Lesley Marion Hodgson

**EXPLORING CHANGING IDENTITIES:
A CASE STUDY OF BLACK FEMALE TECHNIKON
STUDENTS' UNDERSTANDING OF THEMSELVES
AS USERS OF ENGLISH, AND AS USERS OF OTHER
LANGUAGES.**

I wish to state that the contents of this dissertation, unless specifically indicated to the contrary, are my own original work.

Lesley Hodgson 2002

ABSTRACT

This dissertation, a qualitative case study, investigates issues of language and identity among sixteen young black women studying at Technikon Natal. I examine the ways in which identities are structured by discourses of which language practices are an important part. The research participants' need to learn English is also interrogated against a scenario of South Africa during and post-apartheid.

In Chapter 1, I give historical background on the educational structures and legislation which affected my research participants before 2000, and then briefly describe their present context of study. The literature on which my dissertation is based is reviewed in Chapter 2. Humanist theories of motivation for second language learning, for example, Gardner's (1985), are rejected in favour of Norton Peirce's (1995) notion of investment in second language learning, which builds on Bourdieu's (1977 - 1991) concepts of capital, and views the second language learner as inseparable from her social world. However, the emphasis in Chapter 2 is given to some of the central ideas of poststructuralist thinking, particularly those pertaining to the undermining of totalising theories, and those arguing in favour of multiple subjectivity. Chapter 3 contains both my research methods, which were mainly social constructionist, as well as the broad discourse analysis techniques I deployed for my data analysis.

Notable in Chapter Four, in which I present and analyse my findings, is the power of ethnic discourses to govern the use of their own and other languages by their subjects. Significant, too, are the shifts in subjectivity which individuals experience as they integrate new discourses into their lives. Amongst my conclusions in the final chapter is the notion that, from a poststructuralist perspective, code switching may allow the simultaneous display of more than one identity; that the use of English by black South Africans is fraught with contradictions,

and that indigenous African languages appear vulnerable to the pressure from powerful English discourses. I also discuss the limitations of this research and make recommendations for future research, and end with the particular insights into language and subjectivity I have gained as a lecturer in my current teaching context.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION, HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF RESEARCH

1.1 General introduction

It would be difficult to examine the issues of language, education and identity among young black women in South Africa in the last years of the twentieth century and the first years of the twenty first century without reference to apartheid. The political regime associated with the apartheid doctrine structured life for South Africans in nearly all social domains from 1948 to 1994. In dividing people according to race, and more narrowly, ethnic origin, apartheid created a social climate which facilitated stereotypical thinking about people along racial lines – although this process might have begun during colonial times.

In the educational sphere during the apartheid era, educational resources were inequitably distributed, with black schools receiving the least funding. Under-resourced schools with few highly qualified teachers further encouraged negative unidimensional thinking about black students. From the 1980s, when tertiary educational institutions started to become more racially integrated, black students entering tertiary institutions were frequently constructed as disadvantaged at best; at worst they were labelled as unprepared, or even unsuitable, for tertiary education. As regards competency in English, black students were constructed as deficient learners who lacked the language skills necessary to cope with academic English at tertiary level.

However, tertiary institutions currently register first year students who have spent some of their schooling in an educational system controlled by a democratic government (first elected in 1994), and an interrogation of such negative labelling and positioning of black students appears overdue.

1.2 Rationale for this dissertation

This dissertation focusses on sixteen black female students in their second year of study towards diplomas in two different disciplines in the field of commerce at Technikon Natal's

Riverside (Pietermaritzburg) campus[1]. The students had diverse primary and secondary schooling experiences. Their past and current educational experiences are probed with particular reference to English, their home languages (see footnote 3 under 1.5), and the other languages they speak, and the identities they are consequently able to take up. These are identities that are multiple, often challenged and shifting, for they change over time.

While the context-sensitive aspect of the ways in which students understand themselves is recognised, the aim of this study has been to open up the issue of identity and allow for more fluid interpretations - interpretations which move away from the imposition of deterministic identities on students that are selected from narrowly defined categories. This is a small exploratory study. Nevertheless, a better understanding of students' voices, and better interpersonal communication between Technikon staff and students might have been facilitated by drawing on poststructuralist and critical theory to interpret what the research participants say about their own identities.

1.3 Historical background on the education of black South Africans from 1976 to the present

My research participants, since they began their tertiary education in 2000, started primary school in the latter half of the 1980s. By this time, the apartheid government had been forced to make some changes in the area of education for black South Africans as a result of the educational protests which had been taking place at irregular intervals since the Soweto youth uprising of 1976. Only the changes in educational legislation regarding language policy and school admittance, which were of direct consequence to my research participants during their schooling, have been mentioned here.

In 1976, black learners in Soweto had taken to the streets partly in protest against a Department of Education and Training directive that some of the subjects in black schools be taught through the medium of Afrikaans. Other aspects of the Bantu Education Act of 1953

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[1] From April 2002, subsequent to its merger with M.L. Sultan Technikon, Technikon Natal has been renamed the Durban Institute of Technology. However, the name Technikon Natal has been used throughout this dissertation.

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(Act 47 of 1953), but amended several times, had also been 'subjected to severe criticism'[2] (Behr 1984: 200) for their shortcomings during these protests. Thus it was that the Education and Training Act of 1979 (Act 90 of 1979) was adopted which repealed all previous legislation between 1953 and 1978. The act laid down 'cardinal policy principles within the framework of education which must be pursued in black schools managed controlled or subsidised by the Department of Education and Training' (Behr 1984: 200). One of these principles was that the language of learning was to be the home language, that is, one of the indigenous African languages, up to and including Standard 2 (Grade 4). Thereafter, either English or Afrikaans, the two official languages during apartheid, could be used as a language of learning.

Although most black schools then chose English as the language of learning from Standard 3 (Grade 5), it was obvious that the majority of learners in those schools would not have the linguistic competency to cope with the sudden change from home language to English instruction at Standard 3 level. Hartshorne (1981 cited in Behr 1984: 307) expressed the opinion that professionally unqualified teachers (19% of all black teachers lacked any kind of professional qualifications in 1978) with limited academic background, also had a lack of competency to use English or Afrikaans effectively as a language of learning.

An amendment to Act 90 of 1979 in 1991 allowed the parents of learners enrolled in a school, in consultation with the minister of education, to choose the language of learning for that school (Luckett 1995: 12). For the first time, parents had a measure of control over the language of learning of their children. This might have been one of many small signs of the times that apartheid state policy was beginning to 'fray at the edges' (Self 1990: 1 cited by Hartshorne 1999: 100). Yet Hartshorne (1992: 100) claims that the domain of education 'was to prove to be one of the last bastions of apartheid'.

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[2] Throughout this dissertation, single inverted commas have been used for quotations from secondary sources and double inverted commas for quotations from primary sources, that is, students' responses.

This scenario regarding language of learning was that against which my research participants had their early schooling. Serious questions continued to be asked throughout the 1980s by critics of separatist education about black teachers' capacity to teach English as a language or to use it as a language of learning, and about black learners' 'capacity to use English in the classroom at a level appropriate to learning required by the curriculum' (Hartshorne 1992: 206). Black learners have always had to choose to write Senior Certificate examinations in their Standard 10 (Grade 12) year in either English or Afrikaans; the exception would be any other language they may sit for the certificate. Hartshorne again notes (1992: 206) that one indicator of the effects of policy and practice

> ... was the drastic decline in passes in English in the Senior Certificate examination from 78.2% in 1978 to 38.5% in 1984, which was the last year in which these statistics were published in the Department [of Education and Training].

Significantly, 1979 was the year English had become the language of learning from Standard 3.

I wish to mention briefly here two other factors which strengthen the claim that a child in a black school during the apartheid era received an inferior education compared to children in schools for whites, and, to a lesser extent, schools for Indians and coloureds. The Department of Education and Training, realising the need to improve qualifications of black teachers, instituted correspondence courses during the 1980s whereby teachers could upgrade their qualifications. These courses continued to be available during the nineties. However, better qualifications could do little to alleviate the problem of the large learner/teacher ratio which black teachers consistently had to cope with. In 1988, learner/teacher ratios in white controlled areas (that is, excluding the 'independent' Homeland areas of the time) stood at 41 to 1 for Africans (blacks), 25 to 1 for coloureds, 20 to 1 for Indians and 16 to 1 for whites (South African Institute of Race Relations [SAIRR] 1989: 260). The black learner/teacher ratio, furthermore, as a national average, does not reflect that in many areas teachers taught classes of over 50 learners.

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There was also a disparity between the per capita expenditure on African (black) learners compared to those of other race groups. In the 1988/1989 year, for example, excluding capital expenditure, the per capita expenditure for Africans was R655.96, for coloureds R1221.47, for Indians R2066.85, and for whites R2882.00 (SAIRR 1990: 795). Black parents might not have had access to the above statistics, but the evidence would have spoken for itself in the overcrowded classes and under-resourced schools their children were forced to attend compared to the superior conditions and facilities they might have seen existed in schools for other race groups, and particularly in schools for whites.

During the early 1980s and early 1990s, the general political unrest and educational protests against the government's 'separate but equal' educational policy made teaching and learning difficult in many black schools. For instance, Hartshorne (1999: 97) states:

> By the end of the eighties ... in the high schools of the metropolitan areas, in particular, the Department of Education and Training was in a 'no-win' situation and had lost control of the schools.

In 1984 the House of Delegates, which controlled Indian schools, and the House of Representatives, which controlled coloured schools, had agreed that schools under their control could choose to accept children of all 'races'. The language of learning had always been English in Indian schools, and English or Afrikaans in coloured schools, so that black children attending such schools had to learn through their second language (see footnote 3 under 1.5) from Grade 1. Some black parents took advantage of the opportunity to have their children 'admitted to the better quality education in these schools' (Luckett 1995: 12), although initially there were not large numbers of black children attending schools of these other two population groups. In 1988, Indian schools, for example, admitted 1455 learners of other 'races' countrywide, and coloured schools, 7240 learners 'not classified as coloured' (SAIRR 1990: 802).

The process of desegregation began later in white schools. On 23 March 1990, Mr Clase, Minister of Education (for whites), announced his department was considering two possible additional models for the provision of education (SAIRR 1990: 803). The one model, 'Model C', became effective from January 1991 and permitted schools to admit learners of other

'races' provided parents had voted overwhelmingly in favour of doing so. Starting with 205 schools throughout South Africa going the 'Model C' route in 1991, more and more schools chose the multiracial option from then on until all apartheid legislation was revoked.

Thus it was possible for black learners to attend schools of other 'race' groups before 1994 - a choice exercised by eleven of my research participants (see Chapters 3 and 4) after their parents had made the necessary arrangements, or after these learners had passed entrance tests which would have been designed to test their competence to cope with schooling in English.

Following the democratic elections of 1994, came the South African Schools Act of 1996 (Act 84 of 1996). This act repealed all previous discriminatory educational legislation at the primary and secondary levels so that parents can now make personal choices about what schools their children attend. Nevertheless, many formerly whites-only schools still have a teaching staff who are predominantly white, and remain better staffed and resourced than most 'black' schools.

The South African Schools Act of 1996, moreover, made it a school's governing body's responsibility to determine the language policy of that school. In practice, this does not always happen. Hadebe (2001: 35) found that in the historically disadvantaged schools she visited in the greater Pietermaritzburg area of KwaZulu-Natal, the governing bodies were not consulted on language policy. The teachers and management team of the school decided on the language policy.

When English is chosen as the official language of learning in a 'black' school, and this remains the choice of most 'all black' schools, teachers often switch continuously between English and the home language of learners because learners lack the English skills appropriate for the grade they are in. Hadebe states that secondary school teachers from historically disadvantaged schools 'blame the learners' lack of proficiency in English on the primary school teachers who do not develop the learners' English skills' (Hadebe 2001: 55). Many learners from these schools in their final school year may, therefore, still lack some of the

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English skills necessary to write their Senior Certificate examinations with confidence. The
poor Senior Certificate pass rates of recent years have given the Minister of Education cause
for concern. In both 1998 and 1999, the years in which my research participants wrote their
Senior Certificate examinations, the proportion of candidates who passed was 49% (SAIRR
2001: 262). This was a decrease in the pass rate of 5% compared with 1996, which was the
first year in which candidates of all population groups had written common examinations in
each of South Africa's provinces. Hartshorne (1999: 115) quotes the Sunday Times of 12
January 1997 reporting after these 1996 examinations, that 'on average, pupils from
historically disadvantaged apartheid departments still did much worse than white pupils from
the former Model C schools'. It is unlikely that the situation would have changed much by the
end of the 1998 or 1999 academic years.

As a result of the factors mentioned above, a black student from a historically disadvantaged
'black' school entering a higher education institution at the present time may, but not
necessarily, have poorer Senior Certificate results and less competency in English than
students from other schools.

1.4 Tertiary education at a technikon: 1983 to the present

Tertiary education during the apartheid era was, like primary and secondary education, also
divided into separate institutions for each 'race' group. The Advanced Technical Education
Amendment Act of 1983 (Act 84 of 1983) was designed to give technikons autonomous
status similar to that of the universities so that they could provide more efficiently the
advanced technical education they had been established to provide by the Advanced Technical
Education Act of 1967 (Act 40 of 1967). The 1983 amendment also allowed technikons
earmarked for whites to register students other than whites for study, but subject to a quota
determined by the Minister of Education (Behr 1984: 132). Technikon Natal would thus have
admitted black South Africans from 1983.

Racial quotas were not always adhered to and some institutions admitted more blacks than
were officially allowed. Along with the unbundling of other apartheid legislation even before
1994, came a rapid growth in the numbers of students of all races attending tertiary

institutions. In the period 1991 to 1996, the growth in student numbers at technikons was 'double that in the universities' (Hartshorne 1999: 117). The growth in numbers of black students was especially rapid, in contrast to a net loss of white students from historically white institutions (Hartshorne 1999: 117).

The Higher Education Act of 1997 (Act 101 of 1997) claimed, as part of its preamble, a desire to 'redress past discrimination and ensure representivity and equal access' to higher education. Many challenges connected to transformation however remain. Funding problems, and the mergers of some tertiary institutions, which have been set in motion by the present Minister of Education, Kader Asmal, are two of the current issues facing higher education.

1.5 Research site for this dissertation

Technikon Natal's Riverside (Pietermaritzburg) campus has approximately 1200 students and is part of the larger institution with its main campus in Durban. Since Riverside is a small campus, course options are less extensive than on the main campus. Beside an engineering option, students may choose to study towards one of eight three-year diplomas in the Commerce faculty. The majority of students studying at the Riverside Campus live in Pietermaritzburg or the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands, but there are smaller numbers of students whose homes are in the other provinces of South Africa. The international student presence on campus has increased greatly recently with the enrolment of approximately 350 Botswanan students during 2001. Zulu is the predominant home language of Riverside students. English is the language of learning at Technikon Natal.

To register as a diploma student at Technikon Natal, an applicant must have passed the Senior Certificate or its equivalent with a C symbol for English Second Language[3] (Higher Grade) or an E symbol for English First Language (Higher Grade). Students who wrote the Senior Certificate at a 'black' school are likely to have sat for English Second Language with their First Language examination having been their home language or another indigenous African language. Entry to each of the diploma courses is based on a points system with points allotted to each of an applicant's Senior Certificate subject symbols. Each department requires different numbers of total points and may favour good symbols in particular subjects, for example, Accounting or Mathematics for the National Diploma in Accounting.

1.6 Conclusion

In sum, examining issues of language, education and identity among students currently at a tertiary institution in South Africa requires cognizance of the cultural or ethnic background of the students. Their background will have affected their primary and secondary schooling, but it will also affect their perspectives on their lives.

Discussion of the strong interplay of culture of origin with views on the need to learn English as a black South African, as well as with the powerful discourses of the academic world, constitutes a major portion of this dissertation. Ideas drawn from poststructuralist and critical theories, which will be discussed in Chapter 2, are appropriate for an investigation of the above issues. Similarly, interpretation of data (see Chapter 4), again drawing on poststructuralist ideas, can assist the understanding of changes both at the personal and group levels in most contexts. In the current, fast changing and diverse South African context, it is difficult to over-estimate the importance of developing this understanding.

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[3] Education departments in South Africa are moving in the direction of naming the main or first language studied by learners at school the *home language,* and the second or other additional languages *additional languages.* The Senior Certificate (SC) examinations in these subjects will also be referred to by these names in the near future. However, my research participants wrote the Senior Certificate in 1998 or 1999, when the original terms were used. I have, therefore, chosen to use the terms *first language* for the SC examination, and *home language* for both the language spoken at home, and the language of learning where applicable. *Second language* has been used for both the SC examination, and the additional language being learnt.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Norton Peirce's paper entitled 'Social Identity, Investment and Language Learning' (1995) served as the original impulse for the issues discussed in this dissertation. In the course of this research, I examined whether Norton Peirce's theory of social identity, which integrates the language learner and the language learning context, could also be informed by data in a South African context where English is learnt by South African blacks for different reasons and under different conditions from those encountered by the Canadian immigrants of Norton Peirce's study. My research also had a wider focus than Norton Peirce's and included an investigation of identities obtained through knowledge of other languages. Although sometimes highlighted in new ways, it will be shown that Norton Peirce's key arguments are relevant in a South African context - at least amongst black students at Technikon Natal.

Norton Peirce's (1995) paper and that of McKay and Wong (1996) who extended her theory, as well as the work of some of the major theorists who have informed their work, are consequently discussed here. Other writers who either further illuminate the theory of the aforementioned writers, or are particularly apposite for interpreting my own data, are also included. Particular account is taken of a more sociopolitical approach to issues surrounding second language learning, which is contrasted with the more traditional approach, and, crucially, attention will be given to the tenets of poststructuralist theory upon which this dissertation is based.

2.2 The traditional approach to motivation as a variable in second language learning

Since Norton Peirce (1995) has chosen to use the term 'investment' rather than 'motivation' to describe the affective variable of second language learning that signals the learner's commitment to learning the target language, it is necessary to describe how this term is traditionally framed by second language acquisition (SLA) theorists, and thus the reasons behind Norton Peirce's preference for 'investment'.

A major problem with traditional views of how motivation affects SLA lies with theorists'

assumptions that the second language learner 'can choose the conditions of interaction with

the target language community and that access to the target language community is a function

of the learner's motivation' (Norton Peirce 1995: 12). Most influential in propagating this

view have been Gardner and Lambert (1972) in Applied Linguistics and Gardner (1985) in the

field of social psychology. In order to investigate motivation, they used extensive self-report

questionnaires initially, mostly with persons who were Anglophone students studying French

as a second language in Canada, and later with students studying English as a second language

in the Philippines. They attempted to quantify the commitment of learners to learning the

target language by developing two overarching constructs which they believed governed

motivation to learn a language, namely integrative motivation and instrumental motivation.

Integrative motivation is associated with a positive attitude towards the people belonging to

the target language group, a desire to interact with the members of the target language group,

and a potential to integrate with that group. Instrumental motivation, on the other hand,

emphasises the practical value and advantages of learning a new language, for example,

because it may be useful in more easily gaining employment or in advancing one's career.

These are two constructs, then, which would appear to be rather simplistic explanations of

motivation for SLA.

There has indeed been criticism of the constructs of integrative and instrumental motivation as

researched by Gardner and Lambert and Gardner. Au (1988) having reviewed fourteen studies

carried out by Gardner and his associates, found many different correlations between various

measures of integrative motivation and measures of proficiency: positive, nil, negative and

uninterpretable or ambiguous. Au then concluded that 'there is little evidence that the

integrative motive is a unitary concept' (1988:82). Dornyei (1990) found that voluntary

learners of English in Hungary were instrumentally motivated up to a certain level, beyond

which he believed they needed to become integratively motivated to succeed with more

advanced studies in English. So for Dornyei, integrative and instrumental motivation need to

be viewed along a continuum rather than as two discrete categories. Ellis (1994) has not

personally undertaken research on motivation, but gives a comprehensive summary of other

studies in the field of social psychology which have critiqued the constructs of integrative and

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instrumental motivation for SLA. Ellis reports, for instance, on Oller and Perkins' study in which the researchers posit a 'Machiavellian Motivation' underlying some learners' desire to learn a second language. That is, the second language learners, rather than wishing to integrate with the target language community, hope to be able to manipulate and even overcome the people of that community (Ellis 1994: 511). Ellis also cites Berwick and Ross' (1989) study of first year commerce students at a Japanese university (Ellis 1994: 515) which concluded that there is 'an experiential dimension to learners' motivation.' On a pre-test administered to the Japanese students at the beginning of their compulsory English course, their motivation was very low. However, at the end of the course their motivation appeared much improved and there appeared to be greater interest. Through the year the students had begun to understand that learning English might be useful and/or a worthwhile pursuit. Despite the above-mentioned critiques from the colleagues of Gardner, they nevertheless continue to consider motivation as a fixed trait within individuals, paying scant attention, if any, to the constitutive role of context in second language learning.

That wider context, the social environment in which the second language learner lives, has been the focus of research by Schumann (1976 and 1978 as discussed by Norton Peirce 1995: 11) who developed the acculturation model of SLA. This model predicts that learners will acquire the target language in an enhanced fashion when there is minimal social distance between learners from the second language group and the target language group. Acculturation of the second language group is facilitated when social distance is minimal, and concomitant language learning takes place. Norton Peirce (1995: 11) discusses how, from an acculturation model standpoint, a second language learner from the research group might struggle to interact with a target language speaker because of the lack of congruence in the respective cultures. I could argue that social distance between black ethnic groups and home language English speakers in South Africa accounts for the struggles the former experience when learning English. And yet not all individuals experience a struggle to learn English as my data (Chapter 4) will show. A concentration on group differences is thus misguided.

Norton Peirce (1995) points out two other weaknesses in Schumann's model. The first is that the heterogeneous communities in which language learners live are uncritically viewed.

Neither the power relations existing in these communities, nor 'the impact of historical and structural factors upon individual language learning', as Tollefson (1991: 30) suggests, are considered. Secondly, and even more importantly, and relevant also to the work of Gardner and associates, is the fact that a dichotomous distinction is being made between the language learner and the social world (Norton Peirce 1995: 11). This is an artificial distinction which, if removed, might lead to more agreement in the literature about the effect of affective variables on SLA. What is required is a holistic understanding which allows for an integration of the learner with her social milieu.

2.3 From motivation to investment in second language learning and Bourdieu's contribution

Because of the unidimensional use of the term ' motivation' with respect to SLA, Norton Peirce (1995) has chosen instead to use the term 'investment' 'as it more accurately signals the socially and historically constructed relationship of the women [in her study] to the target language and their sometimes ambivalent desire to learn and practise it' (Norton Peirce 1995: 17). The significance of the above quotation will become clearer in the discussion concerning investment in language learning, power relations, discourses and identity in the sections of this chapter which follow below. However, the theoretical roots of the term 'investment' need exploration first since, following Norton Peirce, I have also chosen to use it to interpret my research data.

Although Norton Peirce has found no 'comprehensive discussion' of the term from her readings in social theory, investment is 'best understood with reference to the economic metaphors that Bourdieu uses in his work,' especially the concept of 'cultural capital' (Norton Peirce 1995: 17). Norton Peirce has only a limited discussion of Bourdieu (1977a) and Bourdieu and Passeron's (1997) work. Yet a slightly lengthier explication of their work is pertinent here particularly as the sociopolitical context in which black women in South Africa learn English, or any other language that is not their home language, is even more complex than that experienced by the Canadian immigrants of Norton Peirce's study. Bourdieu (1977a, 1977b, 1986 and 1991) and Bourdieu and Passeron's (1977) work is able to inform behaviour and events in these learning contexts.

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Bourdieu contends that all human activity or practice involves exchanges between individuals or groups in terms of an 'economy of exchange' (Bourdieu 1986). These exchanges, which are not only material in form such as monetary exchanges might be, are the source of social power and control. Maximising social advantage becomes the conscious or unconscious goal of all human activity. In this model involving a dialectic relationship between social structures and human activity, language practices may form 'powerfully mediating moment(s) where human agency and social structure, motivation and norm are realised' (Carrington and Luke 1997: 100).

All human activity, says Bourdieu, also takes place within a web of socially constructed 'fields' (Bourdieu 1991) such as family and community structures, educational systems and institutions, and corporations and businesses, all of which are subject to change over time. Individuals will move through a number of diverse fields sometimes within one day, and certainly within the course of their lives, and be socially positioned within each field according to their relative accumulations of 'capital'. It is Bourdieu's notion of varying forms of capital as an index of relative social power that is the most useful for the present project.

'Economic capital' consists of material goods and resources which are directly convertible into money (Bourdieu 1986: 243). 'Social capital' is gained as a result of the individuals' membership of a group or institution (which may be cultural) and the resulting access to resources owned collectively by the group or institution (Carrington and Luke 1997: 102).

'Cultural capital' is often subdivided into categories, but of chief concern here is that certain skills, the languages one speaks and academic qualifications one gains, are included under this form of capital. Even so, no form of capital *is* capital unless it is authoritatively approved as such in a particular social field. It is understandable that some forms of cultural capital have a higher exchange value than others in a given social context (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977 as cited by Norton Peirce 1995: 17). Apart from one's knowledge of a language, one's pronunciation and accent when speaking it, may consequently affect one's cultural capital. These nuances of cultural capital are borne out by my data (see Chapter 4).

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Norton Peirce's coinage of the term 'investment' is now more apparent. If learners invest in a second language they do so to increase the value of their cultural capital. They want a good return on their investment. Drawing on Ogbu (1978), Norton Peirce takes the position 'that this return on investment must be seen as commensurate with the effort expended in learning the second language' (Norton Peirce 1995: 17). In the South African context where most black pupils do not have a choice about whether they learn English or not, it is the degree of investment in English which may allow the accumulation of cultural capital. Neither Bourdieu nor Pennycook (1994b - see 2.7) would suggest that increased cultural capital can be guaranteed.

It is stressed by Norton Peirce, that the term 'investment', unlike Gardner's term 'motivation', which is perceived as a personality trait of a unitary unchanging and ahistorical learner, tries to capture the relationship of the learner to a multidimensional changing social world. Her notion 'presupposes that when language learners speak ... they are constantly organising and reorganising a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world' (Norton Peirce 1995: 18). As the later chapters of this dissertation will illustrate, investment in learning a new language is also investment in a learner's own identity - an identity that is constantly changing across time and space.

2.4 Towards poststructuralist theory

2.4.1 Understanding the subject

In rejecting Gardner and Lambert's and Gardner's (1985) concept of motivation for second language learning for the reasons noted above, Norton Peirce (1995) is implicitly rejecting the humanistic/Enlightenment notion of the subject. The philosophical movement of the Enlightenment considered reason and rationality the basis for universal human progress. The Enlightenment subject 'was based on a conception of the human person as a fully centred, unified individual endowed with the capacity of reason, consciousness and action whose "centre" consisted of an inner core ... The essential centre of the self was a person's identity' (Hall 1992: 275 as cited in Barker 1999: 13). Each Enlightenment subject was thus considered to be a unique individual, an autonomous, self sufficient agent, with a stable unchanging identity.

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It is worthwhile noting that the Enlightenment subject is one of two conceptions of the subject in modernity, the other being the sociological subject. The notion of an individual with an inner core is retained for the sociological subject, but the individual is no longer autonomous and self sufficient. She is a social 'animal' whose inner world interacts with the social world to form her identity. Furthermore, identity is no longer considered to be stable and unchanging, but 'always in process' (Barker 1999: 15).

This dissertation is predicated on a concept of identity that differs from those of modernity. It is based on the notion of the postmodern/poststructuralist subject. The subject is not constructed as having an inner core in poststructuralist theory, but is decentred with no coherent understanding of self; significantly it is an unstable identity. The poststructuralist subject has different, and frequently contradictory, identities at different times. In short, the poststructuralist subject has an identity in a constant state of flux. It is important to note, also, at this point, that the work of Foucault has been a crucial influence on poststructuralist theories of identity, but this influence will be dealt with later as part of a more detailed consideration of his work (see 2.5.4).

2.4.2 Social versus cultural identity

The description given above of the poststructuralist subject is in accordance with the theoretical foundations of the work of Norton Peirce (1995). In this paper, she equates subjectivity, that is, our understanding or 'sense of ourselves' (Weedon 1997: 21), with *social* identity. I am not persuaded that such a distinction is necessary. Barker (1999) bases his work on *cultural* identity on the writings of similar poststructuralist theorists with part of his definition of cultural identity reading 'points of temporary attachment to the subject positions which discursive practices construct for us' (Barker 1999: 172). It could be Norton Peirce's (1995) definition of *social* identity, briefly, as multiple, produced in a number of social sites (sometimes sites of struggle), and, importantly, changing over time (Norton Peirce 1995: 15 - 16 and see 2.6.1). Norton Peirce (writing as Norton) in 1997 has this to say about distinguishing between social and cultural identity: that, despite her own differential understanding of cultural identity, which references the individual's relationship to a group with whom a common language and understanding of the world is shared, she has come to see

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'the differences between social identity and cultural identity as fluid and the commonalities more marked than the differences' (Norton 1997: 420).

For these reasons, I believe that Norton Peirce's (1995) work should not be restricted to an examination of social identity only. Her work is used in Chapter Four in relation to cultural and particularly ethnic identity as well as social identity.

2.5 Weedon and poststructuralist theory

Although both Norton Peirce and I used female participants in our research (see Chapter 3), it was not a need for a perspective within the feminist research paradigm which motivated the use of Weedon's (1997)[4] *Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory* . Rather, Norton Peirce chooses to distinguish Weedon from other poststructuralist theorists because 'of the rigorous and comprehensive way in which her work links individual experience and social power in a theory of subjectivity' without neglecting 'the central role of language in her analysis of the relationship between the individual and the social' (Norton Peirce 1995: 15).

The 'central role of language' in this relationship requires careful analysis. Firstly Weedon's (1997) poststructuralist view of the role of language as social practice will be explained. Secondly it will be necessary to analyse Michel Foucault's notions of discourse and power/knowledge and the decentred subject, as it is argued that individuals' lives only make sense from positions they occupy within a number of discourses of which they are subjects. The understandings of themselves as users of various languages that the student participants of the present research have, emerge from their participation in multiple discourses.

2.5.1 A poststructuralist view of language

It is not surprising that with differences between humanist/Enlightenment and post-structuralist views of identity being marked as mentioned above (2.4.1), that humanist/ Enlightenment and poststructuralist views about what language is and does should be positioned in polarised ways from each other. Whereas humanists view language as a neutral

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[4] Norton Peirce used the 1987, first edition of this work, while I used the 1997, second edition.

medium in which meanings are fixed and language merely reflects an already given social reality, poststructuralists would reject these statements outright.

Weedon (1997) explains that poststructuralists go beyond assuming that language constitutes social reality, and that meaning is only produced within language, insights gained from the structural linguistics of Saussure (Weedon 1997: 22 - 23). Saussure theorised language as an abstract signifying system constituted by a series of signs. Each sign is analysed in terms of its constituent parts, the signifier (sound or image on the page) and the signified (the concept or meaning). Yet the two parts of the sign are related to each other in an arbitrary way and there is no externally 'real' connection between any image and its concept or meaning. Signs do not have intrinsic meaning, but rather meaning 'is generated through a system of relational differences between signs' (Barker 1999: 12). However, poststructuralists break with Saussurean structuralism precisely because Saussure developed his theory a step further by arguing that the meanings of signs become fixed, and a sign gains a positive, stable identity despite the arbitrary coming together of signifier and signified through language. The fixed meaning of signs is problematic for poststructuralists, because it cannot explain the plural meaning of signs, nor historical changes of meaning of signs.

The poststructuralist, Derrida, has challenged the arguments regarding the fixed meaning of signs and proposed instead the concept of *differance* (Weedon 1997: 25; Barker 1999: 24 and Derrida 1976). *Differance* is a key Derridian concept, and is critical to understanding how concepts and meanings, discourses and identities, can come to be constructed differently in differing contexts and over time. By *differance* is meant the endless process of the production of meaning through the dual strategies of difference and deferral. Signifiers and signifieds have an identity only in their difference from one another, and there is a constant play of signifiers in which one meaning then becomes supplemented by another meaning, or meanings are added to other meanings. Meanings can therefore never stabilise, as meanings are continually deferred. At best, meanings are only ever temporarily fixed, and are acutely sensitive to context, so that a meaning will always be open to challenge or redefinition.

2.5.2 Foucault's concept of discourse

Weedon points out that

> to gain the full benefit of Saussure's theory [and by implication, also Derrida's theory] of meaning, we need to view language as a system always existing in historically specific discourses. Once language is understood in terms of competing discourses, competing ways of giving meaning to the world, which imply differences in the organisation of social power, then language becomes an important site of political [or other] struggle (Weedon 1997: 23).

When Weedon speaks of 'historically specific discourses', she is referring to the extensive studies of discourse of Michel Foucault. Foucauldian discourse, for Weedon (1997: 40), is a 'structuring principle of society, in social institutions, modes of thought, and individual subjectivity'. She also describes discourses as

> more than ways of thinking and producing meaning. They constitute the body, unconscious and conscious mind, and emotional life of the subjects which they seek to govern (1997: 108).

Thus Foucauldian discourses are clearly not only about language use.

Pennycook (1994a) has taken issue with some Anglo-American critical discourse analysts such as Fairclough (1989), because their work, while supposedly informed by Foucauldian views on discourse, speak only of the linguistic features of discourse 'albeit socially embedded' (Pennycook 1994a: 127). Pennycook personally defines Foucauldian discourse as

> ways of organising meaning that are often though not exclusively realised through language. Discourses are about the creation and limitation of possibilities, they are systems of power/knowledge within which we take up subject positions (Pennycook 1994a: 128).

Both the above definitions of discourse are relevant to my research. Nevertheless, what language my research group students use under what circumstances is undoubtedly the focus of my research, even though other ways of organising meaning, and other ways in which possibilities are created or limited for the young women in the research group, are

acknowledged. These include gender specific behaviour allowed or not allowed in ethnic discourses, and the significance of religious rituals in Christian discourses.

Foucault argues that nothing has any meaning outside of discourse, for discourses are 'practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak' (Foucault 1972: 49). Meaning is produced within a discourse and played out in the social practices of everyday life. Moreover, Foucault argues that meaning is constructed within historically specific discourses. How a topic is constructed in a discourse in one historical period will differ from how it is constructed in another historical period. Yet, in any one historical period, the state of knowledge, and the ways of organising meaning, will be the same across different sites. For example, they will be the same in education and in government circles, a discourse pattern that Foucault called a discursive formation. Unlike humanist or Marxist concepts of truth as universal and existing as an external reality, truth, in Foucauldian discourse, is a relative phenomenon. Within any discursive formation, certain ideas are held to be true so that a 'regime of truth' operates - but only as long as the discursive formation remains in place.

Derrida's concept of the instability of word meanings is congruent with Foucault's claim of historically specific discourses. Derrida thinks in terms of a gentle continuous shift or slippage in meaning, while Foucault believed discourse shifts could be abrupt or, alternatively, quite insidious. 'Great radical ruptures, massive binary divisions' do take place occasionally, yet 'more often one is dealing with mobile and transitory points of resistance, producing cleavages in a society that shift about, fracturing unities and effecting regroupings' (Foucault 1981: 96). Change might occur because of the increasing strength of an oppositional discourse against a regime of truth. This is because of Foucault's further claim that where one discourse is in operation, its reverse or counterdiscourse will also exist. It is possible then, too, to have, in operation, a number of competing discourses concerned with the same topic. In South Africa, in 1976, resistance to apartheid's regime of truth regarding the language of learning in schools for blacks was to bring about changes to the language policy in education which would have positive effects for the students in my subject group when they were in the school system (see 1.4). From a Foucauldian perspective, the possibility of change is always present even although power relations may temporarily impede change.

2.5.3 Power/knowledge in Foucault's writing

Foucault not only had an original conception regarding the source of all meaning being discourse, he also had a novel conception of power, which resonates with my data. Unlike most theories of power, Foucault does not understand power as operating in a top-down and repressive fashion only. Marxism, for example, presupposes that the class which has economic power will also have the power to dominate other classes in society and be able to structure social relations according to its needs.

Power, in Foucault's work, is 'the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate' (Foucault 1981: 92), and using 'polymorphous techniques' (Foucault 1981: 11). This type of power does not have a central locus of control; instead, power relations go down 'into the depths of society' (Foucault 1977: 27) and reach to its very extremities by a 'capillary' movement (Foucault 1980: 96). This last statement suggests that Foucault was concerned with the operation of power 'in its ultimate destinations' (Foucault 1980: 96), namely, in ordinary individuals. Foucault argued that power, operating in discourse, will constitute the individual; yet significantly, the individual will not only be controlled by power but also become its 'vehicle' (Foucault 1980: 98). That is, Foucauldian power networks may repress, may control, but are also 'productive' (Foucault 1980: 119). An ordinary individual can therefore exercise power.

Foucault, furthermore, linked power with knowledge. Knowledge in Foucauldian theory, states Hall (1997: 47), is 'always inextricably enmeshed in relations of power because it was always being applied to the regulations of social conduct in practice', that is, through historically specific discourses and their regimes of truth. Knowledge has a relative value only - a possible parallel to Bourdieu's kinds of capital in his 'fields' - and is tied to understanding what is taken to be true in a discourse. It is put to work through the power network. Like power, indeed as a form of power, knowledge is productive, and so can even make truth under the right circumstances. To paraphrase Foucault (1977: 27), power relations are constitutive of fields of knowledge, and knowledge constitutive of power relations.

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2.5.4 Foucault on the construction of the subject

With discourse anchoring human existence in Foucauldian theory, the whereabouts of the individual subject and her subjectivity (see 2.4.2) are brought into question. By placing discourse centre stage, Foucault was decentring the subject. Humanist/ Enlightenment notions of the subject gave the subject, as already indicated, a fixed unchanging identity, and a self who was the independent source of meaning. The Foucauldian subject, by contrast, becomes the subject of many discourses throughout her life. The individual can only understand herself and claim an identity from a subject position within a specific discourse in current circulation in society.

> One has to dispense with the constituent subject ... to arrive at an analysis which can account for the constitution of the subject within a historical framework (Foucault 1980: 117).

Significantly, the discourses will construct subject positions, but individuals have to identify with these positions to take meaning from the discourse. For example, to take up a subject position in Western type business discourse in South Africa, requires fluency in English, a subject position with which all the students in my research group have identified. Hence their greater investment in learning English and in acquiring tertiary education. Again, this 'knowledge' is not dissimilar to Bourdieu's concept of the acquisition of certain forms of cultural capital to enter a particular 'field' (see 2.3).

Weedon (1997: 91) points out that the range of forms of subjectivity open to an individual tend to be affected, though not ultimately determined, by gender, race, class, age and cultural background. Power relations may dictate unequal positioning of any two individuals in a discourse. In Zulu patriarchal discourse, for example, young women enjoy much less freedom of movement than do young men. On the one hand, Weedon acknowledges the conditioning effect of powerful discourses on the individual (Weedon 1997: 97); on the other, she argues that her poststructuralist reading of subjectivity - clearly originating from her insights from Foucault's and Derrida's work - conceives of subjects being able to contest their positioning in discourses and possibly effect change. The principle of *differance* assists the individual to find a discursive 'space' to challenge a discourse which positions her uncomfortably. In sum, these theorists allow for a measure of human agency which may be more, or less, muted depending

on the social context in which the individual is situated at the time. Once the subject has been decentred and the belief in essential subjectivity abandoned, subjectivity is opened up to change (Weedon 1997: 32).

2.6 Multiple identities in Canada, the USA and South Africa
2.6.1 Norton Peirce's work (1995)

I have traced the theoretical foundations of Norton Peirce's (1995) paper, and now wish to return to her definitions of social identity (but see 2.4.2) and investment as well as some of the findings from her research which are relevant to my research findings.

Norton Peirce (1995) defines social identity based on Weedon's (1997) notion of subjectivity, as having three characteristics. Firstly, social identity is multiple and contradictory because individuals are the subjects of more than one discourse during any one time in their lives, and individuals are probably positioned in contradictory ways in these discourses. Secondly, social identity is a site of struggle because an individual can resist her positioning in a discourse 'or even set up a counterdiscourse which positions the person in a powerful rather than marginalized subject position' (Norton Peirce 1995: 16). Finally, social identity is open to change because the discourses of which individuals are subjects are themselves dynamic and so change over time. Along with her examination of her research subjects' social identity, she examines their investment in learning English and their ambivalence towards wishing to speak it on all social occasions.

My examination of black students' understandings of themselves as both users of English and of other languages has a similar though broader focus. My findings, especially in the historically different context of South Africa, are thus somewhat divergent. Nevertheless, findings such as the ambivalence of research participants about speaking English were helpful in alerting me to similar occurrences in my data even if they manifest in different ways.

Norton Peirce's participants display ambivalence towards speaking English despite being highly invested in learning it because of the unsatisfactory way they are positioned as immigrant women in Canadian English discourses. However, as their confidence in speaking

English grows, they take courage from their identities in discourses which position them more favourably to resist discourses which position them negatively - or they set up counter-discourses. They use the measure of agency they have to display their identity as multiple rather than unitary, an essentialised identity of the 'ignorant immigrant'.

2.6.2 McKay and Wong's work (1996)

McKay and Wong (1996) in part extending, in part refining Norton Peirce's (1995) work, make several points that are applicable to this research (see Chapter 4).

McKay and Wong carried out their research with Chinese adolescent immigrants in a high school in the USA. They speak of agency-enhancement and identity-enhancement emerging as sometimes more important than investment-enhancement amongst their research participants. It may be of paramount consideration for some individuals to find that discursive space or agency to enhance positive identities in one or two discourses. Michael Lee, one of McKay and Wong's research participants, was not so invested in learning the written English required for school academic discourse, because his sporting ability and adequate-enough oral skills in English gave him positive multiple identities amongst both Chinese immigrant and non-Chinese American students. His poor positioning in English second language writing class was apparently of little concern to him, nor did he do much to alter it.

The data from Michael Lee is also illustrative of another of McKay's and Wong's conclusions, that many of their focal students had a 'plateauing' of their investment in learning English (McKay and Wong 1996: 603). They state that participants with other apparently satisfactory identities do not need 'the identity made possible by proficiency in the target language' (McKay and Wong 1996: 604), and so efforts to improve their English level off.

In confirmation of Norton Peirce's (1995) arguments, one finds in McKay and Wong's research much evidence of multiple identities, identity as a site of struggle, and identity as changing over time.

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2.6.3 Code switching in South Africa

My research participants frequently mention mixing English with another of South Africa's official languages (see 4.6). For this reason it is apposite to discuss this social practice, generally known as code switching, from a theoretical viewpoint. Code switching has received little attention from critical theorists although it has spawned much literature worldwide in the fields of psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics. I wish to touch on some of the basic ideas regarding code switching emerging from this literature as a starting point for my brief discussion below of code switching as used by subjects of discourses.

'Code switching' is being employed here as an umbrella term to define the alternate use of two or more languages by bilinguals that may occur at the morphemic, lexical, phrasal, clausal and sentential levels. Research into code switching has been conducted among adults who mix languages in the daily course of their lives, and also in the domain of education, to examine how and why code switching occurs between teachers and learners. It is the use of code switching in the former domain that is of interest here, and, in particular, in East Africa, the focus of the work of Myers Scotton (1988 and 1993). Studies by Myers Scotton (1988 and 1993) and others (see Sridhar 1996: 59), have demonstrated that code switching is commonly practised by people who are proficient speakers of both the languages being switched, a category into which my research participants would fall.

Common use, however, should not suggest a lack of complexity. Code switching is a complex phenomenon, the use of which, Myers Scotton (1988: 156) argues, is always both 'a means and a message', that is, a means of communication and an implicit message about the exchange to the other speaker. She further claims that all linguistic code choices 'are indexical of a negotiation of rights and obligations between participants' (Myers Scotton 1988: 155). According to Myers Scotton's (1988) 'markedness model' of linguistic code choice, code switching is either expected or unexpected by participants in an exchange, or it is a non-conventionalised exchange which requires special negotiations of the participants' rights and obligations.

Sridhar (1996: 58 - 59) notes the contributions of a number of researchers, including Myers Scotton (1993), to the consideration of 'identity marking' as one of the more prominent functions of code switching. In this regard, Myers Scotton (1988, 1993) suggests that it is used in East Africa as a marker of solidarity with other members of one's ethnic or tribal group. Among the other functions of code switching, as has been recorded by Peires (1994), is its use as a learning aid by Xhosa/ English bilingual students at the University of Transkei, South Africa.

These claims regarding the use and functions of code switching are challenging from a poststructuralist perspective. They may be insufficient to explain the behaviours of subjects in discourses who may or may not have the agency to negotiate 'their rights and obligations'. It is also necessary to examine the specific historical and local contexts of participants in a code switching exchange. Thus code switching as practised by my research participants, can only be discussed further by referring to their data (see 4.6).

2.7 Pennycook's work (1994b)

Pennycook (1994a, 1994b), as indicated above (2.5.2), takes a Foucauldian view of discourse. This view underpins his arguments throughout his work, *The Cultural Politics of English As An International Language* (1994b). For two reasons, it is pertinent to end this literature review by noting some of the main issues raised by Pennycook in this work. His arguments concur with those of Bourdieu and the poststructuralist theorists already discussed in this chapter, and may assist in a greater appreciation of the subjectivities of my research participants which I discuss in Chapter Four.

Pennycook argues that the phrase, 'English as an international language', is a particular discursive construct embracing the view that the spread of English across the globe has been 'natural, neutral and beneficial' to those who learn it (Pennycook 1994b: 9, 23 and 36). He interrogates this view and argues that English use has not been spread naturally and neutrally by global forces in the postcolonial era, but should rather be understood as embedded in a multitude of local and global, and always partial, discourses across many fields of human activity. A corollary of this argument is that English as an international language cannot be

seen as a monolithic discourse, but as social practices operating differently in various (and changing) local and global contexts of use.

Neither is acquiring English as a second language necessarily universally beneficial bringing with it the hoped for cultural capital. To tout the benefit of knowing English 'is to ignore the relationships between English and inequitable distributions and flows of wealth, resources, culture and knowledge' (Pennycook 1994b: 24). The 'choice' of not learning English may not, however, be the alternative and may trivialise what is a complicated problem. Given local and global economic, social and political circumstances, people have 'little choice but to demand access to English' (Pennycook 1994b: 74).

A critical understanding of culture is also required, according to Pennycook, if one is to look critically at the worldwide use of English. He takes up Clifford's (1988) suggestion that notions of culture should not be essentialised in a humanistic way and consequently framed as unified or continuous. Culture should, following Foucault, 'be replaced by a vision of powerful discursive formations globally and strategically deployed' (Clifford 1988: 273 - 274 in Pennycook 1994b: 64). This can be taken a step further to view culture at the local level, as people's ways of making sense of their lives within particular conventionalised social practices that are interwoven with social and historical relations of power. A sense of culture as discursively constituted can therefore be understood as having a close connection to the various discourses of English use globally.

Of importance for this dissertation, too, is the renewed insight that the use of English (or any language) cannot be seen as an act at the volition of an individual - as implied, for example, by the code switching literature (see 2.6.3.). It is, instead, an act carried out by the individual as the subject of possibly contradictory discourses who might become involved in a struggle to negotiate meanings.

2.8 Conclusion

My research participants were at a different stage in their life trajectories from either Norton Peirce's (1995) or McKay and Wong's (1996) research participants. Yet if discourses have a limited life span because historical and political circumstances change and meaning shifts, all these individuals can expect their 'web' of identities to change as they move on to the next phase in their lives or struggle for better subject positions in old discourses that have developed new truths. That snapshot or cut (Barker 1999: 25) of identities that is meaningful now for the students of my research, may have little meaning in the business world.

In Chapter Three, I discuss my research methods, and in Chapter Four, I turn to part of each of my research participants' present identity 'webs' to exemplify their understandings of themselves as users of a number of languages. I illustrate the participants as both constructed within discourses and as using 'the conditions of possibility' (Pennycook 1994b) created by discourses to take up new subject positions therein. In addition, it should be remembered that the research participants' ongoing descriptions of themselves mark an endless 'process of becoming' (Barker 1999: 25) rather than descriptions of end products of coherent identities.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS AND METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS

3.1 Introduction

An exploratory study using a qualitative paradigm was clearly indicated for research seeking to move away from labelling black students or imposing identities on them selected from outdated narrowly defined categories. Gergen (1985 in Kelly 1999: 403) has said 'that one of the important strengths of qualitative research is that it is generative, i.e. it constructs new ways of understanding' - my aim concerning the issue of identity among black students at Technikon Natal. I wanted to privilege the students' subjective understandings of themselves as users of a number of languages, and couched in their own words, but analysed using theory which recognises the socially constructed nature of these understandings; that is, using methods finally more social constructionist that normatively interpretive.

In keeping with a social constructionist approach, my research material was analysed using some of the techniques of discourse analysis first discussed by Potter and Wetherell (1987) and more latterly, by Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999).

3.2 Research questions

The overarching question explored was the following: 'How do black female students at Technikon Natal's Riverside (Pietermaritzburg) campus understand and construct themselves as a) users of English, and b) users of other languages?' As mentioned in Chapter 1, the language of learning at Technikon Natal is English, and the majority of students on campus regard Zulu as their home language, although black students whose home language is another of the African languages, also choose Riverside for their tertiary studies. Only small numbers of students whose home language is English register for study at Riverside campus.

A secondary question for this research was: 'How does these students' investment in learning English and through the medium of English affect both success in their studies and the identities they are able to form?'

Both research questions were designed to capture the understandings and investment in learning English of students who were not only black, but whose home language, furthermore, was not English.

3.3 Broad aim of the research

The broad aim of this research was to allow fresh understandings of the identities of black students at Technikon Natal to emerge. Although I am not claiming generalisability of my findings from this qualitative research, it is hoped that it will assist in undoing superficial stereotypical views of students to make way for much more flexible conceptions. Better interpersonal communication with students could thereby be facilitated (see also 1.2).

3.4 Finding the paradigm focus

To place this research on what I understand as the qualitative continuum with ethnographic research and its highly empathic interpretation of the subjective worlds of research participants at the one end (Le Compte and Schensul 1999), and critical participatory action research (Walker 1996, Bhana 1999) and postmodern research (Sey 1999) at the other, I found it useful to consider the theory which guided the research. Ultimately the decision to use the work of Weedon (1997), Foucault (1972, 1977, 1980, 1981) and Pennycook (1994a, 1994b), as well as that of Bourdieu (1977a and b, 1986, 1991), moved this research out of the more normative interpretive paradigm into the constructionist paradigm with further poststructuralist nuance.

My research shares with interpretive research a preference for material gathered from first hand accounts given by research participants of events in which they have been involved, and which reveal their attitudes. It differs from most interpretive research in its ontology. In interpretive research the individual subjective reality of each research participant is acknowledged. In my constructionist research, reality is understood as being socially constructed within specific discourses, with what is believed to be true possibly differing from one discourse to the next (see also 2.5.2). Furthermore, an interpretive account must resonate

as a possibly true account of what is going on by those who are being studied (Carr and Kemmis 1986: 91; Neuman 2000: 85).

> This implies that interpretive theory does *not* reinterpret the actions and experiences of individuals for its own purposes and *in terms of its own conceptual frameworks* ... (Carr and Kemmis 1986: 92) [Italics mine],

but rather provides deeper more systematised insights of the research participants' own understandings of their actions and experiences. Constructionist research, however, does 'reinterpret' the activities of the research participants 'in terms of its own conceptual frameworks', although participants should still recognise the activities being described. Since this research takes a distinctly poststructuralist turn in arguing in favour of multiple subjectivity, it is also distinguished from any interpretive research which favours the humanistic notion of the unitary subject (see also 2.4.1).

Constructionist research is sometimes charged with idealism and being too relativist. It is said to reduce everything to language and the world of ideas (Terre Blanche and Durrheim 1999: 168) and to lose touch with participants' feelings. Furthermore, in denying a single criterion for judging truth, such research, it is argued, becomes amoral. In response to these concerns, Sey (1999: 474) acknowledges the need for 'renewed attention in the social sciences to be paid to real socio-economic and political conditions' by Western academics, but argues for a different standpoint in post-apartheid South Africa. Sey suggests that constructionist critiques, including those which draw on the work of Foucault (Sey 1999: 466), may have a role in this country in 'providing a self-reflexive check on the ongoing relationship between theory and cultural practice, and in providing a space for the consideration of the effects of power and knowledge in the application of policy and in the lives of people' (Sey 1999: 474). I welcomed the above mentioned possibilities offered by this approach despite an awareness that for me to make such claims in connection with my small exploratory study, might appear rather ambitious. My research does not have the transformational agenda of critical action research.

This approach offered the particular challenge of attempting to balance up the tension amongst a number of considerations. I wanted to build rapport with my research participants, but, at the same time, maintain a degree of critical perspective regarding the important issues of my

research, and simultaneously also acknowledge my own positioning within the research process. My own multiple subjectivity would undoubtedly impact on this process (see also 3.6).

3.5 Access to the research site and timing of the research

Since I lecture at Technikon Natal, I had no difficulty in deciding to do my research on campus with student volunteers. I have an office at my disposal where interviews could be conducted, and a postbox where written research material could be left for me. As I lecture fairly large numbers of first year students every year, I did not envisage a problem recontacting in 2001, some of the students I had taught in 2000 and asking them to become part of my research sample. Neither did I envisage a problem finding common free time with my research volunteers so that research sessions could take place. In fact, finding common free time did prove more difficult than anticipated especially as the technikon's end-of-year examination-time approached. Some interviews, as will be discussed below, were consequently conducted after the students had completed their examinations.

3.6 Composition of the research sample (subject group)

My research was designed to be a case study of the link between language use and multiple subjectivity of black female students at the technikon.

I decided to limit my study to female students only for a number of reasons. In the first place, it was a way of further focussing my research and reducing the number of potential research participants. Secondly, since I was aware that I was already possibly removed from my students by our differences in age and culture, I, as an older white woman, and they, as 'twenty-something' blacks, I did not want another demographic difference potentially constraining the research. I believed that I could build better rapport and consequently gain more from one-to-one interviews with other women. Finally, although I was not embarking on research within the feminist research paradigm, I regard myself as a feminist and believed that young black women in South Africa face more challenges around identity issues than do young black men.

I composed my subject group from second year students who had passed the majority or all of their first year subjects, including Communication 1, the subject I would have taught them in first year. This was to avoid any gatekeeper issues that might have arisen had I used volunteers from my 2001 first years. I wanted as far as possible to enable a researcher-research participant relationship rather than a lecturer-student one with my subject group.

As a further way of drawing up my 'bounded system' (Nunan 1992: 75), I approached female students from only two of the five different commerce diploma groups I had taught in 2000. I had built up a good relationship with these two groups during 2000 and was fairly certain of a good response to my call for volunteers to assist me with my research. I hoped for up to fifteen volunteers to come forward which would allow for possible attrition later in the study. The students had to be available during the third quarter of the academic year, that is, between mid-July and 30 September 2001.

With the permission of two of their 2001 subject lecturers, I was able to re-establish contact with the two classes. There were thirty five female students in total in the two groups, but of these, not all were English second language speakers. To satisfactorily address my research questions, I required non-home language English volunteers (see section 3.2 above). From my initial call for volunteers, twelve women came forward of whom one soon dropped out. Thus I started my research with eleven self selected participants split evenly between the two diploma groups.

3.7 Data collection stage 1

The research participants were first asked to complete a form (see Appendix G) to elicit biographical information from them as well as to identify the primary and secondary schools they had attended along with the precise location of the schools, as I had asked for volunteers from both urban and rural schools. (The inaccurate assumption I had made about schools in more outlying areas will be explained below, 3.10.) Further, they were asked to note what languages they had any knowledge of, even if this was not a fluent oral or written competence. I explained to each volunteer the purpose of my research and that in each of the written and oral 'tasks' she was to undertake for me, I should like her to give me as much information

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about her language knowledge and experiences as she felt able to give. The issues of confidentiality and anonymity were also discussed.

In addition, it was explained that despite the fact that they, as research participants, would not benefit directly from my research, their participation could benefit them and other Technikon students indirectly in terms of the broad aim of my research (outlined above, 3.3).

Following this introduction, each participant was given guidelines (see Appendix F) in order for her to write a modified form of a literate life history with the focus on language knowledge and experience. She was, for example, to try and remember when she first heard English or recognised written language as English rather than her home language. Participants were asked either to place their completed literate life histories in my postbox or to bring them to the first interview.

Although one-to-one interviews were to be the main source of data collection, the literate life histories were intended to act as a form of triangulation.

3.8 Data collection stage 2

Prior to the start of data collection, a list of questions had been prepared which were to act as a guide for the one-to-one semi-structured interviews which each research participant would have with me (see Appendix E). It had been my intention to refine my list of questions after consultation with two fourth year female black students who were graduate assistants in two commerce departments at Technikon Natal during 2001. However, only one graduate assistant was eventually available. She gave me a rich 'thick' description of her literate life history and changes to her identity, but as she answered each question on my preliminary list in full, I was not able to cut down or refine questions at this time. At this interview I listened and took notes; I did not (unfortunately, perhaps, with hindsight) record the material on audiotape as I was to do with all my research participants.

Each research participant booked an individual interview with me. They committed an hour's time for this and on the understanding that they might be called for a second interview (see 3.9

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below). The interviews, in fact, lasted for thirty to forty five minutes. I used a small battery operated tape recorder with a built-in microphone to record each interview in full.

I believe I was able to establish good rapport with my subject group possibly building on the positive group relationship I had had with their two classes the previous year. The amount of information I was able to gather from these young women was gratifying. While sometimes the students might have given me information they believed I would want to hear, at other times I was told intensely personal and clearly painful stories as part of an indirect response to a question. On these occasions an empathic response to the experience just related appeared appropriate, before I felt I could respectfully proceed with my next question.

Although I am describing my data collection process as a series of stages for clarity of explanation, it was not actually a linear process. One of the positive aspects of qualitative research is the opportunity to refine one's questions as data collection proceeds. I learnt from one interview to the next what extra questions to ask to gain information pertinent to my research questions, and although all participants answered the same set of central questions, I gained the confidence to 'jump around' my list of questions or to leave questions out.

Having completed the interviews with the eleven research participants, and having looked carefully at the data gathered until this point, I made two decisions about further data gathering. I decided to call back my participants for second interviews (see 3.9 below), and, secondly, decided that I required more research participants who had passed their Senior Certificate with English as Second Language (refer to Chapter 1, and 3.10 below).

3.9 Data collection stage 3

When I contacted my eleven research participants to request second interviews, I found that time constraints had become an issue for them with the approach of the end of year examinations. I sensed a reluctance to commit to a second interview. A second interview after the examination period was not a possibility for the participants from the one diploma course as they were to begin their six months compulsory experiential training at this time.

I then decided that in the interests of uniformity of research design for this first subject group, all eleven participants would, instead, answer a written questionnaire containing the additional questions I wished to ask them (see Appendix D). Everyone completed the task. I should have liked to have been able to draw the students out further on answers to some of the said questions, but accepted that my research with these eleven women had to end at this point.

3.10 Data collection stage 4

The decision to call for a further number of volunteers who had specifically passed English as Second Language (ESL) for their Senior Certificate, stemmed from my incorrect assumption that by originally requesting volunteers from urban and rural schools, I would necessarily obtain volunteers who had passed English First Language and ESL for the Senior Certificate. I had ascertained during the interviews that the eleven original volunteers had all come from the first 'category' even though they did not speak English as a home language. I contacted female students from the two targeted diploma groups again, and with the help of the original eleven participants, was able to motivate a second subject group of five (one plus four students from the two diploma groups) from the ESL 'category' to participate in my research. However, making my research volunteer requirements clearer at the outset would probably have avoided this 'hiccup' in the research process. I had wanted to gather as broad a range of language experiences as possible from my participants, and had wanted students from the ESL 'category' because it was possible that these students would have had their investment in English and in their studies more tested at tertiary level than their English First Language (EFL) classmates. Since I had not made it clear that I required volunteers from the EFL and ESL categories, the latter group probably surmised I did not want them. Despite having passed their first year at tertiary level, they might still have had less confidence in their English language competence than their 'EFL' classmates. Whether or not this was the reason for their initial reluctance to volunteer for the research did not unfortunately emerge directly or unambiguously later from my data.

The second subject group having completed their biographical details and literate life histories, each then participated in one extended interview structured to include the extra questions

answered in written form by the first subject group. The interviews took place after the technikon examinations.

The second series of interviews concluded my process of data collection.

3.11 Transcription of audiotapes

Before my in-depth data analysis could proceed, transcription of the audiotapes of the interviews needed to be undertaken. A word-for-word transcription of the interviews was attempted for analysis purposes. Two of the transcriptions are given in full in Appendices A and B.

3.12 Data from literate life histories

The literate life histories yielded much rich data. They were a means of triangulating the data and served to confirm evidence which emerged from the interviews. An example of the literate life histories is given in Appendix C.

Because the data from the interviews and the literate life histories is so integrally linked and much material overlaps, I have dealt with the complete body of data holistically. When presenting my findings in Chapter 4, I have indicated whether a subject's response was oral or written.

3.13 Discourse analysis techniques

My data analysis was accomplished using broad discourse analysis techniques both to identify discourses operating in the body of data and to show their 'effects' (Terre Blanche and Durrheim 1999: 154). In order to orientate myself towards my research material as a whole, I first coded my data by identifying any dominant or less dominant discourses that emerged after several readings of the data. These were then refined with reference to their greater or lesser relevance to my research questions. Following the suggestions of Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999: 158 - 162), I used a number of 'tools' to 'diagnose' the 'effects' of the discourses. The first of these 'tools' was the binary oppositions which emerged, for example, the advantages for students at the technikon of having been at a multiracial school against the disadvantages

of having been at a 'black' school. Another 'tool' was the silences in some participants' transcripts, for example, in not alluding to not having studied her home language at school. I also looked for metaphors which had particular meaning in the text - the 'Oreo' and 'Coconut' metaphors, for example, occurred several times. Across the whole body of data, it was important to note how the discourses varied and how they were consistent. In this regard, Potter and Wetherell (1987: 168) suggest searching for pattern in the data. They state:

> this pattern will be in the form of both variability: *differences* in either the content or form of accounts, and consistency: the identification of features *shared* by accounts.

Central to my research, too, was the relationship of one discourse to another and how such relationships impacted upon my research participants' understandings of themselves. In sum, in accordance with predominantly Foucauldian notions of discourse, I sought out the creative possibilities offered and the limitations constraining subjects in discourses.

A broad discourse analysis undertaken within a critical, poststructuralist accentuated framework takes note of the particular sociopolitical contexts in which these discourses come into being and currently exist and is mindful of those contexts throughout. This is true of my analysis as well. Broad discourse analysis of this type is in stark contrast to the techniques of conversation analysis which refute the need for conceptualising the context as anything greater than that created moment by moment by the two (or more) interlocutors in a conversation (Schegloff 1997). It is the micro- rather than the macro-context which is of significance for conversation analysts. Yet not to privilege the importance of the wider context in discourse analysis will probably result in failure to understand that individuals are constructed within discourse and are the subjects of several discourses. Wetherell (1998: 402) has criticised conversation analysts' narrow interpretation of context. In response to the conversation analyst, Schegloff's criticisms of critical discourse analysts that they import their own theoretical preoccupations and impose these on participants' conversations, Wetherell retorted with 'the problem with conversation analysts is that they rarely raise their eyes from the next turn in the conversation'. A conversation analysis view of context might also either presuppose or influence the humanist view of the unitary free subject (see 2.4.1) rather than the poststructuralist subject.

3.14 Conclusion

I have already noted that I am not expecting to generalise from my findings. Neither will this research, in company with most other qualitative research, claim reliability. At all levels of South African society change is taking place, so to posit reliability, a hallmark of positivist research, would be to fail to take account of the fluid quality of these sociopolitical circumstances. This, and other research informed by poststructuralist thinking, through the recognition of the inevitability of change in discourses, identities and meanings, and the significance which the changes might have for subjects' lives, is antithetic to positivist research.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, my findings are presented according to a number of dominant themes which emerged from my data. Although these are discussed separately, their intricate interlinking and significant dialectical aspects cannot be ignored.

4.2 Preamble

It is useful to note that Students 1 to 11 completed English First Language at Senior Certificate level, and Students 12 to 16, English Second Language. Thirteen of the sixteen participants come from a Zulu ethnic background and speak Zulu as their home language, while the remaining three (Students 3, 5 and 9) regard one (or more) of the other indigenous African languages as their home language. When a participant says 'I am a Zulu', I would regard her as a subject of the Zulu ethnic discourse. I have used the following abbreviations to indicate the source of the data in places in my text where the source is not otherwise clear: (I) for the interviews, (LLH) for the literate life histories, and (WREQ) for the written responses to the extra questions completed by Students 1 - 11.

4.3 Beginnings: investment in English

An overarching characteristic of the data from my research participants is the part their parents and the ethnic discourses of which they were all subjects have played in their 'investment in English' (see 2.5.4 for a definition of subjects in discourse).

Each research participant had parents (or a grandparent) who were responsible for the degree of 'investment in English' embarked on. That is, whether or not their daughter was to be educated in a multiracial school where she might eventually sit English as First Language for her Senior Certificate. I explained in Chapter 1 that in the majority of 'all black' schools in South Africa, learners will write their Senior Certificate subjects through the medium of English. Few learners consequently have a choice about gaining a degree of competence in English if they wish to complete a Senior Certificate. The particular Foucauldian school and ethnic discourse 'truths' (see 2.5.2) exemplified below, which my sixteen research participants

heard in childhood, should moreover, be read with the reminder that they would have been completing their primary schooling by the time South Africa elected its first democratic government in 1994.

The following extracts from my data offer several positions regarding the 'importance' of 'investment in English' for South African blacks. Student 15 wrote (LLH)[5]:

> My parents used to say I must learn and know how to speak English so that I won't get some problems when I am looking for a job because they used to say only White/English people got some jobs which means if you don't know how to speak English you won't be able to get some jobs.

In post-apartheid South Africa it may no longer be 'true' that "... only White/English people got jobs". Nevertheless, Gardner's construct of instrumental motivation (see 2.2), that individuals learn English to have a better chance of gaining employment seems rather simplistic here. The parents of Student 15, in their own way, were aware that they were the subjects of the discursive formation (see 2.5.2) that had developed under apartheid. The above example, like the other two below, suggests why Bourdieu's notion of 'cultural capital' (see 2.3) has more explanatory power than Gardner's construct of instrumental motivation in understanding black learners need to gain competence in speaking and writing English. My participants appear to understand from early on in their lives that the actions of an individual are always related to events and practices in the social world - a major theme of Norton Peirce's 1995 paper (see Chapter 2).

Student 2 who attended English medium multiracial schools from Grade 1, said her mother and teachers influenced her attitude towards English. She stated (I):

> I had in mind that the whole world uses English as a medium of instruction so, therefore, if I want to fit into the society of the world I would have to know English.

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[5] All quotations from the data of my research participants are unedited.

Student 13 attended a Roman Catholic private school where all the learners were black, but some of the high school staff were whites. She wrote (LLH):

> At that time [Grade 8] I understood how important it was to speak English fluently and write it accurately. The teachers never failed to remind us that from that period onwards English was going to take control of our lives, especially in the business sector. Applications of tertiary education were going to be in English, applications of jobs were going to be in English and interviews were going to be in English. In fact, to get to the top, you had to know English, period.

My research participants undoubtedly heeded these 'truths' since they are now half way through three-year diplomas at tertiary level.

Clearly, each of the ethnic discourses which were the sites for my participants' initial understanding of themselves have had little choice but to allow for the possibility of the subject taking up a subject position in one of the discourses of 'English as an international language' (see 2.7). Yet taking up a subject position in an English discourse is likely to have been a source of conflict for the students, as Norton Peirce (1995) (see 2.6.1) and Pennycook (1994b) (see 2.7) argue. It could be expected that the ethnic discourses would seek to limit the influence that an extension of subjectivity would have over the lives of their subjects.

In the next section I discuss briefly my participants' understanding of their ethnic origins or 'primary discourses' (Gee 1990: 151), that is, the discourses used in the context of home as distinct from the discourses of school or other wider social contexts.

4.4 Ethnic subjectivity

Nearly everyone of my research participants can remember a time when the only language they heard was their home language. Four of them remember being brought up according to strict ethnic customs in which a grandmother often played a big part. Student 6 noted "my granny used to tell me about my culture and the clan I belong to of the Mkhizes. At funerals, I was always meeting new family members" (I) and (LLH) (see Appendix C: 1). Customs, in rural areas, include division of labour according to gender with boys looking after the animals, and girls fetching water from the river and doing washing and cooking. Student 6 and six other participants were involved in these duties from girlhood.

The one complaint three of my participants had about being women, and it is ongoing, is that they are discriminated against regarding social activities. Student 11 mentioned (LLH) that it is simply " not fair" that her younger brother may go to a party and stay out all night whereas she is prohibited from going to the party at all. It is rare for these young women to disobey these discourse 'rules' while in their parental homes, although they are likely to have more social life if they are away from home and in student lodging. They do not resist their subject positions in these, their primary discourses.

Student 4's interview data (given in full in Appendix A), has been particularly useful in exemplifying the students' attitudes towards ethnic loyalties, investment in English generally, and as an 'identity in process' across many discourses. In the first excerpt, she says in speaking of her Zulu upbringing (Appendix A: 7): ... "if your parents love you, you're expected to listen to them and keep quiet and respect them."

Student 4 makes several other statements which illustrate a well developed Zulu identity: "I believe my family has done what they were supposed to do in bringing me up and I know where I'm supposed to fit in and where I'm not supposed to" (Appendix A: 3); "it was within us to speak Zulu" (Appendix A: 4), and "I would ... greet her in Zulu because it shows that you really understand who you are ..." (Appendix A: 8 - 9). Perhaps even more than a well developed identity, the ethnic identity of Student 4 appears overdetermined. She refers to her ethnic identity in essentialised humanistic terms (see 2.4.1), for example, "within us to speak Zulu" and "you really understand who you are".

I argue next that this overdetermined, but usually highly valued ethnic identity of Student 4 and at least half of the other research participants, may explain why they do not always practise using English in order to improve their level of competence in it. Rather they have to learn in what contexts it is appropriate not to speak English or use any English words.

4.5 Ambivalence towards using English
In 4.3, the participants' grasp of the necessity of a thorough knowledge of English was discussed. Neither did any of the participants display any obvious negativity towards learning

English. Only Student 7 mentioned (I) querying the need to spend so much of her school life as a subject within English discourses: "It was just in Standard 8 [Grade 10] that I began to question those things, like why do we have to do everything in English and why this other people's language, not our own."

The 'downside' of holding an identity as an English user is more subtle. The data below illustrate that the research participants hesitate to foreground their identities as English users at the expense of their ethnic identities. The examples further suggest the constraint on using any English at family gatherings or in any context where 'more conservative', usually older, family members might be present.

Student 2 attended English medium schools in Johannesburg from pre-school level and says she consistently mixes English and Zulu. Her mother does not mind the code switching, (see 2.6.3) but, says Student 2 (I): "she doesn't want me speaking English all the time ... She prefers me speaking Zulu when we have family gatherings or when we go to my grandfather." Her mother is asking her to present an identity as 'a Zulu girl' which Student 2 finds difficult to do. She says she does not speak "pure" Zulu. It only becomes clear later in the data what the consequence of code switching or speaking English to an equally English-proficient sibling might be in these situations.

It is worthwhile to be reminded of a point made in second language acquisition (SLA) theory before reading the next extract from Student 2's interview - an extract containing a metaphor which I consider of importance in relation to my research questions and thus in relation to the poststructuralist theory as discussed in Chapter 2. Norton Peirce (1995: 14) quotes from Spolsky 1989, that to progress in a second language one must take every opportunity to practise using it - a common argument in SLA literature. Student 2's experience is that during her school days and now at the technikon, you're not "accepted" by "some" people if you speak English socially, that is, outside of lesson or lecture times - and for whatever purpose, whether it is to discuss academic work or socialise with other people who may already be able to speak the indigenous African language you speak. They "say I am an Oreo or a coconut". Both 'Oreo' cookies (or biscuits) and the fruit of the coconut palm are black/brown outside

and white inside "like a black person speaking English". One must not become "too white on the inside". Student 2 as well as Student 3 mentioned in their interviews that sometimes they are called 'Oreos' in a light hearted fashion rather than in a way that is designed to hurt.

Student 1 relates in her literate life history, that she and her sister spent time in a boarding house with people who spoke English and were also sent to a 'coloured' school to improve their English.

> Sometimes it was very difficult because we went to visit my grandparents in the rural areas and my sister and I spoke English and people reacted negatively, sometimes calling us names. I must say it was very uncomfortable.

Although Student 1 does not elaborate on the name-calling, she does add that from then on they remembered they had to speak Zulu with their grandparents.

The discomfort experienced by these students has a similar effect on them all. Fluent English speakers amongst black students or those wishing to practise their English are constrained from speaking English as often as they might otherwise have done. They become ambivalent towards using English, but not because of their poor subject positioning within English discourses, which was the experience of Norton Peirce's (1995) research participants. My research participants become poorly positioned as subjects of their ethnic discourses, and what I would loosely call, black student discourse. Therefore in concurrence with the arguments of Norton Peirce (1995) and Weedon (1997), findings from my data suggest that multiple identity may be a source of conflict for individuals (see also 2.5.4 and 2.6.1). It is not easy to have identities both in an ethnic discourse and as an English user.

I wish to pursue other aspects of my participants' responses to this humanist-style labelling, but first I wish to make two points of theoretical interest that emerge from the above discussion. Firstly, the distinctly negative metaphors, essentialist as they may be, are a fairly robust rejection of Gardner's concept of integrative motivation (see 2.2) or, at the least, 'integrate' would need more careful definition. In South Africa, with its apartheid past, 'integrate' might still retain an emotionally charged and politically constructed meaning.

The second theoretical point I wish to highlight here is Foucault's concept of the potential for productive power which individual subjects have in discourses (see 2.5.3). Ordinary students at school or at the technikon have become the 'vehicles' of power for ethnic discourses. Discourse subjects are consequently not free to choose when to speak English rather than their African language. Their discourse peers will label them Oreos or coconuts if they do.

Other responses to the disciplining effects of discourses may be found elsewhere in discursivity. They are debated in the next section.

4.6 Code switching

One of the responses that students make to the constraints placed on them about speaking English 'only' is to code switch (see 2.6.3). Every one of my sixteen research participants mentioned that they code switch on a daily basis. Indeed code switching between their home language and English has almost replaced the 'original' home language as their 'regular' language of use for these students. Extensive code switching by my research participants is therefore a dominant feature of my data.

Student 11 wrote (WREQ): "I find myself doing it [mixing languages] most of the time. If, for example, I'm speaking and I don't know a word in Zulu, I use an English word and vice versa."

Student 3, who speaks six languages, similarly wrote (WREQ) that she code switches "all the time except when I'm required to speak strictly one, properly, like for an oral presentation". The above two quotations are representative of my students comments on code switching. Clearly they are code switching for reasons other than avoiding the use of English only; so an explanation from poststructuralist discourse theory seems warranted. It would appear that to code switch is allowable behaviour for the subjects of the various ethnic discourses from which my students are drawn. I use 'allowable' in drawing on Pennycook's (1994a) definition of discourse (see 2.5.2) that discourses are about the 'creation and limitation of possibilities'. A student must appear as if she is talking Zulu or Sotho even if the language being spoken is far more a hybrid of, for example, English and Zulu, and may, on many occasions, be more

English than Zulu. Or possibly code switching creates thus, its own prevalent, parallel discourses at Riverside campus.

My research participants might furthermore have found the discursive spaces to display, simultaneously, multiple identities from contradictory discourses (see 2.5.4 and 2.6.1). The prevalence of code switching may also point to the declining power or dominance of ethnic discourses and their associated languages.

The change in status of these discourses could be accounted for by Foucault's argument that discourses are historically specific and change because of 'mobile and transitory points of resistance' which 'produce cleavages' and 'effect regroupings' (Foucault 1981: 96, but see also 2.5.2). If the discourses are somewhat under threat, then it could also be expected that the Oreo and coconut metaphors would cease to have as much leverage in the hands of discourse 'custodians'. That is, the meaning of the metaphors will also slip according to Derrida's principle of *differance* (see 2.5.1). I discuss the declining power of ethnic discourses further in the last section of my findings (4.14).

4.7 Identity-enhancement

Student 12's primary discourse was Zulu. However, unlike the other research participants from my second subject group (see 3.10), her first language at Senior Certificate level was not her home language, but Afrikaans. She wrote English First Language up to Grade 11. She has invested much energy in Afrikaans and English, and since leaving school, in French. First at her parents' bidding, and now because of her own ambitions, her focus has been on these other languages. She has had little chance to invest in Zulu. As a result, she has also been positioned negatively within Zulu discourses - it is useful to note here again what Weedon (1997) argues about uncomfortable positioning in a discourse (see 2.5.4). The rural community from which Student 12 comes have called her a "black Mlungu" (I), (literally a black white person), a similar metaphor to those of the Oreo and coconut. Because she cannot pronounce certain Zulu words correctly and does not know less commonly used words, rural elders are likely to say to her "maybe you're not a Zulu", and strangers "don't believe me that I'm *really Zulu*" (italics mine). Student 12's almost ironic response has been to show the

humanistic name-callers that one is not *"really* a Zulu" and "one need not be a Zulu" only. At the time I completed my research, Student 12 was enjoying her success as a French student. In McKay and Wong's terms (see 2.6.2), she was using her agency to enhance her identity as a French user and was playing down her negative Zulu identity. She had obtained an experiential training position because of her ability to speak, read and write French, and would like to go to France in 2003 and study French at a more advanced level. Student 12 feels sufficiently comfortable with her French user identity to practise speaking French between lectures with a fellow student of French, by chance, research participant, Student 5.

4.8 Language use and cultural capital

Student 3's decision to learn to speak Zulu when she came to Technikon Natal, could be viewed as identity-enhancement - the enhancement of her identity within general on-campus student discourse. However, it may be better viewed as taking up a strategic identity for the purposes of greater cultural capital. She understood very soon, how strong the field (see 2.3) of Zulu discourse is on campus. She might have already been able to speak English, Afrikaans, Tswana, Northern and Southern Sotho and Venda, but on campus, where so much technikon related discussion takes place in Zulu or Zulu/English, all of the other languages, except English, appeared to have little capital value. She had this to say (I):

> One thing I've realised about Zulu speaking people is that they're not willing to learn other languages. You speak their language or they don't care what you have to say! But it is OK, I don't mind. It's to my advantage because I'm learning more Zulu.

Student 14 (see Appendix B for her interview), although a Zulu home language speaker herself, confirmed that "Zulus don't want to learn other languages" (Appendix B: 6), and that a Sotho speaking friend of hers was "adjusting herself to speaking Zulu" (Appendix B: 5). Thesen's (1994: 60) point is germane here that 'one has to take into account the reality of ethnicity as a factor in students' lives' in South Africa.

In terms of the right kind of cultural capital, it also emerged from my data that students are acutely aware of accent as it pertains to the use of English. The mostly highly valued English accent is the one obtained through having been at a formerly whites-only or private school.

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Furthermore, at Technikon Natal, it appears as if the KwaZulu-Natal form of this accent is what is 'right'. Student 5 whose home is in the Orange Free State, said (I) she felt self conscious about the way she spoke when she arrived at Technikon Natal.

> The fluency and everything . It seemed all wrong. The Zulu speaking people they spoke differently. More use a British sort of English.

She felt the need "to start from the beginning" and learn to speak in a way that was "right". When I commented that it sounded as if she had a good ear for languages, she added "I think so. I've learnt French as well" (see 4.7). She has learnt Zulu too - for the reasons noted above. As a white, scarcely bilingual, researcher, the multilingualism of my research participants has been a revelation.

4.9 English - the campus *lingua franca*?

The term *lingua franca* is frequently and unproblematically used in linguistics and sociolinguistics to mean 'a common language used by speakers of different language backgrounds' (Sridhar 1996: 53). In the multidimensional context of the technikon campus, the use of English, as has already been suggested above, is not unproblematic and is often contested. Its use as a language of learning does not appear to be in dispute, and is accepted in much the same way as the need to learn English well is accepted as a legacy of a colonial past and as a means of obtaining cultural capital. Yet, there are two areas in which my research participants possibly struggle with the concept of English as a *lingua franca*.

The first is with the idea that blacks are compelled to speak to South African home language speakers of English in English because most whites (or other home language speakers of English) do not learn the indigenous African languages. This is only hinted at in my data, in remarks such as Student 14's (Appendix B: 8): "I think the whites should adapt themselves to speak our languages" (see also 4.14). It is probable that my data is almost silent on this issue because, at the time of my research, I did not ask particular questions of the students about the extent to which they have had experiences of whites (and others) learning African languages - an unfortunate omission on my part. The research participants might also have chosen to be silent about this out of respect for my identity.

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The second area where English as a *lingua franca* causes feelings of unease for participants is when it is used as 'a common language' with foreigners, but foreigners who are black and African. There is an ongoing idea that blacks do not speak English to blacks - 'a truth' running through 'a discursive formation' (see 2.5.2) of African ethnic discourses perhaps. In connection with this second problem area, Student 10 related a brief vignette which focussed on her friendship with several Batswana. The presence of a cohesive group of about 350 Botswanan students on the technikon campus in 2001, provided competition for the dominant Zulu group for the first time. Unlike the non-Zulu speaking students or the scattered few foreign students of previous years, the Batswana are unlikely to find it more alienating not to learn Zulu (see 4.8). But in Student 10's story she was, in any event, the lone South African student amongst a group of Batswana. She said (I):

> You know, the other day I was walking to town with the Botswanan students and these other black guys went past us, and they must have wondered about us because we were all black, but we were speaking English.

4.10 English at tertiary level

I established in Chapter 3, that some of my research participants wrote English First Language at Senior Certificate level while some wrote English Second Language. I established at the start of this chapter, that in the South African context, the students' parents would have made the decision about the kind of school their children attended, and largely as a result of this, what languages the students did or did not learn at school. Since the research participants have had various degrees of investment in English until the end of high school, one would expect that they would have differing experiences as they engage with English language demands at tertiary level. This is to some extent so. Students from schools in rural areas, that is, Student 14, 15 and 16, recounted struggles in first year with encountering English in every lecture of every subject. During Grade 12, Student 15 was elected to take part in a project at a local accounting company where English is spoken. All the students involved in the project were black, but even at this stage, she assessed (I) her own English fluency as:

> Not good. If you had something to say, you are so shy. You just keep quiet ... Students from township schools where they used to speak English all the time [were there], so it was difficult for us because we speak Zulu all the time.

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When she arrived at the technikon it was no easier, and she explained that if she didn't understand, "I would ask some others afterwards and try to get what happened". At the time I was completing my research, Student 15, nearing the end of her second year, thought her English "improved, but not quite".

Student 16 had similar experiences but said that sometimes her classmates "told [her] wrong" (I) about aspects of the work she did not understand. Thus, as time went on, she gained the confidence to approach lecturers directly for help. Student 14 says she knows she is not speaking English perfectly although she writes well enough. "When I compare myself to people who went to multiracial schools, I'm not very happy, but there's nothing I can do. We are coming from different families" (Appendix B: 7).

Not one of the English First Language students, nor Students 12 or 13, mentioned any problem with the English they encountered at the technikon. Their struggles to adjust to an English speaking environment had occurred at whatever time they first attended an English medium school, for some at primary school level, for others at high school. Student 10 explained her difficulties when starting Grade 8 at a multiracial high school. She said (LLH):

> it was tough ... I was better when I had to write something down. When speaking, the problem was my accent as somehow I knew my English, but just couldn't pronounce it properly ... [I] told myself I could do it. Eventually I did ...

Like Student 10 and the other participants from the 'first' subject group (Students 1 -11), Student 8 commented (I) that 'Technikon' English was no problem because "I was used to talking English from high school". It might be that if not already with pleasing Senior Certificate results, then, as black students engage in tertiary studies, that parents begin to see a return on the investment of choosing the (usually more expensive) option of multiracial schooling for their daughters. That is, the cultural capital (see 2.3), greater competence in English, that the young women have gained proves its worth. On the other hand, my data suggests that the residual effects of apartheid's discourses are still being felt in many schools which, in turn, affect the young people who are educated there.

There is an indication in my data, too, that some Technikon lecturers have an essentialised view of all black students as struggling with their English. By contrast, Students 1 to 13 understand themselves as competent users of English. Student 9 made some forthright comments in this regard (LLH):

> When I got here to Technikon Natal, I found that most lecturers just assume that students don't know English. They just lecture you at a level where at the end of the lecture, you feel as if you really don't know English. Again I found that if you went to a Model C school, it shows in the way you participate in class in most cases. I also find if you question authority about their way of handling students, you are threatened by failing or just not being able to progress.

From a theoretical standpoint one can interpret this as multiple identity being a source of conflict for such students who find themselves unfairly and poorly positioned in academic or English discourses. It is remarkable that with this kind of treatment from lecturers and name-calling from other black students who think their fellow subjects are becoming "too white," that Student 9 can still say (LLH): "I like being fluent in English and I find that it's easier to express yourself to anyone." Fluency in English *is* cultural capital, although an unstable and delicate kind.

4.11 Plateauing of investment in English

I was interested to find out whether my research participants were conscious of any change to their investment in English once they had taken up comfortable subject positions in diploma-specific and general on-campus student discourses. Students 14,15 and 16 had faced problems with English as presented in lectures, but had overcome their lack of confidence to speak to lecturers and, through hard work, had passed their first year examinations. Yet once they were through first year, a subtle change in focus occurred. Students 14,15 and 16, like the rest of the research group, have become more focussed on diploma specific subjects - whether or not they are satisfied with the standard of English they speak or write.

I noted above (4.10) that Students 1 to 13 understand themselves as competent users of English. Nevertheless all 16 research participants acknowledge that their English competency levels should continue to improve (Students 1 - 11 WREQ). It is their general failure to implement any measures to improve that is notable.

The need for improvement was specifically cited by Students 2 and 4 as stemming from the fact that English is not their home language. Half of the students indicated that reading more novels, newspapers and magazines would improve their English generally, but three of these students claimed that lack of time was the reason why they did not read more, while Student 15 claimed (I) that she gets "bored" when reading. Only four students noted being satisfied with their current standard of spoken English, with eleven of the twelve others admitting they need to practise speaking English more. Student 9 justified not speaking English more by stating (WREQ) that for her English to improve, she would need to speak English to people who were "better at English than her". This is an opportunity that does not present itself often for her outside of lecture times on a campus where the majority of students are also not home language users of English. Student 16, in contrast to the other participants, implied that mere exposure to English, the language of learning, would be sufficient to improve by saying (I) that "all of the subjects we do in English, so I think that is sufficient to improve". Except for Student 8, the participants assessed their writing skills as better than their speaking skills. A student's English writing skills are, after all, constantly indirectly assessed in assignments and examinations, whereas, after the Oral Communication assessment in Communication 1 in first year, the students in the one diploma would not be required to do any further oral presentations for assessment purposes.

Of significance here, too, is that except for Students 14, 15, and 16, the other participants were of the opinion that at the technikon they speak less English than they did at school. Three students reported being punished at high school if overheard not speaking English, whether inside or outside the classroom. On the technikon campus, the situation is rather different, as one need not, sometimes dare not, speak English except to lecturers and students who do not speak one's home language (see 4.5 and 4.9). Moreover, English is not compulsory as the medium of interaction in group work situations in the lecture room.

A number of factors consequently contribute to less direct investment in English, and the students become more invested in the 'academic capital' (an aspect of cultural capital - see 2.3) obtainable through the acquisition of a technikon business diploma in their chosen discipline. Drawing on McKay and Wong's paper (see 2.6.2), one can argue that in enhancing their identities in other discourses, their investment in English, particularly as a spoken language, plateaus.

The students' English vocabulary and English writing skills are nevertheless likely to continue to improve with the consistent exposure to English and writing practice they receive as they advance through their studies. Their subjectivities as English users, conflicted and fractured as they are, are unlikely to be static. Weedon (1997) and Norton Peirce's (1995) notions of subjectivity and identity are once again apposite here (see 2.6.1). It is possible that the students' investment in speaking English will be renewed if they go on to gain positions in the business world in which English and 'Western' discourses tend to predominate.

4.12 Heeding or resisting the hail from other competing discourses

I have described Student 4 as having a rather overdetermined Zulu identity. However a tertiary institution campus is not an unlikely site for a student to 'heed the hail' (Althusser 1971: 174) of discourses which challenge this subjectivity. The 'hail' of a discourse can be understood as an ideological invitation to embrace an identity. Student 4's family prevented her from studying at tertiary level away from home because she "might come back pregnant" (Appendix A: 5), but they cannot prevent her from encountering other new influences. The following excerpt from Student 4's interview (Appendix A: 2) is an example of Derrida's principle of *differance* (see 2.5.1):

> ... when I came to Technikon, things really changed. I started to believe in myself as a woman - that I could do things that I couldn't do before. Like the women's stuff. They showed us that we also have power, we as women. We can also do things that men can do. So go with power! Uh!

Student 4's construction of the word 'woman' has changed from the way she previously understood it to a meaning constructed by the women's empowerment groups on campus. Women's empowerment seminars and groups, frequently sponsored by the technikon's

counselling department and therefore usually presented in English, have established themselves on campus. They are becoming increasingly powerful contradictory and alternative discourses to patriarchal discourses such as Zulu cultural discourse. But Student 4 knows it is unwise to display this new identity as a 'powerful woman' at home. She laughingly remarked (Appendix A: 7) that with "an elderly person, you just go with them ... You just keep it low and cool!" A shift will have been effected in her ethnic subjectivity as well, but only certain friends rather than family will, if she is careful, observe this shift.

Not all my research participants use the greater agency available to them on the technikon campus to take up subject positions in new discourses, especially if these discourses have 'truths' (see 2.5.2) which oppose 'truths' of discourses within which one is a 'happy' subject. Student 7 has reacted negatively to the AIDS and sex discourses so widespread on campus. She has apparently comfortable identities as a Zulu and as a Christian and does not experience a conflict of values as a subject within these discourses. What she rejects is what people on campus have to say about sex or condoms: "They're saying it's OK to have sex. They don't even say don't have sex" (I). She is resisting these discourses which 'hail' her in English and Zulu all over campus as she considers them irrelevant to her. Student 7 does not understand herself as changed, nor does she believe she will change when she goes out into the working world. She concludes, " ... because even now I haven't really changed" (I). She wants a more gentle 'process of becoming' (Barker 1999: 25) for herself. She will achieve this by limiting her options in terms of multiple identities and so reducing potential causes of conflict.

4.13 Research participants' reflections on their schooling

I asked my research participants whether, if the choice had been theirs, they would have chosen the schools their parents chose for them. Only Students 4, 7 and 9 from the first subject group (WREQ) would have chosen differently. Student 4 would have chosen a much more democratic school "... where all different languages are taught and which allows freedom of choice to all pupils of different races and cultures". Student 9 appreciated the educational challenges offered by her multiracial school, but maintains that having been at a 'black' school would have made her "more in touch with the suffering most of my peers went through". She also wrote, in her literate life history, that it was unjust that the black students at her high

school should have had to "fight with the headmaster" to have Sesotho eventually taught as an extra subject at the school. This latter statement hints at a silence in all the material of the students except that of Student 7, that nearly all these students have only primary school level literacy or no literacy in their home languages. Student 7 explained that she would understand her own language better if she had not only learnt English and Afrikaans at high school. She wrote, "it is embarrassing knowing you can't explain yourself properly in your own language". However, it would be unfair to assume that all the students experience the absence of much home language literacy as a lack or loss or indignity to be endured along with occasional name calling (see 4.5). Their English literacy has been more than sufficient to get them through their education up to the present time.

There is little suggestion of critical reflection in the responses of the other students from the first subject group. They are so deeply implicated as subjects in English discourses that there is no easy discursive space for them to debate what might have been. They echo their parents' sentiments with statements such as "life would have too many limits without English" (Student 10), you "get better preparation for tertiary education at a Model C school" (Student 6), and knowing English well is "better for business" (Student 8).

Students 12 to 16 place more emphasis on the importance of speaking and writing one's home language fluently, but they would have chosen multiracial schools because of the better education in "English" schools and the chance "to get ahead" (I) (Student 15). Student 14 explained in her interview (Appendix B: 8), that although she would like her son to attend a 'Model C' school, she believes she would then have to teach him Zulu. "...these [Model C] teachers don't even know Zulu, yet they are teaching Zulu people. That is wrong!" She would probably like to observe the transformation of the discourses of education currently in process in South Africa taking place more rapidly.

Student 16 can write Zulu fluently, but prefers to express herself in English on paper. She argues (I) that it is easier and quicker to "express yourself" in English and believes "English is where my future lies".

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4.14 Students' predictions on the future of African languages and their cultures

In the final section, I examine my student participants' understanding of the future of indigenous African languages in South Africa considering that they envisage English playing a prominent part in their lives in the business world.

Only Student 6 of the sixteen research participants wrote that "black cultures were declining," but not African languages. The remaining fifteen students were unanimous that African languages were declining or losing status because of the social practices of their speakers (again, Students 1 to 11 responded in writing). Such practices included some of the issues already raised in this chapter. For instance, Students 2 and 9 mentioned that African languages were "being mixed" too much with other languages. The greater use of English especially, because the youth are now attending "white schools," was the reason given by Students 9 and 13, while Student 3 predicted that African languages "may fade completely as most people who do African languages, they stop when they are in Matric". Students 1 and 11 went further in writing that "more and more people are adopting the Western culture even in their lifestyles" and "are forgetting about their own cultures as they learn to speak other languages other than their first language". The most pessimistic opinions were those of Students 5 and 15 who believe that eventually only in communities where people "live in the old way," and amongst the "uneducated," will African languages be spoken.

There was both mitigation and augmentation of these harsh predictions in the students' qualifications of some of their statements. Students 4, 8, 9 and 10 noted that "an effort was being made to reverse the decline" of African languages and cultures through, for example, the state's promotion of the African Renaissance and pride in one's blackness, and the translation of Nelson Mandela's autobiography into African languages. Students 13 and 14 believe that if whites learn African languages this will lessen their decline, but Student 14 also notes that "in the parliament they still speak English" even though they "talk about Renaissance" (Appendix B: 8).

The students undoubtedly have some insight into the provocative 'hail' (see 4.12) of English and Western discourses which appear to be providing increasingly strong competition to ethnic discourses and their associated languages. The latter discourses once faced less opposition from the more global English and Western discourses. Foucault (as discussed in 2.5.2 and 4.6) argues that discourses inevitably undergo change. The direction of that change for ethnic discourses, however, may be contingent upon the will to struggle for a more powerful discursive formation (see 2.5.2) around notions of black pride and the African Renaissance.

Whether or not there is a maintenance of interest in black pride and related matters, will not halt the process of change that will continue to feature in the subjectivities of all my research participants. They may become more or less invested in English and other languages they use as they move across the various 'fields' (see 2.3) of their lives, but they will always be involved, as Norton Peirce (1995: 18 and see 2.3) posited, 'in organising and reorganising a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world'.

4.15 Conclusion

The themes, metaphors and 'silences' which emerged from the broad discourse analysis of my data, gave me sufficient 'brokerage' to answer my research questions adequately. There was much illuminating material available regarding the research participants' understanding of themselves as users of English, and how a high level of competency in English is considered necessary for success in tertiary studies, and to become subjects of the discourses in the business world. Despite the varying degrees of investment in English among the research participants, none of them therefore disputed the cultural capital to be gained from a sound knowledge of English.

What was remarkable was the extent to which strong ethnic subjectivities and consequently, the use of home languages and other African languages, impacted on the regular use of English at Riverside campus in any but the most obligatory of academic and social contexts. The widespread use of code switching was also noteworthy.

The poststructuralist theory which informed this research can satisfactorily explain such apparent paradoxes. That is, in poststructuralist theory, the individual can be the subject of several contradictory discourses simultaneously, although the challenges inherent in such multiple subjectivities are acknowledged, as is the impermanence of any one set of identities or subjectivities. New identities which were taken up by the research participants at the technikon could thus also be entertained by the theory.

CHAPTER 5: LIMITATIONS OF THIS RESEARCH, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

5.1 Introduction

I have drawn on two definitions of discourse in this dissertation, that of Weedon (1997) and that of Pennycook (1994a), both of which are informed by Foucauldian notions of discourse (see 2.5.2). To take up a subject position in a discourse is to have that discourse affect, if not govern, the choices that an individual makes from a number of courses of action which present themselves (see 2.5.4). A discourse may allow or limit the taking up of subject positions in other discourses. Foucauldian discourse theory emphasises the historical moment and the context as further signalling the choice to be made by a subject. In this research, the context was primarily the localised context of Technikon Natal's Riverside campus (2000 -2001), although the wider South African contexts of home, and primary and secondary school, during and post-apartheid were also significant. Such contexts might have prompted my research participants, for example, to learn Zulu for greater cultural capital (see 2.3 for discussion of this term), practise or not practise speaking English, or change their degree of investment in English.

Different contexts would also account for the varying ways in which Norton Peirce's (1995) adult immigrant research participants, McKay and Wong's (1996) adolescent immigrant research participants and my South African black student research participants handle their need to participate in English discourses. It was, nevertheless, helpful to use Norton Peirce's (1995) definition of social identity - drawn from Weedon's (1997) notion of subjectivity (see 2.6.1) - in examining my research participants' understanding of themselves as users of both English and other languages.

5.2 Limitations of this research

5.2.1 Critique of the interviews with research participants

Analysis of the talk itself that took place in my research interviews was not at the heart of my research as it would have been had I been using conversation analysis methods. Rather, I was hearing about the languages my research participants speak and their subjectivities.

Nevertheless, attending to the relationship between interviewer and interviewee, that is, between myself and each research participant, was necessary because it assisted me in being self reflexive about the constraints of the interview as a method for gathering research material.

In the interviews the research participants and I did not have equal status. Although I had tried to remove as many of the potential barriers to equal status as possible, for example, as mentioned in 3.6, by choosing former rather than current students as research participants and by being empathic to participants' concerns that were not research related, inequalities in status, unfortunately, if not also inevitably, remained. There was good rapport, but I was still constructed by some participants as a lecturer and as such accorded respect, for example, in being called 'Mam'. They probably felt comfortable in placing me in this subject position with themselves as students in less powerful subject positions within a general on-campus technikon discourse (see 2.5.4 for an explanation of subject positions in discourse). Furthermore, ethnic/cultural as well as age differences might have inhibited the disclosure of information which would have been useful, or the giving of information which the interviewee believed I wanted to hear (refer also to 3.8). In doing my analysis, I was aware of such possible silences in the received text as well as in the discourses themselves (see 3.13 and 4.9).

Finally, analysing the asymmetry between myself and my research participants in the interview situation, I was aware that as the one asking the questions, I had more control over the interview proceedings. I did not prevent my participants asking any questions and occasionally they did - usually about technikon but non-research related matters - but power was clearly tipped in my favour. I had greater 'knowledge' in the Foucauldian sense (see 2.5.3) of the process.

No interview context is thus a sociologically neutral space where complete transparency between participants will be achieved. However, despite such anomalies possibly occurring in some instances in the data, and especially if one is alert to them, one can expect one's data as a whole to be dependable.

5.2.2 Duration of research

The time one has available to complete one's research is likely to affect one's research findings. In my case study, the majority of my research participants and I were only available between July and September 2001. Although qualitative research methods allow the researcher to re-interview participants, this was not possible in my situation. My 'first' subject group answered my additional questions in written form (see 3.9), and this procedure precluded me from further drawing them out on some issues. A second interview might therefore have enriched the data from my 'first' subject group, the EFL (see 3.9) students.

If I had been able to extend my data collection period into 2002, I might also have been able to re-interview the students from the one diploma group after they had completed their experiential training. It would have been possible to gauge from such interviews whether these students' investment in English had been renewed after having to speak English in 'the business world'. I could have ascertained whether their English oral competence had been adequate in their view, to cope with the high level of interaction using English they would have had with the public. The French skills of Students 5 and 12 (see 4.7) would also have been 'tested' during experiential training, and they might then have given me more data about possible shifts in their identities as French speakers.

5.2.3 Size and make-up of research sample

The small research samples of qualitative research usually discourage qualitative researchers from generalising their research results. My sample of sixteen students was not only small, but also inadvertently weighted towards EFL participants (see 3.6 and 3.10). Thus I had less data from the ESL participants than I would have liked. Were I to do research along similar lines in the future, I would try to ensure a more even spread between EFL and ESL participants.

5.3 Conclusions: ethnic discourses and the use of English

A notable insight from this research, as implied in 4.15, was the extent to which the research participants' strong identification with ethnic discourses governs their use of English. In a context or 'field', the Bordieun term (see 2.3), where an ethnic discourse is apparently operating powerfully (such as at Riverside campus), the use of English on its own is limited to

the obligatory academic and social domains of use. This would be true across what I have called the discursive formation of all the ethnic discourses (see 4.9) of which my participants are subjects.

As a result of sociopolitical circumstances over a number of historical periods in South Africa (during colonial, apartheid and post-apartheid periods), ethnic discourses have shifted (see 2.5.2) to allow for the possibility of their subjects taking up subject positions in English discourses (see 4.3). But it has made multiple subjectivity within both ethnic discourses and English discourses with their contradictory social practices, contested sites (see 5.1 and 2.6.1) for my research participants. Compelled to invest in English to obtain educational qualifications at the higher levels (see 1.4) and thus not at their own volition (see Pennycook 1994b in 2.7), the young women sometimes find themselves uncomfortably positioned in ethnic discourses. To emphasise one's identity as an English user in the company of fellow ethnic subjects is to risk losing one's ethnic identity. One can be rejected as being 'too white,' an 'Oreo'. Although some of the research participants may essentialise their identity themselves, for example, Student 4 (see 4.4), on the whole they understand ethnic identity as a positive label. It is the negative essentialist labelling they seek to avoid. The appropriate use of the home language in its 'pure' form without the use of any English words in particular contexts might, furthermore, have become an additional important lesson of childhood for those black South Africans who early on gain competence in English (see 4.5).

However, on the technikon campus, no such constraints on having to use a home language in its 'pure' form exist. My fluently bilingual or multilingual research participants code switch between English and one or more of the indigenous African languages on a daily basis. I argued in 4.6 that my research participants and their friends appear to have found a way to deploy their English subjectivity and yet simultaneously retain and manifest their ethnic identity by creating commonly used code switching discourses. These exist side by side with ethnic discourses without obvious resistance from the latter. A degree of agency has clearly been permitted to these multiple subjects, or a degree of latitude found in the discourses, for so much code switching to take place (see 5.6 concerning the vulnerability of ethnic discourses).

The conventional literature on code switching (as discussed in 2.6.3) takes an Enlightenment view of the subject (see 2.4.1), thus giving individuals complete agency to code switch at will. Poststructuralist subjects, by contrast, might not, in all instances, find the discursive spaces they seek to allow them to code switch. They may then refrain from code switching, or must choose to resist the discourse 'ruling' on the issues. I suggest, therefore, that the conventional literature on code switching (as discussed in 2.6.3) may need to be re-assessed when one is drawing on poststructuralist theory for discourse analysis work.

5.4 Conclusions: fluctuating investment in English

Investment in English for my research participants probably peaked in their first year of tertiary studies. Students 14, 15 and 16, in particular, had had to make an extra effort to cope with English at the higher level (see 4.10). Even to be accepted as students at the technikon had required higher than average passes in English at Senior Certificate level (see 1.6).

The fact that they passed their first year examinations seems to have indicated implicitly to the students that their English skills were at the least, satisfactory. So their focus moves away from English (the other problems concerning the use of English notwithstanding) and on to the challenges of their second year subjects and the eventual business diploma or 'academic capital' they are at the technikon to obtain. However, as I discussed in 4.11, this plateauing of investment in English is probably only temporary and investment may pick up again as the students enter environments in the business world more structured for English usage and English investment-enhancement. But at the time of my research, investment in English was not a priority for my research participants.

Most importantly, Norton Peirce's (1995) concept of investment (see 2.3) which integrates the language learner with the social world, particularly in conjunction with her concept of identity as changing over time (see 2.6.1), has more explanatory power than has traditional work on motivation and SLA (see 2.2) to interpret learners' fluctuations of investment in English. Traditional work on motivation and SLA remains less than satisfactory to explain fluctuating investment in English, because it perceives the second language learner as a

unitary, centred, unchanging and ahistorical individual, rather than as decentred and constituted within historically sensitive discourses.

5.5 Conclusions: strategies

My data revealed a number of strategies used by my research participants to add new dimensions and additional quality to their lives. They did this by integrating new discourses into already existing ones, thus adding to their individual identity 'webs'. Again and again, their responses illustrated that identity is multiple rather than unitary. For example, Student 3 began to learn Zulu when she arrived at Technikon Natal in order to increase her cultural capital in a field where she perceived Zulu discourses to be powerful (see 4.8). Student 12, who had found multiple subjectivity in Zulu, English and Afrikaans discourses a site of struggle (see 4.7), has now enhanced her identity by adding French to her repertoire of languages and identities.

Yet the added Zulu identity of Student 3 and the added French identity of Student 12 are far from problematic for them, suggesting that multiple subjectivity or identities are not necessarily sites of struggle. It is possible that the way in which discourses interrelate leads to multiple identities being more or less 'hostile' towards one another. For Student 3 to add one more ethnic identity to those she already has is not considered threatening by any of the discourses concerned, since ethnic discourses in South Africa appear to have similar 'ways of being' (Gee 1990: 142) and to exist in a discursive formation (see 2.5.2). French does not exist in a strong field nor is it constructed as a powerful discourse in South Africa. Student 12's French identity may therefore be understood as simply an alternative identity rather than as challenging to the status of her primary discourse.

English discourses, by contrast, may be constituted as threatening to the future of ethnic discourses in South Africa. This is hinted at by my research participants (see 4.14) and discussed further below (5.6).

5.6 Conclusions: on ethnic subjectivity and the future of African languages and their associated cultures

I have described how my research participants code switch extensively between English and one or more of the indigenous African languages (see 4.6 and 5.3). The students appear to pay little heed to the 'purity' of these languages or the consequences for the future that such constant pressure from English might have on the lexicons and other aspects of the languages.

Student 12 is the only research participant whose ethnic, in her case, Zulu, identity is not of apparent importance to her. Yet there is a lack of interest in the future of the indigenous African languages and their associated cultures from most of the participants. Apart from Student 14, who wants to ensure her child learns Zulu, and Student 9 who made the extra effort of learning Sotho at school (see 4.13), my research participants seem distanced from attempts to revive the status of African languages, cultures and 'ways of being' contained in the notion of the African Renaissance - although they 'rightly' state that changes will take place (see 4.14). I tentatively suggest that my research participants' identities that are associated with English discourses may be emerging as relatively more stable or possibly stronger than their ethnic identities. This is despite having noted more than once in this dissertation Pennycook's (1994b) insight (see 2.7) that many individuals have no choice but to become subjects within English discourses, and having noted, too, the contradictions and struggles this creates for black South Africans. Remaining loyal to their ethnic discourses may be more out of a need for a sense of community and out of fear of being 'othered' ('Oreod'!) than out of commitment to ethnic discourse rules - particularly when these discourses are prescriptive about the behaviour of women (see 4.4 and 4.12). Against the background of changing sociopolitical circumstances, the students' greater-than-average investment in English might ultimately have fractured even their ethnic identity. Through their social practices, they emerge as illustrative of the decentred subjects of postmodern times.

5.7 Recommendations for future research

I wrote in 5.2.3, that it would have been advantageous to have had a better spread of research subjects which would then have included more students who had written English Second Language at Senior Certificate level. I implied, in 5.6, that some young black women may be

seduced by the 'hail' of English and western discourses which they understand as more empowering of women than their primary ethnic discourses. Thus, in order to examine further the power of ethnic discourses over their subjects, it could be worthwhile to use a research sample of students of both women and men, evenly spread across students from urban and rural areas, and using the criterion of English First Language versus English Second Language Senior Certificate credit. Inadequate though this might be as a criterion, it is some measure of investment in English and embeddedness in English discourses. Including men in the sample might be beneficial to investigate the 'depth' of male ethnic subjectivity compared to that of women. On the other hand, I am hesitant to propose that gender should be isolated as a factor when interrogating the increasingly powerful 'hail' of English based discourses in South Africa. From a poststructuralist perspective, isolating gender smacks of humanist categorising tendencies.

I also repeat now my observation in 5.2.2, that, had my research been of longer duration, I would have been able to re-interview part of my subject group after their period of experiential training about their possibly renewed investment in English. Future researchers who were able to interview a similar subject group to mine (or to the one outlined in the previous paragraph) over a number of stages during their tertiary student years and after a period of employment in the business world, would understandably gather more data. These researchers would probably gain richer insights into the young people's understanding of themselves as English users and their attempts to negotiate, in an ongoing manner, comfortable subject positionings in their lives.

5.8 Learnings for a lecturer

In concluding this dissertation, I need to ask what fresh understandings of black students as users of English and as users of other languages have emerged for me in my position as a Riverside lecturer - and possibly for other lecturers as well.

The first noteworthy point may be that my research participants on the whole understand themselves at second year level to be sufficiently competent users of English not to warrant their taking any extra (and perhaps time-consuming) measures to improve their English.

Lecturers, who are often faced with less than perfect standard English in assignments, may not agree with this assessment of student English, but might be wise to approach academic issues connected to students' problems with communication skills with sensitivity. An extension of this point is that, increasingly, technikon first year classes include black students whose English, although not officially their home language, is indeed as fluent and acculturated to cope with tertiary study demands as the English of any home language speaker. One needs to be aware of possible large gaps between competent and struggling English users when engaging with students in the classroom.

Acknowledging the individual English language learner in South Africa as inseparable from her social world may assist in furthering a language teacher's understanding of why it is not always so easy to practise speaking the target language outside the classroom. Apart from the name-calling that might ensue, there may be only other ESL learners to speak to and few opportunities to speak to home language speakers of the language. (See Student 9's reminder in 4.11 of this not unknown problem for ESL learners in South Africa.) In sum, English, as the technikon's language of learning and Riverside's *lingua franca*, is fraught with contradictions.

In addition, the multilingualism of many black students and their willingness to learn new languages needs to be validated and affirmed by lecturers. Ideally, lecturers should follow the example of non-Zulu speaking black students who come to study at Riverside campus and subsequently learn Zulu. If English home language lecturing staff on campus were to learn Zulu too, this would not only gain them some cultural capital, but might also help redress some of the disruptive effects created by powerful English discourses.

5.9 Final comments

Any conclusions made in this chapter are acknowledged as necessarily tentative because they are premised on a relatively small body of data. It is, furthermore, data collected at a site where the research participants continue to experience new challenges as they go about achieving qualifications in higher education. These challenges are likely to require them to make changes to their current subjectivities. The local research site is, in turn, embedded in the larger national context of post-apartheid South Africa and its ever changing sociopolitical

field. If shifts occur at the national level regarding language policy in schools and the workplace, for example, these would undoubtedly affect most South Africans to some degree. South Africans, like my research participants, would be affected according to how well or poorly positioned they are at the time as subjects in the discourses implicated in the changes.

Throughout this dissertation, which has been informed by poststructuralist thinking, the predication has been that my research participants' identities are not stable, fixed entities; they are identities which are discursively constructed, multiple, often contested and changeable. Consequently, my research participants' understanding of themselves as users of English, and as users of other languages, are not monolithic, but open to endless redescription. In South Africa's current fluid and diverse sociopolitical contexts, possibilities for taking up new identities occur frequently. They present not only exciting opportunities for those seeking better positions for themselves in different social contexts, but also ongoing challenges to those of us involved in educational transformation at this time.

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In the following two transcripts (Appendices A and B), complex transcription conventions have not been used. However, I have indicated pauses or laughter in brackets. The students' real names, although sometimes used by the researcher in the interviews, have been omitted from the transcripts.

Interview with Student 4

S4 = Student

R = Interviewer (Researcher)

R: What languages do you speak at home?

S4: Zulu. I only use English when I come to Tech and maybe when I'm lecturing my cousins, also at home.

R: Do you?

S4: Yes I'm trying to help them because they're attending at Zulu speaking schools.

R: So you're helping them with English and what other subjects?

S4: They're only in Std 1, Std 2 so also with Maths and any other subject I can relate to.

R: The Maths would be easy, easy at that stage I suppose, but that's great. Do you see Zulu, the language being very much a part of Zulu culture?

S4: Yes, it plays a very major role because some people still can't speak English at all. Even though they're trying to make that happen with night classes for adults and other classes in the community.

R: So in the family you grew up in was it purely Zulu speaking people?

S4: Yes. It was when I went to secondary school which was a coloured school that I started speaking English, and then I realised that English is the way to go because nowadays it's the medium language. You're gonna have to learn it whether you like it or not.

R: So you don't have a mix of cultures in your family as some other students here do?

S4: No, strictly Zulu.

R: And where in the family are you? The oldest, youngest child?

S4: Well actually I'm lucky because I'm the only one, but I've got cousins- the ones I was talking about earlier. Yes.

R: And do you think you were brought up in a particular way because you were a girl?

S4:   Yes, I was definitely, because being a girl means you have to do certain chores like fetching water, for one; like staying in the house and cooking. You're gotta have respect for the elderly very much and whatever you do, you've got to show you're a woman and you gonna have to follow orders.

R: So who brought you up?

S4:   My mother mainly. My mother is not married, right..? So she stayed at her mother's house and I'm staying like with my grandmother and my uncle and aunts.

R: Have you ever had any contact with your father?

S4:   No. He's married, so it's that situation.

R: Did the tasks you have to do as a girl alter as you became a teenager?

S4:   Yes. Well TV is there and everything and we're kinda adjusting to certain things and as civilisation is coming and you going to have to realise when you go to a tertiary institution you start learning about things you did not know about. And you start changing a little bit, going away from other things you used to do. Before, maybe you had to fetch water, and now there's running water. You're gonna have to do a few other chores around the house.

R: How have you felt about that? Have you ever felt resentful that you had to do those 'girl' things like fetching water?

S4:   I did accept the way I was brought up, but when I came to Technikon, things really changed. I started to believe in myself as a woman - that I could do things that I couldn't do before. Like the women's stuff. They showed us that we also have power, we as women. We can also do things that men can do. So go with power! Uh!

R: So would you say that you have been quite influenced by more feminist women on campus?

S4:   Yes, I have because I think I've grown stronger than before when I was still at school. At school I was a little bit shy, but when I came to Technikon I started realising I am a person and I can do something. I needed financial help. I started the initiative. I started selling sweets around the campus and the cash is really flowing.

R: That's really great. Do you make enough profit for what you need?

S4:   Yes, I make a lot. It's the money I use for transport. It's really helping.

R: And your prices are reasonable, I'm sure, if the students are buying?

S4:   Yes, they are reasonable. I have a competitor because they're selling at the gate at a much higher price. Mine's a lower price and the students know me so I'm sort of at an advantage with that.

R: Hm. Good luck to you. May your success continue. (Pause) And do you belong to a particular religion?

S4:   Yes, of course. I go to church; it's called John Wesley. They wear red and black and white. It's where my grandmother's attending, so I also go there. And I was baptised there.

R: And do they have Zulu speaking services there?

S4:   Yes, it's purely Zulu. We read the Bible in Zulu. We do everything in Zulu.

R: And have you ever found that Christian values conflict with traditional Zulu values in any way?

S4:   Ja, they do in other parts, but they both work like in connection, both like God, the religion go together with the culture. Because they're much the same. But it differs somehow. You gonna have to know what to take. What is wrong and what is right. And you gonna have to stand for what you believe in. You have to know where you are and where you're going in order to be able to survive and choose between the two.

R: And so it sound like it's fairly easy for you to sort out which way you want to go when you have to make choices like that.

S4:   Yes, because I believe my family has done what they were supposed to do in bringing me up, and I know where I'm supposed to fit in and where I'm not supposed to , and which way I'm supposed to go.

R: Wow! Right. Just coming back to the time when you started school. I think from the initial form you filled in you seem to have gone to more than one primary school. Tell me about that.

S4:   We had to change the place where we were staying. First I went to a Zulu school and then when we changed, I went to a coloured school.

R: And what was that like to suddenly have to start speaking English?

S4:   Well, I was lucky because my family sent me to one of the coaching schools where I would attend for 2 to 3 hours on Saturdays and Sundays, so I was picking it up

and there. It really helped my performance at school.

R: It doesn't sound as if you had much time off from work on weekends.

S4: Only on Sundays and I still went to church so I was really hard working while I was still young. But it really helped. Thank God for that.

R: And in the coloured school did they help the black kids with their English?

S4: They did help a lot because when we came in, in '95, I think, they told us if you know yourself you can understand the English that's going on in the class, you can go on with the normal classes, but if you knew yourself you didn't quite understand the English being taught, we had our separate classes.

R: Oh!

S4: Yes, they organised a separate class for those who didn't understand. So they were like going the slow way with the syllabus. And helping us adjust to the whole thing.

R: So they were making the adaptations, they weren't making you adapt. Though obviously you have to adapt yourself. Was it Ok to speak Zulu at break time?

S4: They said we had to speak English even at break, but we couldn't, so we just used Zulu.

R: And they didn't punish you?

S4: They did - they had detention, but then they learnt to realise we couldn't help it. It was within us to speak Zulu.

R: Yes, because it seems very harsh to punish students under those circumstances. Did you have a positive attitude to learning English or did you resent it and think this isn't fair? How did you feel?

S4: Ok. What I can say is that although Zulu is our language and we speak it and we love it very much, during the time that I was studying it happened that my grandmother was a maid at that time. So she had faced a lot of problems with communicating with the people she was working for. So she saw the problems and realised that I needed to know English. She could understand that it was very important for me to go forward with English. So she was very positive about it.

R: So she gave you the positive attitude and you accepted that.

S4: Yes, I accepted that. I saw how she went through suffering in not understanding the language so...

R: And so there wasn't a political overtone of 'why must we become westernised' ?

S4:   No, because she believed the right of education should be given to a person. She had only managed to get Std 7, so she wanted to give whatever she had to me.

R: Mm.

S4:   She wanted me to make the most of the situation.

R: Right, obviously your grandmother had a great effect on you. Were there other teachers or people or kids who have influenced you quite a lot?

S4:   One particular male teacher did. He was always encouraging me to go forward. He could see I was talented. In Std 5 I won this award for English and I was the speaker for the Std 5 Farewell. He was the one who decided I should do the farewell.

R: I suppose having had that honour motivated you even more.

S4:   Even more. I was determined just to stand up and do something and become successful one day.

R: Shew! And I think you are proving yourself here too.

S4:   (Laughs)

R: And when did you start to think about doing tertiary education and maybe Technikon Natal in particular?

S4:   Ok. I wanted to go to Technikon Natal in Durban, but my family wouldn't let me go because they know these days the girl might come back pregnant. So they couldn't let me go and told me I must find something here if I really wanted to study. So I chose Technikon Natal as my first choice and got in here.

R: And have you had any regrets about doing Accounting?

S4:   Not that I can say now. Everything is fine.

R: And having been at the coloured school, how did you find the English spoken at Technikon Natal in lectures and so on? Any difficulty?

S4:   No, I didn't find difficulty. I just came in and adjusted quite well. It felt normal. Even though not quite normal because I was adjusting to a different environment, but it was ok.

R: Mm. Mm. Now when you're discussing Technikon work with other students, what language do you use?

S4:   Oh! We use Zulu.

R: All your friends are Zulu speaking then?

S4:   Oh yes, and it's much easier because we're like cramming the work. But in other

subjects it's not that easy because some of the stuff like in Business Management, you must talk about in English or learn off by heart something in English.

R: Yes, but I suppose working with figures in Accounting say, you could discuss calculations in Zulu. (Pause) Did music or books or TV influence you, do you think?

S4: Yes, you go through different phases as a teenager and you start liking this and then this.

R: So do you think young people pick up values from TV and music much?

S4: Yes, they do. Music can be inspirational. Some people believe in music so much they can't live without it. Music also has a power to a person's heart because of the message that comes in music. I believe that you should listen to the music that goes with your blood and believe that what she or he is singing is good for you.

R: And what kind of music do you personally listen to?

S4: Any kind of music that doesn't violate what I believe in. Like I don't like Rap because of the swearing, but I like Gospel and some Kwaito but it depends where I am what is right.

R: How do you feel that you're changed differently from other members of your family or even friends who haven't had the opportunity of tertiary education?

S4: Sometimes those ones if you say something at home, they say you think you're clever but at the end of the day, we're all family and we're all trying to make each other see the reason for whatever situation at the house. But it does cause a little bit of tension.

R: However, it sounds like it's not something you can't get through or solve in a reasonable way.

S4: Ja, and you just have to understand especially if it's like an elderly person you just go with them.

R: If you don't agree, you just keep quiet.

S4: You just keep it low and cool! (Laughs)

R: And do you see this happening more and more with young people that their ideas conflict with traditional values?

S4: Yes, it really does conflict. Another thing if your parents love you, you're expected to listen to them and keep quiet and respect them. But when you come to Technikon Natal, you have to respond to the lecturer. If you don't respond to them, you're ignorant and you're gonna fail. There is no excuse for you. You must ask questions in

such a way that you learn and enjoy your learning. But at home you have to be quiet. So can you see the contrast! You don't know what to do now - you have to know at home you're going to act like 'this', and at Technikon Natal like 'this'.

R: And I suppose differently again with different friends?

S4: Yes, wherever you are - now I've entered this part of the world, I'm gonna have to act in this way.

R: What is your attitude towards students from other cultures at Technikon Natal?

S4: I believe each and every person should respect each other and we should each do our mission that we came for. We must accept each other and we can be friends. We gonna have to accept diversity. Doesn't mean because you're a certain culture you have to do something in a certain way like I do.

R: What happens if you're in a group with Xhosa or Sotho speaking people, must they learn Zulu to talk to you?

S4: Oh no, we must turn round and start speaking English. English is the medium language. So surely you must know a little bit of English so you can communicate in such a way.

R: Mm. How do you feel about Technikon Natal ? Is there more freedom to be yourself to advance and be the best you can be?

S4: Ja, but it depends. Some people do the extremes at Technikon Natal and they can't
do   the extremes at home. They must try and put the two together and do what is
best.

R: So they're escaping?

S4: Yes, but at the end of the day it's only you and the situation and you're going to have to face it.

R: And those who seem to hit the extremes as you said, what happens to them?

S4: Some fail, but some, you just can't trust them. They can't be adults. They need their parents to tell them, 'hey do this', to follow them up so that they do what's right throughout the day. Like for me. In the morning, my mother wakes me up. Now if I'm away who is going to wake me up? I'm going to be late for the rest of the day!

R: You'll have to do that for yourself if you get a job away from home one day.

S4: Yes, it'll be a problem, (laughs) but other problems I think I can handle.

R: And how do you see yourself changing when you leave Technikon Natal?

S4:   I think I'll change maybe, say, if the right partner comes along and he is say, Xhosa..
        I'll have to change maybe to that clan.

R: And perhaps merely by being a professional working woman will change you perhaps,
        or will it change you?

S4:   Yes, I think I could change there too. Like if I get my own apartment I will change
        already because I've always lived at home, but then I would look after myself. So, I'll
        think I'll change definitely as a professional.

R: Yes, I think that would be true of most of us.

        Finally, last question; this is a long question. Listen to the background information
        first.

        You have applied for a job at a company whose corporate language is English. When
        you arrive for your interview, you notice that the receptionist is wearing a name
        badge which suggests that you share the same first language. What language would
        you greet her in?

S4:   I would greet her in Zulu and then after, I would respond and speak in English
        because maybe I would find someone else coming along. She has to use English as
        the medium of her institution. But I would still greet her in Zulu because it shows
        that you really understand who you are and you are relating to them.

R: Mm. Mm. Right. Thank you very much.

APPENDIX B

Interview with Student 14

S14 = Student

R   = Interviewer (Researcher)

R: What language is it that you speak at home?

S14:   Zulu. Only Zulu.

R: When you were growing up were you aware that you were growing up, being brought up as a Zulu girl in terms of customs and roles and so on?

S14:   No, it was just like everyone around you is doing the same thing.

R: And did you have to do different things and duties because you were a girl that were different from "the boys' duties"?

S14:   Of course. Get some water from the river to wash some dishes of which the boys didn't do that. They would just, like go, and look for the goats. We've got goats at home and they had to bring them home.

R: And is it still the same or do you have water coming from a tap now?

S14:   Yes we do, but otherwise it is similar. Now, another boy that my father pays, takes care of the cows. Not my elder brother.

R: Mm. So that was in the rural area near Bulwer?

S14:   Yes, but I stayed with my aunt in Sweetwaters for some years.

R: And did your mom or aunt treat you differently when you became a teenager?

S14:   By that time, I was back with my mom. She did not tell me enough. Instead of telling me boys were dangerous, she should have told me what to do to overcome them.

R: So you feel she could have told you more or supported you more?

S14:   Yes.

R: And do you belong to a certain religion?

S14:   Yes, Roman Catholic Church.

R: So you still go to Roman Catholic Church services ?

S14:   Yes, I do

R: What language are the services conducted in?

S14:   In Bulwer it's Zulu, but in PMB it's English.

R: Is your Roman Catholic faith important in your life or not?

S14:   Not really

R: What language was spoken in the classroom at the first school you went to?

S14:   The first one was in Sweetwaters and we spoke English except in Zulu period. Although we didn't speak it well, we tried.

R: And on the playground?

S14:   Just Zulu.

R: And then at the schools in Bulwer?

S14:   It was sort of the same. We tried not to use Zulu.

R: Looking back, do you think your teachers' English was good?

S14   Eh, ach. Not really.

R: But they tried! And then what about high school, what happened regarding language there?

S14:   At high school, if you were found speaking any language other than English, you were punished even if it was outside the premises, outside the classroom. We were really encouraged to speak English. We had a debating society where we used to debate some issues and against other schools.

R: So you were punished if you were found speaking any Zulu?

S14:   Yes.

R: So you did Zulu First Language and English Second Language for Matric?

S14:   Of course.

R: And what about Afrikaans?

S14:   Yes, I did Afrikaans up to Std 9 and then after that, it stopped functioning at school.

R: And what was your attitude towards learning English - did you ever feel negative or resentful?

S14:   It wasn't like that I didn't want to learn it because I understood it was the medium of language. But I had a question on my mind why shouldn't I use Zulu and an English speaking person learn to speak Zulu as well. I was questioning like that, but I had no choice. I had to do it.

R: If you had been allowed to would you have preferred to speak more Zulu at school and not been punished?

S14:   Yes. I don't think it was the right way to encourage us to learn English by punishing us. They should have maybe encouraged us to read magazines or listen to other radio

stations. It was not nice to speak something and know you cannot speak it perfectly.

R: And what were your teachers at high school like? Were they good teachers?

S14:   Yes, I think they were.

R: And going back to the Afrikaans, how did you and the others see or think of Afrikaans?

S14:   Ish! The attitude towards Afrikaans was very very bad, in such a way that when you speak about anything to do with Afrikaans, they would just look at you like a fool. They said Black people died because of this language. They feel that thing on their minds.

R: Was there quite a lot of political unrest at your high school while you were there?

S14:   Yes. We didn't miss a lot of days, but it happened that when I was in Std 8 my Economics teacher was killed.

R: Shew! Was there a particular teacher or pupil at school who had an influence on your life?

S14:   Yes, I remember when we were in Matric there was this literature we used to read called 'Crocodile Burning'. Are you familiar with it?

R: I'm not sure.

S14:   It talks about the way a certain manager was treating the staff. Then they went to America and started cheating them of money. They related that to apartheid: The hiding crocodile can be overcome if people can get together and struggle against it.

R: Oh! I see. This was a book you were reading together in class. And the particular teacher was he or she putting the meaning over well?

S14:   Yes. The teacher who was doing it had once been in exile.

R: Oh! So that really influenced you and the other students. (Pause)
      And when did you first think about not stopping your education with Matric, but going on to tertiary education?

S14:   I thought about it from Std 6 because I had seen my sisters and brothers going through tertiary.

R: So you're one of the youngest in the family?

S14:   Yes, the last born out of 7.

R: What do you think influenced you from radio and TV and books and music besides 'Crocodile Burning'? For instance, you said you wished the teachers had encouraged

you to listen to the radio more.

S14: Yes, when you listen on the radio you would hear sometimes about those in tertiary institutions are doing this and that, and you might be encouraged to go there and see what they are talking about.

R: Was TV available to you?

S14: Well, the problem with TV is reception. Even now you can't see the programmes properly even though we have a TV at home.

R: And you can't get all the channels?

S14: No, you can't.

R: And what kinds of music and songs do you like now?

S14: I like Fusion and Gospel.

R: So would you have songs playing in the background if you get the opportunity?

S14: Yes, I do listen to the radio for music and also some tapes.

R: Do you think the words or messages from the music actually influence you or is it just in the background?

S14: It has got some influence, I think.

R: (Pause) Now that you're at Technikon Natal, are you aware of what language you dream in ?

S14: Zulu. (Laughs) Only Zulu.

R: (Pause) How did you hear about Technikon Natal?

S14: It was through the finishing school because my matric results were not good. So I decided to go to the finishing school - Natal Midlands Finishing - from the other students there because my other brothers and sisters didn't know. They went to University or Indumiso.

R: Oh! And how did it benefit you to be at the finishing school?

S14: I redid Maths and Accounting and got C and D, so it was good.

R: How did you find the English that you were hearing in lectures at Technikon Natal? Did you have any difficulty?

S14: Yes. I was struggling very much, but during the course of the year, I would sort of catch up.

R: What would you and your friends do if you didn't understand the lecture content or what went on? Would you get together and talk about it?

S14: Well, I was lucky because I was attending with people from multiracial, so I would sort of ask them what does she said about this, and then I would sort of catch up.

R: Mm. When you talk with your friends now about Technikon work outside of lecture time what language do you use?

S14: We use mixture of Zulu and English.

R: So you use English words for some terms mixed with Zulu words?

S14: Yes, but most of the time we used to speak English. I'd use it with my friend because he is not a Zulu. He is from Botswana.

R: So it would depend who you're talking to - if it was a Zulu speaker, it would be a mix, but otherwise it would be English. Do you feel, then, that you are speaking English more now that you used to?

S14: Yes. I'm actually getting used to it and it helps me a lot.

R: What about socially when you're just chatting about things?

S14: We just speak Zulu.

R: So your friends tend to be Zulus?

S14: Yes, and even the one mentioned is now adjusting herself to speak Zulu.

R: Yes, I've heard even the Sotho speakers say that they have to learn Zulu.

S14: And they are complaining that Zulu speaking people are demanding that they speak their language! (Laughs) Zulus don't want to learn other languages!

R: They said that as well! (Laughs) Do you think the way you understand yourself has changed since you came to Technikon Natal?

S14: No, I don't think so. Let me give you an example. I did not wear slacks when I came here and still do not wear slacks. The others say I must wear jeans, but no, I am not going to. I like it when others do like that, but I still wear the skirt.

R: And in other ways, do you think you've come to behave differently, from when you're at home in Bulwer?

S14: Not that much. I'm just myself.

R: When you go home to Bulwer do your friends or family treat you differently?

S14: Not my family, they are just the same, but the neighbours. They start changing attitudes towards you because they expect you to have changed. That's why I used to hear over the radio that students from the technikons and universities are not adapting to the lifestyle of the communities when they come back. Somehow I've

seen that it is the communities that are not changing, or that have changed towards the students.

R: Maybe they feel resentful because they haven't had the opportunity of tertiary education.

S14: Our community is still struggling to go to the tertiary, so you end up with no friends.

R: So your old friends from school who haven't gone on to do tertiary education no longer want to be friends with you?

S14: Yes.

R: So your friends nowadays are students from the Technikon?

S14: Yes.

R: What did passing first year mean to you?

S14: Oh, I passed everything and it was only me in Marketing who did. The other students go some supps.

R: At the moment, does politics play a part in your life?

S14: Never. I'm finished with that. I've gone there, done that.

R: So it's not right for you. And religion, it sounds like you go to church, but it's not very important to you?

S14: Mm. Yes. I feel I don't have to go to church. I can pray in my room.

R: So you're just going because you feel you have to. You said you had the one friend from Botswana. What do you feel about students from other countries coming to Technikon Natal?

S14: I don't like them. The Botswanan students take themselves as superior to us. Even the head of the technikon he takes them as superior.

R: I see. (Pause) Next question. This is a long question. Listen to the background information first. You have applied for a job at a company whose corporate language is English. When you arrive for your interview, you notice that the receptionist is wearing a name badge which suggests that you share the same first language. What language would you greet her in?

S14: I would greet her in Zulu.

R: And would you continue to speak Zulu to her?

S14: Yes. Yes.

R: Ok. Everyone gives different answers there. Now when you get your diploma and move into the working world, do you think you will change?

S1:   I have to change. I will be in the working environment, and I will have to adapt myself especially to speaking English and things like that.

R: Is that still a strain for you, something that you've got to struggle with sometimes to speak English?

S14:   No. I don't think so because an English speaking person would understand what I'm saying.

R: Definitely. (Pause) Are you happy with the standard of English you write and speak?

S14:   When it comes to writing it's better, but when it comes to speaking, it's not. I know I'm not speaking it perfectly. When I compare myself to people who went to multiracial schools, I'm not very happy, but there's nothing I can do. We are coming from different families.

R: So are you saying that the way English is spoken by students from multiracial schools has a kind of status? It's considered a better way? Those students are like role models or are role models?

S14:   Yes, for some. Other students don't give a damn. For me, I would like my baby to go to some school like 'Merchiston'.

R: So in the future you would like your children to go to multiracial schools?

S14:   Definitely, but I would try by all means to teach him to write in Zulu. You know, these teachers don't even know Zulu, yet they are teaching Zulu people. That is wrong!

R: So you feel one's first language must not be neglected even though one may speak English?

S14:   Yes, definitely.

R: So what do you think is going to happen to Black languages and their cultures as time goes on? Is there an African Renaissance or do you think the languages will decline as more and more people are speaking English?

S14:   I think, I'm not sure what's going to happen. They talk about Renaissance and the Rainbow nation, but then in the Parliament they still speak English, so maybe it is going to decline.

R: And would that be a positive or a negative happening?

S14: Negative.

R: So what can be done to stop that happening?

S14: I think the whites should adapt themselves to speak our languages. I don't know in which way, but ...

R: Perhaps like making Zulu compulsory in schools where English is the first language in KZN schools and say Sotho in the O.F.S. (Pause) Do you find that you translate from English to Zulu much, or at all, to understand something better, for example?

S14: No. I just listen, hear it. Only sometimes one word you don't understand and you try to make a connection to what was said.

R: That was the last question. Thank you very much.

APPENDIX C

Literate life history of Student 6

(Typed exactly as handwritten by the research participant.)

I grew up in a place called Dambusa outside Pietermaritzburg city central. It is a township of black community which is mainly designated by Zulu speaking people. I first realised I spoke different language from other groups when I was at preschool where we were introduced to some nursery rhymes in English. The radio station we listened to was in Zulu as well as the TV programmes we watched.

My granny used to tell me about my culture and the clan I belong to of the Mkhizes. At primary school we learn about different cultures amongst the people in ones class. At my earlier age I was treated the same as my sisters in our own different ways except that I got more responsibilities as the older one. When my nephew came to visit they would be given more privileges than I was because they were boys.

Things change to when I first went to school. I was excited about big school, new friends, school uniform and teachers. When I was in grade 6 I had to try and fit in group I was placed in it and that where I learn to stand up for myself as I am a shy and quiet person. This all happened when I was at the boarding school living in the girls only hostel and I learnt to be independent.

At the two high schools I attended I encounter mostly with English and Afrikaans speaking people until I came here at Technikon Natal where I found wider variety of languages.

I first heard and learn English words at preschool. At primary school I had no problem of doing subjects through the medium of English as sometimes things were translated in Zulu. From school and home I learn that English is the universal language of communication. Knowing how to speak English will give me a better chance of being employed.

I knew what they said is true. Watching TV I could see that English is spoken throughout the world even though not everyone could understand it. Black people who were holding high

positions spoke difficult business English which just proved to me the importance of English. This scared me because I never thought I could speak English fluently like they did. Now I know that it was not English that could get you that important job but ones skills. Translating or placing what I learn here at Technikon Natal in my own language makes me understand and remember things easier.

I speak English mainly when I speak to the teacher in class, doing presentations or speaking to those who cannot speak my language but can speak English. Now that I have studied the whole of my high schooling in model C schools I tend to mix Zulu and English now and then as I speak.

I prefer to use my language when I tell someone about myself because that identifies me as belonging to that speaking group, my roots and how I still abide by my culture. I would also like teach him or her a few words in my language. If I were to write a letter to someone who does speak the language I speak, I would prefer to write in English or mix Zulu and English. Writing in Zulu takes longer to write than English.

Since being at Technikon Natal I feel I can make right decisions, independent and freedom. I am more of a responsible person than before. I am pressured to succeed which I am trying to handle and I am studying Accounting which I like and enjoy. I am striving for success and I am not scared anymore that I might not be employed sooner because I am short and look younger. I have grown up as a person and I look at things in the different aspect now than I was younger and I am learning to appreciate what I have.

I am a Christian raised in the religious family with a grandfather who is a retired Presbyterian priest. I was raised up as a Methodist but since we move to the city central eight years ago I attend Presbyterian service in town which conducted in English. I prefer to attend church service where I am now with the fact that it is a short distance to my house and in black churches there seem to be fashion exhibit. Most of the knowledge I receive from church and my culture have similar morals about life but some where there is a contrast as Christianity disapprove slaughtering of an animal for ancestors.

When I am working in the business world I would be financial independent. I would appreciate my culture even looking at where I would be because If I was not brought up according to that cultural way I would not be where I am now or even be where I would like to be in the future.

APPENDIX D

Extra questions for Lesley Hodgson's research

1. If you were one of those students who said that you disliked learning Afrikaans, why was this so?

2. For what reasons did your parents send you to a school where English was taught as first language? (For example, was it specifically to be more exposed to English or perhaps because they believed the education to be better at such a school?)

3. If you personally had been able to choose where you went to high school, would you have chosen a school that offered instruction through the medium of your home language? If yes, please explain why.

4. Do you believe that you express yourself better in some situations if you are using your home language? (For example, when you are feeling in a heightened state of emotion.) If so, what are those situations or contexts?

5. What do you think is going to happen to African languages and their associated cultures? For example, do you see them declining or gaining in status?

6. How often do you find yourself translating for yourself something that has been said in one language into another language, and for what reasons do you do this?

7. How much mixing of different languages are you aware of doing?

8. How satisfied are you with the standard of English you currently speak or write? If you think that your English needs to improve, how could you go about achieving this?

APPENDIX E

List of questions for interviews with the research participants

1. What is the language (s) you speak at home?

2. Does this language belong to a particular cultural group or was there a mix of cultures in the family in which you grew up?

3. What sorts of things, if any, did you have to do because you were a girl child that were different from the things boys of a similar age might do?

4. How did this change when you reached puberty/became a teenager, and how did it affect you?

5. Do you belong to a religion and if so, a) what language is mainly spoken at the services and b) how has religion influenced or made a difference to your life?

6. What language was spoken most of the time a) in the classroom, and b) on the playground, at the school (s) you attended?

7. Do you think you changed when you went to a) primary school and b) high school, and in what ways?

8. What did you feel about beginning to learn English at school?

9. What influence did teachers or other children have on you during your school years?

10. What ideas and /or dreams about your future career did you begin to have at school and where did these come from?

11. What influence did books, music, TV, radio, newspapers or other people have on you?

12. What kinds of songs did you sing/music did you hear during your school years and what language (s) were being used?

13. What language do you dream in?

14. What motivated you or who encouraged you to come to Technikon Natal?

15. What kinds of difficulties, if any, did you encounter with the language used in lectures last year?

16. What did you do about any difficulties you experienced regarding language?

17. What language or languages do you use with your friends or classmates when you are discussing academic issues?

18. In what ways has your understanding of yourself as a young woman, and as a student, changed since you came to Technikon Natal?

19. What influences have brought about these changes?

20. How do you think you have changed differently to those friends or family members who have not come to Technikon Natal?

21. What did passing first year mean to you as a student, and in terms of future plans?

22. What role do your political and/or religious beliefs play in the ways you currently understand yourself?

23. What has your reaction been to the students here from other countries or cultures?

24. You have applied for a job at a company whose corporate language is English. When you arrive for your interview, you notice that the receptionist is wearing a name badge which suggests that you share the same first language. What language would you greet her in?

25. After you have left Technikon Natal, what changes about yourself do you think will happen as you move into the working world?

APPENDIX F

Lesley Hodgson's research project: guidelines for 'life story'

<u>Please read this handout from beginning to end before you start.</u>

Thank you for offering to be a participant in my research. My research project has to do with the way female students understand themselves in relation to the languages they speak. It has got to do with how peoples' ideas about themselves change over time and how this might relate to the languages they speak.

Anything you say or write here will remain absolutely confidential. Names other than your correct names will be used in the thesis that will follow from this research. Please be as honest as you can. There are no 'right' answers and your responses will reflect your life experiences and differ from other peoples' responses.

Please note that you do NOT necessarily need to respond to every one of the guidelines/ questions that follow. You are also free to add any information you think is relevant. The more information you are able to give me about your understanding of yourself, and the languages you speak, the more helpful your responses will be.

I hope that, by encouraging you to tell your story and to think about aspects of yourself and your life, you might, in a small way, learn something new about yourself.

1 a) I want you to talk about the place, people and community in which you lived as a pre-school girl.
b) Can you remember a time when you realised that you spoke a different language from other groups, for example at school, in your community, or when listening to the radio or watching TV?
c) When did you begin to see yourself as belonging to a particular culture or community or group? Did your mother or female caregiver tell you things about yourself and/or family and/or culture?
d) Describe the way you were brought up in your own home and if you were treated the same or differently to your brothers and sisters.

2. a) Did your ideas about yourself change when you went to school?
b) Were there children from different language and/or cultural groups at your first school and at other schools you subsequently attended?

3.a) When did you first learn or hear any English words?

b) How did you feel about learning English or doing school subjects through the medium of English? Did your parents and/or teachers say positive or negative things about learning English and about the English speaking peoples of the world?

c) What was your attitude or response to what was said? Do you think this response/attitude has changed over time - perhaps at high school, perhaps when you arrived at Technikon Natal (T.N.); perhaps more than once since you arrived at T.N.?

d) In what areas of your life do you use English?

e) If you really wanted to tell someone about yourself what language would you prefer to use?

4. a) Do you think your understanding of yourself has changed since you came to T.N.?

b) Do you think you're 'a different person' ie. do you see yourself differently depending on who you are with and where you are? Describe some of these different ways if you believe this to be so.

5. a) Describe what part, if any, 1) religion, 2) S.A. politics and 3) student politics and 4) religious music have played in your life.

b) Please mention in which language religious services are conducted if you attend a particular church.

c) Explain whether the information/ knowledge you receive about life from eg. the church you attend are the same as those received from eg. Technikon or your culture.

6. In what ways do you think your understanding of yourself will change further when you work in the business world and mix with business people?

APPENDIX G

Information sheet for Lesley Hodgson's research.

Student number: Diploma:

1. Surname:

2. Other names:

3. Age:

4. Language(s) spoken at home:

5. Schools attended (In each case please name the area in which the school is. If the school is in a rural area, also name the town or city closest to that area.)

	School	Area	Town/city
a) Primary school(s) attended:			
b) High school(s) attended:			

6. Apart from your home language(s) mentioned above, what other languages besides English, do you speak or write even if not fluently?