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ECONOMIC AGENCY AND LINGUISTIC REPERTOIRE:  
A SOUTH AFRICA CASE STUDY IN STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF  
MULTILINGUALISM IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

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## ABSTRACT

This exploratory paper addresses how national identity and economic opportunities are informed by language policy in the multilingual country of South Africa. Its goal is to look at perceptions and potentials of South African languages in employability, mobility, and overall economic development. The study was situated at Stellenbosch University, a primarily Afrikaans medium university, so as to be aware of how language choice and languages used in instruction can both empower and disempower people; it determines how language use can have a bearing on individual and social development. Students of Stellenbosch University were interviewed and surveyed regarding opinions on how their language capacities can affect their economic opportunities. By addressing this topic, my research displays how South Africa's ambitious 1994 constitutional language provisions, which recognize 11 languages (two of which are West-Germanic, and nine of which are Bantu), is practically applied and perceived in the contexts of education and employability. Second, it is important to analyze to what extent language is viewed as a resource; how dependent is employment in high-status and low-status jobs related to the prestige, or lack thereof, of certain languages? In turn, how does this affect university students' judgments and expectations for the future? Finally, drawing from the former goals, it is crucial to assess public perception of the benefits and drawbacks of a national multilingual policy in relation to the realities of local practices.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

*“Language influences the way in which we perceive reality, evaluate it and conduct ourselves with respect to it. Speakers of different languages and cultures see the universe differently, evaluate it differently, and behave towards its reality differently. Language controls thought and actions and speakers of different languages do not have the same world view or perceive the same reality unless they have the same culture or back ground”*

*-Peter Mwaura, 1980*

To what extent do South African students, particularly those in previously marginalized societies, find the current language policy in education to affect future economic opportunities? South Africa is a highly linguistically diverse country that once had a large segment of its population marginalized under the impenitently segregationist policies of the Afrikaners and British. Since segments of the society were oppressed under the identities of Afrikaans and English, both of which were the only two official national languages during Apartheid, this paper intends to explore how, in the context of Afrikaans-dominated language pedagogy at Stellenbosch University, students perceive practical multilingualism as a skill in English-dominated employment. This question is important on different fronts by 1) assessing how language is seen as a resource and 2) seeking to explore how policies, especially ambitious ones like South Africa’s language policy which recognizes nine Bantu languages in addition to Afrikaans and English, are translated into reality. The research design, which encompassed multi-leveled interviews and surveys with Stellenbosch University's students, administration, and faculty, has provided many variables by which I can tie language policy and economic agency. In particular, I will focus on how variables of race, language use, and socio-economic status may affect opinions of the use of South African languages in the economic environment. Anticipated results are that those who speak the two main languages (Afrikaans and English) will have lower opinions of the ability of indigenous South African languages to be used in the economic environment. This will allow for analysis of how languages of Xhosa and other African languages are viewed as in light of South Africa's language policy.

In the context of the multilingual country of South Africa, this topic is relevant to public policy because it deals with enforcing language policies in multilingual countries and its effects. Language policies are an expression of a set of choices or values that societies hold. They are capable of shifting economic, educational, political and social opportunities. For example, a language policy that largely favors one national language will, by definition, favor that language for employment purposes or limit those who go to higher level education, since the pedagogical framework will likely use the favored language. Those without access or desire to learn the language will be at a disadvantage, which in turn can limit opportunities and possibly cause societal tension. Language policies can therefore minimize the importance of other languages that are not recognized in the policy, which can heighten the levels of friction in developing countries. South Africa is familiar with this situation; since 1910, “the dominance of the capitalist mode of production was formally recognized [and] the

cultural-political contingency of a single multilingual nation inhered in the situation” (Alexander 1992). Since the mid-sixties onward, economic and political developments were placed on the agenda with the task of uniting the cultural and ideological divides “where the bonding of the peoples has been weakest” (Alexander 1992). The language policy enforced in 1994 was intended to demote the status of Afrikaans and English, the two languages used most in the Apartheid era, in order to allow more prominence and use in the other nine Bantu languages (Mazrui 2007). However, the outcomes of the policy have been relatively modest. As McClean and McCormick state, despite the policy change, “the evidence from various domains... is that this policy thrust toward multilingualism is often intended and perceived as a symbolic statement, and that for instrumental purposes, English remains the dominance language in South Africa” (1996, as quoted in Mazrui 2007). Especially in tertiary education, universities that once used the Afrikaans language in its pedagogy are now shifting to English, allowing a majority of Bantu home language speakers to access their resources and resulting in educational desegregation.

My research contributes to the existing literature of South Africa language policy analysis by taking an integrative approach in seeing how policies affect students’ socio-economic perceptions of language in the workplace. It is important to assess the economic considerations that language policies shape; first, it remains a neglected area of study, and second, it can help social actors determine the pros and cons of the current policy, as well as alternative avenues open to them, in order to make principled and informed choices. This thesis, therefore, attempts to establish an entry point in navigating through the “no-man’s land” between the traditional disciplines of economics, sociology, and policy analysis within applied linguistics.

# CHAPTER TWO

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Language and the Economy

Bold statements can sometimes be made that all languages are equal in value; while this could be true in terms of linguistic equality, experience shows us that this is patently not true in terms of social equality. When society comes together in the same “linguistic community” in terms of language used in schooling and economic activities, linguistic domination of one or two languages inevitably emerges for functioning purposes. This, however, can result in linguistic domination, where the language that dominates sets the norm against the other languages that can be used. In “The Economics of Linguistic Exchanges”, Bourdieu discusses how general discourse and language can be seen as a symbolic asset that receives different values based on its significance in the “market” on which it is offered. Languages, given sudden changes like revolutions or more gradual changes in trends of what constitutes symbolic power, can result in devaluation. One place this can be seen is in former colonies where “the future of language is governed by what happens to the instruments of the reproduction of linguistic capital” (1977), such as the school system which reproduces market value of linguistic competence. After all, a language is only worth the number of people that speak it.

Summarized on Table 1 (Coulmas 1992) below, a comparison is shown between per capita income and the number of languages in both industrial and developing countries. While this graph is not suggesting a direct correlation between languages and economic development, it does reveal certain tendencies. For instance, it challenges the view that “languages are assets” that are conducive to social wealth; instead, it displays that a multiplicity of languages may cause linguistic fragmentation, which is incompatible with a high level of socioeconomic development (Coulmas 1992). As Coulmas states, “the fact that in most industrial economies, population and speech community are highly congruent means that, even in countries where several languages enjoy official status, the configuration of the nation state makes one language altogether dominant, while the others are reduced...to the function of folkloristic accessories of symbolic rather than practical significance” (2007). However, the difference does not only lie in that the industrial countries tend to have fewer languages while the developing have more; rather, other issues that are undoubtedly connected with the multiplicity of languages is the level of literacy in a given country.

**Table 1. Comparison of Per Capita Income and Language Relationship**

<i>Country</i>	<i>Population (millions)</i>	<i>Per capita income (\$)</i>	<i>Number of languages</i>
Ethiopia	50	120 (1987)	120
France	56	16,090 (1988)	10
Vietnam	64	180 (1985)	77
Germany (FRG)	60	18,480 (1988)	7
Philippines	59	630 (1988)	164
UK	57	12,810 (1988)	7
Chad	5	160 (1987)	117
Denmark	5	18,450 (1988)	4
Benin	4.5	390 (1987)	52
Iceland	0.25	21,660 (1987)*	1
Bolivia	6	570 (1988)	38
Uruguay	3	2,470 (1988)	1
Indonesia	174	440 (1988)	659
Japan	122	21,020 (1988)	5
Sudan	23	480 (1988)	135
Netherlands	14.5	14,520 (1987)	5
Sweden	8	19,300 (1988)	5
Papua New Guinea	3.7	810 (1988)	849

\* Per capita GNP.

This, then, brings about the topic of the “value” of languages, a concept that will be used frequently in this study. While the value others place on languages can affect its economic functionality and value, it is also true that perhaps there is economic value of certain languages that make that language use more productive than others. Aside from language being the most efficient communicative system we have, specific languages that are widely spoken (i.e. global languages such as English) increase said efficiency. Why is this? As Coulmas hypothesizes, it is possible that the number of people speaking a certain language give value to that language. The size of the speech community is often empirically shown to result in the utility of that language. Thus, such languages are typically used in the “establishment of economically beneficial relationships. The opportunities in this regard of a member of a speech community of ten are undoubtedly better than those of the members of a two-member speech community” (1992). Even countries like South Africa that are traditionally multilingual still see only a few of its many languages displaying their value in the labour market. This, however, is the common issue with multilingual societies; language resources are not equally distributed and certain languages lack the “capital” that other languages have. Linguistic capital is often symbolically displayed in multilingual countries through language policies.



## **2.2 Multilingualism and Language Policy**

As researchers state, the education language policy reflects and indeed contributes to national development (Inglis 2008) by, in effect, managing cultural diversity. Laitin's *Language Repertoires and State Construction in Africa* (1992), which relies on data about language interests, use, and change, offers an overview perspective of language's effects on social, political, and political ideology. Laitin uses the principles of game theory in analyzing the influence of language outcomes in Africa as a whole. He concentrates on how once aspect of nation-building relies on the attempts of states to manage the language repertoires of their citizens. His focus on repertoires displays the overlapping use of different languages, by the same people, in different contexts. "It comprehends multilingualism as the norm, rather than as the exceptional case where a person goes beyond the mother tongue" (Laitin 1992).

Multilingualism, however, must be managed, and this is usually done through policies. The issue with language planning in particular, however, is that depending on the policy, language policies are capable of changing or reinforcing patterns of development and dominant social relationships (Alexander 2007). Because language is a primary pillar of socialization, policies can affect socialization processes within the institutions that uphold and enforce these policies. Education in particular is seen not only as an institution, but a social setting where students of multicultural backgrounds gather. Current reform of educational systems, namely through language policies, is an attempt to do away with the colonial "order of dependency" to reflect the current social landscape (Woolman 2009). Education is then seen as an agency of cultural transmission that should better reflect and be integrated in the process of nation-building (Woolman 2009).

## **2.3 Language Policy in Education and Economic Agency**

Language policy in education has been a contentious topic ever since former colonies in countries like Africa, Asia and South America have gained independence and have attempted to break linguistic colonial ties (UNESCO 2010). While the 1953 UNESCO publication highlighted the importance of educating children in their mother tongue, many countries, especially in Africa, tend to continue using their former colonial language in both language of instruction and governance. As the UNESCO report "Why and How Africa Should Invest in African Languages and Multilingual Education" states, Africa not only is the sole continent whereby a majority of children start schooling with a foreign language, but across the continent, "the idea persists that the international languages of wider communication are the only means for upward mobility" (2010). Bourdieu also recognizes this trend, noting that the value of linguistic capital is usually highlighted in the schooling system. "The educational system is a crucial object of struggle because it has a monopoly over the production of the mass of producers and consumers, and hence over the reproduction of the market on which the value of

linguistic competence depends, in other words its capacity to function as linguistic capital” (1977). Therefore, the focus has shifted to teaching in the languages that hold sway in economic and cultural power relations. This attentiveness to languages of high status is further encouraged by the continent’s marginalization and exclusion from global knowledge creation and production.

Due to the fact that the school is a training ground before students enter more lucrative areas of the labor force, the language in which the learning is conducted can act as a socializing factor when students consider languages of increased opportunity. Those with dominant competence in the language of power can only secure its position through imposing it on the “legitimate linguistic markets (education, administration, high society, etc.)” (Bourdieu 1977). Thus, the linguistic hierarchy in a given place will require agents to be subjected to the linguistic market, which can act either as a positive or negative reinforcement, which consequently can structure the agent’s appreciation or perception of the state of the linguistic market and also their own personal strategies for acting in it. Therefore, the main relationship that I am testing will be how language attitudes informed by characteristics such as home language use, race, and socio-economic status will inform the sense of economic agency that students have.

By the concept of “economic agency”, I mean to capture attitudes about how language factors into employment and learning employment-related terminology in certain languages. The concept of “agency” in and of itself is a problematic one; linguistic anthropologists often use in it the sense that language is a social action and a cultural resource (Ahearn 2001) and not simply a conduit for transmitting information. Agency, as Ahearn seeks to define it and as I adopt in this study, refers to the “socioculturally mediated capacity to act” (2001), which is to say that agency does not imply free will but neither does it imply the absence of the capacity to act. Rather, it is a capacity to act that is bounded by history and structure. This study defines agency, particularly economic agency, as an actor’s optimization of skills (such as language competencies) and decisions (such as which languages to gain competency in) based on sociocultural constraints (i.e. what constitutes ‘language[s] of mobility’ in a given society’) that will help them succeed in the workplace. What constitutes agency for each person is not the same, then; the “multiplicity of motivations behind all human actions” (2001) lies at the core of this definition.

One study that notes the relationship of economic agency and language is in Flowerdew and Miller’s (2008) study of three Hong Kong students’ investment in English. Although all three students benefitted professionally from this language investment, their relative successes were affected by another factor. The student from a relatively better socioeconomic background received a stronger result of his investment—a master’s degree and a prestigious job that used English as the medium of communication. Flowerdew and Miller stated that agency was enabling yet structurally constrained; “learners may be constrained on the one

hand, by the social world in which they find themselves, but at the same time are active participants in creating this social world on the other” (Flowerdew & Miller, 2008)”.

Few studies make use of the idea that students can derive perceptions about what languages will be valued in the economy depending on the “languages of power” in their university, which is structured by the university’s language policy. A handful of studies have come close to this concept; one reason for the dearth of literature could be because language and economic impacts is never something that can be directly correlated. Language may have a marginal effect on perceptions of job opportunities one is able to pursue, but one cannot isolate such factors when seeking an explanation on how language policy informs differing senses of economic agency. Bruthiaux, however, attempts to connect the two broadly; he restates what many scholars in language policy enforcement in development countries say, which is that the demand for English language education is seen to be motivated by a desire to break with past deprivations and to share in the fruits of globalization. In other words, more jobs and opportunities are expected with learning English. Bruthiaux argues, however, that this primary focus on English language in teaching can potentially divert resources. “In many cases, economic development projects have been tied to educational efforts delivered via a language with national or international reach rather than in a local vernacular, reflecting a mismatch between language education policy and language use in the communities” (Bruthiaux 2002). In order to achieve a better understanding on what general implications language-in-education policies can have on student perceptions, one must see it within a context such as South Africa’s.

#### **2.4 Language-in-Education Policy and Perceptions in South Africa**

Past research looks at how language policy in education can impact student perceptions. Napier provides an introductory look at South Africa’s language policy in education with a relatively optimistic light. Napier’s historical content analysis, through which she compares language-in-education during Apartheid with current policies attempts to show that indigenous languages now have “equal status”, an attempt with which this research paper disagrees. Likewise, a similar study that was conducted by Goldschmidt would also disagree with Napier’s findings. The Goldschmidt study, after which the research methodology for this paper was loosely modeled, looks solely at how identity was affected in an Afrikaans medium university. Goldschmidt analyzes perceptions of student identity in different contexts (home, school, and friends) and within the background of Apartheid. She shows that identity perceptions are addressed in relation to the enforcement of the language policy. A tie between political change and language identity in South Africa (by way of the university’s language policy) is established by retrospectively analyzing language relations in education in 1994 with how they are today. After providing historical and current sociolinguistic context, Goldschmidt provides surveys at Rand Afrikaans University to determine “self-perception” which she links as being based on

ethnicity and native language. A questionnaire was designed to “tap into the students’ sense of identity in the post-Apartheid era”. By requesting information like demographic and language background information, categorical scales of identity, and ratings of the importance of certain languages, it is concluded that self-perception and identity in South Africa are constantly being renegotiated depending on the policies that institutions impose. While the Goldschmidt study is similar to this study, this paper will focus more on whether students of different language backgrounds will feel differently about their abilities in pursuing jobs (or what I call “economic agency”) that normally favor Afrikaans and English.

Another study by Brenda Liebowitz investigates student opinions of academic success based on language capabilities. This study displays student perceptions about how the language policy of Stellenbosch University affects students’ academic performances. One conclusion drawn is that some English and African-speaking students find the Afrikaans language difficult to understand in classroom settings, thereby affecting academic success. Liebowitz’s focus is on the immediate impacts of the language policy. In contrast, my research will enable students to project to their future jobs and see in what ways the current language policy will impact them. For example, questions like “Do you prefer learning career-related terminology in language X or Y” inevitably makes students question which language (English, Afrikaans, or an indigenous language) they anticipate using.

How policies affect perception of languages is discussed in the book *Global Issues in Language, Education, and Development*, where Kathleen Heugh notes English’s undeniable positive disposition. This, however, does not imply that there are negative attitudes to African languages in general. Such an assumption should be avoided. Yet, findings display that while parents are likely to choose the language of higher status, they are more likely to choose a bilingual option if it is presented. Heugh says that a plethora of evidence and small-sample studies suggest that people close to urban and metropolitan areas are “interpreted to indicate a distinct preference for English only” (Rassool 2007). Clearly, language follows a trend based on the economic opportunities available and perhaps even the concentration of multiethnic identities. There are, however, underlying issues; according to Heugh’s work, 35% of South Africans feel “frustrated at not being able to access public signs, official notices, letters from banks, and job advertisements in their own languages” (Rassool 2007).

Based on previous literature, one can see that the themes of language, perceptions of social/academic success and identity appear in the analyses of language policy in education. Most research has focused on the implications of certain policies, whereas others (like Goldschmidt’s and Liebowitz’s pieces) look to student perceptions about these policies. They are exploratory in trying to discover how these policies affect a student’s social identity and academic success, especially if the language prescribed for pedagogy is not the student’s

mother tongue. These pieces bring up relevant points about the social and institutional effects; none, however, has brought up the topic about students expanding and thinking about the language policy's impact on future jobs and earnings in the South African context. If these ideas of immediate environments are affected to some degree by language policy, then language policy should have effects on the perception of economic agency, as I am hypothesizing. Since language of education determines particular career-related terminology and jargon that one will use, students may have different perceptions about the value and use of high-status languages (English and Afrikaans) versus indigenous ones in the economic sphere. This question warrants discovering perception of the students in the predominantly Afrikaans university to see what they expect in their future economic environment.

My hypothesis is that those who are in the Bantu population and associated with traditional African languages will voice more complex, if not inconsistent, views on their ideas of the use of indigenous languages in certain spheres (home, social) versus other spheres (education, economic). They will display a complicated sense of where the language is "supposed" to be used. Aside from practicality issues, there is also a utilization dilemma partly because of the notion of "static maintenance syndrome" voiced by African scholars, which says that there is a feeling among minority language speakers that there is no place in "high status" areas for their languages since the languages of utilization are more global languages like English. Also, due to how socio-economic status is related with employment, I hypothesize that those with higher SES values will be less likely to want African languages integrated into economic affairs and also less likely to view the importance of multilingualism. The perception assessments for using African languages in the economy and the value of multilingualism are both measured by Likert scale values 1-5, with one signifying "not possible/do not agree" and five signifying "very possible/completely agree". Ethnicity and SES, the independent variables, are categorized for simplification purposes; ethnicity has three groups (1- white, 2-coloured, 3-Bantu) and SES has five levels ranging from working class to upper class. These descriptions will be reiterated in the quantitative analysis section.

## CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

The overarching goal of this paper is to investigate perceptions of how language and power intersect, particularly in regards to economic opportunities. High-prestige languages can often be seen linked with high-status jobs, which may allow for a “linguistic hegemony” to firstly, structure an individual’s opinions about the significance of their language(s), and secondly, impacts an individual’s economic agency or self-perceived ability to obtain certain jobs and positions. Language acts as symbolic capital. The methods used in data assessment are both qualitative and quantitative in nature. Thus, this chapter will first outline the conceptual framework by which the data will be analyzed, which is through Critical Discourse Analysis and the Ruiz typology. Next, the data collection methods will be described. Finally, using univariate statistics of the data from the surveys, the paper will provide a demographic overview of the students surveyed.

### 3.1 Conceptual Framework: Critical Discourse Analysis

As a form of viewing language as a social function, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a method of analysis that views language as a form of practice wherein political and social power is situated. Based on Norman Fairclough’s landmark publication *Language and Power* (1989), CDA explores the relationship between language and power through means of analysis in political discourse, media, advertisement, race, ideology, and institutional discourse. It thus represents the “synthesis of linguistic method, objects of analysis, and political commitment that have become the trademark of CDA” (Bloemmart 2005). Aside from Fairclough, others who are known as leading scholars in the CDA field are Ruth Wodak, and Paul Chilton, among others (van Dijk, Wetherell, Billig, Kress, van Leeuwen, etc.). CDA, which draws heavily on the social sciences and humanities, was “founded on the premises that linguistic analysis could provide a valuable additional perspective for the existing approaches to social critique” (Bloemmart 2005).

The analysis can take form in three primary ways: analysis of spoken or written text; analysis of discourse practice (i.e., text production); and analysis of discursive practice as examples of “sociocultural practice” (i.e., ideological effects and hegemonic processes) (Fairclough 1999; Bloemmart 2005). Within these areas, there are certain levels of analysis that can be conducted. Fairclough differentiates these through the micro, meso, and macro levels. The micro level is one wherein the discourse analyzed is through the text’s syntax and linguistic elements; the meso level analyzes how text is produced and consumed; and finally, the macro level uses the text in order to understand broader societal trends. CDA is not known to constitute a specific “school” of study, nor is it a specialization; it is rather an approach or perspective of theorizing. It rejects the concept of “value-free” science and argues that discourse will be affected by social structure (Van Dijk 2001).

Wodak specifically used CDA in the 1970s to analyze the use of language in social institutions, wherein the relations between language, ideology, and power could be displayed. Thus, through texts and talk, one sees how language plays a significant role in social and political control. Wodak and Fairclough (1997) extract the primary elements of CDA in the following way:

1. CDA addresses social problems
2. Power relations are discursive
3. Discourse constitutes society and culture
4. Discourse does ideological work
5. Discourse is historical
6. The link between text and society is mediated
7. Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory
8. Discourse is a form of social action.

My thesis will use CDA at the macro level as a perspective by which I can analyze transcribed interviews with students and faculty at Stellenbosch University, as well as written portions of a survey that was handed to nearly 500 students. I will pair the CDA framework with the Ruiz typology for the qualitative interview assessment. The Ruiz typology comes from Ruiz's 1984 "Orientations in Language Policy" paper which discusses how language policies can have three nominal orientations: language as a resource, language as a problem, and language as a right. While this was a heuristic approach to studying basic issues in policy planning, his orientations are used in this paper to categorize students' complex dispositions toward languages in a multilingual society. These orientations are thus the framework for which language attitudes can be cleanly captured. While simple, this typology has allowed sociolinguists to understand the origin and implementation strategies of language policies in managing language practices. "Language as a problem" displays the disposition that policy planners believe language as a problem which policies can attempt to fix; such problems that language can present are language stratification and literacy, as well as the issue that languages can often be associated with certain occurrences like poverty or low educational achievement. "Language as a right" is an orientation wherein the consideration of a language exists as a basic right, whether through representation in governmental programs or the right to use certain languages in education. It is understood that the discrimination of a language can act as a barrier to many areas, such as skill development. Finally, "language as a resource" is characterized as an idea that can alleviate conflicts presented by the prior two orientations. If language is seen as a resource, it can enhance the status of a "subordinate" language and ease societal tensions between majority and minority groups. These orientations will act as the framework by which this research can label and categorize student perceptions.

In using CDA as a lens and the Ruiz typology as a method of analysis, I want to primarily see how discourse through the interviews and surveys reveal how Stellenbosch's institutional enforcement of using Afrikaans and English 1) structures student opinion about the value of their own languages; and 2) informs or

affects their views on their place in the local and/or global economy. In these two analyses, I ultimately seek to discover how language and power act as lenses by which students view their educational settings and future career tracks. The question is to see how perceptions of language and power structure student opinions of who gets what kinds of jobs based on language fluency and repertoire; due to the setting of this research, I also aim to see how a tertiary education system can be the source of institutionally reproduced power. Thus, the domains being analyzed are education and economics; using CDA will help to uncover how structure (as defined by the university's language policy) and agency (according to student perception) operates in a historically Afrikaans university. This analysis will be conducted through two phases. Phase one lays out the description and overview of the interviews conducted and the surveys collected. In the second phase, I will interpret the materials through a CDA perspective to see in what ways participants display an ideological framework at play in their perceptions of language and economic agency.

### **3.2 Design and Data Collection**

The design for this research involved using multi-leveled interviews and surveys with Stellenbosch University's students, administration, and faculty. These data were collected in my field research at Stellenbosch University in summer of 2011. The survey, which is found in Appendix B, addressed a variety of topics that dealt with language use and perceptions, economic agency, and identity. The key goal of the survey was not necessarily to isolate language as a factor, since this cannot be done, but rather to use a structured survey in which the different sections would help students think of their future prospects terms of language use and proficiency. Especially valuable to later analysis are Likert-scaled questions that targeted the values of multilingualism and using traditional languages in the workforce. The target population for the surveys was undergraduate students of all ethnicities and languages who study at Stellenbosch University. It is highly important to note that the focus was on undergraduates instead of graduates due to different language policies used by each population; whereas undergraduates are required to have some level of proficiency in Afrikaans to understand lectures and exams, the graduate work is conducted almost solely in English. The sample size was 508 subjects which was narrowed to 455 when excluding those who failed to input key survey answers. In some points of analyses, the N changes based on the missing data for each variable, but on whole, the N remains between 451-455.

The interviews were conducted with a total nearly 22 students (13 one-on-one students interviews and three focus groups with three students in each) and eight professors. Unlike the structured surveys, the interviews were semi-structured, so as to allow for openness in the trajectory of the conversation and to allow for clarification when needed. The basic interview inquiries are attached in Appendix A. As the principal investigator in this research, I recruited participants, obtained consent, and administered the study. The primary



means of recruiting student interviewees was through university hostels; after briefly describing the study to the heads of the hostels, a snow-ball sample would be taken from the first small group of participants. Although the researcher made sure to interview students from various backgrounds, a bias of snow-ball sampling is that participants chose students that were relatively close acquaintances, which could indicate a shared set of values or beliefs about some of the questions the interview posed. Therefore, interview results may exhibit overlaps in certain opinions. This, along with the fact that only 15 students were interviewed, indicates that the results may not be indicative of an actual trend. At the same time, however, the researched snow-ball sampled from a number of different students. These interviews were conducted in English; while most students were proficient in this language, this often was a student's second or third language. Nonetheless, this did not appear to limit the manner in which students explained their views or expressed themselves. However, this may have posed a possible limitation in the kind of students I was able to recruit. Since this was a snowball sample, interviewees would have known to only contact students who were semi-proficient in English. Thus, students from different background who may not have had strong communicative English skills may not have been considered by interviewees during the snowball sample, which in turn can prevent this paper from exploring deeper, richer levels of the topic at hand. The quantitative assessments through the surveys are intended to supplement the individual student-based perceptions by providing a bigger picture.

The concepts I am using in this study are those that involve language perceptions with the individual (i.e., what is your home/school/work language) and with the individual's feelings about society, particularly the economy (i.e., how do you view multilingualism; do African languages have a role in the economy). The variables are first identifying the linguistic and socio-economic background of the respondent and then move to perceptions about language use in South African economy.

- I. Independent variables: I have chosen to look at the independent variables, ethnicity and socio-economic status. These were identifying write-in questions on the survey which were re-coded after the fact. For simplification purposes, this was further re-categorized in the bivariate analysis into white (Afrikaans, English), black (Zulu/Xhosa/Namibian/Ovambo/etc.) and coloured (Indians, Muslims, etc.). This can be seen in univariate section. For socio-economic status, there are essentially five levels: upper, upper-middle, middle, lower, and working classes. For the multivariate regression, these were re-categorized into "high SES", "mid SES", and "low SES".
- II. Dependent variables: This research will be looking at two Likert-scale variables. Both address student perceptions about language in the labor market. The first asks whether multilingualism is valuable in the economic sphere. The second asks whether African languages can play a part in the economy. Because the most important variables are the opinions about language use in the economy, these are Likert-scale variables measured 1 (complete disagreement) to 5 (agreement). There are five opinion questions that are coded 1-5 in the data. These concepts will be affected by the independent variables since different

opinions may be formed based on different backgrounds (race, home language, and even socio-economic status).

III. Mediating Variables: One thing that may have affect language perceptions is the individual socio-economic statuses of respondents as well as the jobs that they pursue. Both of these are variables in the survey. For example, if someone is in a lower-class SES, perhaps the way to upward mobility depends on knowledge of the languages of economic importance (English and Afrikaans) and less of an emphasis on the African languages (like Zulu and Xhosa). This can happen to people who are both English/Afrikaner and of Zulu/Xhosa origin. Another mediating variable is the types of jobs that these students want to pursue. For those pursuing social work and related fields, knowledge of indigenous languages will be important. If, on the other hand, the student aims for business or law, more emphasis is placed on English and Afrikaans. Therefore, the career aspirations and SES backgrounds could have an influence on perceptions of language importance.

For methods in this study, I will be relying primarily on bivariate analysis through chi-squared measures. This is largely because there are a fixed number of categories for each variable that will limit the tests that I am able to run with them. The link between age and language perceptions is one that is difficult to theorize, although it may not be impossible. One could say that as the maturity of the students increase, perhaps there is more disillusionment on how languages could be used in certain spheres. The opposite theory could also work. Nevertheless, I will be conducting primarily bivariate and chi-squared analyses.

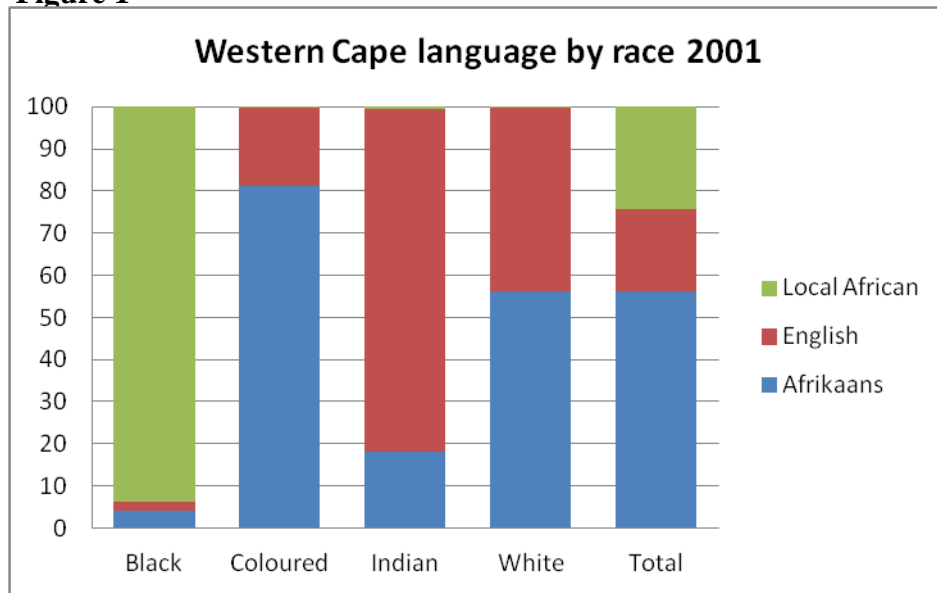
### **3.3 Research Setting: Stellenbosch University as Case Study**

This study takes place in a university setting, particularly one of the strongest universities in South Africa, partly due to the impact that tertiary education has on forming student perceptions about the workforce. After all, the workplace is the immediate environment that tends to follow tertiary education, although its primary purpose is certainly not just to prepare Education, specifically tertiary, has a role in structuring opinions: “The status quo...has to be reproduced via education, amongst other means. Education is one of the main means of social reproduction, one of the main means by which society reproduces itself” (Alexander 1992). Thus, setting this research in a university setting that had a primarily Afrikaans language of instruction will impact the ways in which student are aware of language choices and the linkages between in-class learning and professional development. It is noted that Stellenbosch University is one of the few remaining Afrikaans medium universities in the country and that it represents a pillar to Afrikaner life. The location itself is in the Western Cape, where language use differs slightly more, particularly in favor of Afrikaans, than other regions. Below is a distribution of language by race based on the 2001 census:

**Table 2. Race by Language**

		Language			
		Afrikaans	English	Local African	Total
Race	Black	4.1	2.11	93.78	100
	Coloured	81.08	18.69	0.23	100
	Indian	18.04	81.48	0.48	100
	White	56.3	43.48	0.22	100
	Total	56.16	19.59	24.25	100

**Figure 1**

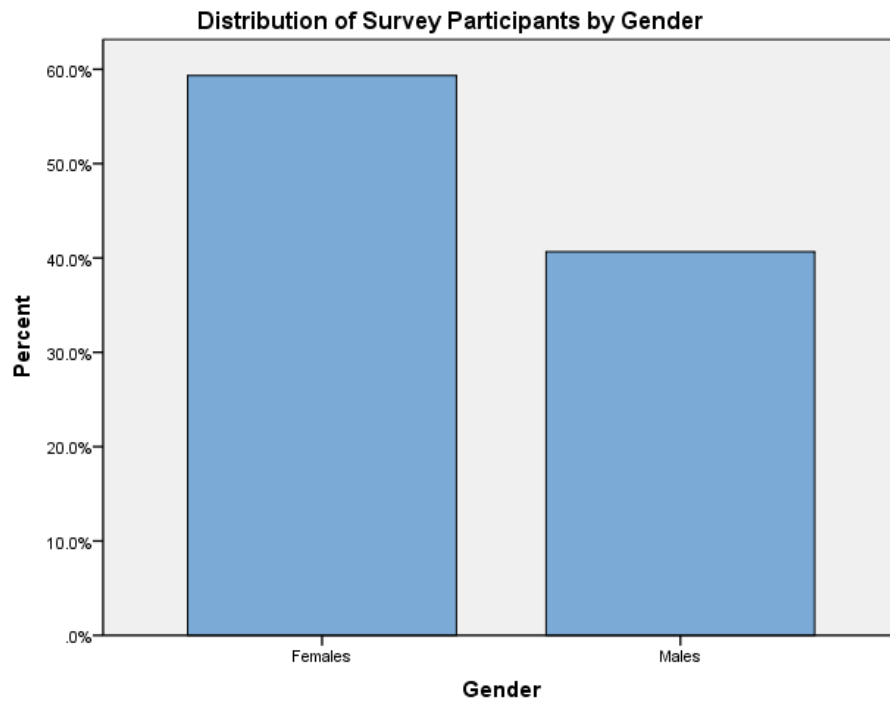


Stellenbosch University is also a unique case in that the Afrikaans language is now facing tension within the country, rivaling its once equally strong national language of English. Its historical profile is also unique; Stellenbosch, as one of the oldest European settlements in South Africa, was a white-only community during the apartheid era. Thus, its language attachment and history make it an interesting backdrop in which one can see not only the stance of traditional languages, but how Afrikaans now rivals English.

### **3.4 Participant Profiles: Descriptive Statistics**

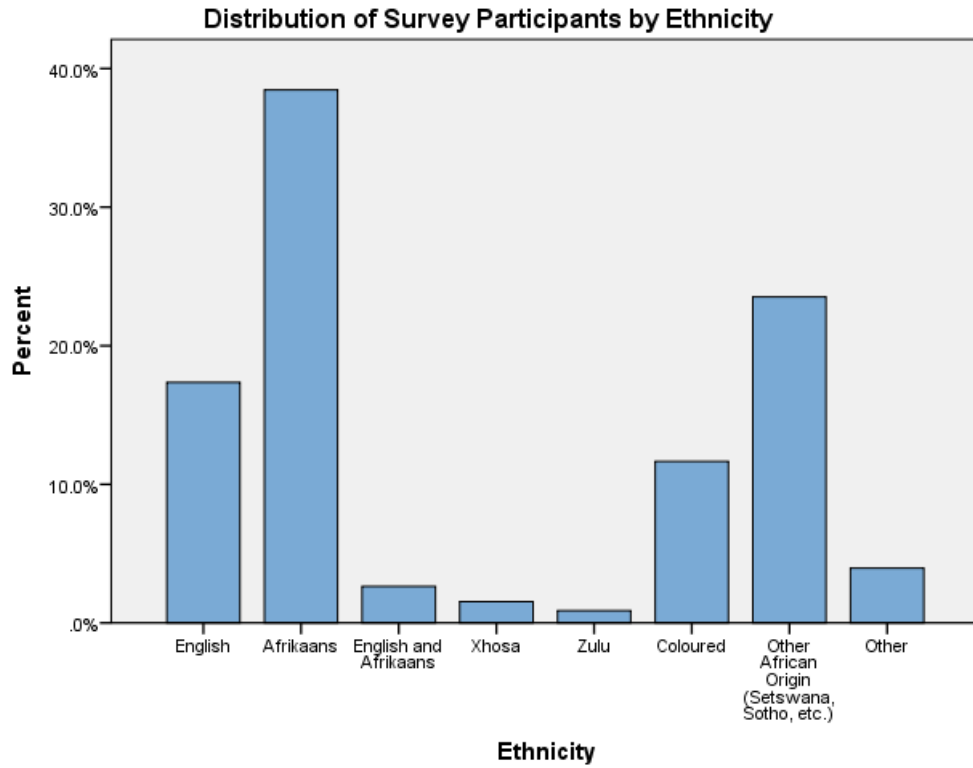
The student profiles were diverse and rich, which will act as a benefit in this study. As the graphs below show, the gender ratio in survey responses was in favor of females with 59.3% of the representation, whereas there was a 40.7% representation from males.

**Figure 2**



Due to numerous subgroups, the variable “ethnicity” was attempted to simplify the broad representation of ethnicities by specifically categorizing the most popular traditional African groups whereas others that occurred with lower frequency were combined into an “other traditional Africans” category. While simplification presents many problems in recognizing the individual groups, it also allows for a better quantitative analysis that could better display significant results.

**Figure 3**



As one can see, the majority of the students self-identified as being from the Afrikaaner background, which is expected given the location and status of Stellenbosch University. This group comprised of 38.5% of survey participants. The next largest group, surprisingly, were those who belonged to “other traditional African” ethnicities, like Setswana and Sotho, which individually occurred at lower levels but collectively accounted for 23.5% of the participants. Interestingly, there seemed to be a low representation of the most popular African groups, Xhosa and Zulu, within survey participants. The numerical breakdown of ethnicities is as follows:

**Table 3. Ethnicity**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	English	79	17.4	17.4	17.4
	Afrikaans	175	38.5	38.5	55.8
	English and Afrikaans	12	2.6	2.6	58.5
	Xhosa	7	1.5	1.5	60.0
	Zulu	4	.9	.9	60.9
	Coloured	53	11.6	11.6	72.5
	Other African Origin (Setswana, Sotho, etc.)	107	23.5	23.5	96.0
	Other	18	4.0	4.0	100.0

Total	455	100.0	100.0
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Due to the complexity of this variable, I changed it to three groups: white, black, and coloured. This was done by superficially collapsing the previous groups. Aside from this change, everything remains the same. After combining the data in age, year of study, and language attitudes, I was left with about 455 valid cases of the total 508 cases. Since ethnicity can be closely tied to language skills, participants were asked to provide both the language which was spoken at home, which is often but not always their first language, and also the language they thought themselves to be most proficient in. From these two graphs, one can see that the languages most chosen in proficiency and language one is raised up in falls in English and Afrikaans.

**Figure 4**

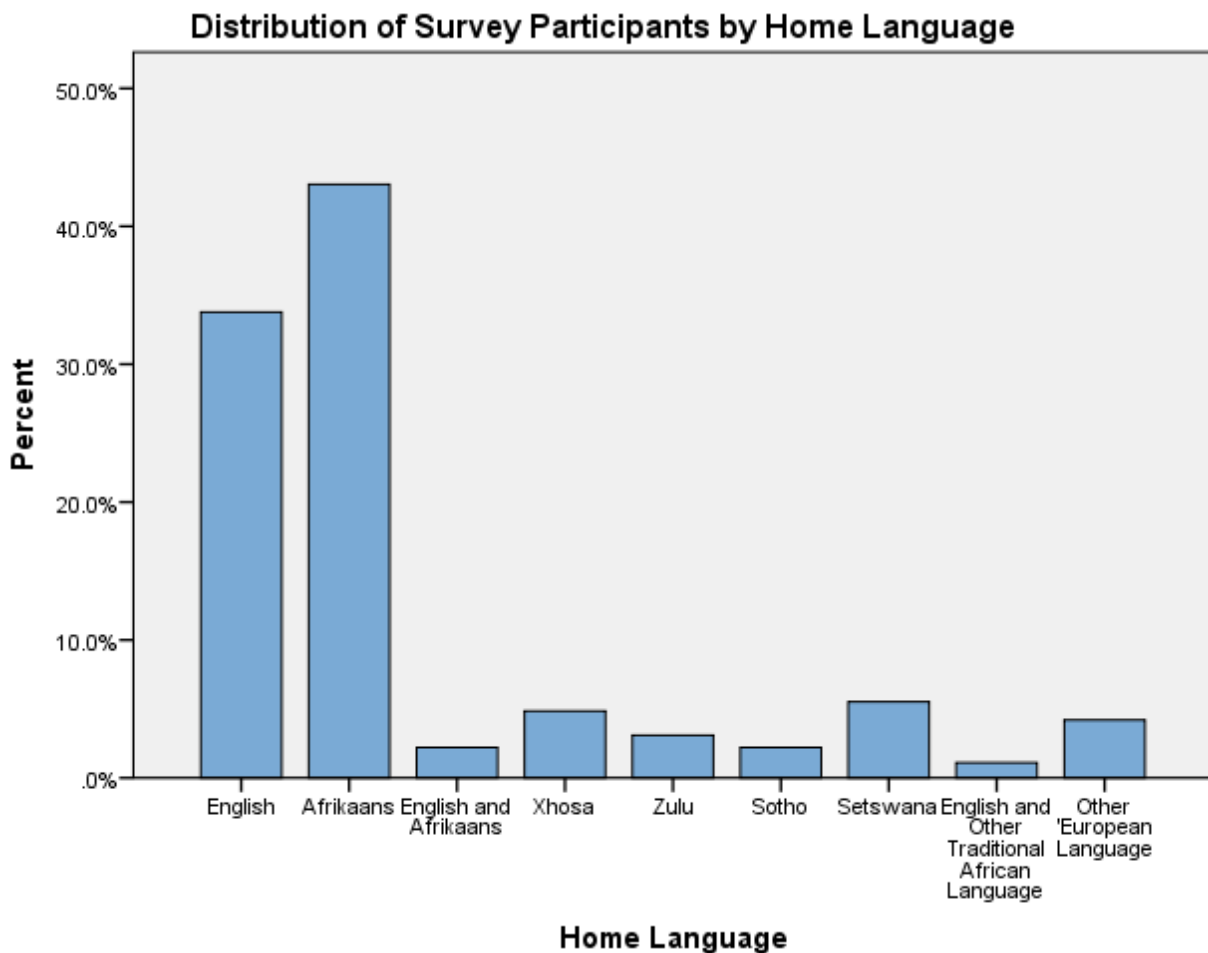
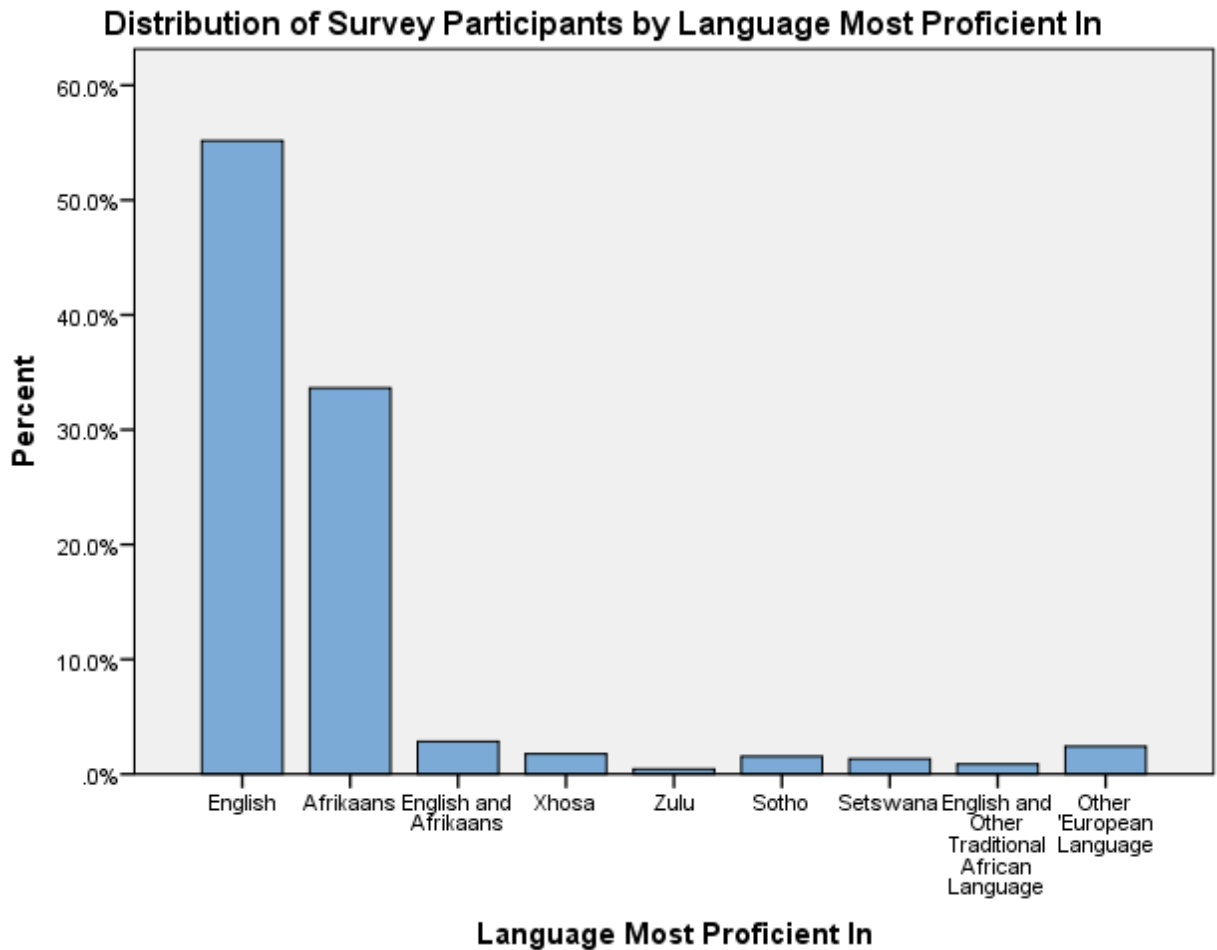


Figure 5

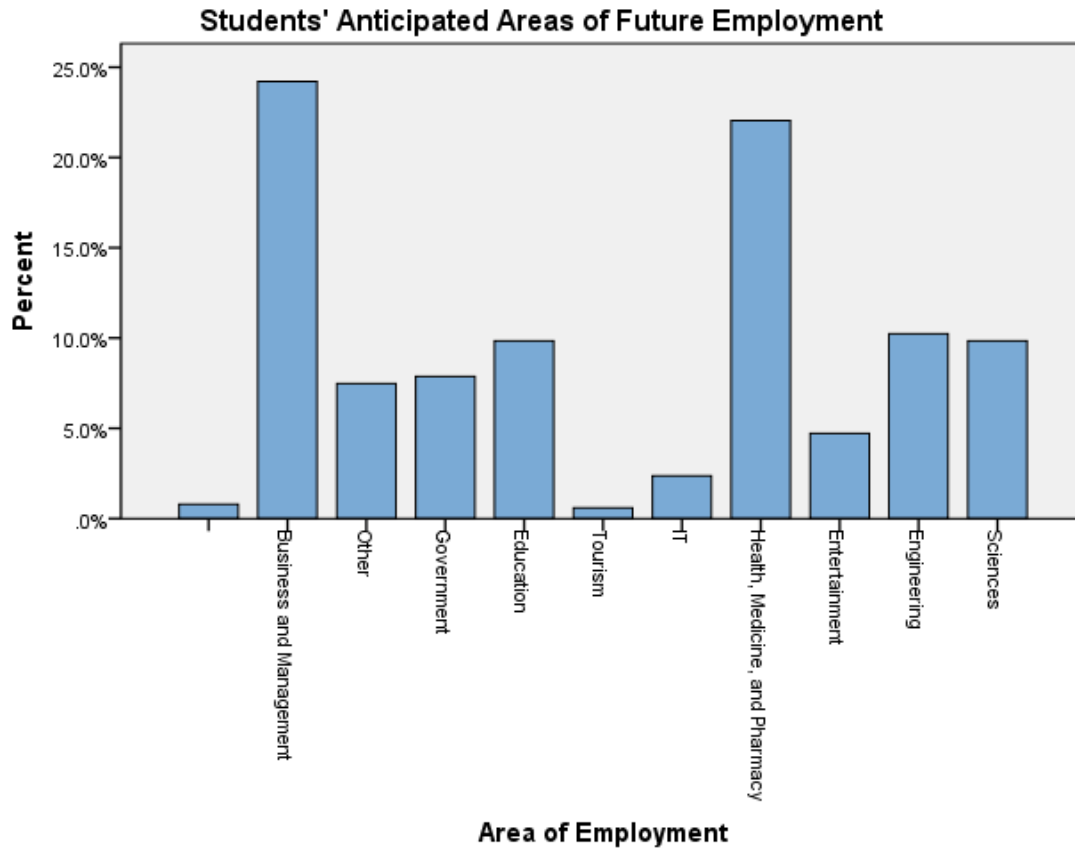


For age, there was a 20-year range, with the youngest participant being 18 and the oldest, 38. The mean age was around 20 and the variation among the data was 2.8 years. For the year of study, there was a four-year range, with the youngest being first years and oldest being fifth years. The mean was 1.6 with a variation in years of .925 in the distribution.

The language opinions were conducted on a Likert scale; the two most important opinions revolved around 1) whether multilingualism was an economic benefit and 2) whether indigenous African languages had a place in the economic sector. The mean opinion value for the first question was 4.45 out of 5 (which indicates “strong agreement”), whereas the mean opinion value for the second question was 3.22 out of 5 (which indicates almost close to a neutral stance).

Finally, due to the economic component of this study, students were asked to describe the general sector they hoped to get in to. The graph below suggests that the majority of students wanted to get into both Business/Management and Health/Medicine/Pharmacy for employment, which, as gathered from interviews, were what constituted some of the “higher” status jobs in South Africa, whereas areas like government and IT are not so prominently held.

**Figure 6**



With this overview of student profiles and a look of how the surveys were distributed, data analyses can now be conducted to see whether relationships between language preferences, future and current socio-economic statuses, and ethnicity play a role in determining whether multilingualism in the economy is seen as reality or simply a symbolic provision in the national language policy.



# CHAPTER 4

## DATA ANALYSIS

This section will feature the quantitative survey outputs and interview analyses, as viewed through the CDA framework. I analyze the ways in which students perceive their language skills and multilingualism to affect future employability and economic opportunities. This analysis will primarily make use of two Likert-scale values of “the value of multilingualism in the workplace” and “the value of traditional languages in the workplace” to see how both perceptions behave in response to student ethnicities and SES statuses. I expect that the two Likert scale variables to be perceived differently, even though using traditional languages in the workplace can be seen as a subset of the wider value of multilingualism in the workplace. This theory is confirmed by a simple paired t-test of these two Likert-scale variables:

**Table 4A. Paired Samples Statistics and Test**  
**Paired Samples Statistics**

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	MultImp	4.55	484	.858	.039
	AfrLangEcon	3.14	484	1.353	.061

**Table 4B. Paired Samples Correlations**

<b>Paired Samples Correlations</b>				
		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	MultImp & AfrLangEcon	484	.237	.000

**Table 4C. Paired Samples Test**

		<b>Paired Differences</b>				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower				Upper
Pair 1	MultImp - AfrLangEcon	1.403	1.420	.065	1.276	1.530	21.729	483	.000

As the samples statistics table displays, the value of multilingualism in the workplace has a higher mean, 4.55 of 5, than the value of using an African language in the workplace, which is 3.14 of 5. The standard deviation for the latter is much larger, suggesting that the range of Likert-scale values was more widely distributed than the value of multilingualism. Thus, there seems to be relatively more conformity and agreement regarding the value of multilingualism than the value of using an African language. With the 2-tailed significance value being .000, we can conclude that there is a statistical difference in how these two Likert scale variables were valued.

## 4.1 Survey Analysis

### 4.1.1 BIVARIATE ANALYSIS

#### Ethnicity and Language Perceptions

One important identifier affiliated with the use of language is ethnicity. Those who are of a European background in South Africa tend to speak “languages of power” and mobility (English and/or Afrikaans) whereas those who are of the Bantu ethnicities are more likely to have mother tongues that are less significant in power.

#### A. Multilingualism in the Workplace and Ethnicity

I predict that the importance of multilingualism in the economic environment will be relatively more valued by ethnicities associated with the Bantu population (who speak Xhosa, Zulu). This is because English and Afrikaans are the languages of primary use in education, politics, and employment. Therefore, those who speak English and Afrikaans will value multilingualism less relative to those of Bantu languages who need to learn English/Afrikaans and are thus more multilingual than those who can comfortably get by with their native language. This hypothesis will be tested by using two categorical variables: the first variable, ethnicity, is categorized in three levels. The ethnicities were re-categorized in the following ways: the first level (1) are all those in the white population (Afrikaners, English, mixed Afrikaners and English, German); the second level (2) is the Bantu population (Xhosa, Zulu, etc.); and the third level (3) is the “coloured” population of South Africa (Indians and Muslims). The ethnicities were simplified due to insufficient N values for each different ethnicity. Here is how the simplified ethnic variables were organized:

**Table 5. Ethnicity\_Recoded**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	European	284	62.4	62.4	62.4
	Black	118	25.9	25.9	88.4
	Coloured	53	11.6	11.6	100.0
	Total	455	100.0	100.0	

The second, dependent variable is the importance of multilingualism in employment, which was measured by a Likert scale 1-5, in which 1 signified “not at all valuable” and 5 signified “highly valuable.”

A chi-squared test was conducted in order to test the association between the categorical variables of ethnicity and the Likert scale values of multilingualism in the workplace. This will be used to analyze whether there are statistical differences between different ethnic groups in respect to their value of multilingualism in the workplace.

**Table 6A. Crosstabulation**

		Count			Total
		Ethnicity			
		European	Black	Coloured	
Value of Multilingualism	1	4	3	1	8
	2	8	0	2	10
	3	20	10	1	31
	4	52	17	10	79
	5	200	88	39	327
Total		284	118	53	455

**Table 6B. Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.725 <sup>a</sup>	8	.461
Likelihood Ratio	10.897	8	.208
Linear-by-Linear Association	.301	1	.583
N of Valid Cases	455		

a. 6 cells (40.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .93.

From the chi-square output, we can see that the data set has issues; for example, six cells have an expected count of less than 5, which is not advisable for testing data as the results may be misleading. But based on the current data and output, a significant relationship does not exist between ethnicity and views on the importance of multilingualism, as shown by a significance value of .461. Thus, these two variables are independent of each other. In fact, the majority of the three simplified ethnic groups chose the value 5, which means that they believe multilingualism is highly important. There is no evidence momentarily that there is a relationship between ethnicity and the importance of multilingualism but the results could also be affected by the lack of sufficient data needed to conduct a proper chi-square test.

#### B. Traditional Bantu Languages in the Workplace and Ethnicity

I predict that the importance of using African languages in the economic environment will be relatively different from the concept of using multilingualism in the workplace. I believe the traditional languages will be more valued by ethnicities associated with the Bantu population (who speak Xhosa, Zulu) due to their level of competence in such languages relative to English and Afrikaans speakers. A chi-squared test was conducted in order to test the association between the categorical variables of ethnicity and the Likert scale values of using traditional languages in the workplace. This will be used to analyze whether there are statistical differences between different ethnic groups in respect to using these traditional languages in the economic environment.

**Table 7A. AfrLangEcon \* Ethnicity\_Recoded  
Crosstabulation**

Count		Ethnicity_Recoded			Total
		European	Black	Coloured	
AfrLangEcon	1	57	7	5	69
	2	58	13	11	82
	3	71	32	14	117
	4	50	27	10	87
	5	45	38	13	96
Total		281	117	53	451

**Table 7B. Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	28.899 <sup>a</sup>	8	.000
Likelihood Ratio	30.482	8	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	14.785	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	451		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.11.

With a significance level of .000 in a two-sided test, this indeed displays that a relationship does exist between one's ethnicity and one's ability to value the use of African languages in the economic environment. With all chi-squared requirements being met and with 0% of the cells having less than the expected count, we can conclude that this is a robust finding that highlights the survey's ethnic distribution in valuing the possible use of African languages in the economic sector.

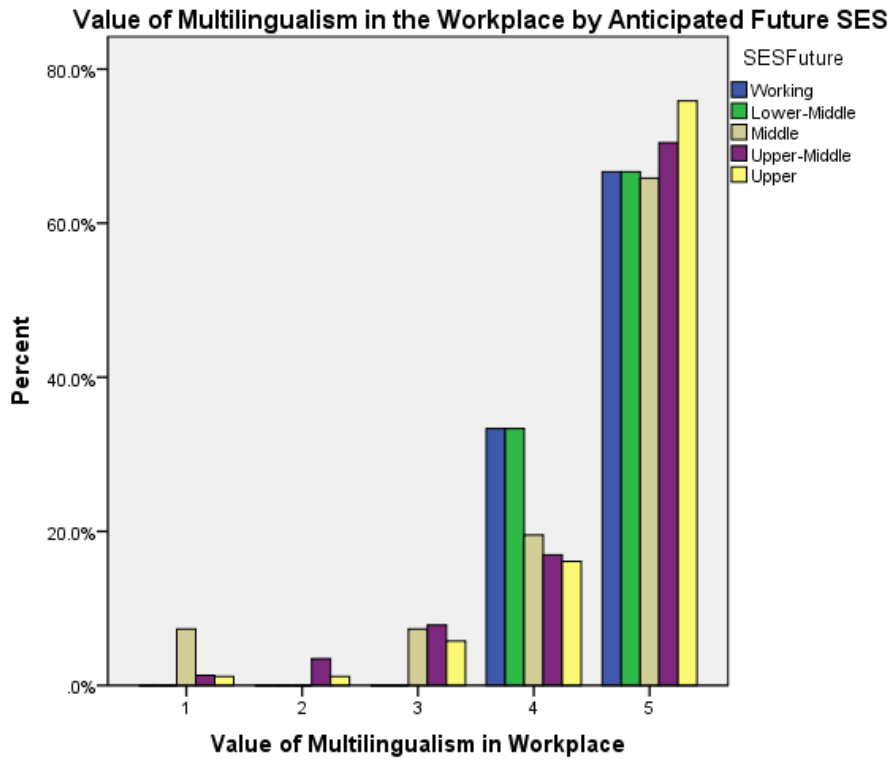
### Socio-Economic Status and Language Perceptions

As a second level of analysis, another important identifier associated with language use is socio-economic status (SES).

#### **A. Multilingualism in the Workplace and Future SES**

My hypothesis is that the higher the socioeconomic status, the lower one may value multilingualism used in the economic environment. It is widely known that in South Africa, the poor and unemployed are disproportionately black, although there is an emerging black middle class ("South Africa: Skin deep"). The variable SES is categorized by five levels wherein 1 indicates working class, 2 indicates lower-middle class, 3 indicates middle class, 4 indicates upper-middle class, and 5 indicates upper class. It is assumed that those who have a higher socio-economic status will speak the language associated with power since the high-status jobs in business and law necessitate proficiency in English and sometimes Afrikaans; therefore, a higher SES may indicate more likelihood that the subject uses the language of power in the economic environment. Socio-economic status will be used as an explanatory variable in assessing one's perceptions about the value of multilingualism. Since high-status jobs frequently require English and/or Afrikaans proficiency, there is less of a practical need for multilingualism. Therefore, it is expected that those with higher SES will express less value in the practical application of multilingualism in the work environment. However, the theoretical value of multilingualism could problematize the output. Below, we see a graph representing how students view multilingualism in the workplace by future SES. We can see that those who hope to be in the working class or lower-middle class value the idea of multilingualism in the workplace the most, by with nearly 60% ranking that it absolutely can be used (Likert level 5) and 40% believing it can be used (Likert level 4). Those who anticipate upper and upper-middle classes as a future SES status seem to be more dispersed in their opinions, as do those who wanted middle-class status.

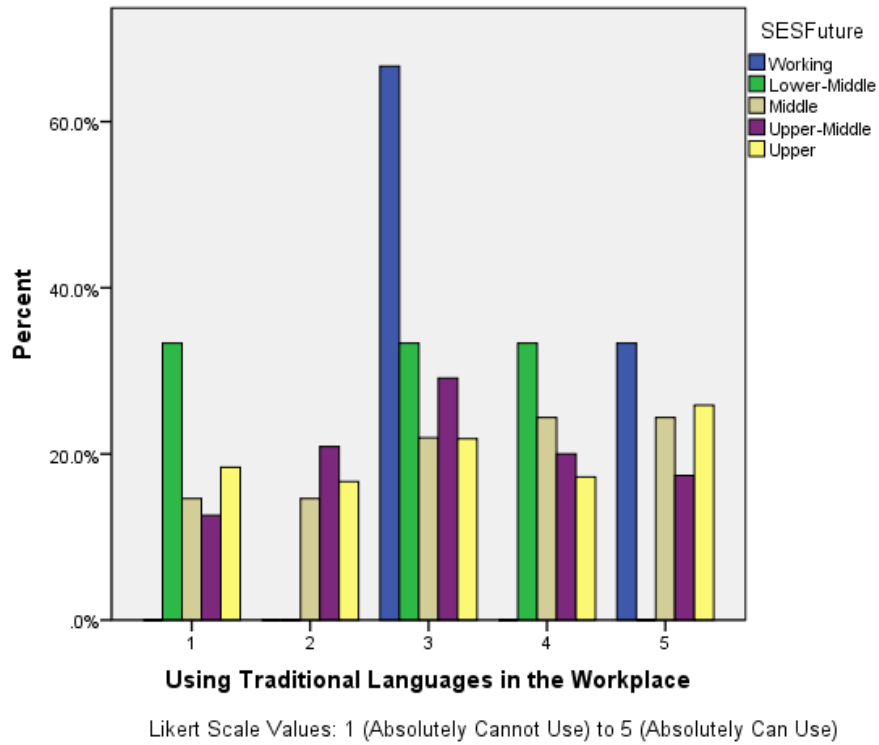
**Figure 7**



However, when opinions of multilingualism are juxtaposed with opinions of using African languages in the workplace, the comparison proves interesting. The table below shows much more variation in the possibility of using traditional African languages in the workplace. We see that nearly 65% of future working class SES students feel either ambivalent, uncertain, or unconcerned with whether these languages can play a role in the workplace, while the remaining 35% do believe that traditional languages can be used. The upper class is also more consistently divided on this issue with survey participants hovering around 20-25% for each Likert level value. The lower-middle class also seems consistently spaced out through values 1, 3, and 4 while the upper middle class seems to hover around 15-25% for each Likert level value.

**Figure 8**

**Value of Using African Languages in the Workplace by Anticipated Future SES**



With these broad trends displayed, we must now conduct statistical analyses to see if the relationship is significant.

**A. Multilingualism in the Workplace and Future SES**

**Table 8A MultiImp \* SESFuture Crosstabulation**

Count		SESFuture					Total
		1	2	3	4	5	
MultiImp	1	0	0	3	3	2	8
	2	0	0	0	8	2	10
	3	0	0	3	18	10	31
	4	1	1	8	39	28	77
	5	2	2	27	160	131	322
Total		3	3	41	228	173	448

**Table 8B Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14.290 <sup>a</sup>	16	.577
Likelihood Ratio	12.597	16	.702
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.823	1	.093
N of Valid Cases	448		

a. 16 cells (64.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .05.

Despite the trends shown in the Multilingualism and Future SES graph, the chi-squared findings suggest that a direct relationship do not exist. This is partly because more than 60% of cells have an expected count of less than five, which means that the data is unreliable in this test. With a p-value of .577, we cannot claim that these two variables are related in a significant way.

#### B. African Languages in the Workplace and Future SES

**Table 9A. AfrLangEcon \* SESFuture Crosstabulation**

Count		SESFuture					Total
		1	2	3	4	5	
AfrLangEcon	1	0	1	6	29	32	68
	2	0	0	6	47	29	82
	3	2	1	9	67	37	116
	4	0	1	10	46	30	87
	5	1	0	10	39	45	95
Total		3	3	41	228	173	448

**Table 9B. Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	16.822 <sup>a</sup>	16	.397
Likelihood Ratio	18.742	16	.282
Linear-by-Linear Association	.048	1	.827
N of Valid Cases	448		

a. 10 cells (40.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .46.



The statistical findings in how perceptions of traditional languages in the economy can be impacted by one's anticipated SES is more so represents the graph seen at the beginning of this section. We saw that there was no upward trend, unlike what the graph for the value of multilingualism showed. With a p-value of .397, we see that there is no discernible relationship between one's anticipated SES and the value of using an African language in the economy. Interestingly, however, when we look at current SES and the value of using an African language, we see that a relationship does seem to exist:

**Table 10A. AfrLangEcon \* SES Crosstabulation**

Count		SES					Total
		Working Class	Lower-Middle	Middle	Upper-Middle	Upper	
AfrLangEcon	1	4	9	27	19	10	69
	2	8	7	40	24	3	82
	3	2	20	64	28	3	117
	4	12	7	42	24	2	87
	5	10	17	36	28	5	96
Total		36	60	209	123	23	451

**Table 10B. Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	36.922 <sup>a</sup>	16	.002
Likelihood Ratio	36.011	16	.003
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.256	1	.039
N of Valid Cases	451		

a. 4 cells (16.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.52.

While the researcher does not know precisely why current SES and Future SES would act differently in relation to the variable of using an African language in the workplace, the chi-square test does indicate that a positive relationship (with a highly significant value of .002 and with only four cells having less than the expected count) exists. Thus, one's current SES and one's value of using African languages in the future does seem to be associated.

## 4.2 Interview Analysis

A key component of this study was the semi-structured interviews conducted. This comprised of 13 one-on-one students interviews and three focus groups with three students in each. The interviews focused on a variety of topics, including student perception of national and tertiary educational language policy, future economic opportunities, languages used in high-status areas, and languages in relation to employability. The focus groups were opportunities to view interaction among students of similar language backgrounds. Two focus groups comprised of students from Afrikaans and/or Dutch background while the other had students of traditional language backgrounds.

The interviews were analyzed for this paper in how students perceived and related concepts of socio-economic mobility to the language repertoire that they held. Transcriptions provided an insight into how such perceptions could be parsed, which followed well with Ruiz's notable 1984 typology of language policy orientations, wherein languages were perceived as resources, problems, and rights. It should be noted, however, that these concepts were not portrayed by each student as isolated blocks of perceptions. For instance, it was rarely the case that students conceived using a South African language as exclusively a resource or a problem. Rather, students seemed to fluctuate and present fluidity in their understanding of how various languages related to these three nominal categories.

These interviews are an important supplement to the prior quantitative analysis because it allows for the closer inspection of language attitudes and motivations that individual students possess. This is important as to see how individual perceptions are informed by outside agents and environment, in order to see how and under what conditions students believe certain languages and multilingualism to be play an influencing factor in socio-economic mobility and the importance of multilingualism in the global economy. The following types of questions were asked to all students:

What are you motivations for learning English/Afrikaans/African languages?

How do you see yourself using the aforementioned languages in your job?

Can you anticipate Afrikaans being of use in your job?

Can you anticipate traditional African languages being used in your job?

### A. Language as a Resource

In Ruiz's typology, the orientation of language as a resource is viewed in the sense that languages often have the power to act as cultural mediators instead of necessarily barriers between groups of people. Thus, it

could ease tensions with people of minority languages and those in the majority group. Languages, within this orientation, should be encouraged for use and/or acceptance in the larger society. From students' opinions, it seemed that while English is emerging as the global lingua franca, that language and culture still serve as a basis for teamwork and building rapport, both in social and economic environments. The stress was on creating a shared experience or meaning in interactions and, as echoed in the UNESCO report, that “[languages] complement each other on different scales of value, and are indispensable for the harmonious and full development of individuals and society” (2010). However, this also seemed to emerge in jobs that required the building of rapport, not only for understanding the customer, but also to enhance and improve the services offered to them. Such positions tended to be in social work or medicine, where the languages of South African speakers in Afrikaans and/or Xhosa were deemed essential for success in one's job.

Male, B. Commerce, Afrikaans:

*After graduation, I'll go into industrial psychology and then start consultation firm. I'll be interacting with a lot of older corporations, which could have more Afrikaans but I see myself forcing to pick up another language to get it all right. I think it's almost a necessity...My approach is completely out of respect; if you try to talk to them, they respect you. You also respect them because you may know more of their culture. It immediately opens you both up to communicating properly.*

“If my businesses are located in South Africa, then Afrikaans has a high ranking importance within my companies. It will allow the companies to attain competitive advantage through being on good terms with the market and being able to anticipate and determine market trends as well as allowing for customer feedback and loyalty due to the businesses catering to the specific needs and requirements of Afrikaans speaking customers.”

Other students, while recognizing the importance of speaking to people in the language they understand, place more of an emphasis that the benefits of multilingualism are not just in the sectors you will engage in, but more importantly, where such areas are in the country and whether the “urgency to learn and understand the language even exists.

Female from Limpopo (northern South Africa), Sepedi:

*I don't think they [the English and Afrikaans] want to learn the language; if they want to, they'd find a way. A lot of English and Afrikaans people own businesses, so I don't think there's an urgent need to learn if Xhosa people or whatever aren't owning it...I don't know. I think it goes right to urgency. I*

*don't think they think there's an urgent need for it. Back home [in Limpopo], there's a more urgent need because we have more black people running businesses and stuff. Or maybe, back home, it's not like majority are Afrikaans people like Stellenbosch. It's balanced. That's why we're urgently needing it.*

Many of the students that viewed language as a resource appeared to note that having a register of languages to use in certain environments with certain people would be an economic benefit to them. Bourdieu illustrates this idea well: "...In a Bearn market town, the same person at one moment used provincialised French" to address a shopkeeper's wife, a young woman originating from another large market town in Bearn (who might not know Bearnais or could pretend not to); the next moment, she spoke in Bearnais to a woman who lives in the town but who was originally from the hamlets and more or less her own age; then she used French that if not 'correct' was at least strongly 'corrected' to address a minor official in the town..." (1977). Therefore, the type of language one assumes in social exchange is mediated based on the situation and the relationship. If the competencies are there, one's linguistic register can change to maneuver around the circumstance and can thus act as a form of capital.

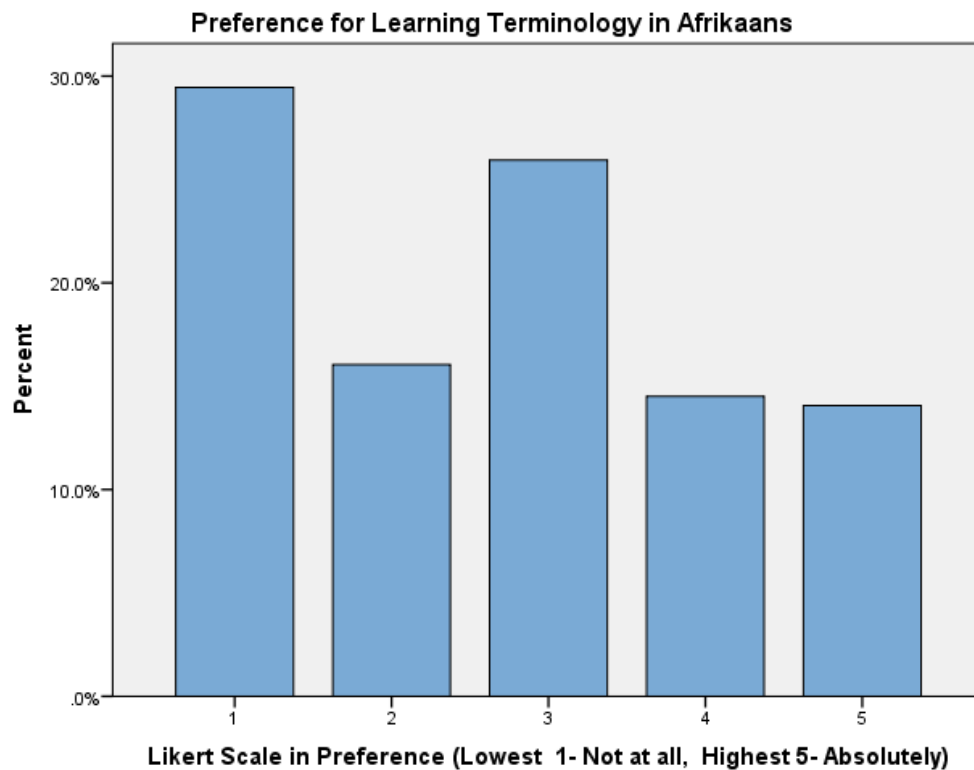
In a certain sense, the viewpoint that language acts as a resource is true; all languages can and are being used for something. But what is lost within this discourse is the difference between agency and structure, what Bordieu calls the fallacy of language communism. At face value, there is a tendency to conflate that all languages are equally useful and equally perceived. This, however, especially with the example of South Africa, is patently not true. As Hill noted in an interview, "In our country, all 11 languages are noticed and "should" be equal on some normative sense. For instance, with the isiXhosa or Susutu who want to educate children in English, their desires display the false consciousness that all languages are equal. Instead, it's about real market situation of how language is in use." If one wants to make a language more valuable, there needs to be a policy. Because South Africa made it an official policy, it stands to symbolically display that all people should believe that all languages are equal. This, especially with the interviews conducted, does now seem evident.

## B. Language as a Problem

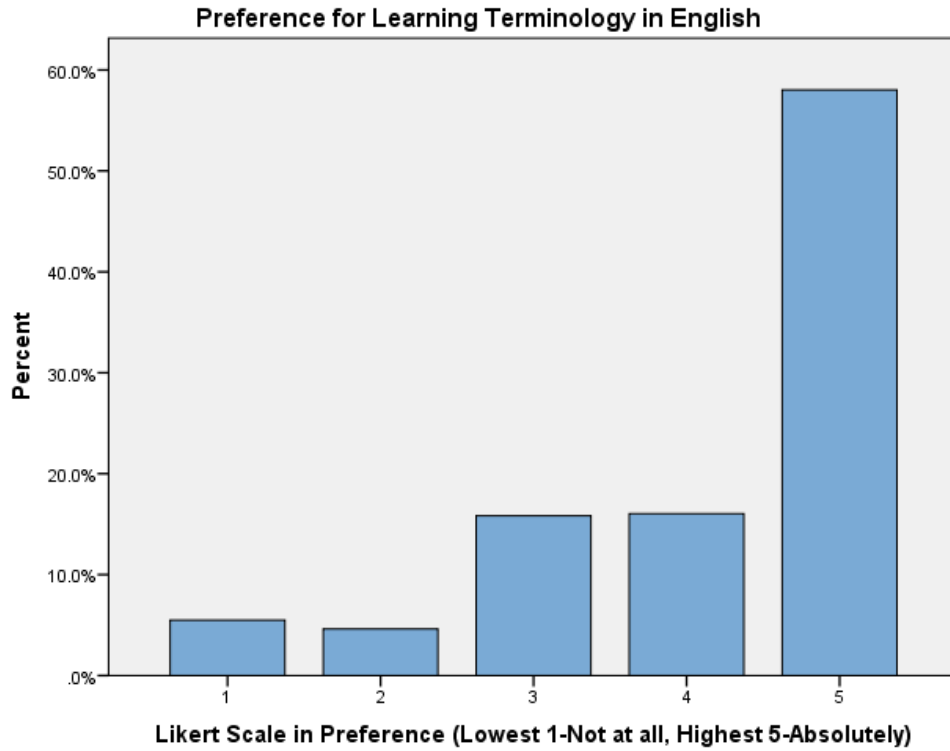
In this paradigm, language is seen as a cause of tension, with practical applications of multilingualism and linguistic diversity as issues to be resolved rather than promoted. In contrast to the "language as a resource" view, language as a problem can indicate that the relative values of different languages are not, in fact, the same.

In the face of English, many of the languages, even including Afrikaans, were seen as posing problems in how students would navigate future employment and research opportunities. Some interviews suggested that English, due to its global role in research and employment, is granted a higher prestige than the other African languages, although Afrikaans seemed to be viewed as a close second by numerous students, namely those of Afrikaans and traditional language backgrounds. Thus, such languages were viewed as high-mobility resources in the global economy and have higher levels of “linguistics and human capital” than the other South African languages will. Reasons for why languages could be viewed as problems varied; some thought that learning traditional African languages took time away from learning other languages that hold greater status or worth, especially due to the lack of methodology in teach traditional languages; others viewed using these languages professionally as delaying knowledge creation and de-legitimizing research findings, especially in the sciences; finally, related with the latter idea, another contentious issue is that African languages are unable to modernize to current terminology to serve adequately in areas of educational or professional development, specifically the sciences and technology. The below graphs show student perceptions of which languages would best be needed to learn terminology. Expectedly, most perceptions seem to indicate that traditional languages and even Afrikaans terminology will not be preferred in light of English.

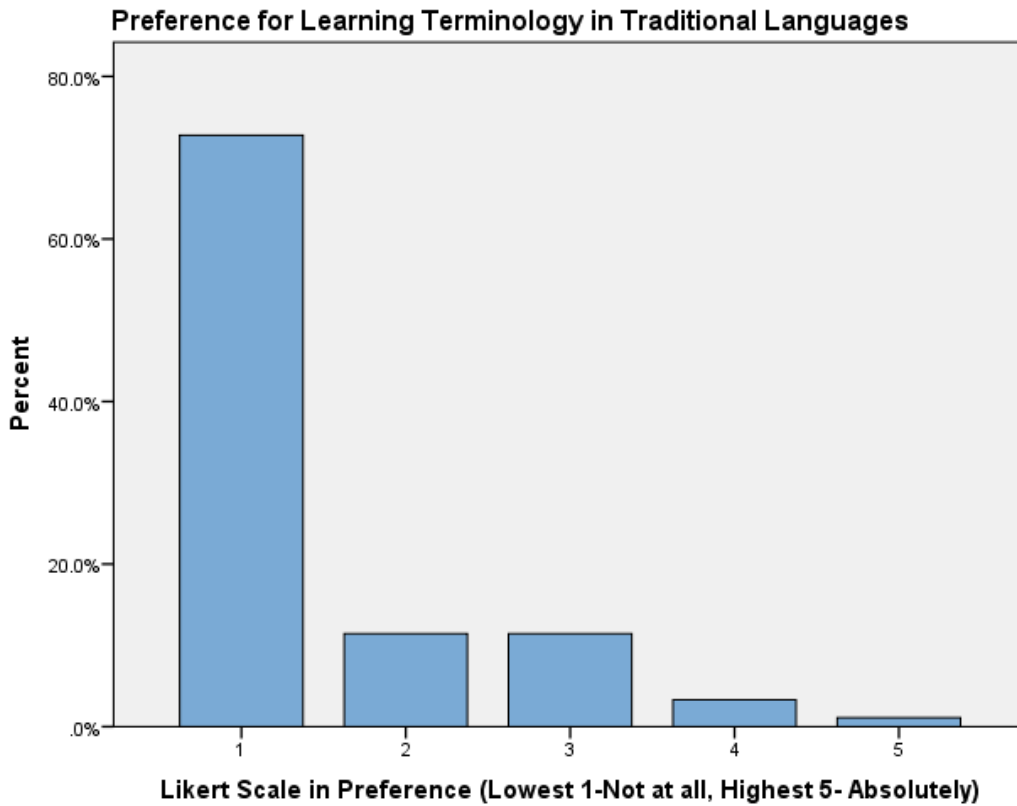
**Figure 9**



**Figure 10**



**Figure 11**



While there was not even complete agreement in the preference of learning English terminology, the majority evidently displayed this preference. This could be due to many reasons. First, the lack of “purchase” of traditional African languages and the lack of a precise methodology to teach such languages impact the use of these languages outside the social and home domains. This point was well-articulated by a British member of South Africa’s Center for Higher Education Transformation (CHET), who said that the three most serious questions around other African languages than Afrikaans is firstly the workplace; apart from social work, these languages have no purchase or practical value in the workplace. Secondly, the issue of the number of traditional African languages there is something that “puts people” off. As he questioned, “Why learn a language that you can only speak in a certain part of the country? There are so many ethnic and identity divides between the groups that it seems highly unlikely that South Africa could come up with a language like Swahili”, that, while traditional, is used widely in eastern Africa. These are all issues that the CHET member claimed were sensitive topics, a bullet that many would not want to politically bite. Finally, perhaps the most important issue to him was the lack of methodology in teaching South African traditional languages:

*CHET: Third is the issue that the teaching of African languages in the university is very weak, and they don’t have a proper methodology of teaching the languages. They don’t have a thing like, Alliance Francaise, or the British standardized system of teaching. So each lecturer does his own thing; some are good, some are useless. There are no proper methodologies so people and go and learn quickly.*

*RC: What’s the methodology used in things like Alliance Francaise?*

*CHET: Well, they’ve got standard kinds of ways in teaching things. There’s certain approaches and different languages schools have different approaches, but it’s a language methodology. In Cape Town, where I live in the city, there are something like four or five schools there that teach how to teach English in other countries...in places like China or Korea. What they teach is a certain methodology of how to teach English as a second language, and you get certified for it. But there’s no methodology of teaching Xhosa. So the guy that teaches Xhosa here does it one way, another one does it another way, etcetera. And I twice tried to start learning one, but I just gave up. The lecture was so bad, it was so inconsistent, he tried to make it as complicated as possible. If you focus on a little tonation, if you click something else, it may mean something different. So I just gave up...So I think despite all this political rhetoric, the biggest obstacle for whites to learn African languages is the African languages themselves. It’s their lack of political agreement and their lack of methodology of doing it.*

Male Student, Biology, English descent:

*All information these days are from a central source of internet and it’s generally English; it shifts everything towards a global village of sorts because it is known throughout the world already. African languages used in the economy, I wouldn’t say so because especially with the African languages, the terms and terminology don’t translate into things that are in a business environment, because it was created...like, they don’t have a word for stapler; those words don’t exist. Afrikaans will not, has not ever, influenced sciences or this direction of my life. You speak English. The things you do, the chemicals you use, you use English. There need to be methods that others can easily access [research*

*papers and outputs]. It [Afrikaans] doesn't make a difference in a career field but it has aided in the social aspect, as sign of respect; it hasn't hampered me in any way because it's useful to get to know another culture.*

Another student expands on the importance of African language knowledge in areas of medicine: *I remember, there was a Xhosa woman and the doctor is Afrikaans. The doctor is speaking English because he understands the patient can't speak Afrikaans, he speaks English. But she is still reluctant to speak English to the doctor so she thought I was Xhosa and asked to speak Xhosa and I can't. She got so frustrated that she stopped talking. They themselves are frustrated, they're in hospital, in pain, then they have to speak another language. It's frustrating.*

This student reinforces the realization that Africa's marginalization is increased by its exclusion from global knowledge creation. In fact, the UNESCO Science Report of 2005 "indicated that Africa is contributing only to .4 per cent of the international gross expenditure on research and development, and of this, South Africa covers 90 per cent" (UNESCO 2010). The student shows using local languages as a problem in his science research-based field; in order for issues to be relevant and replicable, the findings and procedures must be in a language of global use. Many students did not attempt to compare local languages and international languages in an absolute sense since there was recognition that local languages could have uses in social spheres. Nonetheless, the discourse regarding such languages in professional work environments seemed to reify the concept that the languages of opportunity and status were those that could be used globally. Clear from a majority of students' opinion was that English is emerging and well on its way to becoming established as the global lingua franca.

### C. Language as a Right

Language can be viewed as a right for many reasons, but perhaps most importantly, the main reason is that language is a means of self-identification and self-expression. As Kelman notes, "Since language is so closely tied to group identity, language-based discrimination against the group is perceived as a threat to its very existence as a recognizable entity and as an attack on its sacred objects and symbols" (1971). In fact, the "language as a right" perception characterizes South Africa's historical events and how the nine Bantu languages came to be recognized in the South African constitution. Many of South Africa's linguistic issues came about largely due to apartheid, specifically in schooling. When the Afrikaners built a system of divide-and-rule during apartheid, this helped create homelands which then also resulted in linguistic blocks according to the geo-political separation of homelands. Because the Afrikaans language was so heavily tied with Apartheid and was viewed as the "language of the oppressors", students wanted to be taught in English due to its importance in certain areas of employment such as business and commerce and because it was seen as a tool that could help create unity. However, the Afrikaners were in charge of language-engineering and introduced



Afrikaans into the system of education and teaching as per the Afrikaans Medium Decree of 1974. Additionally, the Bantu Education Act ensured that economic inequalities were reproduced through low-quality education. This led to an uproar regarding apartheid and language use. The Soweto uprising in 1976 was an action of protest against using the Afrikaner language. Around this time was when the likes of Neville Alexander proposed the idea of language policies that recognized the official use of English and the recognition of Bantu languages.

For language as a right, Ruiz implies that linguistic diversity should not be used as a basis of discrimination in schooling and in society in general, specifically in post-colonial countries where language capabilities affected opportunities more directly. Alexander relates this idea in terms to South African languages by stating that a language policy will "...necessarily bear features that accord with cultural aspirations and political programmes of the working people... Our point of departure must be that all languages spoken by the people of South African have an equal right to flourish, having due regard to the economic and technical constraints that inevitably limit the implementation of the policy" (Alexander 1992). In terms of educational use, the UNESCO report states that the option of being educated in one's own language is reflective of one's culture and values and is an exercise of the right to education in an inclusive society (2010).

In the view of Afrikaans, a short answer in the survey stated:

*"Afrikaans is dying in South Africa, it is an important language to our culture, and should be important. In my career it will be important because children, especially Afrikaner children, need to learn to appreciate the culture and language of Afrikaans. Each culture should have a right to learn multiple languages but need to be taught in their own mother tongue first. Stellenbosch University was and needs to concentrate on Afrikaans, we are one of the few Afrikaans universities. This is not a discrimination, just a fact. There is enough and better universities in other languages, why change Stellenbosch University? We are just the new generation of Afrikaans children; it has nothing to do with racism, discrimination, or the apartheid."*

This student provides the common argument that Stellenbosch should continue to fight for its culture and heritage by maintaining its current language-in-education policy. Interestingly, because Afrikaans and traditional languages are those whose "rights" need to be promoted, students seemed to distinguish how one group fights for its language more than the other group. Some students saw these differences highlighted within Stellenbosch University:

Female, Sepedi:

*Q: Both Afrikaans and Bantu speakers are to fighting to preserve their cultures, but do you think one does it more so than the other, or more successfully than the other?*

*A: I think Afrikaans is doing it more than the indigenous. It's like, little thing you will see when you're in Stellenbosch, stuff like music. I remember the first week when we walked in the first years, and I've*

*noticed that you find that Afrikaans people are dancing while all the rest of us are sitting there, confused, not knowing what to do. But when they do play African music, they play the stereotypical stuff that they think all Africans listen to. I think their views are a bit tilted in a way. They tend to stereotype all black people*

*Q: Why do you think Afrikaans is being more fought for?*

*A: I think it goes back to the country as a whole, not just Stellenbosch. A lot of people I think are frustrated by black empowerment, with the government having more black people. I feel they're a bit afraid that they're forgotten or punished because of Apartheid... Whether you like it or not, whether you weren't active in Apartheid or not, you benefited from it. You're not being told you can't do this, you can't do that. So I think that South Africa as a whole, the Afrikaans feel like they're being side-lined in the new South Africa. I don't know why indigenous languages aren't being fought for.*

Male, Afrikaans, Economics and Commerce:

*I'm getting defensive about Afrikaans because language defines you as a person; traditions change over time but language is fairly constant so it links you to a lot more, links you to a group of people as well... Sometimes I notice that as soon as one person starts speaking English in a group of Afrikaans, we all speak English. We're all group of Afrikaans but why are we speaking English?*

Students and professors have noted that the fight for the upkeep of Afrikaans is much stronger than the other African languages, largely due to the civil societies and media (music channels and news) that keep it alive through the reproduction of cultural capital. Regarding African languages, some students also mention that while they want their language around, the lack of practice in social and academic spheres are changing their understanding of it:

Female, Xhosa, Sciences:

*We're all moving forward but along the way we're losing our origins. The more I speak English, the more I'll get detached from my language. When I got here, I would speak like a true Xhosa person; the only English words in a conversation would be "and" or "but"; but now it's hard to have one sentence without an English word. I see it shrinking bit by bit; it feels like it's being revised. They're turning it in into something else. It feels wrong to know that I'm losing my sense of education; maybe I'll lose it totally. I won't speak it in the way my forefathers and grandmothers used to speak it. "I wish I could talk like you" We're losing it and I'm sad about it*

In the comparisons between the support for Afrikaans and Bantu languages, students noted how the cultural identity of Afrikaans was stronger than the numerous ethnicities within Bantu languages, which fragmented the larger fight for language due to social tensions between certain ethnic groups. While the South African language constitution obliges equal recognition of all 11 languages, its symbolic goal is still very lacking practical translation without more civil societies and media supporting the use of African languages in other spheres than home life. This approach can also be supplemented by recognition of the resourceful value of these languages.

## CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION

### Limitations

Unfortunately, these findings are only suggestive as it is very difficult to isolate language effects from other cultural factors that affect employment, such as social networks and race (which are also sometimes strongly linked to language preference, but not exclusively so). There were also other limitations in this study. One includes that it is a case study of Stellenbosch University and therefore, the findings reflect the ethnicity distribution of this area, which has a high distribution of English and Afrikaans students and is only recently starting to attract those of other backgrounds. The researcher chose Stellenbosch University as it is one of the only tertiary institutions in the country that uses the Afrikaans language in its pedagogical framework; this follows in line with the theory that with the languages used in high-status, tertiary institutions may have an impact on student perceptions of what languages are useful in the workplace. The interviews allowed for more in-depth views of the personal conflicts and struggles in using traditional languages within only social and home contexts, as well as concerns of traditional languages not being used in the workplace. However, it would have been helpful to have more representation of these traditional language speakers within the surveys to allow for accurate analysis. Future research should do a survey across three or more universities around South Africa in order to obtain a better portrayal of these perceptions of language and the economy.

Another limitation was that these interviews were conducted solely in English. It was assumed that since the students attended a school where only English and Afrikaans were used in teaching, that students would have some grasp on English. While it never proved to be an issue with students in using English to express their ideas and concerns, a possible limitation is that the interviews were not conducted in other languages that perhaps would have allowed students to better express themselves. This may have also led to a possible secondary limitation in the type of students that were recruited. Since interviewees were identified through a snowball sample, interviewees would have known to only contact students who were semi-proficient in English. Thus, students from different background who may not have had strong communicative English skills may not have been considered by interviewees during the snowball sample, which in turn can prevent this paper from exploring deeper, richer levels of the topic at hand. Future research should identify interviewees through a more randomized process and have translators, if the resources allow for it.

## CHAPTER 6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

In conclusion, the previously conducted bivariate data does show interesting trends. While analyses regarding how the value of multilingualism relates to one's ethnicity and one's anticipated SES yielded no statistically significant finding, significant p-values were present when the data instead analyzed views of using African languages in the workplace. Additionally, the findings from the interviews offered much more depth into why these trends may exist and how students saw themselves personally engaging in multilingualism in their future.

My conclusions do display trends with the language-in-education policy literature. The tensions that are indicated between language, identity, and senses of agency in other senses (not economic, but academic and social agency) display a trend that is mirrored in Liebowitz and Goldschmidt's studies wherein student perceptions of language use and agency are researched. However, it is difficult to see how my findings relate to the concept of language being related to economic agency due to insufficient studies that precede my exploratory study. There exist valid reasons for the dearth of literature; for one, language perceptions and economic statuses are messy and indirectly connected issues. There are many contributing factors within SES and of those factors, language perhaps does not play as highly significant of a role. Additionally, language is also tied with other factors like culture, upbringing, education, etc. Therefore, these messy qualitative values make it difficult to isolate one's relationship to the other. Problems within the data may account for why these conclusions are not yet reliable. Even though there was an N of 455 for the survey analysis, many chi-squared tests presented empty cells that made the output unreliable. Thus, it prevented readers from acquiring an accurate look at the different perceptions of those with different ethnicities and socio-economic statuses. However, the study nonetheless displayed trends in how language policies are practically applied and perceived in some of the most important spheres of society. It displayed students in different stages of negotiating between the symbolic nature of policy versus the practicality of using African languages or multilingualism in areas of school and work.

A policy implication of my research derives from the unquestioned drive towards English monolingualism. Many students noted the common view that English often is more practical and less costly, among other functional and instrumental benefits, which allowed some of them to question or fully invalidate the possible use of other languages. Such views could provide that the drive towards monolingualism will go unchecked. Rather, such views need to be challenged in order to give space for other languages to develop. Languages can be maintained only if the use for them is maintained. The economic sphere, specifically the

small businesses and micro-enterprises, could potentially offer such a space for local languages; however, practical examples of how this could save time and costs, aside from the use of these languages in the informal economy, must be explored and researched. However, the functionality and views of this are not only shaped by public use but also by the policies transcribed regarding recognition of languages.

Perhaps language policies should not reflect neither utopian nor static environments. Rather, as Alexander suggests, the post-Apartheid South African society must be cognizant of how languages can be developed and used with respect to the ongoing “socio-political, socio-cultural, and socio-economic changes” (Alexander 1992) and in a way that meets the interests and needs of the society. After all, multilingualism is the norm in not only Africa, but in many places. Multilingualism does not necessarily have to be viewed as a burden. “It is not a problem that might isolate the continent from knowledge and the emergence of knowledge-based economies, conveyed through international languages of wider communication” (UNESCO 2010). While it seems clear that English will always be the lingua franca and a linking language in this diverse nation, developing other languages through a gradual, concentric and all-embracing approach needs to be considered to strengthen relationships in political, economic, and social developments. However, language development only occurs when language develops in use; such use must first start somewhere. Interim actions can be taken in tertiary education given its important role in society. Second, numerous incentives can be established by the government. For instance, multilingualism can be rewarded and upheld through establishing a criterion for professional qualification and promotion within certain sectors (UNESCO 2010). Additionally, a closer collaboration among the fields of linguistics, education, sociology, economics, and anthropology could assist in a more multidisciplinary approach in understanding the ways in which language affects the area of economic development. These steps can allow for a shift in perception of seeing African languages as treasures that have yet to be fully uncovered and exercised.

## APPENDIX A

### Interview Questionnaire

- 1) Identifying information: Where are you from? What is your primary language?
- 2) What is your educational background (what is your major)?
- 3) What role has language been playing so far in your studies?
- 4) What are your future career prospects? What are your motivations for getting into it?
- 5) Is there a primary language that is used in this area?
- 6) What is your proficiency in said language?
- 7) Do you anticipate problems in adapting to the needed language?
- 8) Do you see a separation in the type of people who choose to get jobs in government, business, etc., versus those who aim for jobs that aren't regarded as high-status?
- 9) How is language connected with social/economic mobility?
- 10) Future-related: Do you think your language will be important or used in future?
- 11) "In South Africa during the period of Apartheid rule, English represented a significant means by which the oppressed peoples of that country chose to 'disidentify' and contest the mental, cultural, economic and political subordination that constituted Apartheid policy and practice. In becoming a weapon against Apartheid hegemony, English language use empowered people in their everyday lives, by enabling them to defy the discriminatory and exploitative policies that humanized them." What does Afrikaans/English represent to you?
- 12) Are there certain languages you view as gate-keeping or resourceful? How does this affect prospects on income and socioeconomic status?

## APPENDIX B

### SURVEY QUESTIONS

#### A) Basic identification:

Gender: M F

Year of study in Stellenbosch: 1<sup>st</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> Other\_\_\_\_\_

Ethnicity \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_

#### B) Language Skills and Language Learning (Fill In)

- 1) Native Language:
- 2) Language taught in
  - a) primary school:
  - b) secondary school:
  - c) tertiary/university:
- 3) What language do you use predominantly in the following contexts:
  - a) home:
  - b) school:
  - c) work:

#### C) Socio-Economic Profile (Circle Answers)

- 1) Economic class you currently identify with:
  - 1) Upper
  - 2) Upper-middle
  - 3) Middle
  - 4) Lower-Middle
  - 5) Working
- 2) Economic class you can realistically imagine for your future:
  - a) Upper
  - b) Upper-middle
  - c) Middle
  - d) Lower-Middle
  - e) Working
- 3) In what area do you want to be employed:
  - a) Business and Management
  - b) Government

- c) Education
- d) Tourism
- e) Information Technology
- f) Health, Medicine, Pharmaceutical
- g) Entertainment
- h) Engineering
- i) Sciences
- j) OTHER\_\_\_\_\_

4) What job specifically\_\_\_\_\_

**D) Language Use (Fill in/ Circle)**

What language(s) are needed for your future job? \_\_\_\_\_

Rank the importance of knowing such language for this job (1-not important, 5-highly necessary): 1 2 3 4 5

What is your proficiency in each language (indicate which language(s))?

- 1) Beginner
- 2) Intermediate
- 3) Fair Proficiency
- 4) Proficient
- 5) Expert

**E) Attitudes and Perceptions (Short Answers)**

What language of teaching do you prefer at Stellenbosch: T-Language specifications (A&E), Afrikaans, English, Other \_\_\_\_\_

If the language focus is Afrikaans at Stellenbosch now, what difficulties would this pose for you (for example, competency, trouble in following class lectures, inability to understand material)?

If the language focus is English at Stellenbosch now, what difficulties would this pose for you (for example, competency, trouble in following class lectures, inability to understand material )?

How do you see the role of Afrikaans in your job in the future (for example, does it give you economic advantage, is it a gate-keeping requirement, does it help/benefit?) Explain.



How do you see the role of English in your job in the future (for example, does it give you economic advantage, is it a gate-keeping requirement, does it help/benefit)? Explain.

How do you see the role of black African languages in your job in the future (for example, does it give you economic advantage, is it a gate-keeping requirement, does it help/benefit)? Explain.

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# Ruth Canagarajah

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## Education

Pennsylvania State University, Schreyer Honors College, University Park, PA August 2012  
Bachelor of Arts in International Politics (Concentration in International Economics) and Sociology  
Honors in Applied Linguistics

University of Ghana, Legon (Study Abroad) Fall 2009  
Classes taken: Post-Conflict Peacebuilding & Transitional Justice, Underdeveloped Systems, International Political Economy, Issues in Contemporary African Society, Independent Study in Development-Induced Displacement

## Related Experience

Fulbright Research Grantee, Sri Lanka Oct. 2012 - July 2013

- Chosen to conduct economic development research, particularly the shifts needed to recreate sustainable informal activities to further the redevelopment of northern Sri Lanka.

The Paalam Project, Founder May 2010 - Present

- Created a theatre rehabilitation program for Sri Lankan youth under an NGO (SJC87) that uses art as a rehabilitative tool and provides scholarships to youth in northern Sri Lanka, with a focus on the Jaffna area

Undergraduate Senior Thesis Research on Language Policy and Economic Agency (South Africa) Summer 2011

- Conducted quantitative and qualitative research in Stellenbosch University about student and faculty perceptions about the university's predominantly Afrikaans-oriented language policy. Interviewed students on how prospects of employment were affected by said language policy.

International Center for the Study on Terrorism, Undergraduate Research Intern Jan. - Oct. 2010

- Gathered and coded data on the Irish Republican Army's bombing campaigns; analyzed incendiary bombings; assessed British policies during IRA's terrorist activities and community reactions and polls
- Project Leader in Counter-Terrorism Initiatives

Ghana's Hydroelectric Dam Megaprojects/Independent Project Fall 2009

- Conducted study regarding Ghana's two main hydroelectric dams and interviewed those who were forcibly resettled when the dams were first constructed. Explored impacts of resettlement, remuneration, and transition.

Population Caring Organization (PCO), Buduburam Liberian Refugee Camp, Ghana, Volunteer Fall 2009

- Mobilized community for camp discussions, directed a social psychology workshop for adult learners, and assisted in tribal leaders' dispute and reconciliation sessions in the Buduburam camp near Accra, Ghana. Organizational mission is peace-building in a community enduring a protracted refugee situation.

## Employment

Writing Tutor at Center for Excellence in Writing May 2009- Present

- Tutor in resumes, graduate and undergraduate academic papers, applications, etc., for primarily international students, but also the Penn State community at large.

## Penn State and Community

Volunteer at the Women's Resource Center, State College, PA June 2010-Present

- Trained as a state-certified counselor/advocate in domestic violence and sexual assault

Assistant Tap Teacher at Centre Dance, State College PA Jan. - Dec. 2010

Co-Founder and President/Student Advisor of Oxfam America at Penn State Est. December 2008

## Publications and Presentations

Published research piece in <i>Washington Undergraduate Law Review</i> , Vol. VI Issue III	Spring 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>“Modern Flat-World Theorists on Trial: Genocide Denial and its Place in Contemporary Law Courts”</li></ul>	
Presenter, International Writing Centers Association Conference, Baltimore MD	November 4-6, 2010
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>“Exploring the ESL Tutee to Non-Native Tutor Relationship”</li></ul>	
Panelist, Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution’s Spring Conference, George Mason Univ.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>“No Place to Call Home: Buduburam and the Limbo of Protracted Refugee Situations”</li></ul>	April 16, 2010
Authored pieces featured in <i>Kalliope</i> , Penn State’s literary magazine	Spring 2009, 2010
United Nations University Global Seminar on Sustainable Development in Accra, Ghana	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Sole International Participant (one of 50 chosen from over 200 applicants)</li></ul>	October 21-23, 2009

## Skills

**Languages:** English, Tamil (able to understand; elementary-level conversant), Spanish (conversant and able to read), Hindi (beginner)

**Research:** Microsoft Programs, Excel, Research Databases, R Program, STATA, SAS, SPSS, Lexis Nexis, ProQuest, NVivo

**Travel:** Ghana, Togo, Benin, South Africa, Sri Lanka

## Awards and Other Honor

Thomas and Joan Dye Scholarship for Academic Achievement, Penn State Political Science Dept.	2011 - 2012
Schreyer Ambassador Travel Grant (for senior thesis research in South Africa)	April 2011
Schreyer Honors Summer Grant	April 2011
Phi Beta Kappa, Junior year	Spring 2011
Nancy and Joseph Birkle Student Engagement Award	Spring 2011
Rocks Ethics Leadership “Stand Up” Award, Recipient	February 2011
Kim Anderson Memorial Award for Academic Achievement, Penn State Political Science Dept.	2010 - 2011
Pennsylvania State Winner for National Peace Essay Contest hosted by US Institute of Peace	May 2008