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Chapter 9

Delinking from Coloniality and Increasing Participation in Early Literacy Teacher Education

Carolyn McKinney

In a conversation with interviewer Francis Wade, Kenyan scholar Ngũgĩ wa Thiongo explains that in Anglophone post-colonial spaces:

> The language of power is English and that becomes internalized, (...) You normalize the abnormal and the absurdities of colonialism, and turn them into a norm from which you operate. Then you don't even think about it.' (2018, n.p.).

One of the effects of the #RMF student protest movement at the University of Cape Town was to force people to pay attention to how the abnormal had become and continued to be normalised in our university environment. Such normalisation processes continue to position black multilingual students as linguistically deficient while monolingual English speaking white students are positioned as linguistically adept. In my own and my collaborative teacher education work this normalising of the abnormal as a product of Colonialism takes on particular significance because we are preparing teachers to teach in multilingual schooling contexts. Preparing teachers in this context thus needs to involve a repositioning of student-teachers in relation to their language and schooling histories. In university classrooms where African language resources are usually invisible, we needed to convince African language speakers not just of the value, but of the necessity, of their lived experience of multilingualism and of their language resources for teaching young children. While

in the case of privileged 'monolingual' English speakers, we needed them to acknowledge the gaps in their knowledge and experience, including lack of competence in African languages and lack of experience of typical schooling contexts in township and rural settings in South Africa.

Decolonial theory draws attention to the ways in which hierarchies of language and culture are crucial aspects of the colonial matrix of power (Ngũgĩ wa Thiongo, 1986). In Africa it is commonplace for colonial languages to dominate the education system and for proficiency in a European language and script to be seen as the *sole marker* of being educated. It is also the Western episteme that is largely responsible for monoglossic myths that construct monolingualism as normative in official university spaces. During protests at UCT, the deficit positioning of black students as educationally underprepared in their university classes was critiqued. This is a positioning that white students in South Africa seldom experience with the assumption being that they have received high quality schooling and are adequately prepared for university study. However, especially given the slow pace of change in ethos of previously white schools post-apartheid (Christie & McKinney, 2017; Soudien, 2007), there is an urgent need to also recognise the gaps in white, middle class students' knowledge and resources that hinder them from engaging critically at university. Included in these gaps could be proficiency in African languages, consciousness of their own social positioning, including privilege, and lack of experience of typical schooling in South Africa. These potential gaps are especially significant for student-teachers.

In this chapter I present a case study of one response to calls for decolonised education in a teacher education course on early literacy. One aim of the course was to foreground the multilingual resources and knowledge of our frequently marginalised African language speaking students and to enable our traditionally empowered English home language speakers to recognise the gaps in their knowledge and experience. Another aim was to prepare all students to work productively with multilingual learners in literacy learning. Activities were designed which required students to work collaboratively and multilingually across the three named languages

of isiXhosa, Afrikaans and English that are dominant in our region, the Western Cape. I will present an overview of design elements of the course as well as a close analysis of the embodied responses of a smaller group of students who worked collaboratively in the course.

(De)Coloniality (and dwelling in the borders)

The course was informed by theorising of coloniality, in particular the relationship between language and Coloniality (Makalela, 2018, 2019; Ngũgĩ wa Thiongo, 1986), and the need for 'delinking' from coloniality (Mignolo, 2007), as well as for 'learning to unlearn' (Andreotti and de Souza, 2008; Tlotsanova and Mignolo, 2012). In distinguishing between coloniality and colonialism, Maldonado-Torres (2007:243) explains that coloniality describes what has survived colonialism: 'the long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labor, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production' in the present. Maldonado-Torres reminds us that as modern subjects we breathe coloniality all the time and everyday' (2007:243). The continuing marginalisation and invisibility of African language resources, alongside the hegemony of English, and the construction of monolingualism as the norm in a deeply multilingual society, is a powerful way in which we 'live and breathe coloniality all the time and everyday' in our education system. The exclusive valuing of English in a country where the majority of learners are African language speakers and multilingual has, as Ngũgĩ explains, become so normative as to be invisible.

It is the Western episteme that is largely responsible for monolingual myths that have underpinned research in applied linguistics and psycholinguistics (McKinney, 2017). While most children in the world grow up multilingually, theorizing of language acquisition continues to assume that the typical, or normal child is monolingual and acquires language sequentially in monolingual settings, as the ubiquitous terms First Language Acquisition and Second Language Acquisition illustrate (Canagarajah, 2007, Ortega, 2014). Eurocentric language ideologies position monolingualism in a European language as normative and privilege monolingualism over multilingualism

in 'other[ed]' languages. In South Africa, and other Anglophone contexts of coloniality, it is proficiency and literacy in particular forms of 'standard' English that are the main marker of being educated. The dominant language ideology is *Anglonormativity*, 'the expectation that people will be and should be proficient in English and are deficient, even deviant, if they are not' (McKinney, 2017:80). Yet, education in a foreign language or through a language in which a child is not proficient effectively removes the most valuable resource a child brings to formal schooling: their linguistic repertoire (Busch, 2017).

One of our challenges in teacher education is how to unlearn the dominant monoglossic and Anglonormative language ideologies while at the same time participating in a higher education and schooling system that reproduces and upholds these same ideologies. For Andreotti and de Souza, learning to unlearn is 'learning to perceive that what one considers as neutral and objective is a perspective and is related to where one is coming from socially, historically and culturally' (2008:4). Unlearning involves developing recognition of language resources other than English, learning to hear/'see' African languages as resources, and learning to work multilingually. However, while we advocate bi/multilingualism in schooling and higher education, enabling children to develop their proficiencies in indigenous African languages and English, we are aware that our students have at most times to perform as English monolinguals in the university space. It is in this sense that we position ourselves as dwelling in the borderlands (Anzaldua, 1987/2012), dwelling in a space where we work multilingually to surface invisible language resources, while at the same time performing English monolingualism when required.

Coloniality, Race and linguistic repertoires

Working multilingually in the classroom requires students to become aware of their own and other's linguistic repertoires. Initially the concept of linguistic repertoire was coined by Gumperz to describe shared language resources amongst a speech community. More recently Busch (2017) has expanded the notion of linguistic repertoire to take account of our embodied histories of language learning and use. Her

notion of *spracherleben,* or the 'lived experience of language' is particularly helpful in the South African context where the racialising effects of apartheid and its aftermath profoundly shape people's experiences of and with language use and learning. Rather than understanding repertoire as 'a set of competences or a 'toolbox' from which we draw particular codes, Busch describes linguistic repertoires as multidimensional (2017:355). She sets out three distinct dimensions:

1. interactional/ anthropological, 'how we interact linguistically and socially with one another'

2. post-structuralist or 'how we are constituted as speaking subjects by historical/political discourses', and

3. phenomenological or 'bodily/emotional prerequisites for speaking and experiencing language.'

This multidimensional approach thus 'interweaves social/interactive elements with historical/political and personal/biographical ones.' Significantly, language ideologies, or value laden discourses about languages, language use and users, are active in all three dimensions. Busch points out that language ideologies 'have a major influence on whether we feel that a language we speak brings respect, or whether we try to hide it from others or even to get rid of it' (2017:348).

The experience of feelings of 'shame' linked to how we speak, as well as the resources in our linguistic repertoire is one of the damaging effects of coloniality. Fanon (1952/2017) showed how the colonised are dehumanised through internalising myths of European superiority and exclusive use of European languages for 'legitimate' expression. Ngũgĩ draws attention specifically to the ways in which the denigration of African people's language and cultural practices, their ways of knowing and being, had the effect of a 'cultural bomb':

> The biggest weapon wielded and actually daily unleashed by imperialism against that collective defiance is the cultural bomb. The effect of a cultural bomb is to annihilate a people's belief in their names, in their languages, in their environment, in their

> heritage of struggle, in their unity, in their capacities and ultimately in themselves. (Ngũgĩ wa Thiongo, 1986: 3).

My own research on girls' use of varieties of English in desegregated, elite schools as well as Makoe's (2007) research on language practices and ideologies in primary schooling has shown how children and youth express shame in relation to their language practices. For example, sixteen year old Cape Flats English speaker Sumaya positions herself deficiently in relation to her white English-speaking peers:

> ok I feel like that like I hardly talk in class because of the way I normally speak like I'm scared to talk in class because of the way I speak. I speak differently from the way they do the way the rest of them do.

Sumaya speaks English as her home language but feels silenced in school because she speaks a non-dominant variety of English with a non-prestigious accent. Makoe's research with children in year 1 of schooling analyses how a learner refuses to answer her English speaking teacher's question in an African language when invited to do so because she has learned that only speaking English will garner praise and accolades (Makoe, 2007). We can also note that the children in Makoe's research in this volume declined to use languages other than English in their storytelling even though they were invited to do so (see Chapter 3, this volume). As in all of these examples, it is most often the language use of Black South Africans that is stigmatised in one way or another, either because the variety of the language used (of English or Afrikaans) does not conform to the ethnolinguistic repertoire of whiteness (Benor, 2010; McKinney, 2017) or because their indigenous African languages are not used formally in the educational system beyond year 3, and thus are not accorded status. As South Africans, becoming conscious of our linguistic repertoires means confronting how these are shaped by our colonial and apartheid/racialised histories, and how this is shot through with power relations. This confrontation, and understanding the way educational spaces are saturated with Anglonormativity, enables us to understand why a speaker's competence in a number of African languages, thus multilingualism, is less valued than monolingualism in English.

Research methodology - linguistic ethnography

The teacher education course which is the site for this research focuses on how to enable students to teach early literacy and language multilingually. In a university and teacher education programme where lectures and assessments as well as prescribed reading materials are available in English only, this necessarily involves *modelling* a different kind of language and literacy practice in the classroom. The research aims both to describe and understand/analyse what happened during the course as the lecturer worked to transform the normative interactional order from a monolingual to a multilingual one and from an order that privileged written discourse to valuing embodied and multimodal communication. Linguistic ethnography is especially suited to addressing these aims as it enables us to look at the entanglement of macro social processes and structures and micro interactions (Copland and Creese, 2015; Lillis, 2008). A range of complementary data collection tools such as observation, audio-visual recording of naturally occurring interaction and collection of student work (artefacts) produce data that in combination makes visible the interactions that unfold moment-by-moment. In describing a central insight of linguistic ethnography, Rampton and colleagues (2014: 2) write that 'language and the social world are mutually shaping, and that close analysis of situated language use can provide both fundamental and distinctive insights into the mechanisms and dynamics of social and cultural production in everyday activity.' I hope to show how the interactional order in the classroom was profoundly shaped by socio-historical and political relations of both the past, present and the future.

My role was to observe and record the unfolding of the intervention. I did this through handwritten fieldnotes, informal discussions with the lecturer, photographs of lecturer and students during the process of teaching and learning and of student produced work, as well as audio-visual recording of some of the sessions. We did not video or audio record the first session where observation was captured in fieldnotes and collection of documents. The lecturer, Xolisa Guzula and I, worked together on analysis of some of the data as acknowledged below (see Abdulatief, Guzula and McKinney, 2021). The course ran over 4 x 3hr sessions with 24 students, all of whom

were completing a one-year postgraduate teacher education programme for year 1-3 children (Grade 1-3, 6-9 years of age). The main source of data in this chapter is fieldnotes, accompanied by visual images and a transcribed student presentation.

Analysing participation

In showing how 'participation is intrinsically a situated, multi-party accomplishment' (Goodwin & Goodwin, 2001:231), the Goodwins draw attention to its interactive nature, thus involving speakers and hearers in the joint accomplishment of participation. They also emphasise the need to pay attention to how speakers can adapt to the kind of engagement or disengagement their hearers display through constant adjustments of their bodies and talk'. Thus, participation must be analysed as fully embodied action. Given our aim of working multilingually and making visible marginalised language resources, a focus on student and lecturer language practices and discourses is central to the analysis. Equally important is attempting to account for participants' embodied communication through their facial expressions, gestures and stance, physical positioning in relation to each other and the materials they were presenting, as well as non-linguistic verbal cues such as laughter and hesitations. Participants' affect and their engagement is often more visible in these non-linguistic elements than it is in their words. The analysis is also inspired by Canagarajah's discussion of 'assemblage' in which he draws attention to how 'diverse semiotic resources' work in concert:

> The notion of assemblage helps us to consider how diverse semiotic resources play a collaborative role as a spatial repertoire (…) Assemblage corrects the orientation to non-verbal resources in scholars addressing 'multimodality'. From the perspective of assemblage, semiotic resources are not organised into separate modes […Rather….] all modalities, including language, work together and shape each other in communication (Canagarajah, 2018: 39).

Data Analysis - Constructing a translingual space

In describing and analysing one attempt to delink from the grammar of Coloniality in a teacher education course, I have chosen to focus on four moments from the seminars.

Moment 1: Molweni

Seminar 1 – Opening the class

Xolisa begins by greeting the class in isiXhosa: *Molweni [Greetings All] Ninjani [how are you all?)* There are a few isiXhosa-English bilinguals in the room, and more in the class who have not yet arrived, but most of the students present are English dominant or English-Afrikaans bilinguals. Initially Xolisa's greeting is met with silence and then some students respond with *Ndiphilile* [I am well] and then a few self-correct with *Siphilile [We are well]*. A few students ask Xolisa '*Unjani*?' [how are you?]

Xoli says '*I have to think because it's a long time ago*', then says '*Goed dankie*' [Good, thank you in Afrikaans] and students laugh at this. Xoli then asks *'are we all here?'*

One student responds to Xoli in isiXhosa, explaining that some students coming from Khayelitsha are struggling with transport this morning. Xoli then introduces herself in isiXhosa, translanguaging to English, and asks the students to introduce themselves. I notice that some of the white students introduced themselves using isiXhosa. One isiXhosa/English bilingual student gave a much longer introduction in isiXhosa and telling about her family, clan name and where she comes from.

(Field notes: 30 May 2017)

As an observer in the classroom, I saw a changing interactional order from the moment that the lecturer opened the class with her greeting in isiXhosa. This is likely the first time in the programme that the students would have been greeted in a

language other than English in their methodology class. This may explain why there was a brief silence before students began responding to the lecturer's greeting. The lecturer then made another unexpected move by answering the students' question 'Unjani' (how are you?) first with metacommentary in English (I have to think because it's a long time ago) and then with an appropriate reply in Afrikaans, 'goed dankie'/good thank you. Answering in a language in which she was not confident, Xolisa positioned herself as a language learner, here of Afrikaans. She again disrupted the monolingual English norm and began to model a different kind of multilingual languaging where taking risks was to be encouraged. The students' laughter at Xolisa's answer in Afrikaans suggests that they do not associate her with this language. By way of contrast, they didn't laugh at her opening greeting in isiXhosa. Racialised patterns of language use in South Africa make it unusual for fluency in Afrikaans to be included in the linguistic repertoires of African language speakers as they would have learned an African language as home language subject and English as additional language at school. The lengthy account for her peers' absence in isiXhosa that an isiXhosa speaking student gave in response to Xoli's question 'are we all here?' is also notable. This may be the student's attempt to create solidarity with the lecturer, by speaking in a shared language. It also positions the lecturer as somebody who would understand the material living conditions of students who live a long distance away from campus and who struggle with public transport and taxi strikes. The longer self-introduction of another of the isiXhosa speaking students also shows how changing the language of introduction enables the student to draw on different 'ways with words', replacing the usually brief English introduction – My name is xx – with a way of locating oneself (using a family name, a clan name and giving your place of origin). This allows others to locate you within a wider community. In both cases, the isiXhosa speaking students' participation was enabled by the knowledge that their lecturer would understand both their language use and their message. Participation was thus interactively enabled and accomplished.

Moment 2 – 'there are no monolinguals here'

Xolisa went on from the greetings to surfacing the language resources amongst the students in the room. Later on in the session, she put up a slide with the prompts

Ndithetha…

I speak…

ek praat…

ke bua…

ngikhuluma …

She asked students to discuss in pairs their own language learning experiences and language resources before reporting back to the class.

Extract from fieldnotes 30 May 2017

I notice that when Xolisa asks for feedback from the pairs, students seem hesitant to report back. A student from Zimbabwe explains that she can speak Shona but she cannot read it. Black students report back for themselves or their partners knowledge of Sesotho, isiXhosa, isiZulu, isiNdebele. White students sitting on the North side of room are quiet; one says I speak a bit of French, another says a bit of Portuguese; I can read Spanish. German and Korean are mentioned.

One student says ‘Xhonglish’; Xoli writes up all the language names mentioned on newsprint including ‘Xhonglish’,and then adds ‘Zunglish’, ‘Shonglish’, ‘Frenglish’ ‘Afriklish’ ‘Kombuistaal’. Xoli comments ‘so we are very multilingual, very very multilingual here. There are no monolinguals here’. One girl responds with 'I am. I can only speak a little bit of Zulu.' And some of her colleagues comment 'and you can have a conversation in Afrikaans'.

While Xolisa elicited from students the named languages and varieties in their language repertoires, it was observable that not all students positioned themselves as bi/multilingual or as being able to claim proficiency in a language other than English. The student from Zimbabwe was hesitant to claim competence in Shona because she couldn't write the language; the spectre of shame hovered over her. Reporting of language resources was also racialised. Several white students in the class had studied Afrikaans at school for 12 years and had to pass it every year to complete their schooling, yet none of these students claimed competence in Afrikaans, never mind bilingualism. It seemed as if students had a notion of multilingualism as linked exclusively to proficiency in African languages. We see this in the statement by one girl who responded to Xoli's affirmation that 'there are no multilinguals here' with 'I am. I can only speak a little bit of Zulu'. While her peers challenged her saying 'and you can have a conversation in Afrikaans', she didn't acknowledge her own competence in Afrikaans. This disavowal of language proficiency was not unfamiliar to me. It echoed years of experience where I have asked postgraduate students to share their language histories and white English speakers consistently claim they are monolingual. Historical language ideologies around Afrikaans as either the language of oppression, linked as it was to Afrikaner nationalism and apartheid or to the use of a less recognised and often stigmatised variety of Afrikaans, Kaaps, spoken on the Cape Flats in Cape Town (Dyers and Antia, 2019), play an important role in evoking feelings of shame and leading to disavowal. This confirms Busch's observation of the role language ideologies play in 'whether we feel that a language we speak brings respect, or whether we try to hide it from others or even to get rid of it' (2017: 348).

Moment 3 – constructing definitions in three languages

Having surfaced the linguistic repertoires amongst students in the room, Xoli gave students an activity to do in groups of 3-4 in which they would revise one of the approaches to understanding early literacy or to literacy pedagogy they had been introduced to earlier in the year. Each group was tasked with writing a definition in

the three languages English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa of one of the terms: emergent literacy; whole language; phonics approach; balanced approach. The activity required students to work together across languages. The resources of isiXhosa and Afrikaans, usually invisible, became highly valued as did speakers of these languages. Students constructed their definitions on newsprint to share with the rest of the class. In the example below where students have produced definitions of emergent literacy, we can see evidence of a clear hierarchy amongst the three languages that reflects the valuing of these languages in education more broadly. English is dominant, written first and proclaiming the heading in large red capital letters, while Afrikaans follows with fairly large font size in black ('Oprysende Geletterdheid') and isiXhosa is squeezed in with smaller font sizes in green ('Iliterasi esaphuhlayo'). However students have made a concerted effort to explain the different aspects of their definition in the three languages and have been largely successful in doing this. The time that they spent grappling with meanings across three languages was significant in constructing the classroom as a multilingual space as well as constructing isiXhosa as an academic language. The way in which language resources have been represented on the newsprint simultaneously disrupts English monolingualism as normative and reproduces an ideology of language hierarchy: English, followed by Afrikaans and then isiXhosa.

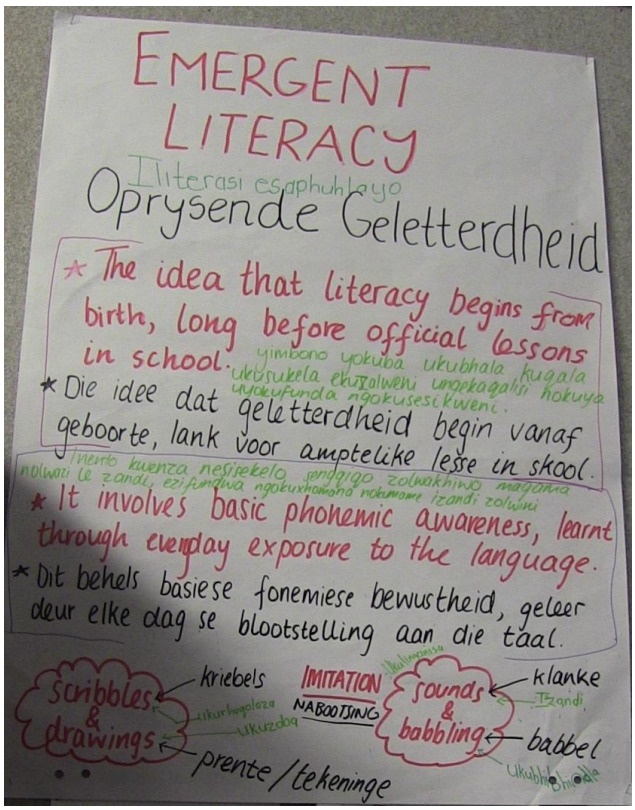

Figure 1: Defining Emergent Literacy multilingually

Moment 4: Mfondini awuzazi iintaka */ My friend (male) you don't know about birds.*

The fourth moment I want to describe is taken from the third session in the course.

Xolisa designed the class around an oral performance that she gave of a story about a beautiful bird that brings rain. In order to decentre monolingualism, Xolisa first asked for equivalent terms for 'bird' in isiXhosa and Afrikaans and then elicited from the class their knowledge about different birds, recording the names in English, isiXhosa and Afrikaans on newsprint before eliciting relevant songs and rhymes. After her storytelling performance, Xolisa then divided the class into four groups each with a different task. Group 1 was to develop ideas for art activities related to the story and specific instructions for these. Group 2 and Group 3 were tasked with developing action songs and rhymes to go with the story and drama/role play ideas and

instructions respectively. Group 4 were to develop ideas for book making and the accompanying instructions. The group work was followed by a plenary session where each group shared their ideas with the rest of the class. While Xolisa had herself been working multilingually and multimodally from the first class, she did not give specific instructions to students that they were required to work multilingually in this activity (as had been the case with moment 3 for example, producing trilingual definitions, described above). It was thus interesting to see how students continued to work multilingually to a greater or lesser extent in their groups.

One group of four female students who were to develop songs and rhymes set themselves the task of doing this multilingually and multimodally thus taking up the pedagogy that had been modelled in the course. They began working as a group of three who were all home language English speakers with schooled knowledge of Afrikaans and very basic communicative proficiency in isiXhosa which they were currently learning during their teacher education programme. Shortly after they began, they were joined by Lisa, an isiXhosa/English bilingual student. As they were explaining the group task based on the story Xolisa had told, Lisa immediately began singing a well-known isiXhosa song about rain:

> [Lisa singing]I*mvula, imvula,*
>
> chapha chapha chapha, imanz' ilokhwe yam,
>
> chapha chapha chapha, imanz' ilokhwe yam,
>
> gqum gqum kuyaduduma
>
> gqum gqum kuyadudma
>
> imanz' ilokhwe yam, imanz' ilokhwe yam[end singing].

The group members were delighted by the song and asked Lisa to include it on the newsprint that they were preparing for their presentation to the class (see text in top left hand corner of Figure 2 'Imvula x 2'). The group went on to create a multilingual and multimodal poster using three distinct named languages isiXhosa, Afrikaans and English as can be seen in Figure 2 below. They chose not to include written translations of the songs/activities described. While the two isiXhosa songs/activities were well known to Lisa, the others were original compositions. In contrast to Figure 1, English while still present is less visibly dominant on this poster. It is used for the title in the centre and two of the six explanations.

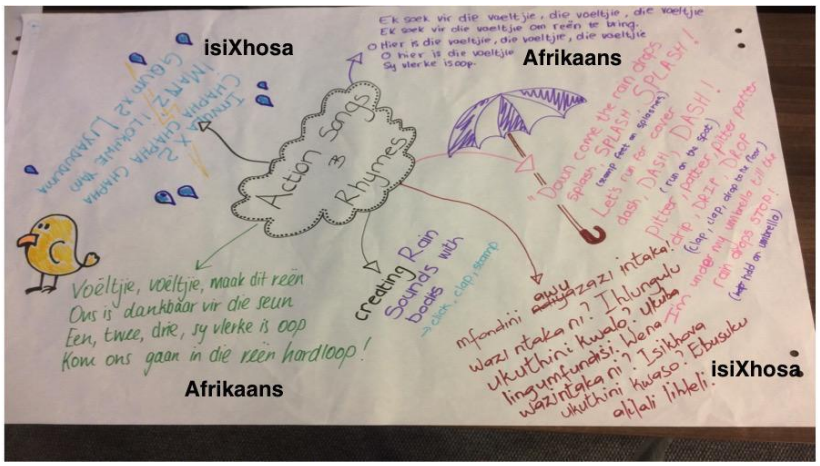

Figure 2: Multilingual and multimodal newsprint poster created by Group two.

In the group's presentation of their activities to the class, the first student performed an activity which used no verbal language but rather body percussion (stamping the feet; slapping hands on her thighs) to create the sound of rain. The students moved through presenting the isiXhosa, Afrikaans and English songs (in that order) and then concluded with the game that is described on the bottom right hand side of the newsprint: *Mfondini awuzazi intaka* (Friend you don't know [about] birds) . The extract is a transcript of Lisa's presentation of the game

Mfondini awuzazi iintaka

1.Lisa: And then the last is a game where they…

2.XOLISA: You want to play it with me?

3.Lisa: Andiva?

4.XOLISA: You can play with me.

5.Lisa: Ok. We can play together.

6.XOLISA: Ok.

7.Lisa: This one is where you are asking whether they know…what kind of the bird they know. 'Mfondini awuzazi iintaka.'

8.XOLISA: 'Ndiyazazi iintaka.'

9.Lisa: 'Wazi ntaka ni?'

10.XOLISA: 'Ndaz' ihlungulu.'

11.Lisa: 'Ukuthini kwalo?'

12.XOLISA: 'Uh…lifana nomfundisi, linxiba ikhola.' [X draws her hand from left hand side of her neck towards the right, gesturing a collar]

13.Lisa: 'Mfondini awuzazi intaka.'

14.XOLISA: 'Ndiyazazi iintaka.'

15.Lisa: 'Wazi ntaka ni?'

16.XOLISA: 'Uh…ndazi i…ndazi i…no…ndazi iskhova.'

17.Lisa: 'Ukuthini kwaso?'

18.XOLISA: 'Siyalala emini xa sivukile thina, siyavuka ebusuku.'

19.Lisa: That's nice.

[Slight applause]

20.XOLISA: So this one is a game…because the boys used to play it a lot when they go like chasing birds. And then they would test each other if they know birds. So you have to tell more about the bird. So they'll say; 'Hey you! You don't know birds.' And then the one says: 'I know a bird.'

21.Lisa: 'What kind of a bird is that?'

22.XOLISA: 'A raven.'

23.Lisa: 'What does it do?'

24.Xolisa: 'It looks like a priest. It's got a collar.' [X draws her right hand from left hand side of her neck towards the right, gesturing a collar]

[Some laughter]

26.Lisa: 'What else do you know about the bird? Which bird do you know?'

27.XOLISA: 'I know an owl.'

28.Lisa: 'What does it do?'

29.XOLISA: 'It sleeps in the day while we are awake and it wakes up in the night.' That's the game.

30.Lisa: Oh!

[Applause from the class]

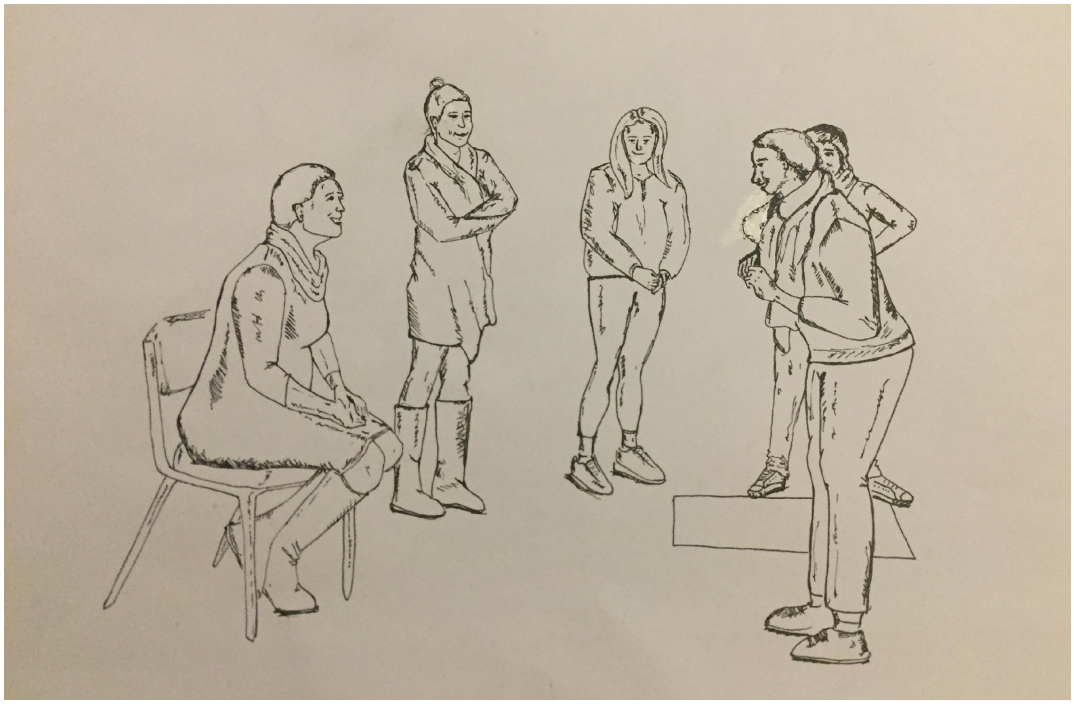

Figure 3: On far left is Xolisa (lecturer) and facing her on far right is Lisa (student)

The activity which Lisa shared with the class was (as Xolisa explains in turn 20) an isiXhosa game usually played by boys in rural areas and involving verbal competition; it begins with a challenge from one boy to another 'awuzazi iintaka/you don't know about birds'. As Lisa introduces the activity, Xolisa immediately offers her assistance 'do you want to play it with me?' showing both her recognition and knowledge of the game as well as her enthusiasm to participate with Lisa in demonstrating it for the class. Given her position as lecturer, Xolisa's joining in lends authority to Lisa's knowledge and positions her as a legitimate speaker. Xolisa sits on a chair facing Lisa while Lisa stands addressing her (see figure 3). In figure 3, we can see how Lisa is leaning in towards Xolisa, directly addressing her, and Xolisa's eyes are on Lisa as she waits to respond. The remaining 3 group members are onlookers, joining the rest of the class as audience. Xoli uses gesture alongside her verbal explanations e.g. drawing her right hand across her neck from left to right when she says of the raven 'linxiba ikhola' [it wears a collar, turns 12 and 20] as evidence for her claim that she knows the bird, raven (ihlungulu). Xolisa leans in towards Lisa as

she speaks and Lisa walks towards and then away from Xolisa as she questions her. These bodily movements in the dialogue add to the competitive sense of the verbal game. As they end the game in isiXhosa (turns 18-19), Xolisa goes on to give an explanation in English:

> So this one is a game…because the boys used to play it a lot when they go like chasing birds. And then they would test each other if they know birds. So you have to tell more about the bird. So they'll say; 'Hey you! You don't know birds.' And then the one says: 'I know a bird.'

When Xolisa begins to describe how the dialogue would work in English, Lisa spontaneously joins in, mirroring Xoli's joining in earlier (turn 7-8) and performing the game again with Xoli, but this time in English for the benefit of those students who don't understand the isiXhosa. The intense focus of the silent audience on Xoli and Lisa as well as their enthusiastic applause after the explanation and demonstration of the game in English is evidence of their engagement and pleasure. With the lecturer's support, Lisa was able to not only demonstrate an appropriate and engaging isiXhosa activity for the group, but was also able to extend the cultural repertoire of her peers who did not know of the game and who may well be teaching isiXhosa speaking children who do know this game. Lisa's participation using isiXhosa and her cultural repertoire enabled her to educate her peers, while Xolisa's support and joint participation with Lisa lent her knowledge authority and increased the volume of Lisa's voice, defined as the 'capacity to be heard' (Blommaert, 2005). This is a clear demonstration of the joint, interactive accomplishment of participation which highlights the significance of teachers/lecturers' involvement in who speaks and for how long in seminars.

Conclusion

Returning to Gutierrez's definition of third space as 'a transformative space where the potential for an expanded form of learning and the development of new knowledge are heightened' (2008:152), I would argue that the course described in this chapter constituted such a third space. The transformative nature of the space was constituted

in part by shifting from monolingual English to an explicit multilingual space where use of a range of language resources was encouraged and where use of the three named languages of isiXhosa, Afrikaans and English was required. Delinking from a colonial use of language, i.e. monolingual English interaction, was a necessary part of constituting third space, and a part of the first steps in an ongoing process of unlearning colonial myths about language (Makalela, 2018, see also Antia & Dyers, 2019 and Hibbert & van der Walt, 2014 for innovative uses of multilingualism in South African higher education). In the different moments analysed, 'unlearning' can be seen as an active process through observation, participation and embodied communication. Learning that English monolingualism is insufficient involves unlearning the myths of the superiority and 'universal' utility of English and inferiority as well as lack of utility of African languages. As students observed the skillful use of isiXhosa in classroom interaction, the rich cultural repertoires accompanying the language also became visible. Students who were proficient in an African language grew in their confidence to participate and to recognise the knowledge they had from their cultural repertoires which would be invaluable in teaching young children. Given the racialised nature of language proficiency in South Africa, working multilingually also meant disrupting racialised patterns of classroom participation where (mostly white) English home language speakers are more confident to contribute and hold the floor while (mostly black) African language speakers are less confident. The transformative role of the lecturer who herself modelled the affordances of working multilingually and who had knowledge to recognise cultural repertoires that are most often excluded in English monolingual spaces can also not be under-estimated. The 'abnormal' of Anglonormativity can only be disrupted by working multilingually which enables othered ways of knowing, being and making meaning not only to become visible but to be recognised as essential for teaching and learning in multilingual contexts of [de]coloniality.

Making connections/Entanglements

My own language history and linguistic repertoire is largely determined by apartheid language policy and education policy for white children, ie. Christian National Education. Through my language use I 'live and breathe coloniality all the time and everyday' as Maldonado-Torres says and my apartheid upbringing breathes through my linguistic repertoire – English, 'suiwe' Afrikaans, and limited isiXhosa learned at university. Like the white students in this study, I learned Afrikaans as a second language at school and had to pass it every year in order to complete my 12 years of schooling. Unlike the students in this study, there was no possibility that I could learn any language other than Afrikaans as bilingualism in Afrikaans and English was the compulosry goal for white South Africans schooled during apartheid. Partly because of anti-Afrikaans prejudice that lingered after the wars between competing colonists British and Dutch settlers in South Africa, and partly as I moved into high school and began to associate Afrikaans with apartheid and thus the language of the enemy, I strongly resisted learning the language, putting as little effort into it as possible. However, when television arrived in SA in the 1970s, the cultural boycott coupled with the state control of broadcasting meant that English and Afrikaans programming alternated daily. So if I wanted to watch popular children's programmes like 'die man van staal' en 'die man van Atlantis', ek moet dit in Afrikaans kyk. As ek by die klein winkel in ons Afrikaans gesprekende gebied van Blouwater Baai in Port Elisabet lekkers wil koop, moet ek die tannie en oom in Afrikaans groet. So ek was gedwing on Afrikaans te gebruik alhoewel ek wou nie en alhoewel ek het nie my self as tweetalig gesien nie. Soos die wit studente in die studente-onderwys klaskamer, ek vind dit nog steeds baie uncomfortable/ongemaklik om myself as tweetalig in Engels/Afrikaans te beskruif. When I arrived at university, I was excited about the opportunity to learn an African language. It was 1991, the ANC had been unbanned and Mandela released – it was the dying days of apartheid. My isiXhosa course was more than 200 students strong and included Uncle Lionel Abrahams, respected Robben Islander who as a mature student said he wanted to learn the language of fellow islanders like Mandela. Despite the two years of isiXhosa, apartheid physical and social segregation which continues to this day prevented me from developing anything like the proficiency I

have in Afrikaans. Ndidiniwe ukuthi ndithetha isiXhosa kancinci qua. Kufuneka ndiza kuzama harder kodwa ndine-excuses amaninzi, andinexesha, andinemali …. Teaching multilingualism in education has enabled me to accept my English/Afrikaans bilingualism and to appreciate that I can understand at least some of the local Afrikaans variety (Kaaps) that so many black people speak in Cape Town. It also gives me the opportunity to learn and use isiXhosa. The idea of the 'language of the enemy' resonates for me in two deeply uncomfortable ways – isiXhosa (along with other African languages) was framed as 'the language of the enemy' of the 'swart gevaar' (lit. black danger) while I grew up in white South Africa and Afrikaans was 'language of the enemy' (of apartheid regime) as I grew older. Language learning and language proficiency is deeply racialised in South Africa. In my experience of asking 100s of students about their language histories over more than 20 years, I've found white English speakers generally identify as monolingual and are largely enabled in this identification by the language ideologies in their schooling and South African society more broadly. Multilingualism it seems is only for African language speakers. My own entanglements with this positioning fuel my research, teaching and language activism.

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