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**INYUVESI**  
**YAKWAZULU-NATALI**

**Struggle Songs and Collective Identity**

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Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.**

**September 2024**

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## DECLARATIONS

I, Bukelwa Khuzwayo declare that

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2. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
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Student Signature:



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*For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future”.*

**Jeremiah 29:11**

## ABSTRACT

This qualitative study aimed to explore the role of struggle songs in constructing a collective identity for students who sing struggle songs during student protests. This study was guided by the objective to explore how the discourse strategies employed in struggle songs currently sung by student activists in South Africa are used to construct their collective identities. The theoretical foundations of this study were based on the Afrocentric paradigm, specifically the Afrocentric framework of personhood. A social constructivist research paradigm was adopted in this study. The data in this study was collected through a purposive sampling of N=21 videos of struggle songs available on the YouTube platform from 2015 to 2022. A political discourse analysis (van Dijk, 1997) was used to analyse the data in this research. The research findings indicated that struggle songs are a form of political discourse with discursive strategies that construct the collective identities of the students who sing them. The study found that these discursive strategies included topics, textual schemata, local semantics, lexicon, syntax, rhetoric, expression structures and speech acts. The study found that the struggle songs discursively construct the students' collective identities based on their sense of community belonging, unity, and connection with apartheid activists. This research found that today, discursive strategies are used in struggle songs to construct the student's social, political, communal, racial and socioeconomic collective identities. The findings of this study collaborated with the Afrocentric framework of personhood through the notion that the conceptualisation of a person, their behaviour, and motivations are based on their community existence, unity of being and relation to others. The study's conclusions will be helpful to the government, institutions of higher learning, university management, and, more importantly, the student activists who sing the struggle songs and future students and student activists who will be singing the struggle songs in the near future.

*Keywords:* Struggle songs, collective identity, Afrocentric framework of personhood

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

### **DECLARATIONS**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

### **ABSTRACT**

### **TABLE ON CONTENTS**

### **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

### **CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background and Context	1
1.3 Research Problem	2
1.4 Purpose of research	3
1.5 Research Objective and Research Question	3
1.6 Aim and Rationale	3
1.7 Significance of the study	4
1.8 Structure of Chapters	5
1.9 Conclusion	5

### **CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

2.1 Introduction	6
2.2 Definition of Terms	6
2.3 Struggle Songs	6
2.4 Struggle songs: An international perspective	8
2.5 Struggle Songs in Africa	9
2.6 Struggle Songs in South Africa	10
2.6.1 Struggle Songs and Post-Apartheid South Africa	11
2.7 Struggle Songs and Student Protests	13
2.8 Struggle Songs and a Collective Identity	15
2.9 Theoretical Framework	16
2.10 Conclusion	18

### **CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY** **19**

3.1 Introduction	19
3.2 Research Paradigm	19
3.3 Research Method	19
3.4 Research Design	20
3.5 Data Collection	20
3.5.1 Search Strategy	21
3.5.2 Inclusion and exclusion criteria	21
3.6 Sampling	21
3.7 Data Analysis	22
3.8 Instruments	25
3.9 Credibility, Dependability, Confirmability, and Transferability	25
3.10 Ethical Considerations	25
3.11 Conclusion	27
<b>CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS</b>	<b>28</b>
4.1 Introduction	28
4.2 Findings	28
4.2.1 Theme 1: Communalities	29
4.2.2 Theme 2: Spirit of Camaraderie	45
4.2.3 Theme 3: Children of the Soil	55
4.3 Conclusion	
<b>CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION</b>	<b>67</b>
5.1 Introduction	67
5.2.1 Theme 1: Communalities	67
5.2.2 Theme 2: Spirit of Camaraderie	71
5.2.3 Theme 3: Children of the Soil	74
5.3. Conclusion	77
<b>CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION</b>	<b>78</b>
6.1 Introduction	78
6.2 Summary and Conclusions	78
6.3 Limitations	79
6.4 Recommendations	80

6.5 Conclusion	82
<b>REFERENCE LIST</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>Appendix A: Ethics Approval Letter</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>Appendix B: Turnitin Report</b>	<b>93</b>

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

**ANC-African National Congress**

**HEI- Higher Education Institution**

**MK-Umkhonto we Sizwe**

**NP- National Party**

**NSFAS- National Senior Financial Aid Scheme**

**TAC- Treatment Action Campaign**

**SA- South Africa**

**SACP- South African Communist Party**

**ZANU-PF-Zimbabwe African National Union (Patriotic Front)**

**#RMF-Rhodes Must Fall**

**#FMF-Fees Must Fall**

## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Struggle songs are crucial to South Africa's colonial and liberation history. Struggle songs are considered the “beat that beat apartheid” because, during this era, music reflected the injustices experienced and constructed social reality when the media was unwilling to publish the people's experiences (Schumann, 2008). Even today, struggle songs are still sung during different protest actions in South Africa, such as protesting against the injustices of service delivery. This research study focused on the relationship between struggle songs and collective identity by exploring the discourse strategies of the struggle songs. The first chapter of this study will give the background of the study and highlight the research problem and purpose of the research, which will explain the gap in the research. Furthermore, this chapter will present the research questions and objective that guided this study, the problem statement, the aim and rationale, the significance of the study, an overview of the methodology, and the structure of the dissertation.

### **1.2 Background and Context**

Higher education underwent various changes after the democratic elections 1994 (Gultig, 2000). Various policies and legislations were instituted to redress the apartheid inequalities, especially in the education system. During the apartheid era, policies were embedded in racial inequalities and discrimination (Gultig, 2000). However, 20 years later, the educational system in South Africa, with changed policies, still struggles to meet the needs of all South Africans and not just benefit a small portion of people.

Student protests are not a new phenomenon in the post-apartheid South Africa. The student protests made a face during the year 2009, and it was only in 2014 that the motive was behind free education for all (Greef et al., 2021). Over the years, the student protests had different motivations, such as decolonising the curricula, using the Afrikaans language, service delivery by university leaders, sexism, racism, National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS), lack of financial aid, and high tuition fees (Greef et al., 2021).

During 2015-2016, there was a rise in the #RHODESMUSTFALL (#RMF) #FEESMUSTFALL (#FMF) protest actions in South Africa (Greef et al., 2021). Even though these protests were not the main and only student protests in South Africa, they were among

the main protests that got media coverage and resulted in the students marching to the union buildings. These protests also manifested the unmet needs after apartheid, based on free education and decolonisation of curricula promised in 1994 (Mpofu, 2017). In his article “Disruption as a Communicative Strategy: the Case of Feesmustfall and Rhodesmustfall Student Protests in South Africa”, Mpofu (2017) highlights that in 1994, South Africa was introduced to a new democracy that eradicated the apartheid regime. However, the expected changes have taken a long period to manifest, and therefore, due to unmet needs, a new apartheid in the form of protest action, violence, poverty, racism, and socioeconomic imbalances. A study by Le Roux (2014) found that during the #FMM, students indicated their dissatisfaction through aggressive protest actions such as burning tyres, breaking and burning university buildings and furniture, burning residences, and burning university vehicles.

The use of music and songs accompanies protest actions worldwide. It is only recently that silent protests have been introduced. As much as songs are generally creative and created for rhythmic purposes, protest songs, also known as struggle songs, further their use to express ideologies, challenge the status quo, and mobilise people for one purpose. The struggle songs influence public discourse by highlighting faced issues and grievances. However, apart from this struggle, songs also have other unifying aspects and identity-highlighting attributes which this study wishes to explore.

### **1.3 Research Problem**

The relationship between music and politics has been a neglected and under-researched field (Damodaran, 2016 ). Previous studies (Groenewald, 2005; Nkoala, 2013; Vershbow, 2010; Schumann, 2008) have focused on the role of struggle songs during the liberation struggle. However, youths have emerged engaging and embodying struggle songs over the years (Alexander, 2010). Furthermore, contemporary student activists were born in the post-apartheid struggle. However, they have played a role in preserving the legacy of struggle songs by using them during their protest actions. Researchers such as Allen (2014), Lidskog (2016) and Mtshali & Hlongwane (2014) have accounted for the role of struggle songs in identity formation. This study aims to contribute to this discussion, focusing on how the discursive strategies of the struggle songs contribute to the student's identities.

## **1.4 Purpose of the research**

This study intends to understand how the discourse strategies employed in struggle songs sung by students in South Africa are used to create their collective identities. A social constructionist research paradigm was used to achieve the intentions of this study. This paradigm holds the assumption that as they engage with the world, individuals seek an understanding of the world in which they exist and subjectively describe their experiences or other concepts (Creswell, 2018). The adopted qualitative research method contributed to the achievement of this study's purpose as it aims to explore the meaning people attach to social behaviour (Creswell, 2018). The lack of research studies that speak to this study's aims allowed the study to gain new information and insight into struggle songs, their discursive strategies and their contribution to a collective identity.

## **1.5 Research Question and Research Objective**

### **1.5.1 Research question.**

How are the discourse strategies employed in struggle songs currently sung by students in SA today used to construct their collective identities?

### **1.5.2 Research Objective.**

To explore how the discourse strategies employed in struggle songs currently sung by student activists in collective SA are used to construct their identities.

## **1.6 Aim and Rationale**

Struggle songs have been used to change and fight against oppression whilst promoting unity amongst communities fighting for the same purpose (Makgopa & Mameleka, 2019). Even today, struggle songs are still sung to fight and communicate societal injustices. The songs may have changed over time to accommodate the different and changing context (Makgopa & Mameleka, 2019).

This study aims to explore the role of struggle songs in constructing a collective identity for students who sing struggle songs during student protests. Mtshali and Hlongwane (2014) argue that struggle songs have been used to construct an identity between those who sang them in the past and those who sing them today. This seems to speak to a collective identity between those who sang them in the past and those who sing them today. The ability of these songs to construct collective identities has yet to be subjected to much empirical study hence the aim of

this study. Furthermore, this study hopes to add to the body of knowledge on the role and usefulness of struggle songs in a post-apartheid context.

### **1.7 Significance of the study**

Research studies conducted on struggle songs (Allen, 2004; Berger, 2000; Damodaran, 2010; Gray, 2004; Groenewald, 2005; Gunner, 2015; Le Roux-kemp, 2014; Maree, 2011; Mtshali & Hlongwane, 2014; Nkoala, 2008; Schumann, 2008) have contributed significantly to the body of knowledge by providing literature on the relationship between protests and struggle songs, dissecting various struggles songs, highlighting the roles of struggle songs, history of struggle songs and the meanings behind the struggle songs. However, this study has built on existing literature with a specific focus on the discourse strategies and their relationship with constructing a collective identity. This study provided a different lens of analytically researching struggle songs and their meaning to students post-apartheid.

This study looked at struggle songs in the context of a university setting; therefore, the findings might help others understand the stories behind protest actions in universities beyond just the perception of these songs as being “barbaric ”. This study will create awareness of the story behind students' protest actions, as most protests happen in conjunction with the singing of struggle songs. This research will also contribute to knowledge that speaks to the youth's collective identities and experienced struggles within the university setting. Furthermore, students have created collective identities with the apartheid era through the struggle songs even though the era both these groups have lived in is more than 20 years apart. The focus on the Afrocentric framework of personhood will contribute to the body of knowledge by looking at the phenomenon from the lens of African values to explain behaviour in an African setting. This study then contributes to creating studies that look at African explanations of behaviour rather than the normally used Western explanations. The findings and recommendations derived from this study may serve as a reference for other studies in various disciplines, and this study has psychological, linguistic, anthropological and social elements.

## **1.8 Structure of Chapters**

This study produced a total of six chapters, which are structured as follows: The first chapter introduces the study research problem, the purpose of the research aims and objectives, the research question and objectives, the significance of the study and the structure of the dissertation. The second chapter of this study gave an overview of available relevant literature on the study. The chapter explained the key terms and explored struggle songs from an international, African, South African, post-apartheid, and student perspective. Struggles songs and their relationship with a collective identity were also examined. Furthermore, this chapter highlights the theoretical framework, which is the Afrocentric framework of personhood. The third chapter of the study discussed in detail the methodology used from the research paradigm, method, design, sampling, data collection, and analysis used in this study. The findings of this study are situated in the fourth chapter. The fifth chapter opened a discussion on the results derived to answer the study's research objective and aim. The sixth chapter concluded the study summarising the study and highlighting the limitations and recommendations for future research.

## **1.9 Conclusion**

The first chapter of this study provided the introduction to the study by providing the background context of the study phenomenon, looking at the history that resulted in the formation of this study's intention. The chapter further highlighted the main problem this study wants to address and how the study will be accomplished through the purpose of the research. The chapter also narrowed the focus of this study by highlighting the research question and research objective. Furthermore, the aims and rationale, the study's significance and the chapters' structure were highlighted.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Introduction

This section will provide an overview of relevant past literature on struggle songs. This literature review aims to provide information and gaps in research on the topic of struggle songs whilst incorporating their relationship to a collective identity. This chapter will be sequenced in this manner: A definition of the relevant concepts will first be provided, followed by a definition of struggle songs. The international, African and South African perspectives will then follow. Next on the discussion is literature on students and struggle songs and their relationship to a collective identity. The theoretical framework will be last in the discussion.

### 2.2 Definition of terms

#### *Struggle songs.*

For this paper, struggle songs will be referred to as music, a combination of voices that create harmony to relay a political message. (Eeseuola, 2015). Furthermore, it is music that has political underpinnings, intending to provide a change in society or resist a situation.

#### *Collective identity*

This paper will use the definition of Pottella and Jasper (2001) when referring to the term collective identity. According to Pottella and Jasper (2001), collective identity refers to how an individual identifies cognitively, emotionally, behaviourally, socially and morally with a group, community or institution.

#### *Discursive strategies*

This paper aligns with Van Dijk's (1997) definition of discursive strategies, which are deliberate plans of linguistic tactics and discursive practises to achieve political goals.

### 2.3 Struggle Songs

Struggle songs are an important topic as they were used in the past and are still effective and being used today. They also affect and still affect people physically, spiritually, socially, politically, and emotionally (Nwoye, 2018). However, there is a lack of research and

information on the struggle song's role in the past and its use in the present (Mbhele & Walker, 2017; Nkoala, 2013; Vershbow, 2010;).

Struggle songs can be interchangeably referred to as revolutionary songs, liberation music or protest music (Le Roux-Kemp, 2014). Struggle songs seek to eliminate social ills, provide solutions, mobilize people, and form solidarity against a common cause (Damodaran, 2016). Additionally, struggle songs function politically to provoke outrage, express fear, evoke emotions and build courage (Damodaran, 2016). According to Eeseuola (2015), struggle songs are an art that expresses political emotions and experiences. They are also a tool of expression as they have the power to evoke and intensify emotions (Eeseuola, 2015). A song allows one to communicate to others about their struggle rather than a speech. Struggle songs strengthen, mobilise and unite a community (Vershbow, 2010). Struggle songs have historically functioned to raise awareness to the public through their emotional appeal (Lawrence & Berger, 2000). Furthermore, struggle songs function to consciously promote, persuade or educate a social or political ideology by arguing in favour of the desired ideology and against the oppressive ideology (Lawrence & Berger, 2000). Struggle songs are connected to a historical or continuing cultural, economic, social or historical context (Lawrence & Berger, 2000; Chisa, 2018). Struggle songs promote an ideology that favours those who are singing the songs, such as political movements (Lawrence & Berger, 2000).

Struggle songs, on the one hand, are interactive as people construct them to voice out grievances and give descriptions of people's experiences; on the other hand, struggle songs are passive as various people can listen to these songs and interpret them (Nwoye, 2018). Politically, Damodaran (2016) highlights how struggle songs are magnetic on one hand and rhetorical on the other. Magnetic protest songs convey a direct political message and grab the attention of listeners, whereas rhetorical struggle songs are directed to a specific problem and convey an emotional message to the audience (Damodaran, 2016). This is alluded to by van Dijk (1997), who states that struggle songs have rhetorical functions to persuade others to join partisan groups through the messages in the struggle songs.

A critical description of struggle songs by Eeseuola (2015) is that they are driven by meaning and purpose. For songs to be effective, they need to be in relation to an experience that evokes emotion (Eeseuola, 2015). This notion is also supported by Nguse (2020), who alludes that struggle songs carry messages such as threats to their oppressors due to their experiences that

evoke anger. Therefore, in the political space, struggle songs evoke emotions as the people singing them are reminded of their experiences or threats to their survival.

Psychologically, struggle songs improved resilience, improved mood, and alleviated anxiety and pain; they also helped with stress and depression (Nwoye, 2018). According to Nwoye (2018), struggle songs also have a healing component to them during the fight for freedom, as they heal people who have lost loved ones during the struggle. Struggle songs distract people from their current painful situations and give them hope for a better future (Nwoye, 2018). These songs ensured that people were of the same collective mind that resisted the oppressive government, fought against injustices and were hopeful for a better life (Nwoye, 2018). Additionally, Nwoye (2018) highlights how the struggle songs were used during protests. Secondly, they were used during the deaths and mourning periods of loved ones who lost their lives fighting for freedom, and lastly, to deal with imprisonment, hardships, and a sense of connection when comrades were hiding in other countries. Just as in the words of Nelson Mandela, the “beauty of African music is that the curious beauty of African music is that it uplifts even as it tells a sad tale” (Schumann, 2008, p.35).

#### **2.4 Struggle songs: An international perspective**

In the United States, the peace and civil rights movement used music as a weapon during strikes to mobilise and fight their opposition and oppressors (Lawrence & Berger, 2000). Struggle songs, which were considered protest songs, gained popularity and recognition in the United States during the 1950s, the time of the Civil Rights Movement (Sanger, 1995). To African Americans, songs are part of the tradition of protests as they use them to fight against injustices; this is because black slaves sang songs expressing their experiences as slaves (Sanger, 1995). African American slaves used songs to describe their jobs, current situations and expectations in the afterlife (Sanger, 1995).

According to Sanger (1995), Civil Rights Movement activists used struggle songs as a form of communication. Civil rights activists needed to strengthen their sense of community and solidarity, and struggle songs helped communicate messages between activists and the wider community. Secondly, the activists used songs as a persuasive element during protests to fuel the movement and persuade others to join. Thirdly, activists used the struggle songs as a transformative tool; they felt renewed (Sanger, 1995).

Activists also highlighted how singing struggle songs gave them the courage to be fearless and the strength to face their situations and calmed their emotions down. The songs also gave them hope, a sense of spiritual backing and positive emotions. Furthermore, the activists highlighted a sense of spirituality that was created as the struggle songs had spiritual underpinnings (Sanger, 1995).

## **2.5 Struggle Songs in Africa**

The African continent is considered an oral continent, where people use verbal techniques such as speeches, dance, or songs to express themselves, retell their history, challenge power and oppression, and create their desired futures (Gunner, 2008). In Africa, music is part of the African culture and heritage, which indicates cultural unity (Manywu, 2014). Allen (2014) is of the same view that music is art that highlights the experiences, emotions, and beliefs of African people in the African continent (Allen, 2004). Songs in Africa have been used to communicate shared experiences and engage in political situations (Allen, 2004), especially since many African countries have power imbalances and inequalities that may infringe on fundamental human rights. In Western countries, freedom of speech allows for the use of mass media to express issues in society. In Africa, people needed to find alternative avenues, such as music, to express who they are and the issues they have (Allen, 2004). The Afrocentric perspective views struggle songs as a way to express the emotional and psychological experiences of African people. Further, they motivate group solidarity through the spirit of ubuntu, which facilitates communal emotions and goals (Manyawu, 2014).

Many African countries have liberation movements that facilitate the fight against oppression and segregation (Manyawu, 2014). These movements have been present for decades, fighting against colonialism, the white majority, racial segregation and gender inequality. Liberation songs have been the critical tool of expression and communication in these movements (Manyawu, 2014). Similarly, Khan (2018) expresses how liberation songs were a weapon to fight an oppressive colonial system by the Rhodesian system in Zimbabwe. These songs were used to mock the Rhodesian system and used to keep the comrades inspired and revived (Khan, 2018). During this time, women in Zimbabwe also used struggle songs to fight for independence, against colonialism and unequal power situation in the struggle (Khan, 2018)

According to Manyawu (2014), in Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwe African National Union (Patriotic Front) (ZANU-PF) used textual and linguistic structures in their struggle songs to facilitate

their collective identity. This article found that the ZANU-PF party and supporters construct their group identity through the merging of their collective understanding of their spirituality, belief in a higher being, superiority of black people and the communal-ness of black people into a "Chimurenga", which is the struggle songs (Manywu,2014). Additionally, Nwoye (2018) highlights how, in Kenya, struggle songs were used against their president, Arap Moi; these struggle songs functioned to insult and provoke the president.

## **2.6 Struggle Songs in South Africa**

Struggle songs form part of South Africa's rich political history (Nkoala, 2013). During the apartheid regime, resistance movements emerged, and struggle songs were used to unite and motivate the movement (Vershbow, 2010; Walker, 2018). During the liberation struggle, music became the voice of the oppressed and a tool to provide change. Existing literature has highlighted the power of protest music to provide change, especially in South Africa, where not only did the country become democratic, but a new order was introduced in the form of the Bill of Rights (le Roux-Kemp, 2014; Nkoala, 2014;). Just as Plato notes, "Any musical innovation is full of danger to the whole state and ought to be prohibited; when modes of music change, the fundamental laws of the state always change with them" (Schumann, 2008: 17). This means that songs carry ideologies and messages that fight oppression and could possibly change the status quo. Similarly, in South Africa, song was a form of communal expression on the injustices and oppression of the apartheid government (Vershbow, 2010).

Struggle songs in South Africa can be dated back to the late 1800s; until South Africa became democratic, struggle songs were used to accelerate change in society (Gray, 2004). Furthermore, during this time, song styles consisted mainly of music, ragtime, and IsiZulu (Gray, 2004). Prominent struggle song composers at this time included the likes of Sontonga, Caluza and Bokwe (Breakfast et al, 2021). In South Africa, struggle songs were significant as they were used in different settings such as marches, funerals, memorials, meetings, and political gatherings (Jolaosho, 2018). Struggle songs became the vehicle of change when the apartheid government withdrew people's voting rights and access to certain resources (Breakfast et al., 2021).

In the Article "The Role of Political Songs in the Realization of Democracy in South Africa", Groenewold highlights how the ANC and anti-apartheid movement composed songs in response to a specific context or situation they found themselves at that time (Groenewold,

2005). The early 1940s and 1950s saw many bus boycotts due to increased bus fares. In response, the song “Koloji tsa Materiana” was formed, and it spoke of the bus owners and how their buses caused conflict. Similarly, in 1955, when the apartheid government enforced the removal of people from their communities, a song was composed to remember these events and the message behind the song was how whites wanted black people to leave Sophia town and move to Meadowlands, which they did not want. Furthermore, in the 1960s, when the government imprisoned the Umkhonto Wesizwe (MK) leaders, including Nelson Mandela, the ANC then composed and sang songs about their leaders, stating how they said they must fight for freedom. During the times of the Soweto uprising in the early 1980s, a state of unrest was called upon the country, and there were then negotiations to resolve the conflict in the country; a call was then made through song for the release of Nelson Mandela, “*Oliva Tambo Oliva Tambo thetha noBotha akhulul’ uMadiba Umandel’ uzobusa Akhulul’ uMadiba*”; where Oliver Tambo was asked to speak to Botha to release Nelson Mandela so he can lead the country (Groenewald, 2005)

### **2.6.1 Struggle songs and Post-Apartheid South Africa**

Struggle songs are still effective post-apartheid. In her article that aimed to examine the use of struggle songs after the apartheid era in South Africa, Langa (2018) highlighted that the continuation of the use of struggle songs post-apartheid fosters the transmission of knowledge to the younger generation and the recalling of memories to the older generation. He also argued that the new generation reshapes struggle songs with new meaning post-apartheid (Langa, 2018). Manywa (2017) highlights that struggle songs are generationally transmitted; the new generation either uses the original compositions or reshapes them to their context.

Comrades and activists sang struggle songs during the apartheid era to relay a message on their injustices to the apartheid government, similarly, communities today sing struggle songs to the African National Congress (ANC) wanting essential service delivery and to remind the government of how they are still facing challenges even after the fight for liberation (Breakfast et al, 2021). Struggle songs today are sung due to the experiences of black people, particularly the lack of resources that were promised by the democratic government (Breakfast et al., 2021). Mpofo (2017) is also of the same view as he highlights how when the needs of South African people are not met, they form movements that use their collective identities and threats to their future to fight and change their situations

However, there is debate on whether struggle songs unite or divide post-apartheid (Thompson & Ramhurry, 2014). Struggle songs are interpreted differently (Khan, 2018). Others may regard struggle songs as critical history, but others may see them as an incitement of violence or not applicable in the context of South Africa Post-Apartheid. This is seen in the court case of the *Afriforum v Malema 2011 (6) SA 240 (EqC)* due to the use of the song “*Dubula iBhunu*” (Langa, 2018; Modiri, 2013; Thompson & Ramhurry, 2014).

*‘Ayasab’amagwala (the cowards are scared)*

*dubula dubula (shoot shoot)*

*ayeah dubula dubula (shoot shoot)*

*Ayasab’amagwala (the cowards are scared)*

*dubula dubula (shoot shoot)*

*ayeah dubula dubula (shoot shoot)*

*aw dubuli ‘ibhunu (shoot the boer)*

*dubula dubula (shoot shoot)*

*aw dubuli ‘ibhunu (shoot the boer)*

(Modiri, 2013)

This song has different meanings for different racial groups in South Africa. For some, it reminded them of their history and strength; however, some saw it as hate speech (Thompson & Ramhurry, 2014). The Afriforum argued that the song was provocative and perpetuated violence and hate against the white Afrikaans in South Africa (Modiri, 2013). However, the ANC and Mandela sang this song to continue the identity of the liberation veterans with the community, further, the songs were part of an important history that could not be ignored (Langa, 2018). In this case, important arguments included how the songs assisted in creating commonality originating from the collective experience of the people singing the songs (Modiri, 2013). Furthermore, how the songs may have been composed in the past, however, people still see them as meaningful today due to their experiences and the stories the songs represent (Langa, 2018). If the socioeconomic, political and racial injustices in South Africa are not changed years after the end of apartheid, then people will still sing them for solidarity and fighting spirit (Modiri, 2013). Struggle songs, therefore, are still communication

techniques on the views and thoughts of citizens on national issues, whilst challenging the status quo and fighting for change and liberation (Eeseuola, 2015).

People still use struggle songs to fight for basic needs, social justice, health, education, crime and safety (Walker, 2018). Struggle songs are used by political movements and social movements such as the Treatment Action Campaign. In his article “*Our songs were our stones: Song and Struggle in the treatment action campaign*”, Walker (2018) describes how struggle songs were used in the fight for HIV/AIDS treatment, rising infections, and fighting against rape culture. Struggles songs sung today are derived from liberation songs during the colonial and apartheid eras; however, they are also altered to meet the context and current fight against oppression (Walker, 2018). During the TAC protests, the protesters changed and created new songs that spoke and called out perpetrators, but these songs resonated with older struggle songs (Walker, 2018). This is an indication that struggle songs have purpose and a goal in whichever context they are sung. Struggle songs also evoke shared anger towards oppressors or the government (Walker, 2018). Struggle songs have cultural and historical underpinnings, they also preserve knowledge and history, and people are able to collectively interpret and derive meaning from them (Walker, 2018).

Walker (2018) also explains how the importance of struggle songs is embedded in how they unite people and create a shared sense of being, by fighting against shared oppression and injustices in which an individual cannot fight alone. This creates a sense of collective identity through the community's shared struggles as they have a common goal. Struggle songs not only create a collective identity with communities today but also creates a collective identity with the apartheid activists who fought for freedom in the past. Struggle songs, therefore, have an element of connecting people of different centuries (Walker, 2018). When people identify with activists from the past, they are then fuelled to fight against oppression just as the apartheid activists fought and succeeded.

## **2.7 Struggle songs and student protests**

The late months of 2015 saw the start of student protests and the university fee increments by the Department of Higher Education and Training. Additionally, the #FeesMustFall demands included, free decolonized education, insourcing of general workers, and racial and gender inequalities in the university space (Langa et al., 2017). These protests occurred in different

universities around South Africa; however, the goals and aims of the protests were the same throughout.

Struggle songs were sung across various universities during the 2016/2015 protests, just as how during the apartheid era, comrades were scattered around the world; some did not know each other, but the struggle songs created unity and an imagined political community (Langa et al., 2017). Struggle songs, therefore, created a collective identity amongst people who never saw each other or knew each other through common beliefs or everyday struggles through sound. Struggle songs are an expression of the community. This creates a bond that creates a collective identity between members (Breakfast et al, 2021). Mbhele and Walker (2017) highlight how students have internalized struggle songs and relate to each other using them.

After the #FeesMustFall protests, an Ingoma Yomzabalazo project was formed by the Black Thought Symposium to talk about the meaning of Struggle songs. During the #FMF protests, the songs sung were the same songs sung during the liberation struggle, such as 'iyoh Solomon', 'benzene na', 'amakomanisi' and 'abalalanga' (Heffernan, 2019).

Struggle songs are an important part of South African history, present and will still be important in the future (Nkoala,2013). The liberation movement during apartheid fought against racial oppression and racial inequality in South Africa. Contemporary student activists during the #FeesMustFall fought against fee increments and fought for the free education that was promised to South Africa in a democratic country in 1994. These contexts are different but similar, as each of these groups fought for their fundamental human rights. Similarly, in all these contexts struggle songs were at play.

This literature review came across a few academic studies on the role of struggle songs. In the study "*The use of revolutionary songs in the #FeesMustFall movement: A discourse analysis*", Mokgabisi Phajane found that in the #FeesMustFall protests, revolutionary songs played a communicative role to express their demands and emotions, they also mobilized other students to join the protests and the creation of a collective identity through shared experiences and common understanding (Phajane, 2020). In the study "*Investigating the emotions evoked within student activists when singing struggle songs*" Mapula Adams found that singing struggle songs evoked negative emotions such as anger and pain towards their situation and evoked positive emotions such as pride towards their fight and hope during their struggles (Adams, 2019) Furthermore this study also found that students sang revolutionary songs to unite as a collective against an issue, to convey a message through these songs and to live up to the African cultural

identity of singing (Adams, 2019). In the study “*An Investigation into the role of struggle songs in youth driven protests: Perspectives of youths in Mdantsane, Eastern Cape, South Africa*” Masixole Zamisa found that students sang struggle songs during protests because they spoke of their current experiences, the songs also evoked emotions that influenced their behaviour (Zamisa, 2020).

## **2.8 Struggle songs and a collective identity**

Collective identity is defined as the shared group beliefs, which are negotiated and link individuals to a group (Van Stekelenburg, 2013). Social movements are populated by people who identify with the group's beliefs or goals. Social movements can also be referred to as discursive communities that share a common goal, bonded by solidarity, shared experiences, and shared identity (Van Stekelenburg, 2013). During protests, people come as individuals with different backgrounds, histories, and contexts; however, through chanting struggle songs and protesting together, a sense of collectiveness is created. It is as if the next person understands your struggles. Chisa (2018) also asserts that struggle songs socially construct the identities of the community.

Music symbolically shapes identity because of how people construct and sing has elements that represent their identity (Rice, 2007). For instance, songs also speak of people's experiences, backgrounds and who they are. Music also contributes to identity by evoking pleasant emotions and fosters participation, purpose, and unity (Rice, 2007). Music can maintain a movement and its beliefs even when that movement no longer exists and through music, a new movement may be formed (Damodaren, 2016). Similarly, the anti-apartheid movement still lives on through the struggle songs, which play a role as oral memory in people's lives. Contemporary student activists use the same songs in their new movements. Mtshali and Hlongwane (2014) argue that liberation songs are ancestral texts that create a collective identity. This is explained by Alfred Schultz's phenomenology of music, which states that when a person performs a song, they travel on the same thoughts of those who composed the song and when the songs are reperformed, a collective identity is then formed (Mtshali & Hlongwane, 2014). Struggle songs were composed in response to a social context in which many contemporary students were not born at that time; however, through struggle songs, students are able to travel on the same

thoughts of those who composed and sang struggle songs even though their contexts are different a sense of collectiveness is then created.

Struggle songs and protests create a social relationship where one cannot occur without the other (Walker, 2018). Struggle songs and political protest action have a close relationship, and they greatly influence each other (Eeseuola, 2015). The movement and song are inseparable, and together, they make up the protest action (Joloasho, 2018). Protests are not considered protests without songs (Mbhele & Walker, 2017). Struggle songs influence political behaviour, whether good or bad (Eeseuola, 2015). During protest action, people sing struggle songs to gain momentum and struggle songs gain recognition during protests. Protests involve collective action that is reliant on the member's interdependence and interconnectedness (Lawrence & Berger, 2000). During these protests, the members are able to connect and meet other revolutionists who have the same problems and experiences (Lawrence & Berger, 2000). However, Mbhele and Sibanyoni (2022) contrast this view by highlighting how students are not revolutionists but just hooligans singing revolutionary songs, throwing stones and destroying infrastructure. There is however, limited research on the relationship between struggle songs that speak of violence as a motivation for violent protests and violent behaviour.

## **2.9 Theoretical Framework**

A theoretical framework explains existing ideas and assumptions on a phenomenon, theoretically building a research study (Collins & Stockton, 2018). The Afrocentric framework of Personhood has been used. Nwoye (2015) suggests that African people should be studied in their context and worldview, thus research and practice should adopt an Afri-centric paradigm. This study is based on struggle songs sung by students in South Africa; therefore, an African ideology was more applicable as it helped explain this phenomenon from the perspective of African people.

Personhood refers to the recognition and characteristics that explain a person (Fayemi, 2018). Within the Western view, personhood is defined on the basis of individuality and internal factors, whereas the African view considers the external factors and the community exposition of a person (Molefe, 2019). In the African framework, the prominent characteristics in the conceptualisation of a person are the idea of group solidarity, unity of being and community (Hoekema, 2008; Mazama, 2001; Molefe, 2019). This view aligns with African worldview principles, as stated by Karenga (1993), which include the centrality of community and unity of being (Mekoa, 2006). Mkhize (2008) asserts that personhood is defined by how a person

relates and participates with others in the community. Therefore, to be a person, one needs to belong and be mutually responsive to each person's struggles in the community (Mkhize, 2008)

The communal nature of being is aligned with the idea of ubuntu (Mkhize, 2008). Furthermore, Prof Augustine Nwoye's "Africentric theory of human personhood" speaks of the assumptions of what makes a person in the African worldview. This theory's fifth assumption contextualises this study as it states that there are fundamental moral principles ascribed to a well-bred African child, and one of those values is the notion of ubuntu (Nwoye, 2017). Additionally, Nwoye (2017) highlights that one of the main sources of motivation in human beings is the recognition of the community as a priority and the economy of investment in social support. From the African perspective, a typical African child is socially motivated and derives strength and psychosocial relations from the philosophy "*umuntu ungumuntu ngabantu*" (Nwoye, 2017). This notion is best understood through the words of John Mbiti in his book "African Religions and Philosophy" where he emphasizes the notion that "I am because we are since we are, therefore, I am" (Mbiti, 1970, p. 141). Where what affects one individual affects the whole group. This means that a child is born into this world, and they then become who they are through assistance from family, friends, community or agemates. It is also the notion that a person is a person through others. Therefore, in an Africentric perspective, no one can live in isolation; one needs other human beings to be human. The community makes an individual; therefore, a person is an individual by belonging to a community.

This framework allows for the understanding of the behaviour and motivations of African people. In the context of this study, the framework fostered the understanding of why students sing these struggle songs and how the struggle songs create a collective identity among them. In Africa, struggle songs are used as a tool of communication on shared experiences and a tool to engage in political situations (Allen, 2004), especially since many countries in Africa have power imbalances and inequity, which may infringe on fundamental human rights. Struggle songs play a role in bringing change, connecting the community, and providing hope during times of oppression (le Roux-kemp, 2014). Just as Steve Biko notes, "Any suffering we experienced was made more real by song and rhythm, which leads to a culture of defiance, self-assertion and group pride and solidarity. This is a culture that emanates from a situation of a common experience of oppression and is responsible for the restoration of faith in ourselves and offers hope in the direction we are taking from here" (Gray, 2004). Students sing struggle songs during protest actions against injustices and oppression. The reasons behind the student protests during the years 2015 and 2016 included free decolonised education, the insourcing of

general workers, and racial and gender inequalities in the university space (Langa et al., 2017). Furthermore, the deregistration of students due to not being able to afford fees did not become an individual problem, but students came together in song, and it became a community problem. Many students may not be direct victims of the injustices; however, because of solidarity and connectedness and the notion of ubuntu, many took part in protest action. In order for student protests to be a success, they need to be unified. The struggle songs then come into play, creating a sense of connectedness.

## **2.10 Conclusion**

This chapter provided definitions for the terms struggle songs, collective identity, and discursive strategies. Furthermore, struggle songs were explained in terms of their descriptions, functions, and meanings. After the literature and use of struggle songs internationally, in particular, the Civil Rights Movement was explored. Following this struggle, songs from Africa were explored. This section further explains the historical use and present use of struggle songs in South Africa. Additionally, struggle songs were explained in their relation to university students in South Africa. The relationship between struggle songs and collective identity was also explored. To end, this section provided a description of the theoretical framework, including its assumptions and principle.

## **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This section will discuss the methodology used to understand the discourse strategies employed in struggle songs currently sung by students in South Africa today to construct their collective identities. The research paradigm, method and research design, sampling procedure, data collection methods and instruments used, data analysis method, transferability, credibility, dependability, confirmability, and ethical principles will be discussed.

### **3.2 Research Paradigm**

A research paradigm is a framework that guides on doing scientific research (Fazliogullari, 2012). Research paradigms are a set of assumptions about the nature of the world and how we make sense of it (Maxwell, 2008). They are considered scientific research paradigms in accordance with their answers to fundamental opinions on nature, reality, and how knowledge is constructed. It guides the research methods and techniques used (Fazliogullari, 2012). For this research, a social constructivist research paradigm was adopted. Social constructionists suggest that the world should be critically understood, as there are many ways of understanding the world or a phenomenon (Burr, 2006). This study did not want to study struggle songs as only music but aimed to look deeper into overlooked knowledge of the role of struggle songs, such as how the discursive strategies employed in the songs can create a sense of identity. Social constructivists view knowledge as being created and not discovered; additionally, knowledge is created through human interaction, reality is also constructed collectively, and social contexts define our realities (Andrews, 2012). This paradigm was relevant for this study as struggle songs are sung in response to a social and political context that collectively shapes people's realities.

### **3.3 Research Method**

Research methodology is obtaining information on a topic by collecting, processing, and analysing data (Neuman, 2007). A qualitative method was used to address the aims of this research. Qualitative methods in research studies use narrative data to explore and understand human behaviour, attitudes, experiences, and motivations in their social contexts (Ahmad., Wasim., Irfan., Gogoi., Srivastava., & Farheen, 2019). According to Grove et al. (2019), qualitative researchers understand that social contexts influence people's words and actions. These words and actions are analysed to understand their meanings and the perspectives

embedded in those words. (Grove et al., 2019). This study wanted to analyse the words of the struggle songs and the discursive strategies embedded in them. In the African continent, music is the art that showcases African people's experiences, emotions, and beliefs (Allen, 2004). This method was suitable for this research as we were trying to explore the human behaviour, attitudes and experiences that are associated with the construction of a collective identity through the singing of struggle songs and the linguistic practises employed in these songs. This methodology allowed for the exploration of the use of these songs by students who sing them.

### **3.4 Research Design**

A research design is considered the blueprint of the study as it gives the structure of how the research was done (Grove et al., 2019). This research utilised an exploratory research design. According to Stebbins (2001), an exploratory research design is when researchers try to study people, situations, phenomena, or processes where there is little scientific information about where researchers believe the phenomenon is worth being discovered. Exploratory research is suitable for a study when there is poor knowledge and understanding of a phenomenon (Stebbins, 2001). Damodaran (2016) highlights how relations between music and politics are an under-researched phenomenon where little is known. This research design was employed to ensure the research explores and provides insight and understanding.

### **3.5 Data Collection**

This study aimed to collect data in the form of struggle songs sung by university students in South Africa. This data was collected through a YouTube search of struggle songs that university students sing. These videos were listened to and transcribed; those struggle songs that were not sung in English were translated. This data collection method allowed this research to forward, rewind and pause to get the lyrics of the struggle songs being sung correctly. Apart from listening to the struggle songs in the videos, this method allowed for the observation of behaviour and expressions in the videos.

This study employed Dressler and Kreuz's oral discourse transcription model (2000). This study used this model's transcription model by transcribing collected struggle songs using transcription conventions, intonation, temporal features, dynamics, breathing, and transcriber comments. This transcription model is guided by the principle's specificity, universality,

consensus, transparency, parsimony, conventionality, and extensibility (Dressler & Kreuz, 2000).

Table 1: Dressler and Kreuz (2000) Transcription Model and System

Symbol	Meaning
?	Indicates the rising of intonation.
.	Indicates the falling of intonation.
/\	Indicates the direction of intonation, whether rising or falling.
,	Indicates continuing intonation.
(tenths of a second)	Indicates pauses in speech and the seconds of the pause.
...	Indicates pauses that are untimed.
<>	Indicates words or syllables spoken more slowly than others.
><	Indicates words or syllables spoken more quickly than others
:	Indicates the prolonging of words or syllables.
-	Indicates a word cut-off, speech interruption, or stopping of speech.
{ }	Indicates the back channel communication, for example, the interjecting of response to the speaker.
[ ]	Indicates the overlapping of speech between two or more speakers.
°text°	Indicates words or syllables spoken more softly than others.
TEXT	Indicates stress and emphasis on particular words or syllables.
H	Indicates audible breaths.
.h	Inhalation
h	Exhalation
((Behaviour))	Indicates other utterances such as laughter, whispering, or coughing.
()	Indicates unclear, inaudible speech.

### 3.5.1 Search strategy

Words such as student protests, student struggle songs #FMF and #RMF were used on the YouTube platform to search for the needed videos.

### 3.5.2 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

For this study, only struggle songs students sang during protests in South Africa were included. The videos

selected will be from the year 2015 till the year 2022. Only videos that show students singing struggle songs during protests, actions, or meetings were selected. The struggles song sung by the general population for protests such as service delivery or other issues in South Africa were excluded from this study.

### **3.6 Sampling**

This research study considered a non-probability sampling approach through a purposive sampling technique (Strydom & Venter, 2002). Purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling based on the researcher's prior knowledge or judgement in selecting a population that best represents the elements and characteristics that suit the study (Strydom & Venter, 2002). This study did not use participants; instead, a sample of videos from the YouTube platform where students sang these struggle songs was used. Through a YouTube search, songs were selected based on availability and the videos being produced from 2015 till 2022.

### **3.7 Data Analysis**

A Political Discourse Analysis method was used to analyse the data in this study. Political discourse analysis is the critical analysis of political discourse (van Dijk, 1997). PDA focuses on the discursive language underpinning political texts, speeches, or material (Dunmire, 2012). The critical stance of this analysis method proposes opposing and resisting political power abuse or domination, such as inequality, through political discourse (van Dijk, 1997). To understand this analysis method, it is essential to understand what constitutes political discourse. According to van Dijk (1997), political discourse is the language and text of political actors. Political actors are those who contribute to the political process, not only politicians or members of parliament but also the citizens of the country who vote people into action (van Dijk, 1997). In this study, the struggle songs sung by students constitute political discourse, where the political agents are the students, and the political action is protesting. This analysis method was suitable for this study as it aimed to explore the language used in struggle songs and the role they play as a political discourse in constructing a collective identity. Songs that were not in English were transcribed and then translated. The struggle songs were analysed through a political discourse analysis criterion proposed by van Dijk (1997) to explore the discursive structures and strategies. Topics, superstructures, local semantics, lexicon, rhetoric, expression structures, speech acts, and interaction are the discourse structures that were the focal points of analysis. These structures helped answer this study's aim and shed light on how

the students use them to construct their collective identities through struggle songs

### **Topics**

The first focus of analysis is topics, which refer to the themes of the political texts being analysed (Van Dijk, 1997). In the context of this study, the first step was to analyse the struggle songs as political discourse by analysing their topics, meanings and the contexts in which they are sung to find out if they were used to create a collective identity.

### **Textual Schemata**

The second focus of analysis is the textual schemata, which refers to the organisation and pattern of political discourse and how these textual schemata function in political contexts (van Dijk, 1997). According to Al-Sowaidi, Banda, and Mansour (2017), these structures are different for each political discourse in accordance with the audience, political actors and goal of the political text. This study then focused on analysing how each of the struggle songs is structured and the function of these structures. This was done in order to determine how the students use this discourse strategy to construct their collective identities.

### **Local Semantics**

The third discursive strategy is local semantics, where the focus of analysis is on the words used in political discourse and the meanings drawn out of them (van Dijk, 1997). The local semantics, when analysed, reveal the object of political attention. However, deeper analysis may be needed as political texts tend to be indirect and involve assumptions (van Dijk, 1997). The local semantics in the songs were also analysed to determine how they are used in the songs' lyrics to construct the singers' collective identities.

### **Lexicon**

The fourth focus of analysis is lexicon, which refers to the vocabulary and choice of words that are considered special in politics (van Dijk, 1997). The lexicon of struggle songs was analysed to determine how political vocabulary is used in struggle songs to construct a collective identity.

### **Syntax**

The fifth discursive strategy is syntax. According to van Dijk (1997), political discourse subtly manipulates syntactic style through the use of dietic pronouns, word formations, word

combinations, and active and passive constructions. Furthermore, the word order may function to draw attention through emphasis or make something look good or bad through mitigation (van Dijk, 1997). Struggle songs were analysed to determine how word constructions and word combinations are used to create a collective identity.

### **Rhetoric**

The sixth discursive strategy is rhetoric, which refers to the persuasive functions of political discourse (van Dijk, 1997). According to Al-Sowaidi et al. (2017), the main aim of politics is to persuade. Additionally, van Dijk highlights how political texts employ persuasive strategies such as semantic repetition, sentence forms, altering information and rhymes. Damodaran highlights how struggle songs are rhetoric as they are directed to a specific problem and convey an emotional message to the audience. The struggle songs were analysed to find any persuasive strategies they may be used to create a collective identity.

### **Expression structures**

The seventh focus of analysis is the expression structures of political discourse. Expression structures refer to the syntactic structures used to emphasise meaning through the use of volume, pitch or intonation (van Dijk, 1997). The struggle songs sung by students were analysed to find out how the expressive structure of the songs is used to create a collective identity.

### **Speech acts and Interactions**

The last discursive strategy involves speech acts and interactions. According to van Dijk (1997), political discourse involves dialogue and verbal interactions. Speech acts involve the actions performed by political actors or political agents (Al-Sowaidi, 2017). In the context of this study, the videos of students singing struggle songs were analysed to note acts that take place during the singing of struggle songs. The struggle songs were analysed to determine whether speech interactions were used to construct a collective identity.

## **3.8 Instruments**

This study used the YouTube app to search for struggle songs sung by students. This study a Universal Serial Bus and a laptop folder to store documents of transcriptions and translations of the struggle songs.

### **3.9 Credibility, Dependability, Confirmability, and Transferability**

Research is generalisable based on its credibility and reliability (Moser & Korstjens, 2017). However, in qualitative research, studies and findings must meet the trustworthy criteria (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). The trustworthiness of a study is proved through its credibility, confirmability, dependability and transferability (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). The following was considered to ensure this study is trustworthy. Credibility refers to the study's assurance that the results obtained are credible and believable (Forero et al., 2018). The credibility of this study was accomplished by providing an in-depth description of the phenomenon of students singing struggle songs and the different sites where these songs are sung. Dependability refers to the ability of the study being able to produce the same results if the study were to be repeated (Forero et al., 2018). To ensure this study is dependable, the approaches and steps taken in the methods employed by this study were documented to ensure that the transcription and translations of the struggle songs do not contain errors (Creswell, 2018). Confirmability refers to the ability of the study to be confirmed by others (Forero et al., 2018). This is to confirm if the data and findings are accurate representations and not just the researcher's bias (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Even though this study analyzed subjectively different parts of this study, such as the literature review, methodology and findings, it was submitted to a research supervisor. It will be presented to peers for review and criticism. In this way, Confirmability was then be established. Transferability refers to the study's ability to transfer to other theories, contexts or research (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). In this study, bias was clarified by reflecting and commenting on how the researchers' social contexts may influence the interpretations of the findings and contradictory evidence will be provided (Creswell, 18).

### **3.10 Ethical considerations**

This study did not involve recruiting participants, however, it still needs to meet the ethical requirements of conducting research. Ethics refer to principles of conducting research morally, including tackling dilemmas, conflicts, and unethical considerations that may arise (Neuman, 2007). The Internet has created new ways for researchers to examine human behaviour and human interaction (James & Bhushar, 2015). The internet is a public platform; therefore, posted data does not need consent. However, it is still complex as researchers need to respect data ownership (Hooley et al., 2012). Markham & Buchanan (2015) ask a valid question on when data is publicly available: Does it mean researchers have the right to use the data, and whether

the participants should be credited for their participation? Furthermore, digital media and internet resources risk harming people as they do things on video or say things online; they may later regret it and not want to be seen in that light. Furthermore, information said online may also be taken out of context or misinterpreted (Markham & Buchanan, 2015).

Using videos as a form of data has ethical implications on informed consent, confidentiality and privacy, which are essential in research ethics. Informed consent involves giving an individual all relevant information about the study so that they can consent to volunteer willingly. Online research is, to some extent, complex as people may upload their data on the internet with a lack of understanding of the terms and conditions of privacy and service of the online site and a lack of understanding of how their data may be reused (Hooley et al., 2012). This research used video data to analyse the songs sung. Therefore, no video participants will be named, and no identifying information was revealed.

Confidentiality and privacy are also infringed; as much as a researcher can disguise individuals in the data because it is online, it is easy to re-identify participants in the data (Hooley et al., 2012). Access to YouTube and its content is free; therefore, consent was not required from the groups of students singing struggle songs in videos; however, to ensure confidentiality and privacy, the videos were listened to and observed for transcription purposes. Anonymity was also employed by ensuring no personally identifiable information would be collected, such as the names or identified information of the students singing the struggle songs. Anonymity refers to a procedure followed in ethical studies that ensures that data is collected without obtaining personal information and identifying information of participants or data collected

(Legewie & Nassauer, 2018). It ensures that participants cannot be linked to data (Burns & Grove, 2001). Furthermore, trustworthiness was established by ensuring that no literature, information, or data was plagiarised.

An ethics application was submitted and approved by the University of KwaZulu Natal Human and Social Science Research Ethics Committee to ensure this study meets the ethical requirements for conducting research. This application was approved.

### **3.11 Conclusion**

This section provided the descriptions and understanding of the methodology used in this study and its relevance to this study. This study employed a social constructionism research paradigm, qualitative research method and exploratory research design. Data consisting of videos of students singing struggle songs was purposively sampled from the YouTube platform. A political discourse analysis method was employed in this study. This section further addressed the issues of credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability within the study and ethical issues such as informed consent and anonymity that were considered.

## CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

### 4.1 Introduction

This section will focus on the findings generated by this study's political discourse analysis method. The data was derived from a sample of N=20 struggle songs sung during student protests in South Africa from 2015 to 2022. These struggle songs were searched on the YouTube platform after that and then translated and transcribed using the Dressler and Kreuz (2000) transcription model. The struggle songs were then analysed politically using a political discourse analysis method (Van Dijk, 1997) to answer the main research objective. It explored how the discursive strategies employed in struggle songs currently sung by student activists in SA are used to construct their collective identities. The songs selected for this study were then categorised into three themes depending on the struggle songs' discursive strategies and dominant discourses. The data is presented in themes underneath, with the transcription of each struggle song followed by the discursive strategies within the theme.

### 4.2 Findings

**How are the discourse strategies employed in struggle songs currently sung by students in SA today used to construct their collective identities?**

*Table 1: Summary of themes*

Theme	Struggle Songs
<b>Theme 1: Communalit</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Nobody wants to see us together.</li><li>2. Ungakhali mama wami</li><li>3. Thula Mtanami</li><li>4. Senzeni na</li><li>5. Fire Brigade</li><li>6. AmaAfrika Amahle</li><li>7. Thulani weba fundi</li><li>8. Nkosi sikelela I Afrika</li></ol>
<b>Theme 2: Spirit of Camaraderie</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Siyaya noma kunzima</li><li>2. Emzabalazweni</li></ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Emaweni</li> <li>4. Sizozabalaza</li> <li>5. 5.Emakhaya</li> <li>6. Ixesha lisondele</li> <li>7. Re Kopane</li> </ol>
<b>Theme 3: Children of the soil</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Yithi ama Guerrilla</li> <li>2. IAgenda yama capitalist</li> <li>3. Solomoni</li> <li>4. Awuzwe</li> <li>5. Ayesaba Amagwala</li> <li>6. Dubula Dubula</li> </ol>

#### 4.2.1 Theme 1: Communalility

##### 1.1 Nobody want to see us together (<https://youtu.be/mFmRA2U5-pQ>)

((Hands clapping))

[AYABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA]

[Nobody wan::a see us TOGE::THER]

[AYABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA]

[NOBODY mami:: NO NO NO:: NO]

[AYABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA ]

[NO NO NO NO:: NO]

[AYABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA]

[NO NO NO NO]

[AYABA YA]

((Screaming)) ((Hands Clapping))

Nobo::dy wan::a see us TOGETHER

[AYABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA]

[Nobody wants to see us toge:::ther]

[NOBODY mami:: NO NO NO:: NO]

[AYABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA]

[NO NO NO NO:: NO]

[AYABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA]

[NO NO NO NO:]

[AYABA YA]

((Screaming)) ((Hands Clapping))

Let me tell you about the story of my LIFE::

[AYABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA]

My mother was a kitchen gir:::l1.

[AYABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YA]

My Father was a garden bo:y

[AYABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA]

That is why I am a communist

[AYABA YA]

You wann::a know a story of my l::fe

[AYABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA]

[My mother was a kitchen gir:::l]

[AYABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA]

My Father was a garden bo::y

[AYABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA]

That's why I am a communist

[AYABA YA]

1.2 *Ungakhali mama wami* ( [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o\\_jGB\\_ggihc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o_jGB_ggihc) )

Zabayabaya zabayabaya

[Ungakhali mama wami, UNGAKHALI sizobuya:] (Don't cry my mother, DO NOT CRY, we will be back)

[Iyo Zababayaba]

[RE TELE::LE::, retelelele tsela ye:] (We have a long way to go)

[Iyo zabayabaya]

[RE TELE::LE:: re telele tsela ye:] (We have a long way to go)

[Iyo zabayabaya]

[RE TELE::LE re telele tsele ye:] (We have a long way to go)

[Iyo zabayabaya]

Ungakhali mama wami: UNGAKHALI sizobuya (Do not cry my mother, DO NOT CRY, we will be back)

[Zabayabayaba]

[Ungakhali mama wami: UNGAKHALI sizobuya] (Don't cry my mother, DO NOT CRY, we will be back)

[Zabayabayaba]

[Ungakhali mama wami: UNGAKHALI sizobuya] (Don't cry my mother, DO NOT CRY, we will be back)

[Zabayabayaba]

[RE TELE::LE:: retelelele tsela ye:] (We have a long way to go)

[Iyo zabayabaya]

[RE TELE::LE:: re telele tsela ye:] (We have a long way to go)

[Iyo zabayabaya]

[RE TELE::LE re telele tsele ye:] (We have a long way to go)

Iyo zabayabaya

**1.3 Thula Mtanami ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3J8YM37nuvI&list=PL-cTuUrxOoNveiHy\\_xikG1yUTbKEjff5M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3J8YM37nuvI&list=PL-cTuUrxOoNveiHy_xikG1yUTbKEjff5M))**

((Hands Clapping))

Thula Mtanami (Quite my child)

WENA UKHALELANI (WHY ARE YOU CRYING)

Thula mtanami (Quite my child)

WENA UKHALELANI (WHY ARE YOU CRYING)

ZIZOJKA IZINTO:: (THINGS WILL TURN AROUND)

Thula mtanamani (Quite my child)

Wena ukhalelani (Why are you crying)

Thula mtanami (Why are you crying)

Wena ukhalelani (Why are you crying)

[Thula Mtanami wena ukhalelani ] (Quite my child, why are you crying)

ZIZOJKA IZINTO;; (THINGS WILL TURN AROUND)

Thula Mtanami (Quite my child)

WENA UKHALELANI (WHY ARE YOU CRYING)

Thula Mtanami (Quite my child)

WENA UKHALELANI (WHY ARE YOU CRYING)

Thuula mtanami wena ukhalelani (Quite my child, why are you crying)

**1.4 Senzeni na (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5CVjGTox9HY>)**

SENZENI NA::: (WHAT HAVE ME DONE)

Senzeni na (What have me done)

IYOO

Senze:ni na (What have me done)

Senzeni na:: (What have me done)

[Senzeni na] (What have me done)

[IYO::]

Senze:ni na(What have me done)

SE:::NZENI NA (WHAT HAVE ME DONE)

[Senzeni na] (What have me done)

[IYO::]

[Senzeni na::] (What have me done)

[SENZENI NA] (WHAT HAVE ME DONE)

[Senzeni na] (What have me done)

IYO::: BO:

[Senzeni na] (What have me done)

[SENZENI NA] (WHAT HAVE ME DONE)

[Senzeni na] (What have me done)

**1.5 Fire Brigade (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z2ucUVgfiko>)**

[Ho ya sha:::] (Its burning)

Bizani I fire brigade (Call the fire brigade)

[Ho ya sha] (It is burning)

Aw bizani I fire brigade (Call the fire brigade)

[Ho ya sha] (It is Burning)

I fire brigade (The fire Brigade)

[Ho ya sha] (It is Burning)

Aw ngikhalela abantwana bami ((hands clapping)) (Aw I am crying for my children)

Ho ya sha (It is Burning)

[Ngikhalela ingane zami] (I am crying for my children)

Ho ya sha (It is Burning)

[Aw ngikhalela abantwana bami] (Aw, I am crying for my children)

Ho ya sha (It is Burning)

[Ngikhalela izingane zami] (I am crying for my children)

**BIZANI IFIRE BRIGADE (CALL THE FIRE BRIGADE)**

[Ho ya sha::] (It's Burning)

[Ifire brigade] (The fire brigade)

[Ho ya sha] (It's Burning)

Awu bizani ifire brigade (Aw call the fire brigade)

Ho ya sha (It's Burning)

**1.6 AmaAfrika Amahle (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LUrW5uPiJcc>)**

Ama frika amahle (Beaitiful Africans)

[Ama afrika] (Africans)

[Ama::]

[Ama afrika, amahle iyo:::] (Beautiful Africans iyo)

Ama afrika amahle (Beautiful Africans)

[Ama afrika] (Africans)

[Ama::]

[Ama afrika, AMAHLE iyo:::] (Africans, beautiful africans)

Aibo thula ma (Aibo be quiet ma)

[Ama Afrika, ama afrika amahle] (Africans, beautiful africans)

{Eyi: eyi::: yinde ma, aw yinde lendlela} (Eyi eyi its long, this way is long)

[Ama Afrika Amahle iyo:::] (Beautiful Africans)

Ow yi::nde bo, aw yinde lendlela (Ow its long aw this way is long)

Ama afrika ama afrika Amahle iyo: (Africans beautiful africans)

Umama wangithumela emahlathini ngiyoba isotsha (My mother sent me to the mountains to be a soldier)

Ama afrika amaafrika amahle iyo:: (Africans beautiful africans)

[Isotsha alikhali lifela ngaphakathi] (Soldier does not cry, it cries within)

Ama Afrika Iyeeyi] (Africans iyeeyi)

Ama afrika Amahle iyo::: (Beautiful Africans) iyoh

Thula ungabokhala ma (Quite do not cry, mom)

[Ama Afrika Ama Afrika Amahle] (Africans, Beautiful Africans)

[Abanye bayosala ma, abanye BAYOBUYA] ((Hands clapping)) (Others will stay, others will come back)

[Ama Afrika AmaAfrika Amahle] (Africans, beautiful Africans)

[Abanye bayoshona ma] (Others will die)

Ama afrika (Africans)

Aibo thula ma (Aibo quite mom)

Ama afrika Amahle iyo: (Beautiful africans iyo)

[Ama::]

Ama afrika (Africans)

Ama afrika, amahle iyo: (Beautiful africans iyo)

**1.7 Thulani weba fundi (<https://youtu.be/OYkGCTiUOA4?si=wARe0xLpVnKVX2q2>)**

Asamboni:: lomfundi (We no longer see this student)

Zumba rumba rumba

Asamboni::i lomfundi (We no longer see this student)

Zumba rumba rumba

LOMFUNDI UBOSHI:WE (THIS STUDENT WAS ARRESTED)

Iyeha

Asamboni lomfundi (We no longer see this student)

Zumba rumba rumba

LOMFUNDI UBOSHI:WE (THIS STUDENT WAS ARRESTED)

Iyeha:

Ashaywa amapoyisa (Beaten up by the police)

Zumba rumba rumba

Uboshwa amapoyisa (Arrested by the police)

Zumba rumba rumba

Muntomnyama w::enzeni: (What has the black person done)

Iyeha:

Asamboni umagwaza (We no longer Magwaza)

Zumba rumba rumba

Magwaza uboshiwe (Magwaza has been arrested)

Iyeha

Asamboni uMbalenhle (We no longer see Mbalenhle)

Zumba rumba rumba

Palisa uboshiwe (Palisa has been arrested)

Iyeha

Thula wemfundi (Be quite student)

Zumba rumba rumba

Sula inyembezi (Wipe your tears)

Thulani webafundi (Be quite student)

UTHIXO UPHENDULILE (God has answered)

Iyeha

Saphucwa ama res (We were robbed of Residences)

Thulani webafundi (Be quite student)

Saphucwa unsfasi (We were robbed of NSFAS)

Thulani webafundi (Be quite student)

MUNTOMNYAMA WENZENI (WHAT HAS THE BLACK PERSON DONE)

Iyeha:

### **1.8 Nkosi sikelela I Afrika (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s64HVZybCw4>)**

Nkosi sikelela:: (God bless)

Nkosi sikele:la la iAfrika (God Bless Africa)

aw maliphakanyiswe (aw May it be raised)

Maluphakanyisuuuu phondo lwayo (Raise high her glory)

Awu yizwa imithandazo: (awu Hear our prayers)

Yizwa imitha:::ndazo yethu (Hear our prayers)

Sibe moya munye (Let us be one in spirit)

Sibe moya: munye (Let us be one in spirit)

((Whistling))

Awu nkosi nkosi sikelela (awu God God bless)

Nkosi sikelelela I Afrika (God bless Africa)

Awu maluphakanyiswe (awu May it be raised)

[Maluphakanyiswu::; phondo lwayo] (Raise high her glory)

Aw yizwa imithandazo:: (aw hear our prayers)

[Yizwa imithandaaaazo yethu ] (hear our prayers)

Aw sibe moya munye (aw let us be one in spirit)

sibe moya munye (let us be one in spirit)

((Whistling))

Awu noma awu noma seku nzima (awu even when its hard even when its hard)

[Noma sekunzima emhlabeni] (even when its hard on earth)

Awu sihlukunyezwa (we are tortured)

[Sihlukunye::zwa kabuhlungu] (Being tortured brutally)

Aw nkosi siphamandla:: (God give us the strength)

Nkosi siphamandlaaaa okunqoba (God give us the strength to conquer)

Aw silwe nosathane (aw to fight against satan)

[Silwe nosathane] (to fight against satan)

Awu noma noma sekunzima: (Even even when its hard)

Noma sekunziimaa emhlabeni (Even when its hard on earth)

[Sihlukunyezwa] (Being tortured)

Sihlukunyezwa kabuhlungu (Being tortured brutally)

Aw nkosi siphamandla (aw God give us the strength)

Nkosiphamandla okunqoba (God give us the strength to conquer)

Silwe nosathan:e (to fight against satan)

Silwe nosath:::ne (to fight against satan)

((Whistling))

Awu thu lu thulululu::

Thulululu lu thulululu ::

Thululululo::

Thulululu thulululu::

Thulululu thululo::

Thululuu thululu:

## Topics

The discursive strategy of **topica** is used in this theme to depict the communality. In analysing these songs, the main topics that dominated were community existence, collective pain, and collective hope. The struggle songs in this theme depict the collective identity of belonging to a community and family system and representing that system within the university space. This is highlighted by the following songs and highlighted words:

*Song 1:1 **My mother** was a kitchen gir:::ll.*

***My Father** was a garden bo:y*

*Song 1:2 [Ungakhali **mama wami**, UNGAKHALI sizobuya::] (Don't cry my mother, DO NOT CRY, we will be back)*

*Song 1:3 Thula **Mtanami** (Be quite my child)*

*Song 1:5 Aw ngikhalela **abantwana bami** (Aw I am crying for my children)*

*[Ngikhalela **ingane zami**] (I am crying for my children)*

*Song 1:6 Umama wangithumela emahlathini ngiyoba isotsha (My mother sent me to the mountains to be a soldier)*

These songs indicate that the students may be registered individually at the university. However, they collectively represent the families and communities they come from. Therefore, the struggles and injustices they are fighting against affect not only them but the communities they come from. The political actors highlighted in this theme are the students protesting, the communities and families that the students represent, and the institutions and government to which the messages are directed.

Furthermore, the struggle songs in this theme highlight the collective pain and tears resulting from the struggle. The songs that best highlight the topic of the student's experience of collective pain are Song 1.5, *Senzeni Na*, and Song 1.6, *Thulani we Bafundi*. For instance, in song 1.5, the lyrics pose a question about *Senzeni na?* (What have we done) to the university management, hired a security company, and the government. Protests during 2015/2016 #FEESMUSTFALL started small, only affecting a few universities. However, momentum was gained, and the protests became intense and violent. The university management responded to the protests by deploying security companies and the police force, who would use teargas, rubber bullets and grenades to disperse gatherings and protest groups. The question asked in this song highlights the pain the students feel when they protest against injustices such as the fee increase that results in the exclusion of those who cannot afford it. Further, they are shot at or arrested instead of getting help. This song was also sung in the anti-apartheid struggle and posed as a question about the apartheid government.

To some extent, the songs in this theme also highlight the hope of the students winning the struggle and returning home. Song 1.8 *Nkosi Sikelela I Afrika*, also known as the decolonised national anthem. Illustrates both the topics of collective pain and collective hope. This song was composed during the 2015/2016 student protests by the students. This song is sung as a rendition of the South African National anthem; it is referred to as the “decolonised” national anthem because it combined the experiences during the times of the original *Nkosi Sikelela* by Enoch Sontanga which was a church hymn sung during anti-apartheid protests and combining it with the currently struggles that students were facing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, unlike the South African national anthem, which combined Enoch Sontanga’s *Nkosi sikelela* and the poem *Die Stem van Suid Afrika* led by the colonial and apartheid-led government. This struggle song sung by the students is considered a prayer highlighted by the following lyrics: “*Nkosi sikele:la*

*la iAfrika*” (*God Bless Africa*) *Yizwa imith:::::ndazo yethu* (*Hear our prayers*). The song asks God to bless South Africa during these times and for God to hear the prayers of the students during the struggle. It is a prayer that highlights the collective pain that the students are facing as they fight against the fee increment for 2016, which was broadcast by the minister of education of that time. This is seen through the lyrics:

*Awu noma noma sekunzima:*

*Noma sekunziiimaa emhlabeni*

*[Sihlukunyezwa]*

*Sihlukunyezwa kabuhlungu*

The song also imparts hope by asking for the strength to fight off Satan, in which Satan is the unresponsive government, university management, and law and security companies that fight and arrest the students. Similarly, Song 1.3 *Thula mtanami* is a song that also gives hope by declaring that things will change. This has been sung predominantly during the African National Congress (ANC) presidential elections. Students sing this struggle song during their protests to indicate how they should not cry as there is a possibility that things might change.

### **Textual schemata**

The songs in this theme use the textual schemata discursive strategy by being schematically structured to emphasise the collective pain experienced by students and their families' economic situations in response to rising fees. Struggle songs in this theme are strategically structured to gain collective sympathy from the audience through their emotional and sensitive nature. This is seen through the following words in the struggle songs:

*Song 1: **Nobo::dy wan::a see us TOGETHER***

*Song 2: [Ungakhali mama wami, UNGAKHALI sizobuya::] (Don't cry my mother, DO NOT CRY, we will be back)]*

*Song 3: **Thula Mtanami** (Quite my child)*

***WENA UKHALELANI** (WHY ARE YOU CRYING)*

*Song 4: **Senze:ni na** (What have me done)*

*Song 5: [Ngikhalela ingane zami] (I am crying for my children)*

*Song 7: LOMFUNDI **UBOSHI:WE** (THIS STUDENT WAS ARRESTED)*

*Ashaywa **amapoyisa** (Beaten up by the police)*

*Uboshwa **amapoyisa** (Arrested by the police)*

*Song 8: [Noma **sekunzima** emhlabeni] (even when its hard on earth)[**Sihlukunye::zwa kabuhlungu**] (Being tortured brutally)*

The struggle songs in this theme are not only political discourse but also social discourse as they speak to students' socioeconomic context and struggles. The struggle songs in this theme give the perception that university management and the police are heartless, unconscious of black students and black families' economic struggles. There is little to no emphasis on the student's actions during the protest that may have resulted in their arrest.

### **Local Semantics**

The struggle songs students sing have special messages that speak to students' collective experiences during protests. The songs in this theme use words concerning crying, wiping tears and being quiet to communicate messages of understanding that the experience is painful for everyone. This is seen through the songs.

*Song 1:2 [**Ungakhali** mama wami, **UNGAKHALI** sizobuya::] (Don't cry my mother, DO NOT CRY, we will be back)*

*Song 1:3 **Thula** Mtanami (Be quite my child)*

*Song 1:5 **Aw ngikhalela** abantwana bami (Aw I am crying for my children)*

*[**Ngikhalela** ingane zami] (I am crying for my children)*

*Song 1:7 **Thula** wemfundi (Be quite student)*

***Sula inyembezi** (Wipe your tears)*

Using these words highlights the humanness and understanding of the collective hurt and pain experienced. The messages of hurt and pain found in these struggle songs do not specifically highlight the positives about the students singing these songs, but they relay a message of pain felt by the students due to the government and university management. This, as a result, emphasizes the negative stance of the government and the university management. The students are empathetically seen as activists protesting due to the hardships of being a university student near exclusion whereas the Government is seen as those who are instilling

pain and hurt due to their lack of service delivery to the promised free education. However, as much as these songs highlight tears, crying, and pain, they also have a non-direct consoling element of hope that one should not cry as it will get better, and the struggle will be won.

### **Lexicon**

The lexical choice of words in the struggle songs under this theme highlights the student's collective identity through the choice of words such as Africa and communist. In song 1.8 *Nkosi sikele:la la iAfrika* (*God Bless Africa*). This song is sung as a prayer for God to bless Africa, the collective identity of being African is seen through the use of the "Afrika" words in songs 1:6 and 1:7. This indicates the identity of being an African first before being anything else in terms of race, ethnicity or culture. The word Africa embodies everyone, even international students within the university.

The students in song 1.1 sing the lyrics *My mother was a kitchen gir:::ll, My Father was a garden bo:y That is why I am a communist* to construct a communist collective identity with other students who grew up in the same context. Political language in South Africa makes use of the word communist to speak to a society with full public ownership and the absence of social classes. The students also created a collective identity with labour workers during the apartheid era. Most jobs occupied by the black community were those of being a gardener or a housekeeper, also referred to as a kitchen girl.

### **Syntax**

Struggle songs sung by the students and highlighted in this theme use pronouns as special words that indicate the collective agreement with what the songs are highlighting. The songs use pronouns to indicate agreement and the social identity of the group of students.

*Song 1:2 [Ungakhali mama wami, UNGAKHALI sizobuya:::] (Don't cry my mother, DO NOT CRY, we will be back)*

*Song 1:4 SENZENI NA::: (WHAT HAVE ME DONE)*

*Song 1:6 Ama frika amahle (Beautiful Africans)*

*Song 1:7 Nkosi sikele:la la iAfrika (God Bless Africa)*

Using the word "Sizobuya" instead of "ngizobuya" in song 1 indicates how the struggle against university injustices may be hard; however, the students will conquer and be back as a group and not just as individuals. The collective question of "Senzeni (*What have we done*)" rather

than “*Ngenzeni (What have I done)*” in Song1:4 also indicates the play of words that indicate communal agreement between the students. Song 1.8 embodies a prayer, and the use of Afrika in this song speaks to communal aspects and ubuntu aspects of being African and praying for each other.

### **Rhetoric**

The discourse within struggle songs sung by students relays messages and grievances and employs rhetoric discursive strategies to get the student protesters, other students, and the community to identify with their experiences and pain. The struggle songs within this theme used rhetoric repetition, rhyme, and melodising to create the student's collective identities. The songs in this theme use the repetition of certain words to create rhythm and for the songs to rhyme and have a lasting musical effect. Struggle songs play a role of spiritually encouraging the students who sing the songs for the purpose behind singing the songs and for momentum. Therefore, it is essential that everyone can follow the song easily and sing it easily. When the lyrics of struggle songs are in patterns that rhyme, they become more memorable for others to remember and recite. This is seen in the lyrics of the following struggle songs:

*Song1: [AYABA YABA YABA YABA YABA YABA]*

*Song2: [Iyo zabayabaya]*

*Song3: Thula Mtanami (Quite my child)*

*Song4: Senze:ni na (What have me done)*

*Song5: [Ho ya sha::] (It's Burning)*

*Song6: [Ama Afrika Amahle iyo::] (Beautiful Africans)*

*Song7: Zumba rumba rumba*

Melodising is also used by songs in this theme, The students singing the struggle song 1.8 create a melody through improvisation using the syllable *Thulululu lu*. In this struggle song, the melody is slow and soft, creating an opportunity for an emotional atmosphere as the students harmonise the melody. As the melody is sung, one gets to reflect on the lyrics, evoking emotions aligned with the collective pain experienced.

### **Expression structures and speech acts**

The struggle songs under this theme are performed in large groups, with one person leading the song and the rest following. In some songs, the students wear different organisation regalia, but in most, they wear casual clothes. In most of the songs under this theme, when the students identify with what the lyrics are saying, whistling is heard, and the volume and pitch increase as they sing the lyrics. In this theme, movement during the songs depends on how emotional the song is. For example, songs 1:4, 1:6, and 1:7 are sung in a slow, emotion-provoking way. As a result, the students are seated in these songs, not dancing, not clapping, but indicating a morose demeanour. The students demonstrate sit-in protest where they are just sitting, not moving or dancing, but rather focusing on the songs they are singing. Throughout the songs, as the students sing the decolonised national anthem song 1:8, they have their hands raised in a fist. This fist is a symbol representing freedom and resistance during a protest or fight against oppression. Within this song as well the students are standing and not dancing or clapping. The students indicated that they identified with specific lyrics by shouting more than before.

#### **4.2.2 Theme 2. Spirit of camaraderie**

##### **2.1 *Siyaya noma kunzima* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=maDXNAL4nN0>)**

((Hands clapping))

Siyaya noma kunzima (We are going even though it is hard)

KUBI KUBI YO:: (ITS BAD ITS BAD YO)

Siyaya: (We are going)

Siyaya: (We are going)

Siyaya: (We are going)

Siyaya (We are going)

[Siyaya noma kunzima] (We are going even though it is hard)

KUBI KUBI KUBI YO:: (ITS BAD ITS BAD ITS BAD YO)

[Siyaya:] (We are going)

Siyaya (We are going)

Siyaya (We are going)

Siyaya (We are going)

[Siyaya noma kunzima] (We are going even though it is hard)

NOMA BESIDUBALA (EVEN WHEN THEY SHOOT US)

Siyaya (We are going)

[BESIBETHA] (WHEN THEY HIT US)

Siyaya (We are going)

BESIBOPHA (WHEN THEY ARREST US)

Siyaya noma kunzima (We are going even though it is hard)

NOMA BESIDUBALA (Even though they shoot us)

Siyaya (We are going)

[BESIBETHA] (WHEN THEY HIT US)

Siyaya (We are going)

[BESIBOPHA] (WHEN THEY ARREST US)

[Siyaya noma kunzima] (We are going even though it is hard)

## **2.2 *Emzabalazweni* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TIinspxFk-EQ>)**

Sisemzalazweni (We are in the struggle)

[Emzalazweni] (In the struggle)

Sisemzabalazweni (We are in the struggle)

[BABE kuphi lababantu] (Where were these people)

Sisemzabalazweni (We are in the struggle)

Emzabalazweni (In the struggle)

Sisebalazweni (We are in the struggle)

[Emzabalazweni] (In the struggle)

Sisemzabalazweni (We are in the struggle)

[Emzabalazweni] (In the struggle)

Sisemzabalazweni (We are in the struggle)

Awu e mzabalazweni (In the struggle)

[Sisemzabalazweni] (We are in the struggle)

Emzabalazweni (In the struggle)

[Sisemzabalazweni] (We are in the struggle)

Shh thu::la

((Stomping of feet)) Imali (Money)

{imali ayikho sizozabalaza zabalaza sizozabalaza zabalaza sizozabalaza}(The money is not there we will struggle struggle we will struggle struggle we will struggle)

Imali (Money)

Imali ayikho sizozabalaza zabalaza sizozabalaza zabalaza sizozabalaza (The money is not there we will struggle struggle we will struggle struggle we will struggle)

### **2.3 Emaweni (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wSWeqmnKLds> )**

Emaweni we:: mama no baba (On the cliffs mother and father)

Solala emaweni (We will sleep on the cliffs)

[Emaweni amabhunu siwaqedile] (On the cliffs we finished the Boers )

Solala emaweni (We will sleep on the cliffs)

Emaweni e:: mama no baba (On the cliffs mother and father )

Solala emaweni (We will sleep on the cliffs)

[Emaweni amabhunu siwaqobile] (On the cliffs we have finished the Boers)

Solala emaweni (We sleep on the cliffs)

Eh maweni ye: zingane zami (On the cliffs, my children)

Solala emaweni (We sleep on the cliffs)

[Emaweni amabhunu siwaqedile] (On the cliffs we have finished the boers)

Solala emaweni (We will sleep on the cliffs)

#### **2.4 Sizozabalaza ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gt\\_uxpLKnXY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gt_uxpLKnXY))**

Thina Sizozabalaza he: (We will struggle)

[Sizozabalaza] (We will struggle)

Aye sizozabalaza he (We will struggle)

So buyela khaya fighter (We will go back home fighter)

Sizozabala (We will struggle)

[NO NOBHALA BAYESHILO] (The secretary did say)

Sizozabalaza (We will struggle)

[BABE THETHA INTWE NJANI] (They were saying something like)

Sizozabalaza (We will struggle)

SIZO LALA EMAHLATHINI (We will sleep in the mountains)

Sizozabalaza (We will struggle)

[() thatha umhlaba] (Take the land)

Sizozabalaza (We will struggle)

[NO NOBHALA BAYESHILO] (The secretary did say)

Sizozabalaza (We will struggle)

[BABE THETHA INTWE NJANI] (They were saying something like)

Sizozabalaza (We will struggle)

SIZO LALA EMAHLATHINI (We will sleep in the mountains)

Sizozabalaza (We will struggle)

[() thatha umhlaba] (Take the land)

Sizozabalaza (We will struggle)

## **2.5 Emakhaya (<https://youtu.be/jqteh7u41BE?si=6S-B7EFyALmIdcId>)**

Sekukude thambo: (It is now far Thambo)

[Emakhaya sekukude emakhaya] (Home is now far, home)

Sekukude thambo:: (It is very far)

Emakhaya sekukude emakhaya (Home is far)

Sekukude thambo:: (It is now far Thambo)

Emakhaya sekukude: emakhaya (Home is now far, home)

°aw Sekukude thambo:: ° (It is far Thambo)

Emakhaya sekukude emakhaya (Home is now far, home)

Sekukude thambo:: (It is now far Thambo)

Emakhaya sekukude emakhaya (Home is now far, home)

SEKUKUDE THAMBO:: (It is now far Thambo)

Emakhaya sekukude emkhaya (Home is now far, home)

SEKUKUDE THAMBO:: (It is now far Thambo)

Emakhaya sekukude:: emakhaya (Home is now far, home)

°aw sekukude thambo° (It is now far Thambo)

## **2.6 Ixsha lisondele ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d2Kc\\_76TDlg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d2Kc_76TDlg))**

((hands clapping))

UNITY UNITY

Unity mtanami (Unity my child)

[Lisondele ixesha] (The time is close)

Ixesha lisondele (The time is close)

Siyakhala siyakhala (We are crying we are crying)

Siyakhala mtanami (We are crying my child)

[Lisondele ixesha] (Time is close)

Ixesha lisondele (Time is close)

Siyakhala siyakhala (We are crying we are crying)

Siyakhala mtanami (We are crying my child)

Lisondele ixesha (Time is close)

Ixesha lisondele (Time is close)

UNITY UNITY

Unity mtanami (Unity my child)

[aw unity mtanami] (Unity my child)

lisondele ixesha (Time is close)

Ixesha li sondele (Time is close)

UNITY UNITY

Unity mtanamani (Unity my child)

Lisondele ixesha (Time is close)

Ixesha lisondele (Time is close)

## **2.7 Re kopano ([https://youtu.be/B\\_AsSjIAaew](https://youtu.be/B_AsSjIAaew))**

Re kopane (We are together)

Re ko::panoe (We are together)

()

Re ko::pa::ne(We are together)

Yoyoyoyo

Re kopane (We are together)

()

Re Ko::pane (We are together)

Re ko::pane (We are together)

()

Re Kopane (We are together)

## Topics

Based on the contents of the struggle songs of this theme, various topics concerning the spirit of camaraderie are dominant. These include topics such as unity amongst the students, the courage and strength they have shown in the face of the injustices they are experiencing, and the socioeconomic implications of being a student in South Africa. The songs in this theme also indicate the collective experience and acknowledgement of the injustice students face, their lack of resources, and how hard the struggle against the common enemy is.

*Song 2.1 NOMA BESIDUBALA (EVEN WHEN THEY SHOOT US)*

*Siyaya (We are going)*

*[BESIBETHA] (WHEN THEY HIT US)*

*Siyaya (We are going)*

*BESIBOPHA (WHEN THEY ARREST US)*

*Siyaya noma kunzima (We are going even though its hard)*

*Song 2.2 {imali ayikho sizozabalaza zabalaza sizozabalaza zabalaza  
sizozabalaza}(The money is not there we will struggle struggle we will struggle  
struggle we will struggle)*

The struggle songs as political discourse also served as political threats towards the unresponsive government and institutions. This is highlighted in *song 2.1 Siyaya noma kunzima*, *2.3 Emaweni* and *2.4 Sizozabalaza*. In these songs, threats are directed to those

opposing the students' views and fighting against what the students want. Free education was one of the things promised by the ANC-led government after the 1994 elections. In the #FEESMUSTFALL protests, the students fought for free education after the ANC-led government indicated that the fee would increase the following year. These protests gained momentum and expanded to students wanting the decolonisation of the current educational system and transformation in university spaces in terms of racial and gender identities. The songs that indicate unity well are song 2.6: *Ixesha lisondele*, song 2.7 *Nkosi Sikelela Afrika*, and song 2.8 *Re kopane*.

### **Textual schemata**

The student protests during 2015 and 2016 were not the first to happen; however, the momentum, media coverage, and magnitude of these protests were significant. If the students were not united, they would struggle to maintain the effects of the strike to the point of governmental and managerial impact. Therefore, unity between the students and fearless identity was necessary for the success of the protests. In this theme, the struggle songs were organised in a style that highlighted the students' struggle as protestors but emphasised the student's collective fighting spirit and unity. The songs were structured to persuade and motivate the students to come together to contend with the views of the government and university institutions, which oppose their view of decreased fees and free education.

### **Local Semantics**

The students singing the struggle songs under this theme used local semantics to construct their political identities. The messages within this theme communicate the students' fighter identity collectively. The youth is referred to as the future of the country, and the songs in this theme also embody this notion as they communicate how courageous the students are and are willing to partake in the struggle no matter the circumstances. This is seen through the struggle songs:

*Song 2.1 Siyaya noma kunzima (We are going even though it is hard)*

*Song 2.2 Sisemzalazweni (We are in the struggle)*

*Song 2.3 Thina Sizozabalaza he: (We will struggle)*

The struggle songs in this theme also highlight how far the students have come to give up, and this is seen through the lyrics of *song 2.5 Emakhaya*.

During the liberation struggle against the apartheid government, people referred to as “*impimpi*” (*spies*) were known to attend liberation gatherings to get information for the opposition party and police. During students' protests, many activities are unlawful, such as the destruction of property and disruption of classes. Similarly, the police and management may expect specific learners to expose the leaders of the strikes. Therefore, the student's emphasis on unity in *Songs 2.6* and *2.7* is essential for the police, university management and government to know that they are united in the struggle and unwilling to sell each other out.

In this theme, there is little to no emphasis on the opposition party, university management, higher education minister or the government. In this case, the struggle songs may be semantically structured in this way, so the focus is on the students' bravery, strength and fighting spirit amidst the injustices they face. The emphasis on unity also builds the student's spirit of camaraderie.

### **Lexicon**

The lexical choice of words found in the struggle songs under this theme highlights the student's collective political identity through the words ‘umzabalazo’ and “emzabalazweni”. These words directly translated mean “struggle” and have been used during the colonial and apartheid liberation warfare. The word is associated with the collective activities of fighting against social, economic and political injustices. For one to identify with these words, one must be consciously aware of the political language used in the context of liberation and freedom. The students use these words in their struggle songs to align with the political identity of being a freedom fighter and contributing to the struggle.

### **Syntax**

The struggle songs in this theme used several syntactical features such as pronouns, active and passive expressions, and imperative clauses to indicate their collective identities. The grievances that the students strike upon may affect the protestors at different magnitudes and intervals, however, when the students sing the struggle songs, they do not just sing what is applicable to them but sing the songs as a collective. Similarly, the struggle songs in this theme utilise pronouns to indicate the collective action of courage through the use of pronouns. Pronouns such as “I” and “Me” were not used as they show individualisation. The students come from different backgrounds and experiences. However, pronouns such as “We” create a sense of togetherness in one struggle despite the differences. The use of pronouns is highlighted in the following songs and has been highlighted:

*Song 2.7: **Re kopane** (We are together)*

*Song 2.4: **Thina Sizozabalaza he:** (We will struggle)*

*Song 2.3: **Solala emaweni** (We will sleep on the cliffs)*

*Song 2.2: **Sisemzalazweni** (We are in the struggle)*

*Song 2.1: **Siyaya noma kunzima** (We are going even though its hard)*

These phrases on the struggle indicate collective agreement and solidarity between the students. Imperative clauses in a few of the struggle songs under this theme were used not to command the opposition to do something, however, it was more for the protestors commanding themselves towards an action.

### **Rhetoric**

When student protests happen in university spaces, not all students participate for various reasons, such as disagreeing with the protestors' views, not being affected by the issues being protested upon or being uninterested. Struggle songs are also sung during student representative elections; in these elections, various student bodies sing songs together in groups to persuade other students to join them or to vote for their representatives. This is seen in the videos under this theme where students are in groups, and others walk around, unaware of what is happening. Therefore, struggle songs as political discourse serve as a persuasive measure; this is also highlighted in the struggle songs under this theme, where various rhetoric operations were used to draw attention to the protests, the meaning behind the sung struggle songs, and the student's collective identities that may be hidden.

The struggle songs under this theme also used rhetorical deletion as a persuasive operation. When the students prepare for strikes, they have mass meetings where discussions happen on what they agree and do not agree on. If one does not attend these meetings, one may be clueless about the protests. Similarly, the struggle songs sung during protest actions may be an existing struggle so rendition of an existing struggle song or be entirely new, however, if one does not attend the mass meetings, they may not know the hidden meaning behind the songs. The songs under this theme indicate the readiness of the protestors to unite and fight but they do not clearly state what the struggle is about, this leaves listeners with questions on what is being fought for. For example, *song 2.1 Siyaya Noma Kunzima* indicates that the protestors are going even though it is hard, however, the song does not indicate where the protestors are going and what they will be doing. This then allows the listeners to be persuaded to join the strike to understand the purpose collectively.

## **Expression structures and speech acts**

The struggle songs under this theme were performed in large groups. Most of the songs under this theme have a leader who starts the song, and the rest follow the leader's rhythm and style of singing. Most of the leaders of these struggle songs are male singers, and in the videos where the students are in a circle, the leader is standing in the middle; in videos where the protestors are not standing in any order, the leaders of the songs are in front of everyone else. In most of the songs under this theme, there is much excitement, and the protestors are energetic, clapping their hands and stomping their feet to form a rhythm and fuel the protestors. Similarly, while singing the struggle songs, sounds such as whistles and screaming of phrases such as “Yiyo” fuel the protestors to sing in a higher intonation. This is why some songs start slower and become faster and louder as the protestors carry on singing. The 2015-2016 Fees Must Fall protests were violent and damaged many university infrastructure. This means that protestors carry objects that could cause damage when used. This is seen in Song 2.1 *Siyaya noma kunzima* and Song 2.6 *Ixesha lisondele*, where students carry sticks and stones. This action is not entirely new, as protests that happened during the apartheid regime would also become violent to the point of burning tyres on the roads and putting stones on the roads.

### **4.2.3 Theme 3: Children of the Soil**

#### **3.1 Yithi ama Guerrilla ([https://youtu.be/GTIKxUR\\_R98Song8](https://youtu.be/GTIKxUR_R98Song8))**

YITHI amaguerrilla (We are Guerrillas)

Usesemncane () (You are still small)

YITHI amagueerrila (We are Guerrillas)

E yam o mama

Yithi amagueerrirela (We are Guerrillas)

AYAYA YOYOYOYOYO::

[Yithi amaguerrilla] (We are Guerrillas)

Omama o mama

Yithi amaguerrilla (We are Guerrillas)

()

Yithi amaguerrilla (We are Guerrillas)

Usesemncane ( You are still young)

Yithi amaguerrilla (We are Guerrillas)

Usese mnacane iyo (You are still young)

Yithi amaguerrilla (We are Guerrillas)

Usemncane (You are still Young)

YITHI amaguerrilla (We are Guerrillas)

Usasemncane yeh (You are still young)

YITHI amagurrilla (We are Guerrillas)

Yithi amaguerrilla (We are Guerrillas)

Awu shona phansi (Go down)

Yithi amaguerrilla (We are Guerrillas)

EH UZOBUYA ((Ululations))

Yithi amaguerrila (We are Guerrillas)

Uzobuya sigoduke (You will come back and we go home)

Yithi amaguerrila (We are Guerrillas)

### **3.2 IAgenda yama capitalist (<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/WnBoFRnepTo>)**

Iagenda yama capitalist (The capitalist agenda)

Asiyi funi (We do not want it)

IAGENDA (Agenda)

OYAMA CAPITALIST (The capitalist)

[Asiyi funi] (We do not want it)

I agenda yam capitalist asiyifuni (The capitalist agenda)

Ngoba ya bulala uChris Hani (It killed Chris Hani)

Asiyi funi IAGENDA yama capitalist (We do not want the capitalist agenda)

Asiyifuni (We do not want it)

Ngoba ya bulala u chris hani: (It killed Chris Hani)

[Asiyifuni I AGENDA YAMA CAPITALIST asiyifuni] (We do not want the capitalist agenda)

### **3.3 Solomoni (<https://www.youtube.com/live/7zqf6qJc8hk?feature=share>)**

Iyo:: solomoni (Solomon)

Solomoni:: (Solomon)

[Iyo::: solomoni] (Solomon)

Solomoni (Solomon)

Iyo::: Solomoni (Solomon)

Wayelisotsha (He was a soldier )

isotsha lomkhonto wesizwe (A soldier for Umkhonto wesizwe)

Wayebulawa (He was murdered)

Wayebulalwa ama bhunu eAfrika (He was murdered by Boers in Africa)

Wayelisotsha:: (He was a soldier)

Isotsha lomkhonto wesizwe (A soldier for Umkhonto wesizwe)

Owabulawa (He was murdered)

Waye bulawa amabhunu e afrika (Murdered by Boers in Africa)

Wayelisotsha: (He was a soldier)

Isotsha lomkhonto wesizwe (A soldier for umkhonto wesizwe)

Owabulawa (He was murdered)

Waye bulawa amabhunu e Afrika (He was murdered by Boers in Africa)

Somoni:: (Solomon)

[Iyo:: solomoni] (Solomon)

Solomoni:: (Solomon)

[Iyo:: solomoni] (Solomon)

Solomon Mahlangu (Solomon Mahlangu)

Iyo:: Solomoni (Solomon)

### **3.4 Awuzwe ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f\\_23-cvF\\_ow](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f_23-cvF_ow))**

AWUZWE AWUZWE (Hear hear)

Istin esandlen (Stone on hand)

AWUZWE AWUZWE (Hear hear)

Bantshontsh amavoti (They are stilling votes)

[AWUZWE AWUZWE] (Hear hear)

Babulal izingane (They are killing children)

Awuzwe awuzwe (Hear hear)

Awshaye kancane (Hear hear)

AWUZWE AWUZWE (Hear hear)

Awshaye kancane ((Clapping hands))

AWUZWE AWUZWE (Hear hear)

Awshay ungavuki (Hit do not wake up)

[Awuzwe awuzwe ] (Hear hear)

Awshay ungavuki (Hit don't wake up)

[Awuzwe awuzwe] (Hear hear)

Free education

AWUZWE AWUZWE (Hear hear)

Land expropriation

AWUZWE AWUZWE (Hear hear)

I want our land

Awuzwe awuzwe (Hear hear)

Bulale ibhunu (Kill the boer)

AWUZWE AWUZWE (Hear hear)

Sifun umhlaba (We want the land)

AWUZWE AWUZWE(Hear hear)

Sifuna amaminerals (We want Minerals)

AWUZWE AWUZWE (Hear hear)

Izwe lethu (Our land)

AWUZWE AWUZWE (Hear hear)

Azania

Awuzwe awuzwe (Hear hear)

Bantshontsh amavoti (They are steeling votes)

AWUZWE AWUZWE (Hear hear)

Babulal izingane (They are killing children)

AWUZWE AWUZWE (Hear hear)

Awshaye kancane (Hit slowly)

AWUZWE AWUZWE (Hear hear)

Awshaye kancane (Hit slowly)

AWUZWE AWUZWE (Hear hear)

Awshay ungavuki (Hit don't wake up)

AWUZWE AWUZWE (Hear hear)

### **3.5 Ayesaba Amagwala Dubula Dubula**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hsviqf5143Y&t=16s>

AYESABA amagwala (The cowards are afraid)

Dubula Dubula:: (Shoot Shoot )

AYI YE

Dubula ngesibhami (Shoot with a gun)

Ayesaba amagwala (The cowards are afraid)

Dubula Dubula (Shoot Shoot )

AYE

Dubula ngesibhami (Shoot with a gun)

Guerrella Dubula (Guerrilla shoot)

Dubula Dubula (Shoot Shoot )

Dubula Dubula (Shoot Shoot )

Dubula ngesibhamu (Shoot with a gun)

DUBULA DUBULA (Shoot Shoot )

Dubula Dubula (Shoot Shoot )

DUBULA DUBULA (Shoot Shoot )

Dubula ngesibhamu(Shoot with a gun)

MAMA NGIYEKELE (Mama leave me)

Dubula Dubula (Shoot Shoot )

Sengifuna ukuba isosha (I want to be a soldier)

Dubula Dubula (Shoot Shoot )

MAMA NGIYEKELE (Mama leave me)

Dubula Dubula (Shoot Shoot )

Sengifuna ukuba isosha (I want to be a soldier)

Dubula ngesi bhamu(Shoot with a gun)

Isibhamu into encane (A gun is a small thing)

Dubula Dubula (Shoot Shoot )

Dubula Dubula (Shoot Shoot)

## **Topics**

Many of the songs in this theme were popular during different movements and warfare experiences in South Africa, such as the Boer and guerrilla warfare, Mkhonto we Sizwe, ANC and the apartheid conflict. The songs during this time were sung against an oppressive element to raise awareness of injustices, send messages to each other, or remember their fallen heroes.

The students sing the songs in this theme for three reasons. The first is that the students reshape the songs to fit their context and highlight the injustices done to them by the university and government. The students in this time are fighting for free education, decolonisation of curricula, the dismantling of statues that represented the apartheid regime, and other subtle structures that are causing injustices such as capitalism.

The other reason is to create a collective identity with fallen heroes and those who contributed to the different fights against injustices during the colonial and apartheid regimes. The songs are sung in a different context. However, the students identify with the stories of past leaders as they find themselves in a similar predicament. They were reminding themselves that they were the children of these leaders who were continuing the legacy and the fight. This has been highlighted in the songs.

*Song 3.2 Ngoba ya bulala u **chris hani**: (It killed Chris Hani)*

*Song 3.3 Iyo::: **Solomoni** (Solomon)*

*Wayelisotsha (He was a soldier)*

***isotsha lomkhonto wesizwe** (A soldier for Umkhonto wesizwe)*

Like the colonial and anti-apartheid activists, the students also highlight their guerrilla identity. Struggle songs under this theme also highlight the collective ideologies that the students identify with. This is seen through song 3.4; the students in this song are demanding free education and land expropriation.

### **Textual Schemata**

The struggle songs used the textual schemata discursive strategy within this theme to schematically highlight the students' collective political identity. The struggle songs in this theme were schematically patterned to emphasise the students' collective partisan stance politically. The desired message is made prominent through the emphasis on what the apartheid government did to the heroes of the struggle and people of colour in South Africa. *Song 3.1*, The struggle song, remembers Solomon Kalushi Mahlangu, who was part of the Umkhonto Wesizwe (MK), a wing of the ANC; he was sentenced to death by the Apartheid government. Similarly, in *Song 3.2*, the struggle song remembers Chris Hani, one of the leaders of the South African Communist party, who was an anti-capitalist assassinated by Janusz Waluś due to being in opposition to the apartheid government.

The struggle songs within this theme also emphasise the students' demands in line with the demands of those who voted during the 1994 elections, putting the ANC into power. *Song 3.4* is patterned to emphasise essential demands such as free education and land expropriation. The #FeesmustFall and #Rhodesmustfall protests occurred 21 years after the end of the apartheid era; however, some of the injustices are still present that affect primarily the black community. Through these demands, the students continue where the liberation struggle heroes left off.

### **Local semantics**

In this theme, the struggle songs use the discursive strategy of local semantics through hidden ideologies. These ideologies relate to the students' conscious opposition to the apartheid-led government and the government today that lacks service delivery to what was promised post-apartheid. The opposition, in this case, is the apartheid government that killed Chris Hani and Solomon Mahlangu, the student's political heroes. The mentioning of these heroes creates a collective resentment against the Boers, who were of the white race, therefore unintentionally creating a political, racial collective identity. This is highlighted in the songs.

*Song 3.2 Ngoba ya bulala u chris hani: (It killed Chris Hani)*

*[Asiyifuni IAGENDA YAMA CAPITALIST asiyifuni] (We do not want the capitalist agenda)*

*Song 3.3 Isotsha lomkhonto wesizwe (A soldier for Umkhonto wesizwe)*

*Owabulawa (He was murdered)*

*Waye bulawa amabhunu e afrika (Murdered by Boers in Africa)Bantshontsh amavoti (They are stilling votes)*

*Song 3.4[AWUZWE AWUZWE] (Hear hear)*

*Babulal izingane (They are killing children)*

Today's opposition is the ANC-led government that has not transformed to ensure free education for all. In the same theme, the struggle songs sung also emphasised violence, highlighting the students' fearlessness. One might think that using the words *Dubhula iBhunu (Kill the Boer)* in song 3.4 and *Dubula Dubula* in song 3.5 gives the students a wrong violent impression. However, the emphasis of these words gives the students momentum and courage and indicates a fearless identity, just as the leaders who fought against the Boers were also fearless. This is also seen in song 3.1, which emphasises the phrase *Guerrilla YITHI*

*amaguerrilla* (*We are Guerrillas*) and song 3.4 *Dubula guerrilla* (*Shoot Guerrilla*). This word was popular in some countries and states, representing a group of people coming together to make and instil change in the government; the word has also been used in South Africa to identify as freedom fighters.

### **Lexicon**

The lexical style used within the struggle songs under this theme was used to construct the students' collective political identity and their identifying with the colonial liberation struggle activists. The vocabulary used within the songs in this theme aligns with the political language formed during the different liberation struggles in South Africa. In *song 1: Yithi amaguerrilla*, the word *guerrilla* is an international word describing the smaller war groups formed to disrupt the police and military operations. The students singing this song highlight their identity as *guerrillas*.

The word “*land*” and *land expropriation*” in song 3.4 is used to construct the student's black identity. There has been discursing on land in South Africa, where after the 1994 elections, the black community started to talk about land redistribution because, during the colonial era and apartheid era, the black community were removed from their land for the benefit of the white community. Therefore, the use of these words is the students reminding the government of what is yet to be done for the black community and continuing from where the older generation left off. The students are faced with the same realities of the past; the time is different, but the context is similar. Through the vocabulary of these struggle songs students are preserving the truth of the struggle ancestors whilst sending a message to their oppressors.

### **Syntax**

The struggle songs sung by the students under this theme are similar to the other themes, whereby the syntactical style of the songs indicates the student's collective agreement and political identity.

Song 3.1: **YITHI** amaguerrilla (*We are Guerrillas*)

Song 3.2 **Asiyi** funi (*We do not want it*)

In these songs, the students use pronouns to indicate their agreement with their guerrilla identity and that they do not want the capitalist agenda. In song 3.3: *Waye bulawa amabhunu e Afrika* (*He was murdered by Boers in Africa*) plural nouns were used to indicate the students'

collective blame on the Boer community rather than the government that sentenced Solomon Mahlangu. Similarly, in Song 3.2, the student puts the blame on those who support the capitalist agenda rather than specifically highlighting Chris Hani's assassinator.

### **Rhetoric**

The songs under this theme used the discursive strategy of persuasion through the repetition of certain words in the struggle songs. The semantic repetition of these words creates musical elements and rhyme within the song. This ensures that anyone can join in on the song even if they do not know it well. In the songs in this theme, a lead singer starts the songs, and the other members follow; the other members usually sing the semantically repeated words, and the leaders sing essential messages. Students within the university space belong to different political student organisations, and others do not belong to student organisations; however, the songs that were sung within this theme are persuasive because they look beyond organisations and look at collective partisans before 1994 and during the 2015- 2016 period.

### **Expression structures and speech acts**

The struggle songs under this theme are similar to the other two themes regarding the expression structures and speech acts. In this theme, the students are also in large, unified groups, with the orator starting the songs and everyone else following. The students collectively dance in unison, dancing in a way that identifies them and is in rhythm with the song. In song 3.3, the students sang outside the union building, seated on the floor, clapping their hands and whistling. In this case, the students might be seated so the song speaks for them and its message is heard clearly. In song 2.2 the students sing louder when they sing the lyrics *Ngoba ya bulala u chris hani: (It killed Chris Hani)* rather than when they sing [*Asiyifuni I AGENDA YAMA CAPITALIST asiyifuni*] (*We do not want the capitalist agenda*). The students sing the first lyrics in a mellow tone to mourn the fallen hero, Chirs Hani, and their tone and pitch go higher when they sing the second lyrics to get the message across clearly.

### **4.3 Conclusion**

Chapter four of the study focused on the researchers' findings generated using a political discourse analysis (van Dijk,1997). The songs were transcribed, translated and grouped into themes according to the collective identities formed using discursive strategies. Although there were many discourses within the struggle songs, only ones that were dominant throughout the

songs in each theme were considered. After that, the discursive strategies employed in each theme were analysed to see how students between 2015 – 2022 used them to construct their collective identities. The three themes identified within the political discourse analysis include Theme 1, Communality; Theme 2, Spirit of Camaraderie; and Theme 3, Children of the Soil.

## **CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This study investigated how students use the discursive strategies employed in struggle songs to construct their collective identities. This chapter introduces a comprehensive discussion of this study. This section will consolidate the essential points from this study's literature, theoretical framework, and methodology that contributed to answering the research question and the study's contribution to the body of knowledge.

The previous chapter thoroughly analysed N-21 struggle songs and grouped them into themes based on their discursive strategies and dominant discourses. Through this analysis, three themes were derived: communality, spirit of camaraderie, and children of the soil. These themes will be discussed in detail in this chapter, emphasizing the collective identities constructed through the discursive strategies found in the struggle songs.

**How are the discourse strategies employed in struggle songs currently sung by students in SA today used to construct their collective identities?**

#### **5.2.1 Theme 1: Communality**

##### **Topics**

The struggle songs under this presented the topics of the collective identity of family representation, community belonging, and collective pain. The topics within the struggle songs under this theme effectively communicated the students' collective identities of not just being students in a university space but a representation of their families at home and the communities they come from.

The 2015/2016 protests were fuelled by various reasons, such as the increase in university fees, deregistration of students due to unpaid fees, decolonised education, and gender and racial inequalities. (Langa et al., 2017). Some students were not affected by these issues but were allies in the struggle; however, they engaged with the protests as if it were also their struggle. Some students were first-generation students who represented their families' dreams in the university space as well. The deregistration of the students may have diminished the hopes and dreams of the family. This is alluded to by the African worldview principles, which explain

that the centrality of being human lies in community belonging (Mekoea, 2006) and a person's dedication to being responsive to others' struggles (Mkhize, 2008).

The struggle songs under this theme also relate to students' collective painful experiences. In context, the shared painful experiences of the students are due to the continued lack of transformation in higher institutions of learning to meet the needs of South African students. As (Eeseuola, 2015) highlights, for struggle songs to be compelling, they must evoke emotions due to related experiences. This is no different from the liberation struggle, where the expression of the black South African's realities during the apartheid through struggle songs made their segregation experiences real and more painful (Gray, 2004). Similarly, the struggle songs sung by black slaves during the Civil Rights movement also expressed experiences of their improvised conditions by the law (Sanger, 1995).

### **Textual Schemata**

The struggle songs in this theme schematically organised their arguments to gain attention and collective sympathy from the community and the country. The struggle songs emphasised the emotional nature of the songs and the collective pain associated with the protests. It seems this method was used to gain interaction and sympathy from others, creating a collective sense of understanding of the students' pain at that time. This method is alluded to by Nwoye (2018), who explains how struggle songs play an interactive role in describing people's experiences and emotions for interaction. Lawrence and Berger (2000) assert this by explaining that the purpose of struggle songs is to appeal emotionally to the public regarding the grievances experienced. This method may focus on the students' experiences rather than protest actions. This is also covered by Greef et al. (2021), who state that the biased nature of the media overlooks the real problem, which is the students' need for change in HEIs.

### **Local Semantics**

Local semantics were used in the struggle songs under this theme to highlight the student's collective understanding of their painful experiences. Students protested and sang the struggle songs in this theme to bring rise to the realities of being a university student. The issues that formed the foundation of the student protests were real issues that mainly affected disadvantaged black students (Kgoroba et al., 2017). Even though the students' protests were political, they were based on the students' painful experiences (Nyamnjoh, 2017).

The struggle songs in this theme use words that evoke powerful emotions associated with anger and pain. The students' anger was directed more at the government and university management for ignoring the need to transform tertiary institutions. Kgoroba et al. (2017) also allude to this by highlighting how, as much as apartheid can be blamed as a foundation for the students' painful experiences, the real perpetrators were the leading government that embezzled and mismanaged government funds. Student activists also expressed how the deployment of police by university management fuelled their anger, and they could not be emotionless and calm when power dynamics were being used to silence them (Kgoroba et al., 2017).

The struggle songs in this theme also bring attention to painful collective experiences associated with the arrests of fellow activists during the protests. Many students were arrested during the #FMM, such as Mcebo Dlamini and Khanya Cekeshe, leaving them with criminal records and others with public violence records (Tshabalala-Mavuso, 2022). Similarly, many youth activists were arrested and criminalised during the Soweto uprising (Greef, 2012).

### **Lexicon**

The language and word selection in the struggle songs under this theme construct the students' collective African and political identities. The struggle songs under this theme make reference to Africa to construct their African identities. Through such songs, the students could connect with international students, giving them a sense of belonging and motivating them to participate in the struggle. Mainly because some international students felt that students protest in South Africa have focused only on the struggles faced by South African students even though they are also affected by the constantly increasing fees (Raghuram et al., 2020).

The struggle songs in this theme construct the students' political identities through their lexical choice. The students singing of being communists define their political identity. During the apartheid era, communists were referred to as anti-apartheid groups that fought against capitalism that discriminated against black people and only benefited the white minority (Gumede, 2015). The student's protest also represented class struggles in society that have been present since apartheid. Therefore, the students sing about the emotional reality of the lack of a fundamental human right, such as education, due to increased fees and exclusion after that, mainly affecting poor black students (Ntombana et al., 2023).

## **Syntax**

The syntactical style used within the struggle songs within this theme has been used to construct the student's collective social identity. The struggle songs sung by students highlight their injustices, hopes and political messages, thus creating a sense of common sense of understanding, values, goals and membership. Chisa (2018) also asserts that struggle songs create a social identity by communicating social issues and preserving indigenous values. The repeated use of pronouns that speak to communality rather than individuality in the struggle songs under this theme, builds on the student's communal nature of being. In the African perspective of personhood, the communal nature of humans speaks to ubuntu (Mkhize, 2008). The struggle songs heighten the students' interdependence and group identity. Similarly, the ZANU-PF party used struggle songs to construct their group identities by singing songs about their spirituality, communal-ness and superiority (Manywa, 2017).

## **Rhetoric**

The persuasive function of the struggle songs under this theme has been used to construct the students' communality. The struggle songs in this theme highlighted the students' painful realities within the higher institution of learning. This also aligns with Nwoye's view on how struggle songs are interactive because they express injustices and grievances (Nwoye, 2018). The struggle songs in this theme were rhetorically structured to gain public sympathy. The students wanted to find a sense of belonging and support from the community. Mainly because the students also represent their families and communities in the struggle.

## **Expression structures and speech acts**

The struggle songs in this theme were expressed and performed further to define their collective identities through their experienced collective pain. The struggle songs have emotional elements. Therefore, the students' slow movements, low voices and standing in one place may be used to get attention to their words as they narrate their painful experiences rather than focusing on how they are moving, violent or singing. Similarly, during the Civil Rights Movement, sit-in protests focused on the protester's experience and evoked sympathy from bystanders (Honenstein, 2024). The raised fist used in one of the songs in this theme defines the students' resistant stance, solidarity and identities. This is alluded to by Davidson and Blair (2018) as that historically, the raised fist started during the black power movement to represent solidarity for civil rights; even today, the fist is still used to represent solidarity and resistance symbolically.

## **5.2.2 Theme 2: Spirit of Camaraderie**

### **Topics**

The struggle songs under this theme communicate the students' unity, courage and sense of comradeship amidst the injustices they face in HEI's. The comrades of the colonial and apartheid struggle sang struggle songs to convey a message about their injustices, such as racism, inequality and oppression (Breakfast et al., 2021). Students today are against the ANC-led government and the corruption that has led to increased fees and the exclusion of students. Struggle songs function to unite activists and create a shared sense of comradeship due to fighting against a common goal that an individual cannot fight alone (Walker, 2018). Similarly, during the civil rights movement, activists used struggle songs to strengthen their sense of community and solidarity, motivate themselves, and portray a fearless identity (Sanger, 1995). This notion of struggle songs is alluded to by the African perspective of personhood on how struggle songs motivate group unity and solidarity (Manywa, 2017).

The issues that resulted in the 2015/2016 protests reflected real injustices faced by black economically disadvantaged students (Kgoropa et al., 2017). The protests were centred around the failure of the government and society toward the young people of South Africa (Sutton, 2019). The government's failures include the university fee increase, exclusion of students, inequality, curriculum decolonisation, and the need to transform universities to be effective for everyone (Nomvete & Mushayamombe, 2019). These are the issues that the students sing about and vow to fight against in the struggle songs under this theme.

### **Textual Schemata**

The schematic structure of the struggle songs under this emphasises the student's collective fearless identity and fighting spirit. The 2015/2016 student protests were reported to be violent and disruptive (Mbhele & Sibanyoni, 2022). However, during the singing of struggle songs under this theme, the students used the struggle songs only to relay their messages and courage rather than physical acts. This is why struggle songs are referred to as a weapon against resistance (Vershbow, 2010).

Unlike the songs in the previous theme, the struggle songs under this theme emphasise the students' strengths and hope for a better future. Therefore, the students needed to be unified and committed to ensure that the protests expanded throughout the country to achieve the

desired outcomes. This is why Lawrence and Berger (2000) emphasise that protestors must be interconnected and interdependent for protests to succeed.

### **Local Semantics**

The students singing the struggle songs under this theme used the local semantics discursive strategy to highlight their political identities as freedom fighters. The words used under this theme have hidden political threats as political discourse. The threats in this case are towards the government and university management, who have ignored the students' demands due to the injustices experienced (Langa et al., 2017). The injustices were not only experienced by the students but also by the community at large. The students' protest during the 2015/and 2016 times also involved the demands of insourcing university workers rather than outsourcing from different companies (Kgoropa et al., 2017). Even though the students were not workers, however, what affected others within the university space affected them as well. This speaks to the African view of personhood whereby the centrality of being human is “ubuntu”, and the central motivation is supporting the community regardless of the individual being personally affected.

### **Lexicon**

The lexical choice of words and language under the theme was also used to construct the student's freedom fighter identity similarly to the schematic structure and semantic patterns. The use of words such as “Umzabalazo” and “Sizozabalaza” refers to the struggle (Mkhize, 2013). This choice of words under this theme highlights the student’s willingness to fight to achieve the desired outcomes of the protests. The songs under this theme fuel and give the students a deem them powerful. This is also narrated by Eeseuola (2015) that struggle songs mobilise people under the thought that power lies in them. The struggle songs distract the students from the painfulness of the struggle, but rather, the focus is on conquering the struggle. Similarly, during the Rhodesian struggle in Zimbabwe, the struggle songs focused on keeping the activists motivated, revived and hopeful (Khan, 2018). Therefore, the students' collective fighter identities keep them hopeful for change during times of oppression (le Roux-Kemp, 2014).

### **Syntax**

The struggle songs under this theme had syntactical features that constructed the students' collective identities. Similarly to the previous theme, the syntactical features indicated the

students' collectiveness in the struggle rather than individualism. Not all students who took part in the student protests were financially excluded. However, the students empathetically felt the need to collectively support the social movement regardless of whether they were affected (Kgoropa et al., 2017). In this case, the struggle songs played a vital role in connecting students from different economic backgrounds and contexts through the messages relayed in the songs (Van Stekelenburg, 2013). Some other students participated in the protests because of the experience they shared with others who were excluded and affected by the fee increments. This also contributed to the movement's growth because the shared experiences motivated the students to a common goal, creating a shared identity (Van Stekelenburg, 2013).

### **Rhetoric**

The struggle songs under this had rhetorical functions to create a collective identity between students striking and those unaffected by the strikes. This included students not affected by the fee increments but also the country at large. Singing struggle songs fosters participation even from bystanders (Rice, 2007). The students also gained allies in their struggle, such as the worker's alliance, which further created a collective identity with others through them speaking on the insourcing of university workers. (Kgoropa et al., 2017). This is also explained by the African perspective of personhood, which explains that an African person is motivated and derives strength by helping one another. (Nwoye, 2017)

### **Expression structures and speech acts**

The performance and expression of the struggle songs under this theme fuelled the students towards collective action. The singing of the struggle songs under this theme involved much collective movement and chanting. The nature of the songs sung in this theme required protestors to be energetic and sing in higher intonations. Joloasho (2019) explains that protest action is made by protest music and the people who belong to the movement. Protest music and action influence and motivate each other (Eeseuola, 2015; Walker, 2018). In some of the songs, the students are seen carrying sticks and stones; this indicates that the student's protests were also violent and disruptive. Sutton (2019) explains that the deployment of police and military personnel to call the students into order resulted in the students retaliating by being violent, burning and breaking university infrastructure.

### **5.2.3 Theme 3: Children of the Soil**

#### **Topics**

The struggle songs within this theme used the discursive strategy of topics to highlight their collective identity with activists and fallen heroes of the liberation struggle. Just as Langa (2018) explains that student activists today sing the same struggle songs as apartheid activists, however, with new meanings that align with their context. Activists sang the struggle songs sung during the liberation struggle to fight the national party with its white supremacy and ideologies that segregated and caused injustices to the people of colour. Groenewold (2005) also gives an account of how, during the liberation struggles, protest songs were formed for injustices experiences, such as when bus fares were hiked, during the forceful removal of non-whites from their home, during the imprisonment of struggle leaders and during the Soweto uprising unrest. Today, university students are singing the struggle songs against the government for free education and against injustices faced by university students. The contexts are different, but one context was built from the other and continued the legacy. Manywa (2017) is of the same sentiments that students sing struggle songs to help keep the legacy of the struggle activists going, even in a different context. The use of struggle songs by student activists today proves the fostering of knowledge from one generation to the other (Langa, 2018). African philosophies explain personhood from a relational perspective, where people define themselves from a relational context (Attuire, 2022). Similarly, the students singing these struggle songs identify themselves with other students in the struggle and with activists of the colonial and apartheid struggle due to the communal realities experienced.

#### **Textual Schemata**

The textual schema discursive strategy was used to emphasise the students' collective political identities. Bernstein (2016) also indicates that collective identity is created through membership for an identity of empowerment where people are politically conscious of the need for transformation and empowerment. However, the students' collective political identities are racially and historically located in the liberation struggle. The struggle songs in this theme emphasise the students' political identities by standing with those who fought during apartheid and highlighting what the apartheid government did to them. Struggle songs in this theme are discourses that tell a story of past activists' experiences and political identities. Anti-apartheid activists are accounted for in these struggle songs, such as Solomon Mahlangu and Chirs Hani, who died at the hands of anti-apartheid and anti-communist operatives. The students' partisan

stand with the liberation heroes emphasises their alignment with the activists' political identities. Kelly (2013) further alludes to this by highlighting how psychologically political identities are formed through the narrations of activists' experiences and sustained through the retelling of these emotion-provoking narrations.

### **Local Semantics**

The struggle songs in this theme also have hidden messages drawn from the apartheid struggle to construct the students' collective ideologies and racial and political identities. Struggle songs bring attention to educate and persuade others towards a political and social ideology by emphasising the desired ideology against the oppressive ideology (Lawrence & Berger, 2000). During apartheid, the anti-apartheid movements were against the national parties' racial and capitalist ideologies. Similarly, today, the student protests have been against the neoliberal education system and capitalist system by demanding free education (Kgoroba et al., 2017). The ideologies behind the 2015/2016 protests involved ideologies such as the black consciousness, black feminists and Marxist ideologies (Kgoroba et al., 2017). This further defines the students' collective identities identity as fearless fallists, mainly because they rejected the unequal racialised and systemic social exclusion of black students through the lack of free education (Kgoroba et al., 2017).

### **Lexicon**

The struggle songs in this theme use the lexicon discursive strategy to construct their collective political identities and identify with the colonial liberation struggle activists. The students signing the struggle songs today take many of their ideas and songs from the colonial and liberation struggle but to fit their context (Langa, 2018; Makgopa & Mameleka, 2019). The students sing their guerrilla identity and speak on land expropriation as an idea taken from those who fought for democracy. When people sing struggle songs, they travel the same pathway as those who composed the songs (Mtshali & Hlongwane, 2014). However, the students are today fighting the same fight against the government more than 20 years later using the same struggle songs and their messages from the apartheid times. This was the same during the TAC protests, whereby the songs sung resonated with older struggle songs even though the context differed (Walker, 2018). This is alluded to by Mtshali & Hlongwane (2014), who say that struggle songs are considered ancestral texts because of their relevance even after those who composed them have left Earth. The liberation and anti-apartheid movement still lives today due to the students singing struggle songs during their injustices.

## **Syntax**

The syntactical style used in the struggle songs under this theme is no different from the other themes in this study. The syntax discursive strategy is used to solidify the students' collective agreement and highlight their political and racial identities. The students sing the struggle songs under this theme to emphasize the inhuman acts the apartheid government did to black people and the liberation struggle heroes. The songs under this theme refer to the students' agreement on the unfair treatment of the apartheid government towards activists such as Solomon Mahlangu and Chris Hani. Solomon Kalushi Mahlangu was an MK cadre and struggle activist who died at the age of 22 after being sentenced to death by the apartheid government after being tried for a murder that he did not commit (Baines, 2017). Chris Hani was an activist and leader of the South African Communist Party who committed himself to fighting against inequality and oppression (Longford, 2023). During the year 1993, he was assassinated by Janusz Walus, an anti-communist who was associated with the national party (Longford, 2023). These struggle songs are magnetic in nature as they convey a political partisan message and grab the attention of the listeners through the emphasis on the struggle heroes (Damodaran, 2016)

## **Rhetoric**

The struggle songs under this theme used the rhetoric discursive strategy to construct the students' collective identities and persuade others to identify with them. Africans are considered oral beings who unite and express themselves through song (Allen, 2004; Gunner, 2008). Therefore, it is most likely that when people are singing and dancing, they are able to grab attention and invite others to join in. The semantic repetition of words in these struggle songs made it easy for those who did not know the songs to join in, even though they did not know the lyrics. Nkoala (2020) alludes that the simplicity, catchiness and use of repetition in songs make the songs easily followable by groups. Furthermore, the struggle songs also persuaded those who were part of the struggle but in different student political organisations to come together for the exact cause.

## **Expression structures and speech acts**

The struggle songs under this theme are not different in expression and performance from the other two themes. The Struggles songs were performed and expressed to construct the student's collective identities as a movement. The students' march to the union building during the #FeesMustFall protests was also significant. It symbolised their seriousness in wanting the

government's attention in their quest to decrease university fees. This was not the first time a movement protested at the union building; during the year 1956, one of the most historical protests took place at the union building and involved close to 20000 women marching against pass laws that required people to carry identification (Sisulu, 2006). In one of the songs in this theme, the students were seated on the floor, symbolising a peaceful protest. This was essential as the students were known to display hooligan behaviour by breaking the infrastructure during their protests (Mbhele & Sibanyoni, 2022).

### **5.3 Conclusion**

This chapter presented a discussion based on the findings of this research guided by the research question: How are the discourse strategies employed in struggle songs currently sung by students in SA today used to construct their collective identities? The discussion combined this research's first chapter, literature and theoretical framework to support the findings. The discussion was presented in the three themes found within the struggle songs used in this study. These themes were communality, the spirit of camaraderie and children of the soil. This research found that discursive strategies are used in struggle songs today to construct the student's social, political, communal, racial and socioeconomic collective identities. These identities are constructed through the struggle songs that serve as political discourse. Similarities were noted between this study's findings, available literature and the African perspective of personhood that theoretically grounded this research.

## **CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This section will provide a conclusion on this study by highlighting the objectives of this study and the main findings generated. Further, the study's limitations and recommendations for future research and theory production will be covered.

### **6.2 Summary and Conclusions**

The purpose of this study was to explore the discursive strategies employed in struggle songs and how students use them to construct their collective identities. This was achieved through the analysis of political discourse on 21 struggle songs derived from YouTube. The first chapter of this study introduced the background and context of this study and the research problem behind this study. The study's research question, objective, aims, and significance were discussed. The third chapter of this study drew attention to the methodology employed to answer the objectives of this study. The methods highlighted included the social constructivist paradigm employed in the study, the adopted qualitative research methodology, an exploratory research design, data collection procedures, political discourse data analysis method and ethical considerations. The fourth chapter of this study provided a transcription and translation of 21 struggle songs, further grouping them according to the themes within the struggle songs. Further, the struggle songs were politically analysed through the discursive strategies employed in the songs. The fourth chapter of this study provided a discussion on the study by consolidating the findings, available literature and theoretical framework in how they answered the study's objective. The main finding of this research indicates that the struggle songs sung by students today have discursive strategies that construct the student's collective identities. This research found that struggle songs define and construct the student's different collective identities.

#### **Theme 1: Communal**

The findings through analysing the discursive strategies on the struggle songs under this theme highlight the students' communal collective identity. The struggle songs serve as a reminder to the students of where they come from and who they represent in the university spaces. This

aligns with the Afrocentric view of personhood, which states that an African person's identity is embedded in their responsiveness in prioritising the community. The students' struggle for free education, transformed institutions, and decolonised curriculum would benefit them and the other students who have yet to enter the university space and have the same experiences. The students also represent not only themselves in the university but also the families and community that grew them. This speaks to the central principle of the African perspective of personhood, where a person is a person through others (Nwoye, 2018). The struggle songs evoke painful emotions highlighting the painful injustices that the students face due to the fee increment, inequality and exclusion from the university. The painful experiences serve as connecting factor between the students as they create a collective identity through them having the same realities and painful experiences. The emotional component of the struggle songs also fosters a connection between the students and the country at large through the gaining of sympathy and empathy from those who are allies of the student's struggle. The finding on discursive analysis of the struggle songs of this theme found that the students make use of discursive strategies to construct their political, racial and social collective identities.

### **Theme 2: Spirit of camaraderie**

The findings through the analysis of the discursive strategies on the struggle songs under this theme highlight the student unity, solidarity, comradeship and collective political identity as freedom fighters. This study found that struggle songs serve as a fuelling agent for students during protests. Through the chanting of struggle songs, the students get to unite under one cause with the aim of succeeding. The struggle songs also serve as banners for the students to relay their dissatisfaction with the government and university management. The struggle songs are a cry for help for the students as they carry discourse and the student's realities that are underpinned by poverty, inequality and oppression.

### **Theme 3: Children of the soil**

The findings through the analysis of the discursive strategies on the struggle songs under this theme highlight the students' collective identity with activists and fallen heroes of the liberation struggle students' collective ideologies and racial and political identities. The struggle song serves to connect the past struggle heroes with the students today who sing the struggle songs.

The struggle also preserves the history of the different struggles in South Africa; through the students singing the struggle songs, the legacies and experiences of the apartheid and liberation struggle are brought back to life. Similarly, the songs carry names of those who contributed to the fight against oppression in South Africa; the struggle songs help the student define their identities through the struggle heroes. This is alluded to by the African philosophies that explain personhood as a relational experience whereby people relate with others regardless of being in different times and contexts (Attuire, 2022). This study also found that the discursive strategies with the songs also indicate the students' political identities through their partisan stance on issues involving the apartheid and liberation struggles. The struggle songs also influence the ideologies with which the students collectively agree and identify, in contrast to the ideologies that governed South Africa pre-1994 and post-1994.

### **6.3 Limitations**

This study used data in the form of videos acquired from the YouTube platform. This platform is for public use, and anyone can upload and delete videos. Therefore, the videos used in this study may have been uploaded between 2015 and 2014. However, it does not mean that it was recorded in that period. The videos used in this study were saved using their URL links. However, the owners of these videos can delete them at any time, which would cause the URL links not to be found. Using the YouTube platform only to acquire video may have limited this study to what is only available on this platform. Therefore, these issues caused limitations to this study's trustworthiness and credibility. This study was limited to videos to answer its objectives. It may have benefited this study to use participants to build on this study's findings, bringing in a personal reflection on the discursive strategies used to construct the student's collective identities. The themes generated in this study were based on the researcher's resources and analysis; another researcher may have a different perspective and generate different findings. Therefore, this research is limited to one view. The researcher conducted the transcription and translation of the struggle songs in this research. This may also limit this study to just the researchers' understanding of the language in the songs that were in vernacular language.

## **6.4 Recommendations**

### **Research and theoretical recommendations**

Research on struggle songs has focused mainly on the liberation and apartheid struggle. The minimal focus has been on the use of struggle songs post-1994, especially by students. Media coverage may explain students' protests as barbaric, disruptive, and violent behaviour. However, the findings of this research through the struggle songs indicate that the protests are the student's way of bringing attention to their realities and injustices. Struggle songs are political in nature, but there is much room for more research on their psychological underpinnings that explain human behaviour and motivations.

This study focused on the Afrocentric perspective of Personhood. Africans have been studied with the focus of Western perspectives and values as research, and the credibility of information found on Africans may be under scrutiny. The understanding of the nature of a person from an African perspective will build on research that understands the nature of Africans, their values, way of life and motivations of African people. This research study recommends that more researchers focus on understanding Africans from their point of view to understand their nature.

### **Policy and practice recommendations**

This study indicated that student protests are the result of low socioeconomic status, improvised conditions and frustrations around the students' unmet needs. The students' protests are also a result of ideologies that were formed in the apartheid that is still present in institutions more than 20 years after democracy has been attained. The study's findings revealed that students in South Africa cannot afford university education regardless of being an NSFAS recipient or being classified as the missing middle class. Therefore, looking at the state of the economy of South Africa, Higher will become a luxury that a select few can afford. The study recommends that the government and the Office of the Minister of the Department of Higher Education and Training, Science and Innovation investigate ways of supporting university students and providing an effective education to all students of all races and economic backgrounds.

This study found that the violence seen during student protests is a retaliation of the students due to being ignored and the deployment of police and security to tame the students. Therefore,

the university management needs to reconsider its management of student protests. Looking at the student's protests as more than just disruption but a cry for help.

## **6.5 Conclusion**

This section provided the last chapter of this study, with a focus on reiterating the study's objectives and main findings, highlighting the study's limitations and recommendations that can be used for future knowledge production.

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## Appendix A: Ethics approval letter



13 December 2022

Bukelwa Fundiswa Khuzwayo (221105903)  
School of Applied Human Sc  
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear BF Khuzwayo,

**Protocol reference number:** HSSREC/00005009/2022

**Project title:** Struggle songs and a collective identity

**Degree:** Masters

### Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 07 November 2022 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

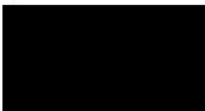
**Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.**

This approval is valid until 13 December 2023.

To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Yours sincerely,



Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)

/dd

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### Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa

Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 8350/4557/3587 Email: [hssrec@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:hssrec@ukzn.ac.za) Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics>

Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville

**INSPIRING GREATNESS**

## Appendix B: Turnitin report

Research Bukelwa			
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PRIMARY SOURCES			
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<b>3</b>	<b>Submitted to Robert Kennedy College</b> Student Paper		<b>&lt;1%</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Submitted to University of Newcastle</b> Student Paper		<b>&lt;1%</b>
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<b>7</b>	<b>eprints.qut.edu.au</b> Internet Source		<b>&lt;1%</b>
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