to voters and to candidates, helping voters make decisions and helping candidates win elections (Downs, 1957). In agreement, Woon and Pope (2008) state that party names are not just representations of the brand of the political party but they also serve as an ideological brand name that informs voters. Political scientists and demographic theorists have long been concerned with understanding the role of parties as intermediaries between the people and their representatives. Voters sometimes lack the necessary knowledge about political affairs to make informed decisions. Uninformed voters use party labels as information shortcuts (Woon and Pope, 2008).

Figure 9 below uses a time line to present the various autonyms of the DA and its predecessor organisations as basis for determining if there is semiotic evidence of transformation towards (greater) inclusiveness.

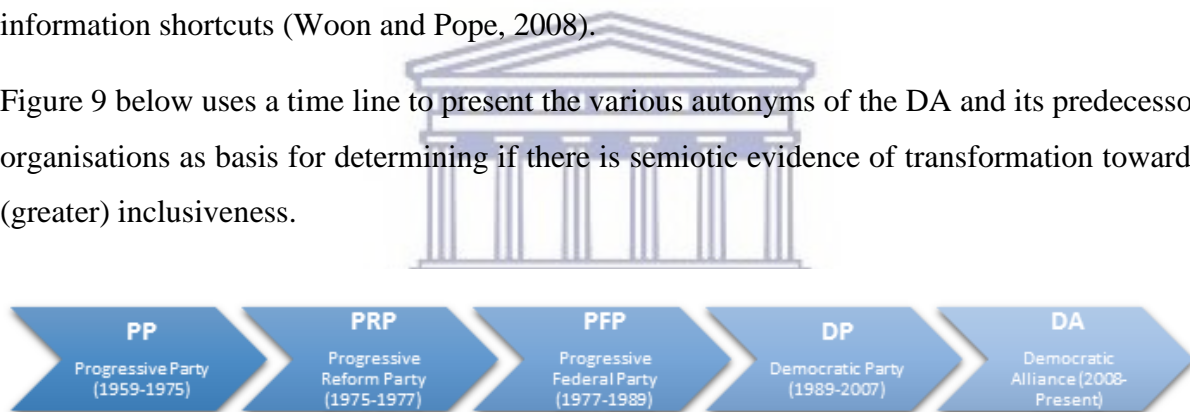


Figure 9: Time line of Autonyms used by the DA and its predecessors over time.

From the literature discussed previously, the Progressive Party (PP) was the first form of the DA. The PP was formed at the height of apartheid where social and political exclusion of particular demographics was prevalent. The term “progressive” is defined as “a movement in favour of new ideas, modern methods and change” (Turnbull, *et al.*, 2010:1175). Even though the PP was predominantly white, they were the only party in parliament that fought for equal rights and non-discrimination.

So, in a sense, this name describes the political party's values. Names, or their semiotic potential, can of course be contested. The progressiveness of the PP can be contested. As noted in the literature review, the PP, because of minor strongholds they had in parliament and in the country, was considered to be passive. Even though their intention of equality and freedom

were “leftist” at the time, maintaining their seats seemed more important than branching out to become an aggressive political opposition (Selikow, 2000).

In 1975, the Progressive Reform Party (PRP) was formed from the PP merging with other small political parties that canvassed equal rights amongst South Africans. The term “reform” means to make changes in order to improve something, especially an institution or practice (Turnbull, *et al.*, 2010:1236). In adding “reform” to the previous autonym of Progressive Party, the architects of the new political formation would have been communicating their intention to take the fight for social change to a higher level than what the PP was able to do.

However, the PRP was still a predominantly white male party. Still using the original name frame of Progressive Party, the next form of the metamorphosis of this political organisation inserted “Federal” in the place of “Reform” to become the Progressive Federal Party (PFP) (1977 – 1989). This change may be interpreted as indicating that, while the new organisation remained committed to the social change agenda of its predecessors, it was also concerned with extending its geographical reach beyond the regional (Cape Province) confines of its predecessors, either because the party wished to speak for the entire country (even while remaining a predominantly white male formation), or they wished to draw support/membership from the entire country.

The next formation in line, the Democratic Party (DP) (1989 – 2000), chose a name that addressed concerns of identity/diversified membership and of social change. The term “democratic” can be defined as “relating to or supporting democracy or its principles” (Turnbull, *et al.*, 2010:389). This means that democracy coincides with a system of government in which power is entrusted to the people, who rule either directly or through freely elected representatives (Emery, 1997). The term ‘democratic’ is also deigned as a system pertaining to or characterised by the principle of political or social equality for all. So, the new name could be parsed as communicating an organisation that is bold enough to go beyond calling for accomodating blacks to actually canvassing for a majority government. The name also communicates that membership of the party as well as its workings were consistent with democratic principles.

While remaining a predominantly white male political party, the DP (as if to translate its name into practice) began to recruit small numbers of coloured and black members and have them represent the party at local levels within the party.

The last stop in the time line in Figure 8 is the Democratic Alliance (DA) (2000 –present) which was the product of mergers. The term ‘alliance’ is defined as a union or association formed for mutual benefit, especially between countries or organisations. Using this term in the autonym communicates layers of meaning: the organisation is a union of like-minded (that is, democratic) organisations; its membership is united by common democratic principles; and / or the organisation wishes to enter into a pact with the citizens or the electorate to protect and to deliver democracy.

From the analysis above, we see that the autonyms of this political formation have always communicated transformation in the sense of social change that allows for inclusiveness (cf. progressive, reform federal, democratic, alliance). What my analysis reveals, however, is a semiotic intensification of this transformation agenda, beginning with timid calls for social change (cf. progressive, reform) through aspirations to become an organisation with a national reach or identity and a goal (cf. federal, democratic, alliance).

To conclude this section on onomastic material, we have seen how the researcher has used various kinds of context or social background to present socially significant meanings (around greater inclusiveness) derivable from person names, place names and organisational names. Seen in the context of a history of blacks being excluded from taking part in politics, an increase of black-sounding names and a decrease of white-sounding names from time frame one to two has to be seen as communicating a socially significant meaning. Similarly, given a history of exclusion of women from authorised political spaces, there is socially significant meaning that can be read into the increase in female-sounding names from time frame one and two. Against the backdrop of the apartheid-era cartography of South Africa, dividing the country into white and black areas, we have also seen that place names occurring in the documents of the political organisation from time frame one to time frame two communicate the meaning that the organisation is garnering support from black people, therefore the increase of toponyms, and anthroponyms from time frame one to time frame two is significant to highlight change. All of these interpretations are consistent with the meanings read into the party’s autonyms, which have progressively communicated higher levels of commitment to change and inclusiveness.

The above interpretations confirm that a critical study of onomastics can be a form of social analysis (Batoma 2009; Price and Price 1972; Lea 1992; and Pärli 2011). As seen earlier, in public and political discourse, “onomastic material is widely used as a means of aligning

oneself with preferred ideologies or sets of preferred representations of reality” (Galasiński & Skowronek, 2001:52).

#### **4.2 The Semiotic Potential of Language Use and Code-Switching:**

This section of the chapter analyses the meaning potential of language choice in the texts of the DA and its predecessors from the chosen perspective of transformation (understood as inclusiveness) and against the backdrop of the earlier theoretical section constructing the semiotic potential of code-switching in political contexts. It may be recalled from the methodology (chapter three) that a number of interpretive conventions were adopted. Transformation towards greater inclusiveness would semiotically have taken place if in time frame one the majority of the texts were in one language, but in time frame two it was not one language that had the majority of the texts but there were texts that made use of more than one language, or there were texts in languages that had not previously been used. For the texts with code-switching, the interpretation would be that, semiotically, transformation towards greater inclusiveness would have taken place if:

- a. In the texts of time frame one there were very few code-switching instances compared to time frame two;
- b. In the texts of time frame one, the languages involved in the code-switching were only limited to English and Afrikaans, but in time frame two other languages (e.g. Nguni) are included; and
- c. In the texts of time frame one, the most common function of code-switching is the symbolic one (greeting, etc.) but in time frame two, there are various substantive types of information in different languages along with their translations.

##### **4.2.1 Quantitative analysis of the semiotic potential of language choice:**

Out of the 35 texts in each time frame, there were texts that were: produced in English only; texts produced in Afrikaans only; texts that were English dominant but had “bits” (such as greetings, and phrases) in Afrikaans and Nguni languages (such as isiXhosa, isiZulu, Venda, and Sotho); texts that were English dominant but had “passages” (paragraphs or other substantive content) in Afrikaans; and texts that were English dominant, but had “passages” of Bantu languages. Figure 10 below presents the distribution of the sub-corpora.

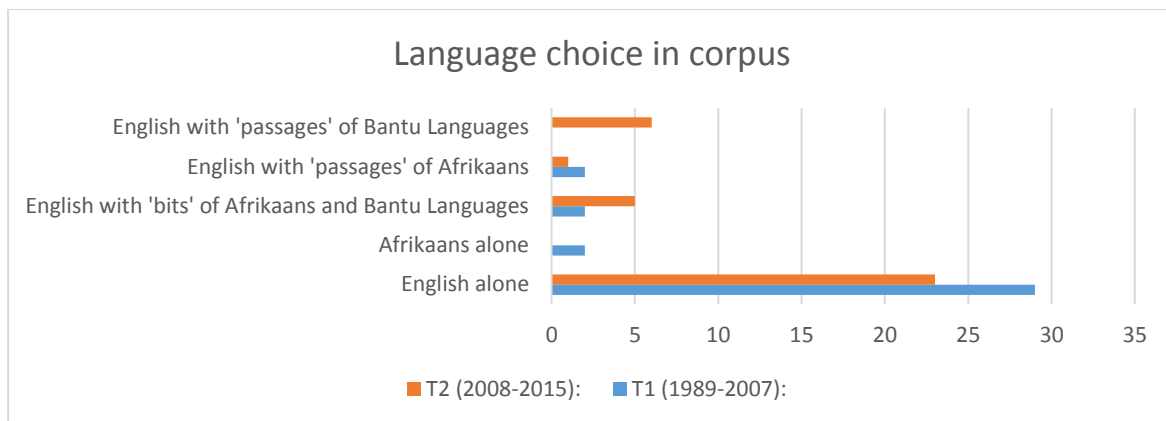


Figure 10: Graphic depiction for the types of code-switching in texts obtained over time.

As we see in Figure 10, in both time frames one and two, the majority of the texts are in English only. In time frame one, there were a few texts in Afrikaans only, a few English texts with bits (e.g. greetings, solidarity calls) of Afrikaans and Bantu languages, and English texts with passages of Afrikaans. What is remarkable about time frame two is that the texts are, in a sense, more multilingual in a substantive rather than a token sense. Unlike in time frame one where there was no English text with Bantu language passages, this category emerges in time frame two. While there is a slight drop in the number of English texts with Afrikaans passages in time frame two, there is a two-fold increase in the number of English texts with bits of Bantu languages and Afrikaans. In time frame two, there is no Afrikaans-only text in the corpus.

The more multilingual nature of texts in time frame two is potentially significant socially when historical facts are recalled. It is important to note that time frame one (1989-2007) largely reflects the situation of an even more distant past when the previous forms of the DA, such as the PP, PRP, and PFP, were popularly known as white English-speaking political organisations (Alexander, 2004). Many English speakers were the electorate for the DA's predecessors. Many whites who supported the National Party (NP) were said to be more Afrikaans speaking (Emery, 1997). Therefore, the majority of the DA's texts would have been produced in English. Figure 10 shows only a few texts were produced exclusively in Afrikaans and in mixtures of English and Afrikaans in time frame one. Any texts in this time frame using Bantu languages only used them for symbolic purposes. It can therefore be suggested that the increase in the use of other languages in time frame two and the increase in both passages and bits (as defined earlier) signifies that the party is reaching out to especially African language-speaking audiences.

From a standpoint of transformation as inclusiveness, it becomes evident that the DA is attempting to reach new audiences and with increasingly more substantive messaging.

#### **4.2.2 Qualitative overview of the semiotic potential of language choice:**

Let us now turn to a more qualitative analysis of the texts in order to investigate how transformation or inclusiveness can be read off any possible changes in language choice patterns in texts of the political organisation across time frames.

##### **4.2.2.1 Qualitative analysis of time frame one corpus:**

The language choice, as seen in Figure 10 below, clearly shows that English and Afrikaans were the major languages of the political organization in time frame one. These two languages were either used separately as in Figure 11, and in Figure 12 below, or jointly as in figure 13. When Bantu languages were used at all as in figure 14, only bits of these languages were employed for purposes that were largely symbolic.

Figure 11 below presents an excerpt of a speech in English titled “Put the people first – Beka Abantu phambili” at Alexandra, Johannesburg in 2000. Significantly, the area where the speech was delivered in Johannesburg, which, according to the map presented in Figure 5 and the census of 2012, is mainly populated by isiXhosa and isiZulu speaking South Africans. One would have expected that the speech would be delivered in isiXhosa or isiZulu – if inclusivity had been important. Instead, the text had bits of isiXhosa that were mentioned symbolically (text highlighted in green) as a translation to mobilise the crowd; however, the remainder of the speech was delivered in English by Tony Leon.

**Speech by dTonyLeon MP  
dLeaderoftheOpposition**

**pAlexandra, pJohannesburg  
Monday 4 September 2000 at 13h35**

**"Put the People First — Beka abantu phambili"** *— first instance of the use of Xhosa code-switching → relative*

The dDemocraticAlliance is here to bring together a bigger, better alternative to the cANC. For the millions of people left behind after six years of cANC rule. dOur mission is to represent the forgotten people. Those without jobs. Those who are still without shelter. Those without running water or the most basic necessities of survival. Those who feel sthey have no voice and few opportunities to improve stheir own lives.

The dDemocraticAlliance wants to put the people first — **Beka abantu phambili!**

The dDemocraticAlliance is a slightly different name, with a slightly different symbol — which reflects our greater numbers. But the principles of the party have not changed at all. dWe remain committed to:

- democracy, freedom, material and political equality.
- building opportunities — for all the people.

The dDA is acutely aware that fine words like freedom, democracy, political rights, or equality, mean little to people without jobs, or homes, or a chance to better themselves. There is still terrible poverty in pSouthAfrica, six years after the right to vote was won by all. **Abantu ba sokola bonke.** (All the people are suffering.) I have seen this for myself.

sYou only have to look around this area to see that most adults are without work. There are residents of pAlexandra who have been on the waiting list for houses for years, only to see cANC councillors and new-comers allegedly taking RDP houses for themselves. In pSetswetla, there are households run by children of 10-years old, and sometimes younger. sTheir health — particularly of the children — is shocking. Some living in shacks there cannot even bury stheir dead with dignity.

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Figure 11: English speech delivered by Tony Leon in 2000.

In Figure 12 below, we have an excerpt of a speech in Afrikaans titled “Bevry die Ekonomie” [free the economy] given by Tony Leon at Lynnwood, Pretoria in 2000. In this particular speech, the use of Afrikaans was suited to the audience, as the majority of Pretoria’s population is said to be Afrikaans speaking (Statistics South Africa, 2012). Significantly, the whole speech was produced and delivered in Afrikaans. The text offered no code-switching no instances in terms of translation or symbolic phrases to mobilise the crowd.



## 5 Die "Nuwe Ekonomie" verg nuwe denke

Die globale ekonomie verander baie vinnig en maak talle nuwe geleenthede oop — vir die ontwikkelde lande, ja, maar ook vir die ontwikkelende lande. *In* sommige opsigte bied die "nuwe ekonomie" vir die ontwikkelende lande groter kanse as vir die ontwikkeldes, want hulle kan bo-oor die struikelblokke van 'n swak tegnologiese infrastruktuur spring. As 'n goeie stelsel van landlyne vir telefone ontbreek, spring sjy reguit na selfone toe. Sjy moet net baie vinnig en buigsaam wees om dit te kan doen. Wat die "nuwe ekonomie" betref, is Afrika-lande se grootste remskoen 'n staatsmonopolie in telekommunikasies. *s*SuidAfrika moet Telkom baie gou privatiseer en telekommunikasie vir vrye mededinging oopgooi. *d*Ek waarborg dat die sektor geweldig gou sal uitbrei en duisende nuwe werkgeleenthede sal skep.

Figure 12: Extract of Afrikaans speech in 2000.

Figure 13 below presents an excerpt of a speech in English with passages in Afrikaans. The speech titled "Saamtrek" [come together] was given by Tony Leon at Koeberg Stadium, Graaf Reinet in 2000.

"Die taak van die Demokratiese Alliansie"

Today, less than 100km from where we stand, the Deputy President is due to lead a commemoration of the Cradock Five. We join him in saluting those who were slain by evil men, prosecuting an indefensible ideology by undemocratic means. That is what the new South Africa, established under the rule of a Constitution, not under the misrule of men, sets itself against. Reasserting the rule of law, over the misrule of men, is a founding principle of the Democratic Alliance.

*s*Oms het bymekaar gekom om aan *s*SuidAfrika 'n nuwe opsie te bied — een met minder verdeeldheid, meer eenheid, groter, sterker en dbeteropposisie. Die *d*DP en die *o*NNP saam met die *o*FederaleAlliansie beplan om onder een banier by die OVK vir die plaaslike regeringsverkiegings registreer.

We have accomplished a task many may have thought impossible. That is to put aside our differences — which really had more to do with old habits and long memories, than the current policy of either of the major parties to this alliance.

Dit maak sin om saam te staan vir die bereiking van 'n belangrike doelwit — naamlik om die *c*ANC aan te vat en chulle 'n ding of twee te wys. 'n *d*Sterkopposisie is die enigste manier om die *c*ANC te kry om oor sy skouer te kyk en twee keer te dink oor die rigting waarin chulle *s*SuidAfrika neem.

But we are not simply defining ourselves in opposition to the ruling party. What stops us from being just another political fruit salad, is that the *d*DA is founded on strong, coherent and unique principles:

Figure 13: English speech with passages of Afrikaans.

Figure 13 shows the inclusivity of using Afrikaans passages in an English speech. The audience justified the use of Afrikaans passages in the English speech – as the majority of the population in this area is Afrikaans speaking. However, this particular area is also known to have English speaking residents – therefore calling for a more inclusive and multilingual text (Statistics South Africa, 2012).

The functionality of the Afrikaans passages in relation to the English passages provided other information on the topic. There are a total of eight paragraphs that are delivered in Afrikaans; no translations are offered in English by the speaker. The type of information offered in Afrikaans differs from the information being relayed in English. Therefore, the DA uses the Afrikaans language to communicate friendship, and their desire to affiliate with the audience by using the audience's stronger language. This is an attempt of wanting to belong or to be accepted by the people of Graaf Reinet.

The use of English also indicates a form of status, and can symbolise a change in attitude. The use of English in the speech is made up of political and factual statements.

For example: *“The politics of denial: Die ANC regering praat altyd goed van hulself - al vertel die invloedryke koerante van die wêreld ‘n ander storie. Miskien is die rede hievoor dat baie van ons regeeringsleiers te veel tyd in die ou Sowjet-Unie deurgebring het. Hulle dink seker ons mense is soos die inwoners van hierdie ou kommunistiese dorpie wat moet aanhoor hoeveel trekkies die regering gebou het, terwyl hulle nie eers een trekker het om die lande mee to ploeg nie. To employ the politics of denial is to play a dangerous game. The government will almost certainly lose credibility. Yet this is the kind of tactic is used more often by the ANC”* (figure 13). It is evident that the tone becomes more serious when the speech diverts to the use of English. An explanation of what will be elaborated on in English is offered in Afrikaans, and the Afrikaans passage explains generally what the politics of denial is about, asserting that the ANC makes use of this tactic. By the time the DA switches to English, the tone becomes more serious - *“dangerous game”*.

In the same speech and not simultaneously, Tony Leon ends the speech with the only bit of isiXhosa in the text, “Nkosi Sikelel’ iAfrika”. The place, Graaf Reinet, justified the use of Afrikaans, thus providing substantial information in the Afrikaans language. We see the only use for isiXhosa is for mobilising and other interpersonal functions, such as to establish a connection or relationship between the audience and the speakers of the language. On the transformation scale, this particular mixing of languages weighs in low, as the audience who are isiXhosa speaking are still excluded from the information that was delivered in English. On the other hand, it becomes clear that the DA (Tony Leon) made use of code-switching because of the desire to identify and affiliate with other audience segments (Baker, 2006). The use of the public's stronger language in parts of the conversation indicates deference, wanting to belong or to be accepted – as seen in the examples given above in time frame one.

In terms of language choice in time frame one, the DA portrays the party as centred around English and Afrikaans speakers only, with token attention (in the form of phrases and words) accorded speakers of indigenous African languages, who incidentally are a majority in the country. This practice is quite consistent with the historical account of the political organization, as presented in Chapter 2. In time frame one, language use shows the party as being very minimally accommodating of the country's linguistic diversity. Whether or not this is an issue of the proficiency of the party's officials in various languages is not very important, because that in itself can be socially significant. Let us now turn to time frame two.

#### **4.2.2.2 Qualitative analysis of time frame two corpus:**

The presentation of the qualitative analysis in Figure 10 indicated that the use of English-only texts had dropped in time frame two, as had texts in English with passages in Afrikaans. Time frame two also had no Afrikaans-only text. In contrast, there was a two-fold increase in the number of English texts with bits of Bantu languages and Afrikaans in time frame two. A new category emerged of texts in English with passages in Bantu languages. Let us briefly analyse some examples for each of the latter two categories (that is, an English text with bits of Afrikaans and Bantu languages, and an English text with passages of Bantu languages).

Figure 14 below contains a speech by Helen Zille, delivered at Polokwane, Limpopo on the occasion of the 2014 DA Manifesto Launch.

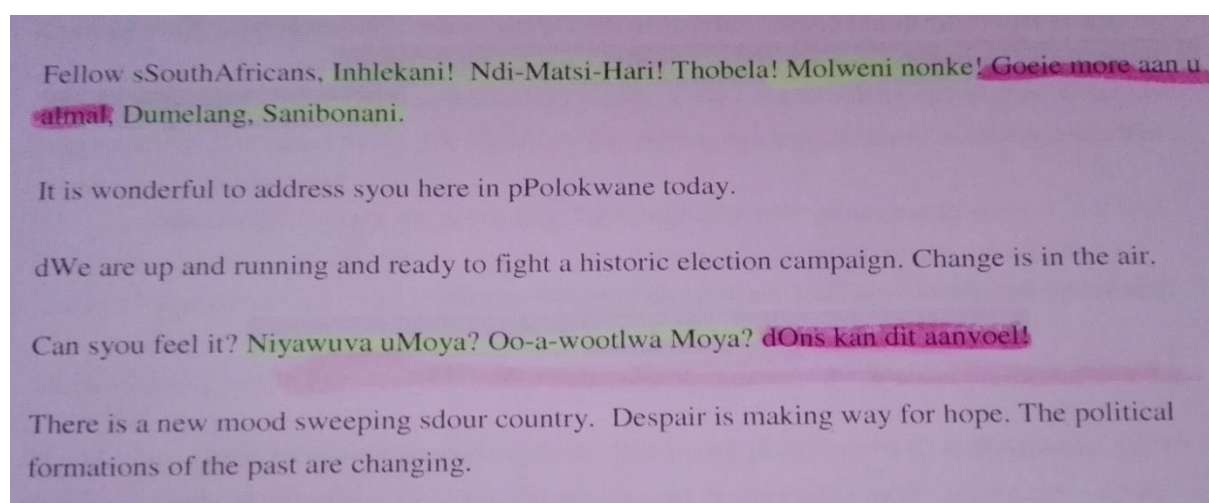


Figure 14: Speech by Helen Zille with bits of Afrikaans and bits of Bantu languages.

In the extract in Figure 14, the initial form of address/greeting in the first two lines is given in the following languages: English, “*Fellow South Africans*”; isiZulu, *Inhlelani! Ndi-Matsi-Hari! Thobela!* [attention, I greet you all well]; Afrikaans, “*Goeie môre aan u almal*” [Good morning to you all]; and Sesotho, “*Dumelang, Sanibonani*” [Greetings to all]. From the translations above, it becomes evident that what is said in each language is more or less the same when translated generally to English. It is clear that the speaker is greeting the audience, recognizing most linguistic groups present by using variations of greetings in these languages. The functionality of the code-mixing in Figure 14 relates to the interpersonal relationship that Zille attempts to establish. The use of English, Afrikaans, and Bantu languages communicates with and includes the whole audience, as the speech took place in the area of Limpopo, which is mainly populated by isiXhosa, Sesotho, and isiZulu speaking South Africans, according to the map in Figure 5 and the census of 2012. Therefore, by using variations of greetings in the beginning of the speech, Helen Zille not only engages the audience in their language, but shows the DA’s transformed identity and attempts to be inclusive.

Helen Zille poses a question in English further on in the extract. This question has an interpersonal function in which Zille tries to establish a relationship with the audience by inviting them to answer the question. She poses the question to get a response in English: “*Can you feel it?*” She persists with the same question in isiXhosa: “*Niyawuva uMoya?* [Can you feel the spirit?]” She repeats the same question in isiZulu: “*Oo-a-wootlwa Moya?* [Can you feel the spirit?].” Zille then completes her sentence and answers the question in Afrikaans: “*Ons kan dit aanvoel!*” [We can feel it coming!]. The Afrikaans response is not a question, but a statement.

In the example that follows, we have an English text with items that perhaps exceed bits of Afrikaans and Sesotho. Figure 15 below is an extract of a speech by Lindiwe Mazibuko (DA’s parliamentary leader of 2014). The speech was delivered at Kroonstad, in the Free State in 2014.

inability to provide jobs. dDA e lwanela le ho sireletsa tokoloho le ditokelo tsa botho tse lwanetsweng ka thata. Ena ke dDA e lwanang mebileng, ka hara bo-masepala, ka hara palamente ya Afrika-Borwa ho sire-letsa ditokelo tsa ma-Afrika-Borwa tse sireleditsweng ke Molaotheo. Ditokelo tsa ma-Afrika-Borwa ohle. [The dDA is fighting to protect our hard-won constitutional rights and freedoms. This dDA is a party that fights on the streets, in pParliament, and in municipalities across pSouthAfrica for the rights of ALL sSouthAfricans.] It is the dDA that called on the sSouthAfrican Police to investigate the fraudulent contracts between the Letlaka Group and Premier Magashule. It is the dDA that called for the launch of the Human Rights Commission's investigation into water in pBrandfort, where they subsequently found the pBrandfort municipality guilty of violating human rights. And it is the dDA that is fighting in pParliament to remove cJacobZuma as president of pSouthAfrica because of pNkandla. dDA e tla tsekisa bohle ba utswetsang ma-Afrika-Borwa. dDA e tla makalla cANC ka ho hatikela ditokelo tsa ma-Afrika-Borwa tse sireleditsweng ke Molaotheo wa naha. [The dDA will hold those who steal from sSouthAfricans accountable for ctheir crimes. The dDA will hold the cANC accountable for its violation of constitutional rights.] Ka voutu ya dhaoDA e tla tjhentjha Afrika Borwa. dDA e tla tjhentjha Afrika Borwa e be setjhaba seo Molaotheo o se labalabelang. Met u stem sal die dDA pSuidAfrika verander. Die dDA sal pSuidAfrika verander in die land wat deur sDons Grondwet beoog word. [With syour vote, the dDA will change pSouthAfrica. The dDA will change pSouthAfrica into the nation envisioned by sDour Constitution.] The dDA will rid sDourgovernment of corruption by preventing cgovernment officials and ctheir immediate families from doing business with the state. Under a dDAgovernment, those found guilty of corruption will not be allowed to hold public office. A dDAgovernment is a government of delivery. In the pWesternCape, where the dDA governs, over 99% of households have access to piped water and over 90,5% of households have access to flush toilets. In fact, 76% of the dDA-run pWesternCape's budget is dedicated to service delivery in poor communities. n dDAregering lewer nie net dienste nie maar ook werk. [The dDAgovernment not only delivers services but also jobs.] Unemployment in the pWesternCape is the lowest in pSouthAfrica. The dDA has spearheaded initiatives like the Work and Skills Programmes and the Advancement of Youth Project. These initiatives provided training and skills to more than 6000 people in the pWesternCape.

A dnationalDAgovernment will create six million REAL jobs and grow sDour economy at 8% per year. To do this, the dDA will change sSouthAfrica into a nation of entrepreneurs by supporting small businesses and cutting cgovernment red tape.

The pFreeState is province of hope. A province of opportunity. A province ripe for change. That change is the dDA.

O na le matla a ho tlisa phethoho ka hara pFreistata. O na le matla a ho tlisa dDA pFreistata e sita le ho Afrika-Borwa yohle. [sYou have the power to bring change to the pFreeState. You have the power to bring the dDA to the pFreeState and sSouthAfrica.] Together sdwe can bring change to sSouthAfrica. Together sdwe can bring jobs to sSouthAfrica.

Matla! Ke a rona! Ke lebohile.

Baie dankie.

Figure 15: Speech in time frame two delivered by Lindiwe Mazibuko in Krronstad, Free State. Green highlighted colour represents the use of Sesotho language, and the pink represents the Afrikaans language.

Kroonstad is situated in the Free State – an area known to be an Afrikaans dominated area with growing use of Bantu languages. The functionality of the languages used to communicate in figures 14 and 15 differ. This becomes evident when we recall that although Zille communicates in different languages, her code-mixing offers some sort of translation to what is being relayed in English. In figure 15, Mazibuko communicates different pieces of

information in the different languages that she code-mixes in her texts. For example, in figure 15, she code-switched from English with passages of Sesotho and Afrikaans. The functions of passages in the different languages employed by Mazibuko include explaining the theme, exemplifying what was stated before, or elaborating on information. For example, “*Ka voutu ya haoDA e tla tjhentjha Afrika Borwa. DA e tla tjhentjha Afrika Borwa e be setjhaba seo Molaotheo o se labalabelang.* [With your vote, the DA can change South Africa as the people desired in the Constitution]. *Met u stem sal die DA Suid Afrika verander. Die DA sal Suid Afrika verander in die land wat deur ons Grondwet beoog word.* [With your vote, the DA will change South Africa. The DA will change South Africa into the nation envisioned by our Constitution]. *The DA will rid our government of corruption by preventing government officials and their immediate families from doing business with the state.* In the example above, Mazibuko code-switches to Sesotho to appeal to the audience at an interpersonal level, then code-switched to Afrikaans to exemplify what was said in Sesotho – that voting for the DA can bring desired change as envisioned in the constitution. By the time she code-switches back to English, the message of voting for the DA is emphasised.

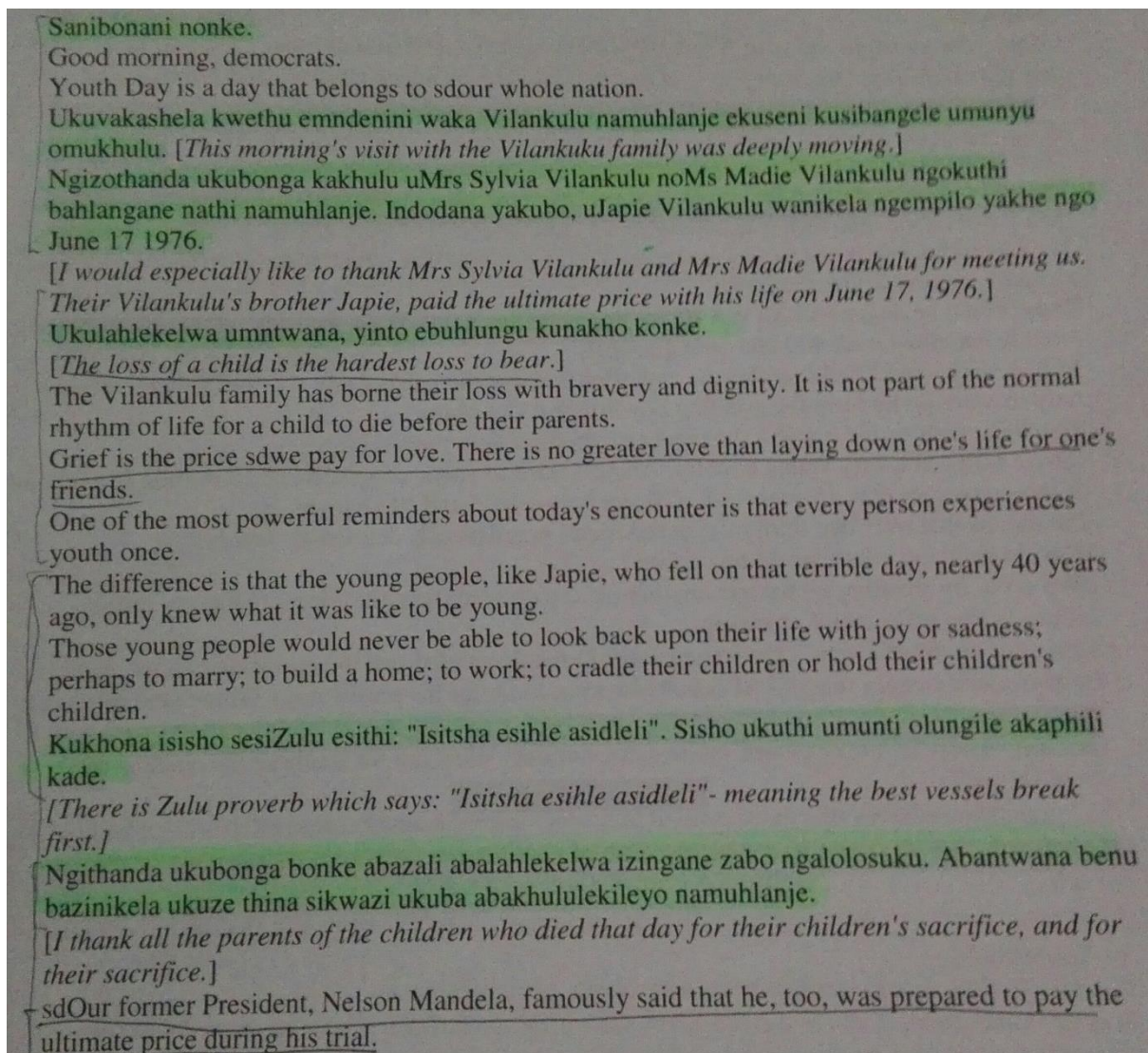
There are significant changes between figures 14 and 15 above. Firstly, the number of languages employed increases in figure 14 when using bits of English, Afrikaans, and more than one Bantu language, whereas in figure 15 it decreases to the use of English, Afrikaans and Sesotho only. The DA uses the instances of Nguni language to include and to grab the attention of the audience, and if the speech is in their home language this makes it easier for listeners to resonate with their message, and it shows their need for deference, wanting to belong (Baker, 2006). This exploration affirms that the DA, in time frame one, speaks “for” the ‘black’ population and not “with” them; the black population is still being excluded with the parts of the text that is dominant in English. The linguistic diversity in these texts can be interpreted as semiotic signature of accommodation by the party of the country’s linguistic diversity. These examples show by converging to people’s code(s), politicians attempt to draw potential supporters’ attention and momentarily create social solidarity, particularly the integration of a society or ethnic group (Tang, 2008:1).

A significant change can be seen in terms of the languages used between Figure 11 and Figure 15. In Figure 11 in time frame one, the speaker, Tony Leon uses English as the main language and inserts a translation in isiXhosa “*Put the people first – Beka Abantu Phambili*” (see Figure 11). One can see that in terms of the language choice, Leon deliberately puts the English

speakers at the forefront of understanding, and then makes a consideration towards Xhosa language speakers thereafter. In a sense, the people Tony Leon's text puts first are English-speaking. In Figure 15, the opposite occurs. The speaker, Lindiwe Mazibuko, uses Bantu languages first, and makes consideration to English speakers thereafter (see Figure 15). Not only is there a change in what language is deemed more important to the audience, there is also a significant change in terms of the receivers of that message. In time frame two, English speakers are not necessarily deemed as important and the focus favours the inclusiveness of more Bantu languages.

Let us consider one example of a speech with passages in a Bantu language. Figure 16 below presents excerpts of a speech by Lindiwe Mazibuko, delivered on the occasion of the DA's commemoration of the Alexandra Riots (of June 1976). This commemorative speech took place in Alexandra, a township just outside Johannesburg, Gauteng. The majority of the audience, therefore, is more fluent in isiXhosa and isiZulu than English.





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Figure 16: Speech in time frame two by Lindiwe Mazibuko, delivered in Alexandra, Johannesburg in commemoration of the Alexandra Riots.

In this specific text, the speech begins with the greeting in isiZulu and followed by the English equivalent as a translation: “Sanibonani nonke [Good greetings to all]. Good morning democrats”. We then see a statement on Youth Day in English. This is followed by an account in isiZulu of a visit by Lindiwe Mazibuko to a family that lost their brother, “Vilankulu’s brother Japie”, during the riots in 1976. Using this language at this point in the speech is a way of identifying and communicating with the family and the community in a language they understand, i.e. isiZulu.

After a passage in English on grief and sacrifice, Mazibuko switches back to isiZulu where she highlights the theme of courage and what it takes to be courageous, as a way of extolling the virtues of the dead and consoling other families.



What is interesting about the use of English and isiZulu in this message is the inclusiveness it creates. An individual who knows only one of the two languages is able to make sense of the message. A text of this kind, as well as those in English with Afrikaans passages, jointly create an impression of a political organisation that is seeking to diversify its audience base. Collectively, the multilingual nature of some of the texts in time frame two may be interpreted as semiotic evidence of greater inclusiveness.

#### **4.3 Chapter summary:**

Code-switching in political discourse aids the different identities that politicians portray. Tang (2008) asserts that when politicians converge to people's code(s) in political campaigning discourse, they draw potential supporters' attention – thus “creating solidarity particularly the integration of a society or a particular ethnic group”. However, Bhatt (2008) also makes a valid point in arguing that “code-switching can invite social actors to break free from inherited systems of social practices and engage in meaning making processes, drawing on cultural resources to take on new practices”.

Relating back to the analysis of this section, we have seen how politicians in the DA have, over time in their language choices, asserted or revealed an identity, contested a previous identity imposed on them, and created (or aspired to) a new identity. The DA seeks to contest a previous identity and to construct a new one, in time frame two mostly, by making constant use of Bantu languages in their speeches – offering different messages in different languages, translating the same message into different languages, and building interpersonal ties with new audiences. By making frequent use of Bantu languages and decreasing the use of Afrikaans in their texts, the DA are simultaneously contesting a previous identity imposed on them – a political party which intends to bring back apartheid.

Although every speech is in principle shaped by its context, the speech given can decide to generously acknowledge, minimally acknowledge or to not acknowledge that context. Even though some of the speeches in time frame one are intended for black South Africans, they contain at best minimal acknowledgment of this segment of the audience or electorate. Minimal acknowledgment can be seen in the fact that time frame one has texts in English as well as in Afrikaans, but not in a Bantu language. Mixed-language texts in time frame one have English with passages in Afrikaans but not English with passages in Bantu languages. Bantu languages are only included as bits (for interpersonal functions) in time frame one. Although in time frame

two, there are no texts written exclusively in a Bantu language, the mixed language texts include not just bits but also passages of Bantu language material, and in a greater diversity of Bantu languages than in time frame one – and this can be read as implying a move towards embracing new audiences. It is in this space that (speakers/) writers, as well as (hearers/) readers, (re-)position themselves and are presumed to have the capacity to combine and to transform in front of new audiences (Bhatt, 2008).

Evidently, even though speech presenters are not necessarily the ones who write their speeches, and even though they can be trained to read speeches in languages they do not know, there is no doubt that the greater inclusiveness suggested by the use of Bantu languages has been helped by other factors seen in this chapter. It was seen in time frame two that there has been an increase in anthroponyms indexical of black ethnicity. With several party leaders in time frame two (e.g. Helen Zille, Patricia De Lille, Lindiwe Mazibuko, and Mmusi Maimane) being speakers of Bantu languages themselves, it is not particularly surprising that these languages feature more prominently.

The greater use of Bantu languages is also consistent with the analysis of toponyms associated with the party across both time frames. It was seen that in time frame two there was an increase in place names associated with a number of ‘black areas’ in the county’s apartheid cartography, suggesting, among others, that the party was campaigning a lot more in in these areas than in time frame one. Scholars who describe how politicians use language for political gains point out (Bosch and De Klerk 1996; Galasiński & Skowronek, 2001; Batoma, 2009), it is reasonable to expect that, when campaigning in areas where specific groups are dominant, politicians would use the languages of these groups.

Besides reading transformation from anthroponyms, toponyms and language choice, this chapter also discussed the semiotic potential of gender-indexical names and the party’s names over time. In time frame two, the party increased the number of female representatives fulfilling prominent roles in the political party (leader, parliamentary leader, mayoral candidate, and presidential candidate). This progression in ethnic- and gender-indexical names contributes to the growth and diversity that the political party portrays in their autonyms over time. The change in autonyms contribute to the semiotic signature of the party’s transformation. All autonyms of the DA and its predecessors suggest that this political formation has always been interested in transformation in the sense of social change and inclusiveness (cf. progressive, reform, federal, democratic, alliance).

In relation to the semiotic potential to highlight transformation in this study, I can conclude that across both time frames, changes that was observed within the different types of names, places, and gender are pointing in the same direction – towards transformation. The changes in language choice equally validates this shift from time frame one to time frame two. We see the data on names and language use jointly creating an image of an organization that is transforming at least at a level of semiotics.



## **CHAPTER FIVE:**

### **5 THE MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL DISOURSE**

#### **5.1 Chapter overview:**

The following chapter explores the realm of social semiotics and the study of meaning through the analysis of multimodal material. The investigation intends to highlight the changes that

have occurred in the campaigning material of the DA over time outside the specific confines or realm of language. This chapter will be analysing whether other elements of multimodality are also working together to present a consistent picture of the DA as a transformed organization.

Bearing in mind the perspective on transformation (as inclusiveness), the chapter seeks to answer the following questions.

1. What changes relative to the representation of people have occurred over time in the multimodal material of the political organisation?
2. What changes have occurred over time in the multimodal material of the political organisation in terms of composition paying attention to information value, gaze and placement, colour, and lastly, salience?

Significantly, the analysis of this chapter contributes to the research topic in terms of exploring the various meanings communicated through political multimodal material, which is often neglected yet rich in data. For example, if there are various changes in who is represented, how and what message is relayed on the campaigning material over time, the interpretation would be that the party is opening up, and being more inclusive towards the public. The researcher draws on work by Van Dijk (2000), Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), van Leeuwen (2008), Makoni (2012), and Molokomme (2009).

Before the analysis answers the above questions – a brief account of the distinct differences between the time frames will be explored as a general overview of the material. This allows the researcher to focus on the parameters that the questions of this chapter seeks to answer.

## **5.2 A brief overview of the general differences found in the material in the respective time frames:**

In this overview, I will present some of the campaign material of the political organization in the respective time frames – to note the number of general differences that are relevant from

the standpoint of analysing both non-verbal items as well as the relationship between verbal and non-verbal items – in other words, a multimodal analysis.

The first striking issue is that many of the publicity materials in time frame one have the picture of the party official who occupies a prominent role in the party as the central focal point. For materials in time frame two, even when a party official is depicted, the organization does not make the candidate a focal point. Rather, equal prominence is given to the party logo as well as a relevant political message. Below, Figures 17 and 18 represent time frame one, and Figures 19, 20, and 21 represent time frame two.



Figure 17: Campaigning poster of PFP - "Eglin"

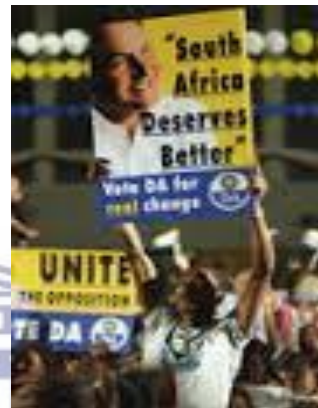


Figure 18: Campaigning poster of DA/DP - "Leon"



Figure 19: Campaign poster of DA - "Polokwane"



Figure 20: Campaign poster of DA - "Together for Jobs"





Figure 21: Campaign poster of DA - "small businesses"

As we can see in Figure 17, the picture of Eglin (leader in 1989) with his surname in bold is the main focus – but not politically relevant to any topic or campaign. Figure 18 depicts non-party officials holding a campaign poster with a picture of Tony Leon (leader in 2000). Both Figures 17 and 18 have the leader of the party, or a party official as the focal point of the poster. In contrast to Figures 17 and 18, when we look at Figure 19, we see that although party officials are represented, there is also a relevant political message as well as the party logo (in a very prominent position).

Another striking feature about time frame one and time frame two is the way non-party officials are represented on the material. In time frame one (see Figure 18) when we have such a representation – a crowd is presented. In figure 18, the faces are not very distinct due to the long shot, whereas in time frame two, the non-party officials depicted are clear and distinct. This can be seen in Figures 20 and 21. As we see from figure 18, the people captured holding the party material are not clearly depicted – they are only being shown as “in support” of the party, rather than people who are in the party or “part of the party”. In contrast, Figures 20 and 21 are medium shots and are very distinct in detail in terms of dress code, race, and gender.

From a standpoint of transformation, there is semiotic potential that can be read into these differences in the way candidates are represented. In time frame one, the focus was on an individual, the focus was a personality cult of a particular party candidate. However, in time frame two, the party has become more important, but more so, how it has been relating itself to its audience – it is providing a message. Figures 19, 20, and 21 clearly have the party identifying itself as an organisation willing to engage a lot more with people – if not in fact all types of individuals. Therefore, in time frame one (see Figures 17 and 18), the party is calling on the audience to listen and follow them, whereas in time frame two (see Figures 19, 20, and 21), the party constructs a message prominent enough by including its audience to engage directly with the DA.

The semiotic potential of these differences are that of greater inclusiveness. The meaning that can be read in time frame one - by having indistinct individuals in long shots – is almost as if individuals do not seem to matter. In time frame two, there are pictures of individuals inviting us to read meaning into the uniqueness of each of the individuals representing different racial, cultural and religious backgrounds. Even in Figure 21, where there is one individual portrayed and who is a non-party official, the meaning conveyed is that this organisation is one of opportunity – an individual from a historically marginalized group (black male) can be part of this organisation. Whether you are a woman or man (black or coloured) – this is a party where you can become the centre.

Let us now address the representation of people in the DA's texts over time.

### **5.3 The Representation of People in Political Multimodal Material:**

The first section of this analysis intends to highlight the strategic use of and meanings associated with individuals in the DA's political texts over time. This approach explores the work of van Dijk (2008), and Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), according to whom the interpretation and use of people (social actors) in multimodal texts is influenced by a particular context.

The argument harks back to chapter two where the ideational metafunction put forward by Halliday (1989) was seen to allow for interrogating how people, places and objects are depicted within a particular context. From the perspective of this study, the corresponding question will be: has there been a change in the participants represented on campaign material over time? The interpersonal metafunction invites the analysis of the nature of social interaction between depicted persons and the viewers of the image. Depending on a variety of considerations, depicted persons may communicate a sense of distance or proximity. If a person of other ethnicities or races that have not traditionally appeared on materials of the DA are now found to appear on such materials, the question one would then ask would be whether such persons are included as active participants with which a relevant population segment is expected to actively identify with.

Let us begin with the analysis with Figures 22 to 25, which are representative of the kinds of material in the corpus I created.

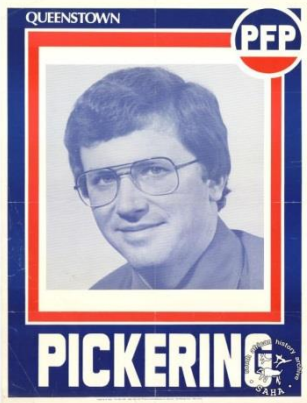


Figure 22: PFP campaigning poster in 1989.

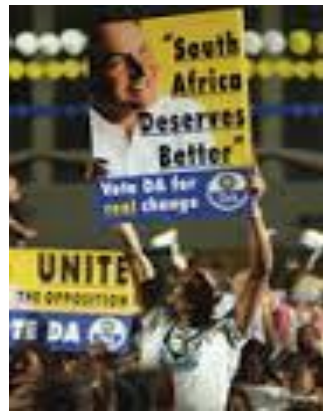


Figure 23: DP campaigning poster in 1999.



Figure 24: DA campaigning poster in 2008.



Figure 25: DA campaigning poster in 2014.

Figures 22 and 23 are from time frame one and Figures 24 and 25 are from time frame two. With regards to race and gender, the materials in time frame one (see Figures 22 and 23) depict individuals who are white males. These individuals were known to have prominent roles within the party at the time (e.g. Tony Leon, who was the party's leader, represents the DP in Figure 23). During time frame one, the context of politics and voting at the time were mainly dominated by males. Thus, the majority of the individuals that represented the DA and its predecessors were white, middle-aged males. When compared to Figures 22 and 23, a significant change can be seen in time frame two (see Figures 24 and 25). Figure 24 has black, white, and coloured females occupying prominent roles in the party (e.g. Parliamentary Leader, Leader of the DA, and Mayoral candidate). The changes in time frame two become more distinct when analysing Figure 20 which is also Figure 25, which depicts individuals who do not occupy prominent roles in the DA and who are of diverse racial and gender groups.

This diversity is (further) reflected in the clothing. In figures 22 and 23, the individuals depicted in the texts are dressed formally - even though the placements and angle of the picture does not focus on attire due to the medium shot (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). No affiliation to any religious groups can be determined of the individuals in Figures 22 and 23. A conventional approach to political campaigning posters is employed in Figures 22, 23, and to some extent, Figure 24. This approach traditionally includes an image of the politician representing the party occupying a prominent role, along with the party's name and their campaign slogan (Fourie, 2011; Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006; Abdullahi, 2012; Opeibi, 2006; and van Dijk 1989).



Significantly, figure 25 differs in terms of how the individuals are depicted to express their religion and ethnicity, thus deliberately producing a text to the public that shows the political party as possessing a diverse identity. This impression is created through dressing, positioning of the camera angle and the types of individuals chosen to be on the poster. For example, the individual in the centre wears a distinct piece of clothing on his head, which is a form of dressing associated with the Islamic religion. This headwear is known as a “taqiyah” and it is worn by male Muslims for religious purposes. It serves a similar purpose to the female “hijab” or female Muslim headwear (Huda, 2017).

In short, the campaign poster in Figure 25 strategically expresses diversity, having various males and females that are black, white, coloured, Muslim, and Indian. The semiotic potential of this representation may be interpreted as follows: the DA is a diverse party that represents all individuals, cultures, and religions in South Africa. Considering the past of the DA, figure 25 may be taken as a semiotic signature of transformation, suggesting that the DA is a political party that wants equality and is as diverse as the country. This view coincides with Berger’s (1972) point that images provide interpretations, ideologically appealing to the barely conscious, half-forgotten knowledge that the viewer has in the particular context.

#### **5.4 The Potential of Information Value in Political Multimodal texts:**

This section approaches the data in terms of how multimodal strategies are used strategically to communicate political messages of the DA over time. In turn, the collection of data over time and the multimodal strategies not only show how rich in data political posters are towards a campaign, but the vast difference that has occurred through the lens of transformation.

Chapter two presented a framework proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) based on principles of information value (Given, New, Real, Ideal), salience, gaze and colour. In describing information value, Kress & van Leeuwen (2006) write that “the placement of elements (participants and syntagms that relate them to each other and to the viewer) endows them with specific informational values attached to the various “zones” of the image: left and right, top and bottom, centre and margin” (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006: 177). These will be used to analyse visual images from the standpoint of transformation. Similarly, van Leeuwen (2008) highlights an important point that the placement of a participant’s gaze is important when representing individuals in multimodal texts. Gaze is explained by Halliday (1985 cited

in Kress and van Leeuwen (2006:118)), as “the participants’ demand they want from the viewer – that the viewer enters into some kind of imaginary relation with him or her”. There is meaning potential in the gaze from which we see the person: directly, whether contact is established even on an imaginary level when represented participants look at the viewer formed by participants’ eye lines, connect with the viewer (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006).

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) and van Leeuwen (2008:139) interpret a downward gaze as being related to power differences. To look down on someone is to exert imaginary symbolic power. It becomes evident that political campaigning posters are strategically constructed at a vertical angle - the physicality of the posters being placed on lamp posts high enough for viewers to look up and read the message, is suggestive of the power differences that the political party exerts over the reader. The symbolic power of the individual(s) in the text comes through when the depicted person looks down on the reader at that position, highlighting the power of that individual in the text.

Let us now analyse the materials in figures 26 and 27.



Figure 26: Campaigning poster of the PFP - “Eglin”



Figure 27: Campaigning poster of the DA - “Polokwane”

Figure 26 is from time frame one and Figure 27 from time frame two. These figures are similar in placement, as the prominent members of the party are depicted in the posters (this shows that they are the only individuals that are chosen to represent the party – their faces become the brand, a face that the public should resonate with) – even though as seen earlier DA posters also contain significant messages and accord importance to the logo.

Placement and angles of how the individuals positioned in the text communicate interpersonal relationships. Distance becomes symbolic - it indicates closeness, “of our relationships, whether such closeness is temporary, lasting the duration of a particular interaction or more permanent, and whatever more precise meaning it gains in specific contexts” (van Leeuwen, 2008:138). Figure 27 depicts a closer and open relationship that the DA has with the public – as all the prominent figures are represented in the centre of the poster. The individuals are represented together which represents unity, and diversity – asserting a united front positioned in the centre of the poster. The political message situated in the Ideal zone (top section) presents the aspiration not only of the place that the DA will be campaigning in, but emphasises the place that they ideally want to govern. The logo is presented in the Real zone (bottom section) of the poster, presenting the fact that the DA is promoting its campaign. With regards to the centre and margin zones – significantly, the two new black male and female party officials (Lindiwe Mazibuko on the left and Mmusi Maimane on the right) communicate a focal point in the political message that is being represented in Figure 27. By having these members in the centre communicates the change in terms of representation and the possible change in leadership of the party. This semiotic signature relates to the other older party officials (Helen Zille, and Patricia De Lille) positioned in the margins – the semiotic signature significantly tells us a story that the black members are the nucleus of the political party and the information in the margins are dependent on this possible new leadership. The information placed strategically in the centre and margins are relative to the ideal “promise of the product” that is being promoted in the top section of the poster. Figure 27 does not include information in the Given and New zones (left and right sections).

The placement of information in Figure 26 depicts the prominent individual in the top (ideal) and left (given) spaces - with the textual (written) elements representing the new and real spaces (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). Evidently, the people occupy the ideal space (aspirations and dreams) and given (already known information) spaces to assert two points in their campaigning posters. Firstly, having a picture of the leader in that space asserts the party’s aspiration to win elections. Secondly, occupying the “given” space shows that they are the leaders, which the public is most likely aware of already.

Figure 26 has only one white male representing the brand of the party, positioned in the Ideal zone (top left hand corner). This suggests that the political party ideally proposes the male depicted to be the leader of the country, should the PFP win elections. In contrast to Figure 27,

the real information is placed in the bottom section. It gives factual information of place and time of the campaign. A significant change between Figures 26 and 27 could be that figure 26 has information strategically placed in the New zone (right hand section). The information presents the topic of discussion or campaign that is not yet known or explored - and most importantly, the first and second name of the leader – who is represented visually in the Given and Ideal zones (top left hand sections). The semiotic signature of the message (“*Colin Eglin on Rent Problems*”) in Figure 26, compared to Figure 27, contributes towards a personality cult. The PFP logo is not salient and therefore the possible assumption of no affiliation to a political party could possibly be made. There is no inclusivity or resonance that the PFP in Figure 26 is demanding from the viewer. Rather, we see a constant effort to promote the leader (Colin Eglin).

Gaze is equally influential in the analysis of how people are depicted in the DA’s texts. The gaze allows the reader to view the participants in the texts as ‘interactants’ as they are gazing at the reader, aware of the interaction and communicative event that is taking place (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006). Figure 27 has the interactants gazing directly at the reader – having the reader perceive the message as though the interactants are communicating the written message to the reader with their direct gaze. Thus, engaging or symbolizing the beginning of an imaginary relationship –the gaze asserts that contact is established with all four interactants in figure 27 and the viewer of the text.

van Leeuwen (2008:141) explains that if the participants in the texts look at us, “if they do address us directly with their look, the picture articulates a kind of visual ‘you’, a symbolic demand”. Thus, the people in the picture want something from us - which can be seen in other elements. In the texts chosen, the DA and the people in the texts want the reader not only to engage in the texts, but to participate in the instruction, by voting for the DA and listening to what they have to say and where they are saying it.

In contrast to this, the way the interactant is placed in figure 26 does not allow contact to be established from his gaze – the placement and gaze are therefore suggestive of the interactant looking down on the viewer of the text – or could be gazing downwards as the viewer would have to gaze upwards, contributing towards a power difference between the party official and his audience.

There are significant changes in terms of gaze when referring to Figure 27 and comparing it to Figure 26. In Figure 27, there are more prominent individuals representing the DA in the centre of the poster. The placements of these individuals not only show the aspired order of the prominent roles they occupy, but highlight the DA's diversity as well. Firstly, it has the leader of the party at the time (Helen Zille) positioned behind a prospective leader (Mmusi Maimane). In the centre of Figure 27, the depiction of seniority is not visible; on the other hand, the older, more experienced political individuals are positioned behind the young and new political individuals of the DA – which could suggest that they will be occupying the more prominent roles in future. Here, the gaze invites the reader to vote for the party, to support, and become aware of the transformed identity they are promoting. The demographics of the participants explicitly shows all three races (black, white, and coloured). For this image in particular, the placement of the leaders in the text communicates that a change has occurred in the DA. This incites the reader to pay attention to the non-verbal entities of Figure 27 – to attend the campaign launch in Limpopo to hear and see the membership change taking place in the DA. Therefore, in terms of transformation in time frame two, Figure 27 engages the audience at the same level.

The semiotic potential of placement in campaigning material allows us to pay attention to not only who is depicted on the texts, but how these individuals are depicted. It becomes evident that placement and representation are useful factors to determine the semiotic potential and the change that occurred from a standpoint of transformation. Figure 27 shows that the DA promotes their diversity and transformation with the members they depict (all demographics) and how they are placed (forefront with a direct gaze). The DA places the two black officials in the centre of the poster with the white and coloured along the margin – this suggests that the party not only promotes diversity, but values marginalized groups.

### **5.5 The Semiotic Potential of Colour:**

Colour is viewed as a semiotic resource because it is a central element in the composition of a text and is mainly used to grab the attention of the reader. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006:105) propose that “signifiers such as colours carry a set of affordances from which sign makers and interpreters” or in this case “designers can select according to their communicative needs and interests”. Colours are a resource that can be used to do things, for example, to represent people, places, ideas or things. They can also be used to communicate intended relationships, to warn,

to appeal, to subdue, and so on. van Leeuwen (2011) notes that certain colours have been associated with prominent meanings, based on their usage and interpretations in particular contexts, which in this context have been mainly Western. These prominent meanings refer, for instance, to red being associated with anger and aggression; blue being associated with royalty, diplomacy and honesty; etc.

Colours incite and evoke particular meanings within a social and cultural context. The various changes that occur, therefore, can have meaning potential. Significantly, the DA has made various changes in terms of colour over time. This occurred when name and leader changes were made in the organisation. The PFP represented themselves with the colours red, blue, and white (see Figure 22). The DP made use of the colours yellow, blue, and white (see Figure 23). Lastly, the DA uses blue as their most prominent colour, and adds a logo (and sometimes a background that reflect the colours on the South African flag (see Figures 24 and 25). The noticeable colour the party has chosen to represent itself over time is blue, associated with royalty and interpretable as an aspiration towards power.

There are two striking aspects about the evolving colour use of the political party. Firstly, there is the expanding reach of the blue, from serving as either the colour used in lettering (see Figure 26), or for framing a candidate's picture (see Figure 22). Blue in Figures 19, 20 and 21 becomes the dominant or overwhelming background colour. This could be interpreted as a determination to take much further the party's royalty ambitions – a goal that is only realistic if the sorts of transformation indicated by the diversity of persons represented on the party's campaign material take place.

The second striking aspect is in the incorporation of the colours of the South African flag to show unity, transformation and diversity. This shows that they have a more inclusive and national approach to achieving political goals. Significantly, the use of the colours of the national flag communicates the DA's attempt to be more inclusive and to show their diversity. From the standpoint of transformation, the change in colours that the DA has made over time contributes to their diverse and transformed identity. By moving away from colours that could possibly associate the party to the other political parties and organisations, the DA has not only changed in terms of representation, but that they are explicitly expressing the changes that they have undergone in terms of their identity and ideologies. In terms of colour, semiotically, by

incorporating the colours of the South African flag, the DA promotes their diversity by making the South African colours their brand to promote their ideology of equality and transformation.

### 5.6 The Semiotic Potential of Salient elements in the campaigning material:

The composition of a picture or a page involves different degrees of salience to its elements – the weighting and visual attraction of elements (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Regardless of where they are placed, salience can create a hierarchy of importance among the elements, selecting some as more important, or more worthy of attention than others. From a standpoint of transformation, salience is an important factor when trying to signify the important elements that are meant to make the most meaning in an integrated text as well as the context. Salience will highlight what elements the DA has strategically placed to attract the reader’s attention over time.

Visual weight creates a hierarchy of importance, causing some to draw more attention to themselves than others. For example, Figure 23 – a campaign poster by the PFP during the 1980s - captures the reader’s attention with the bold surname of one of the PFP leaders, “*Slabbert*”. The logo in the campaigning poster is not the most salient as it does not draw the reader’s attention.



Figure 28: Campaigning poster of the PFP - “Slabbert”

In this case, the surname of the leader is the most salient. This creates the impression of a focus on personality. As there is no sort of explanation for the poster, it can easily be questioned if this is in fact a political poster. Therefore, meaning can only be made if the reader knows the prominent names representing the PFP (e.g. “*Van Zyl Slabbert, Eglin, and Van Der Merwe*”). The information is simple with a place, date, who constructed it (“*PFP*”) and who will be there (“*Van Zyl Slabbert, Eglin, and Van Der Merwe*”). It is clearly about salience being given to specific personalities.

On the other hand, when looking at figures 29 and 30 below, the DP gives salience to verbal messages (even though there are pictures as well). Figures 29 and 30 have messages relating to the DP’s “*Fight Back*” campaign. In Figure 29, salience is given to the verbal messages in Afrikaans and we find some of the translations in Figure 30.



Figure 29: Posters of the DP - “Future”

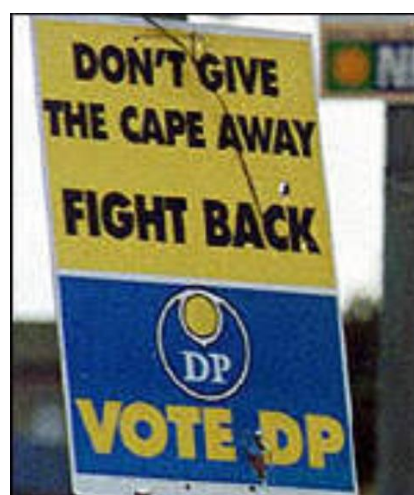




Figure 30: Campaigning poster of the DP - "Fight Back"

The DP is clear that they want the reader to know what they are fighting for: winning the Western Cape.

When analysing the texts in time frame two with regards to salience, Figures 31, 32 and 33 show significant changes in various multimodal elements with regards to visual weight, colour, and balance of the texts. Transformation can be seen when comparing texts from time frame one and time frame two. In terms of total change, transformation can be seen in all the texts in the verbal and non-verbal discourse. Figures 31, 32 and 33 are a representation of the DA billboard campaign series. These billboards were situated along the highway making it possible for every commuter to see them.

Structurally, the DA's billboard in figure 31 shows a balance of salience between linguistic and non-linguistic elements. This can be seen as the logo (DA) and the verbal message, "*VOTE TO WIN*", along with the picture of the DA's leader (Helen Zille), are equally balanced and positioned to capture the message that is intended. The uninformed reader will know such things as the following by looking at the billboard: who the advertisement is from ("DA"), who the leader is ("Helen Zille") of the party, and what they want you to do in order to win ("Vote").



Figure 31: Billboard of the DA - "Win"



Figure 32: Billboard of the DA - "corruption"



Figure 33: Billboard/banner of the DA - "small businesses"

Figures 32 and 33 share the same structure and same balanced salient features as in figure 31. However, the semiotic signature that the DA produces in Figures 32 and 33 promote a transformed identity by including non-party officials and a prominent political message that possibly resonates with the reader. The changes in time frame one and time frame two, in terms of salience between the linguistic and non-linguistic features, promote the openness and transformed identity that the DA aims to achieve.

Although there is still the picture of the prominent individual in Figure 31, there is nonetheless a shift compared to the more personality-focused images seen earlier on in time frame one. The semiotic potential in terms of the visual and verbal representation differs considerably in time frame one compared to time frame two. The messages and the representation of individuals depicted show that the DA has become more inclusive promoting a diverse and transformed identity in time frame two, being inclusive to all races, religions, ethnicities and gender in the South African context.

## 5.7 Chapter summary:

This chapter of the study explored the realm of social semiotics and the study of meaning through the analysis of multimodal material. The examination showed that semiotic resources could provide the basis for investigating the transformation of the DA – to highlight the semiotic potential campaigning posters can acquire. To do this, the investigation explored two parameters, namely the changes in the way the people have been represented over time and the placement of elements in a multimodal text. The analysis highlights the significant shift that occurs in time frame two – where the DA incorporates and communicates their transformed identity by using non-party officials in their posters. Not only does the use of non-party officials have the semiotic potential to prove transformation, these officials were the focal point of a political message depicting diversity, inclusivity and equality. The semiotic signature of transformation for this parameter can be seen in the medium shot (inciting a close interpersonal relationship with the reader), so that the reader can pay attention to the incorporation of race, gender, culture and religious varieties that were promoted in the posters. As for time frame one, the representation of people was more of a personality cult; the DA's predecessors promoted the party officials more than the ideologies and political messages.

With regards to the second parameter, the changes that have occurred structurally in terms of information value and placement, colour, and salience exhibited the semiotic signature from the standpoint of transformation. These changes were highlighted in the campaigning material over time outside the specific confines or realm of language. In time frame one, it becomes clear that the placement of elements is used strategically to emphasise party officials – little or no effort is made to express the political messages and ideologies of the party at the time. Thus, the semiotic potential is the sense of exclusivity.

The semiotic signature for the second parameter, from a standpoint of transformation for time frame two, presents a profound change. The placement and meaning expressed by the information value promotes a clear and distinct political message to the viewer, as well as asserting the party's presence by always making their logo and colour prominent. The DA asserts their transformed identity by promoting their diversity with a nationalized approach, by incorporating a new colour, having more individuals of various gender and races represented, and allowing the visual weight to guide the reader to their ideology of equality and diversity. These parameters of analysis allowed the party the semiotic signature to inform voters (old and new) and to possibly influence the public's perception of the DA – that they are not the same party in time frame one (being a white male dominated organization).

With that said, the various multimodal elements (gaze, representation of social actors, colours, positioning and informational value) work together, highlighting the semiotic potential that presents a consistent change across time frames to show the DA as a transformed organization.



## **CHAPTER SIX:**

### **6 CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY**

#### **6.1 Overview of the study:**

Studies done on political discourses in South Africa has analysed texts from political parties from a standpoint of transformation, primarily focusing on the text and talk of political organizations and the implications thereof. The semiotic resources of text and talk that are employed with the discourses of parties have limited research in a way that hinders the exploration of other avenues to determine transformation and other political actions that occurred over time.

South Africa's historical context offers an explanation for the pervasiveness of transformation as a theme in public discourse. South Africa's history has shaped various systems and structures. As a result of such political and social analysis, the history of inequalities, which, according to many analysts (Badat, 2010; Banda & Mafofo, 2014; and Egglestone 2014) continues to exist, and there are practically unlimited or contested meanings of transformation. These inequalities shaped the notion of transformation as a topical issue in the political discourse of South African political parties.

Evidently, other semiotic resources have been overlooked in studies of transformation, the resources that go beyond the 'sayings' of politicians and their organisations. Thus, an observation that motivated this study was the absence or lack of studies on how political parties themselves had transformed over time – in particular, studies going beyond the 'sayings' of the political parties that analyse other types of semiotic (or meaning-making) footprints associated with them. By exploring and opening the dialogue for such an investigation, was promptly discouraged when the Democratic Alliance was accused of not transforming but of hiring black faces instead.

Regrettably, the situation of investigating transformation was not given in theoretical advances in social semiotics (Lemke, 2008; Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006; and Fourie, 2010), showing that humans and institutions not only draw on tools beyond the use of language, but on other modalities to make socially significant meanings. As a result, I have decided to conduct a study

on *The Semiotic Signature of Transformation of Political Parties in South Africa: A multimodal analysis of selected Democratic Alliance texts* – with the following objectives:

1. To analyse any changes there have been in the anthroponyms (person names), and toponyms (place names) and/or autonyms (self-labels) in documents associated with the DA and its predecessors over time.
2. To describe any changes there have been in languages employed in documents associated with the DA and its predecessors over time.
3. To determine any changes in the ‘entities’ and other multimodal elements depicted on campaign posters, billboards and other publicity material of the DA and its predecessors over time.

The investigation into the semiotic potential of transformation of the texts that the Democratic Alliance (DA) produced over time has revealed the various changes in the identity of the DA and its predecessors. The analysis of semiotic potential highlights the semiotic analysis of political discourse as a powerful tool which has been overlooked over the past years in the respective disciplines. The fields of political science and discourse analysis can use these tools to investigate transformation and certain patterns of change, which are not confined to language.

Each research objective that this dissertation explored was designed in order for the researcher to investigate the semiotic potential in the discourse produced by the DA and its predecessors over time. The importance of the analysis was to investigate the changes in the textual and non-textual data, and to prove that semiotic potential for creating meaning and contributing to the growth of the party is evident. Each objective provides a substantial argument towards the DA’s growing success in the South African political domain. More specifically, each objective was created to view the semiotic signature of transformation in concrete terms – thus, to see if the changes bore fruits in reality.

The data collection included and considered resources beyond the use of text and talk of the DA. The data collections allowed me to build a corpus that included textual and non-textual data, such as statements, speeches, membership lists, campaigning billboards, and posters that the party produced over time. The analysis sought to look at changes (i.e. transformation) that

occurred since the party's inception to the most present (2015). Due to texts only being archived from a certain time, I decided to divide the political organisation into two time frames, namely time frame one (1989-2007) and time frame two (2008-2015) to manage the processing, and to be able to highlight changes that occurred over time. The corpus was processed manually by analysing, annotating and documenting change, and with the help from a concordance tool, AntConc, to aid investigation for the first objective. The data needed for objectives two and three was processed and analysed manually.

To theoretically frame the study, I reviewed relevant literature on onomastics, code-switching, multimodality and transformation within the context of the political domain. With respect to the first objective, literature on onomastics and the use of naming practices allowed me to develop the following framework: if the type of names that indicate various religious, cultural, and gender backgrounds increases and changes over time, then the DA shows patterns of change which contributes towards an identity of inclusivity and transformation.

With respect to the second objective, literature on code-switching alerted me to the social significance of how transformation can be seen in the use of languages other than English, especially in political texts. This suggested the following interpretive framework for my data analysis: if in time frame one, English is used in the majority of the texts with little or no instances of other languages, but in time frame two, the incorporation of more than two languages appear in the texts, then the DA is making a conscious effort to assert their transformed and inclusive identity.

With respect to the third objective, literature on multimodality and semiotics alerted me to the social significance of colour, positioning, and how actors are represented in campaigning material. The changes that occurred over time alerted me to the following interpretive framework for my data analysis: if in time frame one the party only represents themselves by their logo, name, and party leader, but in time frame two incorporates more party officials, political messages that are socially relatable and candidates showing a diverse ethnic background, then the party is moving towards a more inclusive and transformed identity.

Relative to the theory and analysis that was presented in this dissertation, regardless of what changes have occurred in the political party over time, was whether the DA gained from these changes in terms of votes, growth, and success.

The concluding outcome shows the semiotic potential of transformation in the texts of the DA over time. What follows is an explanation of how the DA and its predecessors made meaningful instances in their goings, beings, and sayings which contributed to growth, popularity, and in some cases, leading to success in the political domain. The potential in the non-verbal/non-textual resources contributes to the notion of how organisations strategically make meaning using resources other than the languages used in their text and talk over time. It will also prove that transformation, or lack thereof, can be seen in the DA's texts and behaviour over time by the analysis of the various parameters addressed by the research objectives.

## **6.2 Recapitulation of findings of the analysis:**

With respect to objective one on the changes that have occurred in the naming practices in the documents associated with the DA and its predecessors over time, some key findings on the analysis were obtained. The naming practices were divided into various sections to highlight the specific changes that occurred in the investigation. The study investigated the changes that occurred in the anthroponyms (people's names), toponyms (place names) and autonyms (organisation names). This section of analysis allowed the researcher to consider the membership lists and members of the political party over time, but not just accounting for the increase in members that has occurred over time, but the type of members – the parameter of anthroponyms allowed me to search beyond the name, but the ethnic and gender background to explore the extent of the membership of the DA and therefore, its diversity.

The section on anthroponyms was divided further into two categories, ethnicity-indexical names, and gender-indexical names to investigate change. In the corpus of time frame two (2008-2015) with respect to ethnicity-indexical names, there were 18,3% less white sounding names compared to time frame one (1989–2007); an increase of 13,8% in black sounding names in time frame two compared to time frame one; and 8,3% increase of coloured sounding names in time frame two compared to time frame one.

In the corpus of texts in time frame two with regards to gender-indexical names, there was an increase in female members by 16,4% compared to time frame one. A small increase occurred in male membership, only a 2,3% in time frame two compared to time frame one. Taking into account that any person can bear any name, and that the nature of gender and ethnicity cannot



only be determined by a name, the section of other was created for non-distinguishable names that have occurred over time.

The section on toponyms (place names) allowed the researcher to explore the diversity and transformation from a standpoint of how place names were used as a strategic communicative device to be more inclusive and transformed. In time frame two, of the 192 accounts of toponyms, 105 (54%) were black areas and only 87 (45,3%) were white areas. This denotes a substantive increase in the DA's efforts to transform and have a more nationalized approach. In time frame one (1989-2007), of the 169 accounts of toponyms that were mentioned, 83 (49,1%) were black areas and 86 (50,8%) were white areas. Although marginal, the change in toponyms appears consistent with changes in both ethnicity- and gender-indexical anthroponyms. The semiotic potential of toponyms show the DA's efforts to be more inclusive and transformed.

The section on autonyms needed no concordance tool to highlight the changes that occurred in the DA and its predecessors over time. We see that the autonyms of this political formation have always communicated transformation in the sense of social change that allows for inclusiveness (cf. progressive, reform, federal, democratic, alliance). What the analysis revealed was a semiotic intensification of this transformation agenda, beginning with timid calls for social change in their names (cf. progressive, reform) through aspirations to become an organisation with a national reach or identity and a goal (cf. federal, democratic, alliance).

Seen in the context of a history of blacks being excluded from taking part in politics, an increase of black sounding names and a decrease of white-sounding names from time frame one to time frame two has to be seen as communicating a socially significant meaning. Against the backdrop of the apartheid-era cartography of South Africa, dividing a country into white and black areas, we have also seen that place names occurring in the documents of the political organisation from time frame one to time frame two communicate the meaning that the organisation is garnering support from black people, therefore the increase of toponyms and anthroponyms over time is significant to highlight change. All of these interpretations are consistent with the meanings read into the party's autonyms, which have communicated levels of change and inclusivity. These figures and changes that have occurred in the analysis of naming practices in the DA and its predecessors over time have semiotic potential. The

semiotic potential invites us to read them as a semiotic signature of transformation in the political organisation over time.

With respect to objective two in search for the changes that have occurred in languages employed in documents associated with the DA and its predecessors over time, some of the key findings of the analysis were evident to transformations in the political organisation. The data that explored the analysis thereof was namely the textual data that included the speeches and official statements, which was manually processed.

In time frame one (1989-2007), the prominent language used in political texts was English with little instances of other South African Bantu languages and Afrikaans. In time frame two (2008-2015), English was still used in majority of the texts, however, other South African languages were used as well, namely: isiXhosa, isiZulu, Sotho, and Afrikaans.

Time frame two had texts with more code-switching than in time frame one. The interpretation thereof is that, semiotically, transformation towards greater inclusiveness will take place if the following parameters within this objective were met:

- a. In the texts of time frame one, there were very few code-switching instances compared to time frame two;
- b. In the texts of time frame one, the languages involved in the code-switching were only limited to English and Afrikaans, but in time frame two other languages (e.g. Bantu) are included; and
- c. In the texts of time frame one, the most common function of code-switching is the symbolic one (greeting, etc.) but in time frame two, there are various substantive types of information in different languages along with their translations.

Some of the key findings show that in time frame one, there were a few texts in Afrikaans only with no translations, a few English texts with bits (e.g. greeting, solidarity calls) of Afrikaans and Bantu languages, and English texts with passages of Afrikaans. In time frame two, the DA approached a more multilingual stance in a substantive rather than a token sense. Unlike in time frame one where there was no English text with Bantu language passages, this category emerges in time frame two. While there is a slight drop in the number of English texts with Afrikaans passages in time frame two, there is a substantive increase in the number of English

texts with bits of Bantu languages and Afrikaans. The results of time frame one and the way the DA presents another language in their text are for symbolic purposes only.

The increase in the use of other languages in time frame two and the increase in both passages and bits, signifies that the party is reaching out to especially African language-speaking audiences. From a standpoint of transformation as inclusiveness, the DA significantly attempts to reach new audiences and with increasingly more substantive messaging. Again, these changes in language use and the incorporation of other languages other than English, invite us to read them as a semiotic signature of transformation in the political organisation over time.

With respect to objective three on determining changes in the ‘entities’ and other multimodal elements depicted on the campaigning posters and other publicity material of the DA and its predecessors over time, a shift can be seen in what elements are placed on the semiotic material and how meaning can be read into the various changes. Significantly, in time frame one (1989-2007), the picture of the party official occupies a prominent role as the central focal point (see Figure 17); however, in time frame two (2008-2015), equal prominence is given to the party logo as well as a relevant message (see Figures 19 and 20). In the second time frame the DA adopts a more inclusive and active role in the material that was analysed by incorporating individuals who represented the party at a provincial, parliamentary, and national capacity. From a standpoint of transformation, the semiotic signature into these differences can be seen in the way candidates are represented and not so much as to who is represented on the material. In time frame one, the focus was on an individual, the focus contributed towards a personality cult of a particular candidate with a small depiction of the logo and a message which can be deemed insignificant. However, in time frame two, the party has become more concerned about how it has been relating itself to its audience – it is providing a message. One particular image (see Figure 20) depicts the DA identifying itself as an organisation willing to engage a lot more with people – if not all types of individuals. This particular image (see Figure 20) depicts male and female individuals with specific dress codes depicting their cultural/religious background, and an important incorporation of having black, white, coloured, and Indian individuals to emphasise the diversity of the party.

Another key finding from the analysis was related to gaze and how the DA has used and changed this aspect over time. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) interpret a downward gaze as being related to power differences. To look down on someone is to exert imaginary symbolic

power. It becomes evident that political campaigning posters are strategically constructed at a vertical angle to suggest the power differences that the political party exerts over the reader. In time frame one, the DA exerts their power over the reader by having the political candidate positioned on the text so that he/she looks down on the reader. In contrast, the individuals who are represented in time frame two are positioned in the centre, with a more direct gaze towards the reader – exerting an equal power difference and an inclusive relationship with the reader. It becomes evident that placement and representation are useful factors for determining the semiotic potential and the change that occurred from a standpoint of transformation.

The analysis of objective three highlighted a significant shift that occurred in time frame two – where the DA incorporated and communicated their transformed identity by using and making non-party officials the focal point in their posters. The changes in colour, placement and salient elements in the political message depicts the diversity, inclusivity and equality that the DA has adopted over time. Thus, the semiotic signature of transformation for this objective asserts the inclusive ideology that the DA sought to promote in time frame two. The semiotic potential informs voters (old and new) and to possibly influence the public's perception of the DA – that they are not the same party in time frame one (being a white male dominated organisation).

It becomes evident in all chapters of analysis that the various concepts, notions, and parameters used in the DA's discourse, contributes towards the construction of semiotic potential in terms of transformation in the DA and its predecessors over time.

### **6.3 Limitations of the study:**

There are various limitations of this study that need to be considered. The selected advertisements and texts are only representative of a very small sample, because not all material was archived and therefore not all material was analysed in this study. As mentioned previously, I have collected speeches, compiled membership lists, posters, leaflets and statements, basing the analysis on using the convenience model – material found and taken from a group I had easy access to. Even though the texts were from the years 1989 to 2015, more texts would have produced a larger sample and thus produced more significant results.

The limitations brought forward by texts not being archived and the researcher not being able to view these texts, have impacted the analysis in terms of sampling and text selection. It would have been beneficial to the study if the researcher could have obtained publications that dated back to the inceptions of the Progressive Party, or even further back, to show how political parties have progressed in terms of modality, composition, style, language use, and representation. Another interesting angle from where the semiotic potential of political parties could contribute towards the analysis of transformation, would be material from the United Party, which was one of the two most prominent political parties in South Africa (1934-1948). Despite the limitation of text collection, I was able to analyse the corpus to determine how ideals have progressed in the DA and were presented in a new democracy.

The findings for this study emphasized the need for an in-depth look into the portrayal of South African political parties, and the perceptions of transformation in the discourses that are being produced and consumed. With regards to any political topic, when it comes to political discourse, the word is the product, therefore linguistic analysis is deemed an important and significant factor when conducting a political discourse analysis. However, the DA used topics and issues that are challenging the public to their advantage, by making promises to the public and by addressing the issue in such a way that might seem as they will solve the issue. This approach is important in order to emphasize if political parties are being favoured by what they are producing linguistically. Contrary to this statement, even though language is an important factor, we cannot ignore non-verbal factors that also create a dialogue for interpretation. This study has proven that a political party has to be politically correct visually as well on what they are 'promising' or 'selling'.

Based on how the DA and its predecessors represented themselves over time, and what public classifications were made toward them, it would be useful to investigate exactly how much of the content is devoted to other material which may incidentally reflect alternative representations of the DA. In the context of the study, the researcher has shown how code-switching, onomastics, multimodality, and semiotics have been used to perform various functions and meanings, such as an interpersonal strategy to signal inter-ethnic identification or solidarity to create, strengthen or destroy interpersonal boundaries, express emotions, and convey meaning effectively, among others. It can be concluded that political candidates and organisations choose different modes in different contexts to maintain and negotiate a certain type of social identity with their addressees (Opeibi, 2007).

Another limitation brought forward is the opinions of politicians, voters, and citizens in South Africa as receivers of these messages, which could possibly provide a more conceptual approach towards the study. Hence, interviewing a sample of politicians, text producers, voters, and non-voters might be another avenue to explore in order to shed some light on the opinions of the various parameters discussed as receivers of this type of media material from a standpoint of transformation.



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