

**Temitope O Adekunle**

**Gift Mheta**

**and**

**Maleshoane Rapeane-Mathonsi**

*Durban University of Technology*

# ENVISIONING THE USE OF TRANSLANGUAGING IN PUBLIC SPACES AS A RESOURCE IN HIGHER INSTITUTIONS OF LEARNING

## **Abstract**

In this paper we explore translanguaging in the linguistic landscapes of two South African universities located in the Western Cape Province. The paper foregrounds translanguaging as a representation of marketisation and internationalisation in these multilingual settings, even though some of the borrowed languages are not part of the indigenous languages of the users of that space. The study draws on photographic data which were collected from selected campuses of both universities. In this study, we focus on the available modal resources and the application of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Multimodality (MDA) in examining the observed translanguaging and symbolic placements of modal

resources on the campuses. Findings revealed that word-borrowing is as much an economic signal (business, language and institutional marketing), as it is a potential avenue for global learning and engagement. We, therefore propose ways through which translanguaging can be beneficial to students as a resource for cross and intracultural or intralinguistic engagements on the selected university campuses discussed in the study.

**Key words:** Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) Institutional, Linguistic Landscape Marketing, Multilingual, South African Universities, Translanguaging, Western Cape Province,

## Introduction

Ever since the commencement of the 1994 human rights dispensation, there has been a movement towards a fair socio-economic directive that accentuates the progress and advancement of multilingualism in South Africa (SA). Consequently, SA has vast multilingual capacity and a diverse and accommodating language policy and constitution (Bamgbose 2003). The accommodating language policy is structured in such a way that all languages, no matter how few or many speakers it has, are embraced and could be used for communication. In addition, it is focused on ensuring language equity (Kaschula 2004) in a manner that even education and books used in schools can embrace indigenous South African languages. Translations, where and when needed, are done, and in this way, all languages are acknowledged. It may thus be said that the institutionalisation of the South African language policy was aimed at ensuring that all languages are embraced and promoted in practice. This position, ensuring parity of esteem for all South African languages, is due to the linguistic, economic, and political struggles SA encountered in the past. From the intermittent use of recognised and/or indigenous languages by means of codeswitching on campus and in study materials, there is a gradual move towards the use of more languages in this multilingual context, including non-South African languages.

Within this context, a new concept like translanguaging, is also relevant. In 1994, Cen Williams defined translanguaging as language users' ability to incorporate multiple languages in communication (Canagarajah 2011: 401). Initially, translanguaging was seen as a method of bilingualism that permits an alternate use of diverse language modes (Baker 20011) and involves word-borrowing from different languages. Some scholars also view translanguaging as the flexible use of modal resources (Canagarajah 2011a) in public spaces and it is this use that is relevant to the current study where the use of several languages on the selected universities is assessed to determine their ability to ensure epistemic access and active citizenry among students. Although translanguaging serves an economic value in utilised spaces, it is a potential avenue for global scholarship, intellectual development and linguistic engagements. We argue that translanguaging in landscapes offers a cross and intracultural- or intralinguistic platform for the development of students' language learning skills while also enhancing students' critical participation in fulfilling a social justice imperative. The paper explores the linguistic landscapes of these South African universities in the Western Cape Province in order to ascertain the available resources on both campuses as well as the linguistic modes of information or transfer. It analyses language forms or modes (interactive channels of communication - Kress, 2012: 205) as they are utilised in disseminating information in the public places of the universities.

## Linguistic landscapes and south africa's language policy

Languages are not isolated systems but interact with other systems outside linguistics, such as culture, politics, and environment (Mühlhäusler 2003). Language serves two functions, symbolic and informative (Dagenais *et al.* 2009: 254). The kind of function is mostly dependent on the nature of the conveyed message and the type of language being used in public spaces (Kotze 2010: 28). The symbolic functions of linguistic landscaping thus comprise due semantic interpretation of cultural relationship, uniqueness, linguistic prestige, and power dynamics (Dagenais *et al.* 2009: 254), while the informational function does the sole job of creating awareness and informing the audience about some phenomenon. The interaction of language with these systems has thus created a space for studies in linguistic landscaping. Linguistic landscapes (LLs) are publicly used signs, which enable an understanding of what a place stands for in comparison with another (Ben-Rafael 2009: 40). Some multilingual landscapes have been studied in SA. An example is Du Plessis (2011) who focused on language policy and linguistic landscaping in rural settings in the Free State. Stroud and Mpendukana (2009) also examined multilingualism and geosemiotics in urban spaces. Nonetheless, in agreement with Makalela's (2015: 15) suggestion that translanguaging being observed as a move towards decolonisation, should be further explored and studied in diverse contents (Makalela's 2015: 28), this article contributes to the body of knowledge by focusing on linguistic landscapes at HE institutions in SA. Hence, the difference in organisational context. Research into this aspect of sociolinguistics is done especially in multilingual settings (Coulmas 2009: 14). Most studies on LLs have used this concept to describe and analyse language situations. Gorter (2006) holds that the definition of LL can also extend to the description of the history of language or knowledge of languages, which focuses on the written language used in public spaces. Bourhis and Landry (2002) refer to this concept as 'language that is visible within a given area or space'.

The presence of multilingual signage potentially contributes to the establishment of a more inclusive and supportive HE environment which supports students' academic achievement. For instance, an angle towards multilingual and multimodal signage hopefully makes students and all space users in general feel at home. Likewise, multilingualism is a transformative approach towards the enablement of student's epistemological access in higher institutions of learning. From findings collected in multilingual studies in SA, Coetzee-Van Rooy (2016) explains that multilingualism promotes social cohesion and better interactions in otherwise intricate situations. It enhances social equity, inclusion and social justice in the utilised spaces (Burcu *et al.*, 2014) and is thus of immense significance in SA's multiculturally and linguistically diverse milieu.

As a result, the situational context of the text (Kress and Van Leeuwen 2006: 220) is significant to its readership and reception. It contributes to the content of signs, as well as readership, meaning and design. A sign is not independent of its placement and may not be meaningful if not read in specific settings (Backhaus 2007: 9). This is because texts are parallel to the settings, appearance, and applications of their creation (Blommaert 2008: 12). That is, the site of landscaping is as significant as the text itself (Scollon and Scollon

2003) because of its relationship with people or other objects with which that space is shared. That is, a single constricted view of language alters the way it is understood (Shohamy and Waksman 2009: 318). This is also referred to as geosemiotics or the meaningful spatial positioning of symbols, texts, schedules and discourses in society (Scollon and Scollon 2003: 10). It is the purposeful commercial application of language sciences (linguistics and discourse analyses) to factual organisational issues (Ereaut 2002), as spacing influences contact and interaction with displayed texts. The geographic position of a sign enables readers to interact with it, as per the message contained in it and its placement. For instance, with roads signs, the audience merely has a chance to steal a glance at texts placed on a freeway road, while they can conveniently read the signs placed on boards/posters on a highway or other less busy roads or streets. Such signs orientate road users, sometimes suit the road type or geography, educate, notify, and express authority, as well as communicate information (Puzey 2009: 1). Hence, the accurate understanding of a text entails a complete acknowledgement of the context within which it is used, as meaning is derived from both the text and its context.

LL also contributes to the construction of sociolinguistic contexts, as publicly placed symbols or signs often disparately affect and influence the linguistic behaviours and language use of people who stay in communities. It indicates the accepted and recognised language forms as well as their level of acceptance and use in the specific space. For instance, the languages chosen and used as a country's institutions' official languages, can vividly mirror the language policy practiced in that region. Thus, the signage used on landscapes usually reveals the language ideologies of the people and government in various contexts. This, in some cases, is bound to cause some inconsistency between the language policy of a place, the publicly used signs (Abongdia 2013), people's identities and other languages (often considered as minority languages). Ultimately, while LL is mostly focused on the language used in public places, it cannot be divorced from language policy. LL is a mechanism affecting *de facto* language policy and is a major tool of language manipulation (Shohamy 2006: 112). This is due to the fact that "public linguistic space" is shaped and controlled consciously by rules and regulations, which are the keys to language policy (Spolsky 2009: 65). SA's language policy is highlighted below:

- SA's official language are Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu.
- All indigenous languages must be used, elevated and advanced since they were once historically disadvantaged.
- At least two official languages may be used in a province by the government of a province and these languages must be used by the national and provincial governments; specifically considering the province, pragmatism, cost, requests and choice of the people living in that community.
- Municipalities are to acknowledge the language use and choice of the people living in that province.

- Governments (National and Provincial) must judicially control and amend the used official languages. The provisions of subsection (2) (which states that all official languages must be acknowledged and must have equal treatment and respect) must be adhered to at all times (Constitution of the Republic of SA 1996-2018).

This policy also explains that a Pan South African Language Board (PANSALB), recognised by national legislation, must:

- Encourage, and generate circumstances for the advancement and practice of all official languages, the Khoi, Nama and San languages, and sign language.
- Encourage and guarantee admiration for languages regularly used by South African societies; these comprise German, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Portuguese, Telugu, Tamil, Urdu, as well as Arabic, Hebrew, Sanskrit and other religion-related dialects in SA (Constitution of the Republic of SA 1996).

Similarly, the recent Higher Education language policy document (2017/2018) emphasises the presence and significance of multilingualism in the country's higher education system. The Language Policy for Higher Education (LPHE) was created for the development of multilingualism in higher institutions of learning (Government Gazette 2018: 9) and in a bid to transform HE and promote the status of previously marginalised languages through intentional inclusion and structuring. It recognises all indigenous SA languages as well as languages which are used to communicate in higher institutions of learning (Government Gazette 2017/2018: 13-16). This is inclusive of both private and government owned higher education institutions. The policy advocates the "promotion of multilingualism for sociocultural, intellectual and economic development" (Government Gazette 2017/2018: 13-16) and institutions are implored to embrace and devise innovative ways of promoting multilingualism.

It has however, been variously noted that despite the linguistic specifications of the SA language policy, English gains pre-eminence from Grade 3 onwards in education due to the nation's colonial past and its structured pedagogy. This is even deepened in higher institutions of learning where the English language is given more recognition and it is evident in the classroom space and linguistic landscapes. This poses a bigger problem for students as they hail from different backgrounds and with somewhat unequal pedagogical access to English and its rules. A similar situation was reported in Bulawka's (2006) study on the use of English in Polish magazines, where it was discovered that approximately 79% of the magazine content was in English, as opposed to Polish, due to the love for westernisation and internationalisation. Ustinova and Bhatia (2005) derived similar results, where the reasons for the preference of English over indigenous Russian was due to it symbolising modernity and westernisation. There is thus a stronger move towards monolingualism than bilingualism not to mention multilingualism in these contexts.

Based on this premise and at a first glance, it is easy to perceive translanguaging as a 'disruptor' of the learning curve as most South African students (especially those from

rural areas) are evidently still grappling with the use of and understandings of English as well as its relevance to their academic journey. There has been several initiatives to ensure compliance with the language policy of SA, especially through the constant use of selected indigenous languages which are also provincially determined. By so doing, most linguistic landscapes are bi- or multilingual in a bid to show an acknowledgement of SA's indigenous languages. In some urban settings, landscapes are also plastered with selected foreign languages, such as French, Swahili, Lingala, Arabic, Chinese, Italian, Latin, German, among others. The presence of foreign languages mixed with South African languages in urban landscapes in South Africa could stimulate a positive attitude to the learning of languages, inclusivity or an exploration of different cultural or linguistic tenets. Translanguaging in this paper is thus examined via the use of indigenous languages in SA, English and non-South African languages that are made available in public spaces of the selected universities.

## **The Western Cape Province**

About 48% of the speakers in the Western Cape Province use Afrikaans as a home language, 24.7% use isiXhosa and 20.3% use English (Census 2011). The dominant languages used in the Western Cape are Afrikaans, isiXhosa and English. Afrikaans is mostly spoken by Coloured, White, and a small percentage of Black South Africans in the region. Based on reports from 2008, this province also has one of the fastest growing economies in the country (Western Cape Economic Overview: Westgro 2016). The Western Cape, known for its high level of educated residents and degree holders, accommodates four prominent universities: Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Stellenbosch University, University of Cape Town (UCT) and University of the Western Cape (UWC) (Fast facts 2007: 7). The focus of this study, however, is on two of these universities (UCT and UWC) which, according to Banda (2012), have been in almost similar ways, structured by the history of SA. The implemented policies in these universities guide their language practices. This policy also maintains the hierarchical classification of cultural and/or racial groups present in SA in the Apartheid era.

## **Methodology and analysis**

The interpretive paradigm was employed in this study in understanding the effects of translanguaging in a linguistically and culturally diverse South Africa. The paradigm also informed the choice of Multimodality (MDA - Pienaar and Becker 2007) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA - Kress 2003b: 36) as theoretical frameworks and methods of analysis. There is a body of theoretical work for Multimodality (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006, Kress 2010, Jewitt 2009, Bezemer and Mavers 2011) and Critical discourse analysis (Fairclough 2009/2010, Wodak and Meyer 2008, Van Leeuwen 2009, Morgan 2010). The aim of the article is not to critically engage with the theoretical frameworks, but to present new data from the selected HE institutions. CDA and MDA enhanced

the structuring, collection, analyses and interpretation of data (written, drawn, images, among others), while also providing several means of interpreting and detecting hidden patterns in modes.

UCT's Upper Campus (which comprises the faculties of **Science, Engineering, Commerce, and Humanities**, Smuts Hall and Fuller Hall **residences as well as** the famous Chancellor Oppenheimer library) and UWC's Main Campus (the university's main campus where courses such as Public Health, Physics and Chemistry are offered) were selected for data collection. Important activities, such as graduation, examination and other official ceremonies take place in these campuses, thereby making these settings the choice data collection sites.

An in-depth qualitative study was conducted using an explorative case study design and data were collected by means of visual-photography. A digital camera and a phone camera were used to take photographs of signs and texts inside the campuses. Other semiotic resources (such as brochures, marketing profiles, and website information) were downloaded from the institutions' web pages. Four hundred units of data (two hundred from each university) were purposively collected from two selected campuses of the universities, as the researcher deemed this number fit for the study's aim and questions. However, it was discovered during analysis that some of the pictures were either blurred or repeated. Thus, two hundred clear and suitable items of data (one hundred for each campus) were eventually considered suitable for analysis. The criteria for selection include (but are not limited to) language use, presented ideals and the presentation of modes on the landscapes.

Collected units of data were thematically identified, categorised and analysed as they emerged. Here, it was important to identify language forms and choices as well as how these themes occurred and reoccurred in data. Using CDA helped in identifying both the obvious and hidden themes and MDA was sufficient for the data which linked images with linguistic choices, such as cartoons and graphical posters. Language use, structural organisation of concepts, as well as the settings in which they were placed enhanced an understanding of the contrasts and similarities in the collected data, including the possible reasons and benefits of their use and placements in the spaces. Textual and contextual interactions, as well as the practiced discourses and structures/arrangement were also considered in analysis and interpretation. It was important to describe and interpret how social practices were established and altered (Rogers *et al.* 2005: 371) through collected data. As a result, categorisation was done as suggested by McGregor (2010: 3); Van Dijk (2006: 3); and Blommaert and Bulcaen (2000: 448). The texts were then coded (Chamaz 2006: 13) and critiqued in order to understand language use and power dynamics (Lucke 1996: 20) in the selected universities. This was fully influenced by Gorter's (2006) suggestion on profitable coding, where certain matters are deliberated before data is collected. Some of our considerations were:

- Available languages (for instance, English, Afrikaans, among others) and their usages (or not).

- Silences (non-availability of some languages such as African languages, including Afrikaans, isiZulu or isiXhosa).
- Used font.
- Location and presentation of signs.
- Arrangement of languages used.
- Languages used and possible reasons for choice.

## Findings and discussion

In collecting data, focus was placed on multimodal resources that contained multiple languages in order to assess their use and possible effect in the spaces the authors have chosen, as well as potential impact on the readership of the texts. It was discovered that the indigenous languages used in the landscapes were mostly English, isiXhosa and Afrikaans. Some examples are presented in figures 1a, 1b, 1c and 1d below:



**Figures 1a, 1b, 1c and 1d: Multilingual signs**

The use of translanguaging is beneficial in diverse modes and this impacts their semantic implication per context. Meaning could easily be deduced from the signs because their equivalents in other languages have been supplied. Language is a key multimodal inventory that enhances the generation of meaning (McKinney 2017: 2), it is not autonomous. Likewise, the ways in which different design elements are combined and positioned as a single composition contributes towards their meanings (Kress and Van Leeuwen 2006); and these are some of the important elements of geosemiotics. Taking a look at the bilingual signs in figures 2a, 2b and 2c below, one can assert that there is a deliberate effort to ensure that the institutions' landscapes are not devoid of terms from indigenous languages, no matter how few examples are used.

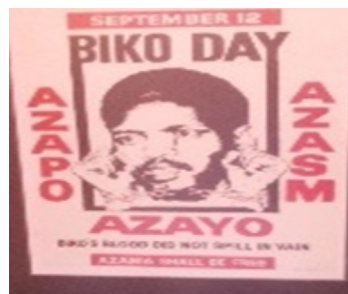


Wie Geht's German Textbook  
Dieter & Ingrid Sevin  
R700 neg.  
Call/ WA Sue @082 517 3551



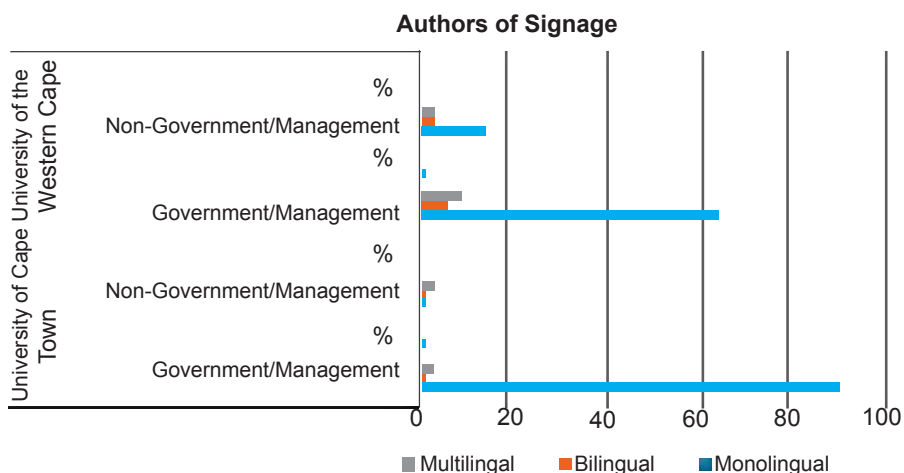
**Figures 2a, 2b and 2c: Bilingual signs**

The use of bilingual signs in information transfer as seen in figures 2a and 2b above also reinforces the assumption that communication is determined by how texts are culturally, socially and historically applied. That is, all forms of communication are socially and semantically constructed and influenced as a result of their geographical spaces. This thus connotes that communication can be variously realised, depending on their geographical spaces and this is essential in the process of meaning construction (Adekunle 2018). *Mayibuyeye* (in figure 2b above) means 'bring back what was lost'. It was a sequence of events and uprisings, aimed at peacefully resisting the rulings of the apartheid government across the country (Galeshewe 2016) by the ANC, South African Indian Congress and the African People's Organisation in 1952 (Kimberley city info. 2013). This finding confirms Pujolar's (2007: 78) statement that public spaces have continuously been utilised as signposts of communities' diversity in urban areas. This accentuates the principle of placement which, as Scollon and Scollon (2003: 2) explain, creates more meaning through signs and symbols, as each embodies various levels of semiotic discourses. Placement also emphasises the essence of constant engagement with ethnography, context, society as well as historic factors (Jaworski and Thurlow 2011) as observed in the universities' landscapes. Signs were used to push political motives both current and historical (as in figures 3a and 3b below).



**Figures 3a and 3b: Political awareness and education**

The authors in figures 3a and b are able to establish and support linguistic and cultural uniqueness via linguistic means (Ben-Rafael 2009: 39) by the use of translanguaging. Languages are thus seen as economic weapons of revival in a bid to retain seats in the position of language and management (Pujolar 2007: 81). This serves as an information tool for the users of that space as they are better informed of the advocated political ideals, existing language borders and the semantic connotations of the chosen words. The use of the selected languages in these cases enhances self-education and research about themes, while also nurturing a group of critical and reflective bi- and multilingual students. It also helps to identify the dominant language ideologies in any community. It is understandable that since the providers of such services are usually the management of the spaces (the universities' authorities) or the consumers of the services of that space (that is, students), the propagated ideologies will be aligned with their interests. Figure 4 below presents the percentages which indicate the number of signs posted by the universities' management and those posted by individual authors.



**Figure 4: Sign authorship**

At UCT, while 91% of the monolingual signs on campus can be categorised as emanating from management, 1% of the monolingual signs could be identified as non-Management signs; 1% were bilingual signs from both sections, and multilingual signs were 3% on both sides. Similarly, 65% of the monolingual (English only) signs at UWC were by management, 14% by non-management, 6% of bilingual signs by management, 3% by non-management, while 9% of the multilingual signs were by management and 3% non-management authors. The monolingual signs were not included in the analysis of this article, as they only comprised the English language.

Given that 95 of the 100 signs in the data were in English first and that other languages followed, the English language is perceived as a 'must learn' or 'must use' or 'must know first' language in the settings where the signs are displayed. It is, however also

indisputable that the universities' LLs are targeted towards a multilingual audience, despite the fact that there were spasmodic appearances of isiXhosa and Afrikaans on LLs and a few non-SA languages (such as Latin, German and French) which were minimally displayed in different places on the campuses; English remained the most prominent language used on the selected university campuses. This confirms Lewis *et al's* (2011: 644) assertion that in translanguaging a strong language is used in the development of the weaker one; which in a way, shifts from the conventional classroom second language teaching to strategically, gradually retaining and developing new languages from provided LLs in the learning environment. Space then becomes the facilitator. Determining the semantics of text placement and their remediation often also indicate the relevance and benefits of such texts; should they be old quotes or even from external or foreign sources. Such texts are embedded in reasoning, experience and purpose (as seen in figure 5 below). Language is thus, used as a tool of advertisement and awareness, as well as for enlightenment, with regard to culture and identity (Kelly-Holmes 2010). An illustrative instance is the Latin idiom on the UWC logo (Figure 5). Notable are the elements of linguistic borrowing on UWC's crest - the Latin term '*Respice Prospice*', which was placed prominently in the logo of the institution.



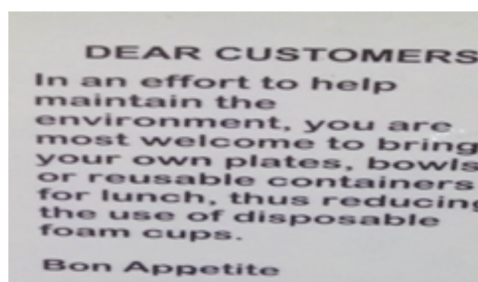
**Figure 5:**  
**Language flexibility on  
logo and crest**

'*Respice Prospice*', literally translated means 'Look back and look ahead'. An idiomatic translation would be: 'Look to the future and learn from the past' (Fun Trivia n.d.). The UWC holds this dearly (CBA group 2017). This is possibly as a result of the history of apartheid and racial segregation in South Africa during which the institution and its students' resistance was prominent. This Latin phrase that is treasured by UWC members is a continuous reminder and encouragement to its members (students, staff, visitors and citizens of the Republic of SA) to learn from the past, in order to make better choices. In this case, translanguaging enhances a broadened semiotic view of language, being a social, story-telling, historic and political tool. Hence, re-semiotising (using modal resources cross-contextually) selected terms from foreign languages either heightens or reduces

inter-sign tension and conflict as a result of the socio-historical overtones depicted. In addition, the placement of this sign at the entrance of the university and in conspicuous zones enables a view of geosemiotics from two angles: sites of necessity (places where people sell basic amenities and where people pass who need these things) and sites of luxury - also termed “authorised spaces” (Scollon and Scollon 2003). Such deliberate acts in order to reach a wider audience is advantageous to the social and economic positions of the universities. It also enables a due examination of semiotic constructions with an acknowledgement that space is dialogical, somatic and ideologically dependent (Prior and Hengst 2010). Space is thus explored in several layers, such as educational, illuminating, historical and commercial.

Using the Latin idiom also indicates management’s or the government’s bid to portray the university as a prestigious international institution of learning, which contrasts with Backhaus’ (2007: 58) claim that the use of a foreign language in a LL hardly indicates an alignment to a foreign audience. The universities can be seen as brands who stand for certain values. Brand communication is essential in any business enterprise. It aids the stimulation of consumer choice, enhances profitability, ensures popularity and safeguards continued business existence (Chiaravalle and Schenck 2007: 13). Translanguaging in this case may be aimed at presenting the institution as a clear-cut, appealing, great and outlandish citadel of learning. By so doing, the institution could attract potential international students (Ryan and Carroll 2005: 3), academics, investors or sponsors (funding), as well as other forms of beneficial support. This is termed “late capitalism” by Duchêne and Heller (2012), which Da Silva and Heller (2009) posit has made language more of an economic symbolism than linguistic. The question as to what position is occupied by which language thus arises. An answer to this may reveal how LL points to or indexes linguistic influence and social value. That is, we must understand how languages, their use and positioning relate to power attribution. On the other hand, it may also be correct to assume these signs were displayed for both the audiences’ awareness rather than merely the institution’s financial gains.

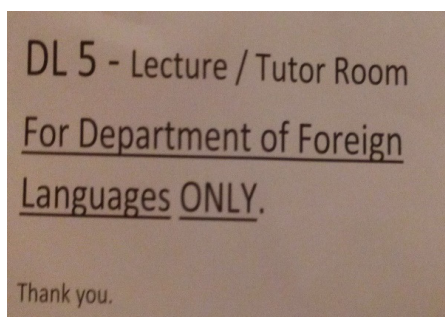
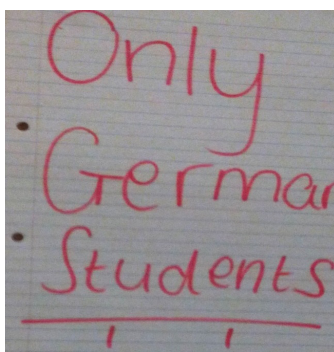
Another form of translanguaging is visible in Figure 6 below, where various semiotic resources are used for communicative purposes (Garcia and Wei 2014). Language, here, is seen as a cohesive communicative system (Canagarajah 2011: 401; Ofelia and Wei 2014) with the aim of communicating effectively and cognitively (Lewis, Jones and Baker 2012: 641) in a multilingual society.



**Figure 6:**  
**Informational**  
**signs**

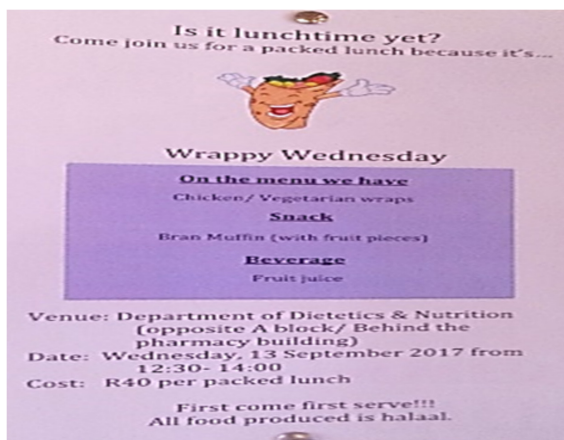
The use of the French phrase 'Bon Appetite' (which means 'I hope you enjoy the meal') is also intended to soften the tone of the relayed instruction as well as indicate the author's language flexibility and presents a sign of internationalisation within the space. The author is most probably an independent businesswoman or man looking out to make a profit. The sign also informs the audience that while they (the authors) advocate a clean and healthy environment, eating is also essential - which is not forgetting that there is money to be made from the business (Vala 2017) by the sign owners or authors. Translanguaging in this instance also positions languages as usable and consumable only when they can offer something tangible (material, cultural and symbolic) to authors and/or the people of the society (de Gruyter, Stroud and Wee 2007: 253), as well as language users. This is also strategic because the choice of 'consumability' creates and solidifies a sense of prestige, identity and belonging in communities (Benwell and Stokoe 2006: 167), as well as provides economic support for local and national governments or businesses.

Besides this was the signage at the UCT Languages department, where an Italian sticker was posted onto the entrance door of one of the lecture rooms to indicate that a foreign languages curriculum exists on campus (figures 7a and 7b below). Other languages such as French, Mandarin and German were also in like manner presented as taught codes in other places on the campus.



**Figures 7a and 7b: Foreign language teaching**

This is a more undeviating indication that the institution also actively engages in bilingual teaching and learning (Hornberger 2005) in their conventional learning spaces, in addition to code mixing and word-borrowing in the linguistic landscapes. Hence, what is learnt in class is supported by what is seen in the linguistic landscape, ensuring some form of continuity in the bi- and multilingual process. Again, with regard to food advertisements on campus, another conspicuous or 'must-see' sign was strategically placed near the 'Student Centre'. As part of this sign, the authors have coined exciting introductory terms that aimed to make money from students (Figure 8 below); and the sign also provides a learning experience for readers.



**Figure 8:**  
**Bilingual signage (food)**

While the signage expresses that only lunch services are provided at the Department of Dietetics and Nutrition, which should presumably provide healthy meals, it also provides a rhythmic slang phrase 'Wrappy Wednesday'. This indicates the use of language that authors perceive could attract target consumers to their services and products. In this case, there is a depiction of consumer and environmental influence on the authors' choice(s) of words and symbols. The last sentence 'the food is halaal' specifies the authors' belief, and intention to lure a wide range of customers (from all religions) and a certain group of customers particularly (Muslims), to the products and services. The meaning of the Arabic word 'halaal' also becomes a 'must achieve' objective for inquisitive consumers - with questions such as: what does 'halaal' mean? This confirms Hendricks and Leibowitz's (2016: 20) assertion that translanguaging heightens the application of higher order thinking and interracial arbitration in clarifying the transcendent and semantic implications of multilingual tenets. It is interesting to note that the small businesses' provision of bi- and multilingual texts on the campus are almost synchronised with the universities' promotion of same language policy within the same space- although there is a more deliberate use of foreign languages by these business owners. Yet again, it enhances continued learning.

As a result, the selective use of linguistic and semiotic resources cannot be overemphasised in language pedagogy. Authors utilise these tools in achieving fascinating results, charming (Gilje 2010) and educating the audience. Duchêne and Heller (2012) term this "late capitalism", which Da Silva and Heller (2009) posit that such actions have made language more of an economic than a linguistic symbol. The use of French (on the food advert signage) and Latin (for instance, on UWC's logo - Figure 1) languages on the campuses, indicate that texts are representational, constructional (Mheta 2011: 69) and informative. When this is not identified and explored, and their occurrences critiqued (Christie 2005), the essence of their use and placement may be defied, meanings may be lost or ignored and their significance, as well as maintenance in the learning spaces will be jeopardised; not only in social activism but also in literature.

Consequently, the ‘common-sense placement’ (Ricento 2006) of languages on both campuses intentionally serves the benefit of a specific group of people (Kroskrity 2000: 8) who, in this instance, may be the first and second language users of English, space users who may be interested in learning a local or international language, as well as taking into account the economic situations of the institutions who would prefer to be seen as a linguistically and culturally diverse settings, a home to all and sundry. With regard to the present study, the commercialisation of language may be established as a significant factor in language planning, policy and use at the selected universities. This is as a result of the nature of prestige, identity and power status, which well-used languages acquire over time; as well as its effect on other, under-represented languages.

A higher number of indigenous (rather than foreign) languages were used in the landscapes and this indicates a deliberate move towards the inclusion of South Africa’s indigenous languages in higher education. The use of few foreign languages in strategic places however may not suggest any form of aloofness but perhaps a subtle and gradual presentation of the languages to the audience such that familiarisation is achieved, eventually. Likewise, the fact that English language is added more regularly indicates the preference towards English as well as its use as a translational tool in the multilingual setting. One may expect that with the continuous use of all indigenous languages on an equal level SA’s HE will attain its desired height of development and inclusivity. As a result, translanguaging in public spaces becomes either a blessing or a status quo obstructer in terms of language use, preservation, endangerment and language as a pedagogical tool as orchestrated by space - conventional or not.

## **Limitations of the study**

A small sample of artefacts were analysed in the end, and a very small sample included relevant translanguaging findings for the study. It should be noted that the results may not be representative of what gives in other settings, and therefore cannot be generalised. Nevertheless, generalisability is not as important to this research, as is the derivation of valuable information about the LLs and language use of the selected universities. Findings are thus indicative of the current language use in the examined settings.

## **Conclusion**

The paper determined the influence of language as a door that opens other doors, due to the utilised modal resources. Translanguaging is indeed an effective marketing tool for higher institutions of learning in SA. It favourably positions the country as well as institutions where word-borrowing is utilised, as linguistically diverse spaces which are accommodating and willing to explore outside cultures and languages, while also incorporating SA’s indigenous languages in the process. Besides this incredible sort of recognition, institutions’ financial purses bulge as the income increases based on the

intake of international students who perceive them as a second home as well as local students who want to take advantage of the opportunity to, as Creese and Blackledge (2010) posit, learn new terms or languages. They are also able to make friends with peers from varied international settings.

Authors seem to deliberately select texts envisioned to attract a specific audience. This confirms Dyers' (2008) assertion of a developing linguistic shift in SA. The linguistic shift, from this study's findings, is obviously towards the English language and other international languages (especially French, Latin, Italian, Arabic, Chinese/Mandarin and German). Translanguaging is thus, likely to be a blessing rather than a curse to any higher institution of learning if properly managed. When international languages such as French and Mandarin are used on university campuses in South Africa, it supports the idea that international students are welcome in South Africa on these campuses. Public and private spaces are "awareness and learning" zones for all space users and must thus be approached in that manner, especially if translanguaging in linguistic landscapes is acknowledged as a vehicle through which multilingualism progresses. From this study, it can be assumed that the attempt at internationalisation may be aligned with the nation's yearn for the internationalisation of the curriculum where students are well informed of theirs and other languages as well as settings, thus nurturing and certifying them ultimately as citizens of the world who are comfortable in diverse spaces; as opposed to citizens who have never travelled beyond the borders of their own country.

Although English is the avenue through which translanguaging works in these cases, it is undeniable that with the use of indigenous languages and the introduction of non-South African languages in the institutions' LLs, our university societies are becoming more multicultural and multilingual. Likewise, due to the variously developing dynamics of internationalisation and nationalisation (Archer 2011: 131; Ryan and Carroll 2005: 3), students are further exposed to other local and global languages that could enhance their use and knowledge of the communicative roles of language. By such means, everyone potentially feels more accepted (Creese and Blackledge 2010) and included in the affairs of the university. Thereby, harmonising power relations from the linguistic perspective (Canagarajah 2011). As a result, translanguaging foregrounds the strategic use of language to create and construe context-specific signs via communication while also portraying diverse prejudices and bias within society, for example, via the observed language hegemony in the instances of the University logo and the small business adverts where foreign languages are used with the English language, discussed in this study. This study reveals that not all the indigenous languages of South Africa are carried into the LLs of the universities that formed part of the study. In other words, indigenous South African languages are not judiciously equally utilised or represented in these landscapes.

Furthermore, the use of multilingual signs could assist students in general feel welcome at the university which is an important issue in the national debates about the role of universities in SA, how universities succeed or not in making students



feel welcome and how universities are struggling to really 'decolonise' in the actual sense. Multilingualism may indeed be a progressive retort to the existing linguistic crisis in SA's higher institutions of learning (Madiba 2014). Using multilingual signs is one way of maybe contributing to the transformation of HE. By such means, everyone feels accepted (Creese and Blackledge 2010) and included in the affairs of the university. This would support a positive/conducive environment for learning and academic achievement as well as encourage the use of more languages (Higher Education language policy documents 2017/2018) for teaching and learning at the institutions. From the above discussion, it is evident that translanguaging provides room for meaning generation and activism in higher institutions of learning, in both conventional and unconventional settings.

## Recommendations

Having discussed translanguaging and its educational, political and economic impact on students, higher institutions of learning, spaces and authors, we suggest effective utilisation of space as a productive avenue to promote multilingualism in enhancing cross- and intracultural and linguistic engagements which will be useful to students' exposure, success and intellectual development. Space is an integral part of communication. Judicious uses of spaces through a display of linguistic richness enable the presentability of such spaces as well as the authorities of the spaces as progressive and student-centred. Universities' management should take advantage of available public and private spaces to educate students about languages and their cultural, social, economic and linguistic affluence. This a momentous step from the traditional language learning pedagogy to a more unconventional free - space enhanced schooling, which is able to nurture active knowledge constructors, critical and reflective thinkers as well as citizens of diverse spaces who are socially, economically, linguistically and culturally aware of local and global contexts.

## References

- Abongdia, J. A. 2013. *Language ideologies in Africa: Comparative perspectives from Cameroon and South Africa*. Unpublished. PhD., University of the Western Cape.
- Adekunle, T. 2018. Linguistic landscaping in selected South African Universities: Case studies of University of Cape Town and University of the Western Cape. Doctoral thesis submitted to Durban University of Technology.
- Archer, A. 2011. Investigating the effect of Writing Centre interventions on student writing. In: Archer, A. and Richards, R. *Changing Spaces: Writing Centres and Access to Higher Education*. 131-144. Stellenbosch: Sun Press. Available:

<https://books.google.co.za/books?hl=en&lr=&id =SqkxAwAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA131&dq=Investigating+the+effect+of+Writing+Centre+interventions+on+student+writing> (Accessed 5 January 2018).

- Backhaus, P. 2007. *Linguistic landscapes: A comparative study of urban multilingualism in Tokyo*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Baker, C. 2011. *Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Bamgbose, A. 2003. Language planning in a multi-ethnic state: The majority/minority dichotomy in Nigeria. *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 12(1): 105-117.
- Banda, F. 2012. Linguistic/ semiotic landscapes and post-apartheid identities at three Western Cape Universities. *Seminar delivered at 2nd international conference of the department of African languages and literature, University of Botswana, 12-14 July*. Unpublished paper.
- Ben-Rafael, E. 2009. *A sociological approach to the study of linguistic landscapes*. London: Routledge.
- Benwell, B. and Stokoe, E. 2006. *Discourse and identity*. Oxford: Edinburgh University Press.
- Bezemer, J. and Mavers, D. 2011. Multimodal transcription as academic practice, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* ,14(3): 191-206.
- Blommaert, J. 2008. *Grassroots literacy: Writing, identity and voice in Central Africa*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Blommaert, J. and Bulcaen, C. 2000. Critical discourse analysis. *Annual Reviews Publishers*, 29: 447-466.
- Bourhis, R. Y and Landry, R. 2002. La loi 101 et l'aménagement du paysage linguistique du Québec. In: Bouchard, P. and Bourhis, R. Y. eds. *L'aménagement Linguistique au Québec: 25 D'application de la Charte de la Langue Francaise*. Québec: Publications du Québec, pp 107–132.
- Bulawka, H. M. 2006. *English in Polish advertising*. MA Thesis. Department of English: University of Birmingham. Available: <http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/collegeartslaw/cels/essays/appliedlinguistics/BulawkaDissertation.pdf> (Accessed 12 February 2018).

- Burcu, Y.M., Fannin, J., Montanero, M and Cummins, J. 2014. A multilingual and multimodal approach to literacy teaching and learning in urban education: A collaborative inquiry in an inner city elementary school. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 5,533
- Canagarajah, S. 2011. Codemeshing in academic writing: Identifying teachable strategies of translanguaging. *The Modern Language Journal*. 95(3): 401–417.
- Canagarajah, S. 2011. Translanguaging in the classroom: Emerging issues for research and pedagogy. *Applied Linguistics Review*, 2: 1-28.
- CBA group. 2017. *Success story*. Available: <http://cbagroup.co.za/uwc-success-story/gdfsdftyg> (Accessed 29 March 2018).
- Chamaz, K. 2006. *Constructing grounded theory. A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Chiaravalle, B. and Schenck, B. F. 2007. *Branding for dummies*. New York: John Wiley and Sons.
- Christie, F. 2005. *Classroom discourse analysis: A functional perspective*. New York: Continuum.
- Coetzee-Van Rooy, A. S. 2016. Multilingualism and social cohesion: Insights from South African students. *International journal of the Sociology of Language*, 2016(242), 239-265.
- Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. 1996. *Chapter 1: Founding provisions*. Available: <http://www.gov.za>. (Accessed 6 December 2014).
- Coulmas, F. 2009. *Linguistic landscaping and the seed of the public sphere*. New York: Routledge.
- Creese, A. and Blackledge, A. 2010. Translanguaging in the bilingual classroom: A pedagogy for learning and teaching? *The Modern Language Journal*, 94 (1): 103-115.
- Dagenais, D., Moore, D., Sabatier, C., Lamarre, P. and Armand, F. 2009. Linguistic landscape and language awareness. In: Shohamy, E and Gorter, D. eds. *Linguistic landscape: Expanding the scenery* (pp. 253-269). New York, NY: Routledge.

- Da Silva, E. and Heller, M. 2009. From protector to producer: The role of the state in the discursive shift from minority rights to economic development. *Language Policy*, 8(2): 95- 116.
- de Gruyter, M., Stroud, C. and Wee, L. 2007. Consuming identities: Language planning and policy in Singapore. *Language Policy*, 6(2): 253-279.
- Duchêne, A. and Heller, M. 2012. *Language in late capitalism: Pride and profit*. New York: Routledge.
- Du Plessis, T. 2011. Language visibility and language removal: A South African case study in linguistic landscape change, *South African Journal for Communication Theory & Research*, 37: 194-224.
- Dyers, C. 2008. Truncated multilingualism or language shift? An examination of language use in intimate domains in a new non-racial working class township in South Africa. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 29(2): 110-126. 103.
- Ereaut, G. 2002. *Analysis and interpretation in qualitative market research*. London, Sage.
- Fairclough, N. 2009. A dialectical-relational approach to Critical Discourse Analysis. In: Wodak, R. and Meyer, M. eds. *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*. London: Sage. pp 162-86.
- Fairclough, N. 2010. *Critical discourse analysis: The critical study of language*. Harlow: Longman.
- Fast facts. 2007. Provincial profile, Western Cape. South African Institute of Race Relations, pp. 7-20. Available: <http://irr.org.za/reports> (Accessed 15 February 2017).
- Fun Trivia*. n.d. Available: <http://www.funtrivia.com/askft/Question81055.html> (Accessed 28 March 2018).
- Galeshewe. 2016. *Time travel Mayibuye uprising 1952*. Available: [http://www.bridging-gages.com/site/assets/files/1678/mayibuye\\_uprising\\_1952\\_scenew-va.pdf](http://www.bridging-gages.com/site/assets/files/1678/mayibuye_uprising_1952_scenew-va.pdf) (Accessed 25 October 2017).
- Garcia, O. and Wei, L. 2014. *Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism and education*. New York, Palgrave Macmillan. (pp 162).

- Gilje, O. 2010. Multimodal redesign in filmmaking practices: An inquiry of young filmmakers' deployment of semiotic tools in their filmmaking practice. *Written Communication*, 27(4): 494-522.
- Gorter, D. 2006. *Linguistic landscape: A new approach to multilingualism*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Government Gazette. 2017/2018. Revised language Policy for Higher Education. Department of Higher Education and Training. Vol 632, no 41463.
- Hendricks, C. and Leibowitz, B. 2016. Decolonising universities isn't an easy process – but it has to happen. Available: <https://theconversation.com/decolonising-universities-isnt-an-easy-process-but-it-has-to-happen-59604>.
- Hornberger, N. H. 2005. Heritage/community language education: US and Australian perspectives. Available: [http://repository.upenn.edu/gse\\_pubs/10](http://repository.upenn.edu/gse_pubs/10) (Accessed 5<sup>th</sup> November 2018).
- Jaworski, A. and Thurlow, C. 2011. *Semiotic landscapes: Language, image, space*. Eds. London: Continuum.
- Jewitt, C. 2009. *The Routledge handbook of multimodal analysis*. eds. London: Routledge.
- Kaschula, R. H. 2004. South Africa's national language policy revisited: The challenge of implementation. *Alternation*, 11(2): 10-25.
- Kelly-Holmes, K. 2010. Linguistic fetish: The sociolinguistics of visual multilingualism. (pp. 135-151). In Machin, D. ed. *Visual communication*. Berlin/New York: De Gruyter Mouton.
- Kotze, C. 2010. *The linguistic landscape of rural South Africa after 1994: A case study of Philippolis*. An unpublished MA thesis, University of the Free State.
- Kress, G. 2003b. *Literacy and multimodality: A theoretical framework. Literacy in the New Media Age*. London: Routledge.
- Kress, G. and Van Leeuwen, T. 2006. *Reading images: The grammar of visual design*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. London / New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group.
- Kress, G. 2012. *Discourse analysis and education: A multimodal social semiotic approach*. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum, 205-226.

- Kress, G. 2010. *Multimodality: A semiotic approach to contemporary communication*. London: Routledge.
- Kroskrity, P. 2000. Language ideological perspectives. In Kroskrity, P. ed. *Regimes of language* (1-34). Oxford: American Research Press.
- Lewis, G; Jones, B. and Baker, C. 2012. Translanguaging: Origins and development from school to street and beyond. *Educational Research and Evaluation*, 18(7): 641–654.
- Lucke, A. 1996. *Text and discourse analysis*. New York: American Educational Research Association, 21:3-17.
- Madiba, M. 2014. Promoting concept literacy through multilingual glossaries: A translanguaging approach. In Hibbert, L; van der Walt, C, *Multilingual universities in South Africa: Reflecting society in Higher Education*, 68-87. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- Makelela, L. 2015. Translanguaging as a vehicle for epistemic access: Cases for reading comprehension and multilingual interactions, *Per Linguam*, 31(1): 15-29.
- Mcgregor, S. L. T. 2010. *Critical discourse analysis: A primer*. Halifax: Mount Saint Vincent University.
- McKinney, C. 2017. *Language and power in post-colonial schooling: Ideologies in practice*. London: Routledge.
- Mheta, G. 2011. *A contextual analysis of compound nouns in Shona lexicography*. Doctoral thesis, University of the Western Cape. Cape Town: Shumani Mills Digital.
- Morgan, A. 2010. Discourse analysis: An overview for the Neophyte researcher. *Journal of Health and Social Care Improvement*, 1:1-7.
- Mühlhäusler, P. 2003. *Language of environment- environment of language. A course in Ecolinguistics*. London: Battlebridge Publications.
- Ofelia, G. and Li Wei. 2014. *Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism and education*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Pienaar, K. and Becker, I. 2007. The body as a site of struggle: Oppositional discourses of the disciplined female body. *South African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies*, 25(4): 539-555.

- Prior, P. A. and Hengst, J. A. 2010. *Exploring semiotic remediation as discourse practice*. New York and Hemp shire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Pujolar, J. 2007. Bilingualism and the nation-state in the post-national era. In: Heller, M. ed. *Bilingualism: A Social Approach*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Puzey, G. 2009. Opportunity or threat? The role of minority toponyms in the linguistic landscape. In: Ahrens, W., Embleton, S. and Lapierre, A. eds. *Names in multi-lingual, multi-cultural and multi-ethnic contact*. Proceedings of the 23<sup>rd</sup> International Congress of Onomastic Sciences. 17-22 August 2008, York University, Toronto, Canada. Toronto, Canada: York University, 821-827.
- Ricento, T. 2006. Topical areas in language policy: An overview'. In: Ricento, T. ed. *An introduction to language policy: Theory and method*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, pp. 255-272.
- Rogers, R., Malamcharuvil-Berkes, E., Mosley, M., Hui, D. and O' Garro Joseph, G. 2005. *Critical discourse analysis in education: A review of the literature*. Washington: Sage Publications.
- Ryan, J. and Carroll, J. 2005. Canaries in the coalmine: International students in western universities. In: Carroll, J. and Ryan, J. eds. *Teaching international students*. London: Routledge, pp. 3–10.
- Scollon, R. and Scollon, S. 2003. *Discourses in place: Language in the material world*. London: Routledge.
- Shohamy, E. 2006. *Language policy: Hidden agendas and new approaches*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Spolsky, B. 2009. Prolegomena to a sociolinguistic theory of public signage. In: Gorter, D. and Shohamy, E. eds. *Linguistic landscape: Expanding the scenery*. New York: Routledge, pp. 25-39.
- Stroud, C. and Mpendukana, S. 2009. Towards a material ethnography of linguistic landscape: Multilingualism, mobility and space in a South African township. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 13(3): 363-386.
- Ustinova, I. and Bhatia, T. K. 2005. Convergence of English in Russian TV commercials. *World Englishes*, 24(4): 495-508.
- Vala, A. 2017. *The multimodal CIO for the digital business era*. Available: [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/vala-afshar/the-multimodal-cio-for-th\\_b\\_6559042.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/vala-afshar/the-multimodal-cio-for-th_b_6559042.html) (Accessed 31 January 2017).

Van Dijk, T. A. 2006. *Principles of critical discourse analysis*. Amsterdam. University of Amsterdam.

Van Leeuwen, T. 2009. Discourse as the recontextualisation of social practice: A guide. In: Wodak, R and Meyer, M. eds. *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*. 144-61. London: Sage.

Western Cape Economic Overview. 2016. *Westgro*. Available: [http://goto.capetown/home\\_wesgro](http://goto.capetown/home_wesgro). (Accessed 15 February 2017).

Wodak, R. and Meyer, M. 2008. *Critical Discourse Analysis: History, agenda, theory, and methodology*. London: Sage.



---

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR(S)

### **Temitope O Adekunle**

Email: [tpadekunle@yahoo.com](mailto:tpadekunle@yahoo.com)

**Temitope O. Adekunle** is a doctor of Language Practice, researcher and lecturer at the Durban University of Technology, South Africa. Her works focus on sociolinguistics, literature, education, policies, and discursive practices from interdisciplinary perspectives.

### **Maleshoane Rapeane-Mathonsi**

**Maleshoane Rapeane-Mathonsi** is the Research Coordinator in the Faculty of Arts and Design. She holds a PhD in Sociolinguistics, from the University of Cape Town. Her research interests include language use, especially studies on the linguistic landscape of Southern African cities, and language differentiation and gender.

### **Gift Mheta**

**Gift Mheta** (PhD Linguistics, University of the Western Cape) is the Writing Centre manager at the Durban University of Technology. His research is mainly focused on corpus development and maintenance, computational lexicography and language technology applications for the development of African languages.