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The Multilingual Citizen

Towards a Politics of Language for Agency and Change

Edited by
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Introduction

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Preamble

Exactly 10 years prior to the publication of this book, in 2007, a group of us met at a workshop on linguistic citizenship convened at the Two Oceans Aquarium in Cape Town. This was one of a series of three workshops that were held in South Africa and Sweden, and that brought together common threads and activities of two research and development projects that were inaugurated at the initiative of Kathleen Heugh and myself, and in which we participated as the principal researchers. Both projects were funded by the then Swedish Agency for Research Cooperation with Developing Countries (SAREC), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Authority (SIDA) and the National Research Foundation (NRF) South Africa. The collaborative projects under which the workshops fell were:

- *Multilingualism in an Integrated View of Development: Democracy, Human Rights and Citizenship* (a joint UWC–SAREC project in which the University of the Western Cape (UWC) and Stockholm University collaborated).
- *Representations and Practices of Multilingualism in a Transformative South Africa: Language, Identity and Change in a South African Educational Institution* (a joint SIDA–NRF project, in which UWC, the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and Stockholm University collaborated).

The first meeting had taken place two years earlier in February 2005, and had been attended by an eminent list of wise elders in the field of language policy, planning and education from across Africa, Australia, Europe and South-East Asia. The title of that event was 'Workshop on Multilingualism in Development: Education in an Integrated Society'.

The intention with the workshop was to explore the role of multilingualism across a range of fields, such as democracy, health and economy, and to discuss how language education (both formal and informal) could contribute to a more integrative treatment of these issues. One of the points of departure for this event was a document written by Kenneth Hyltenstam and myself, originally prepared as a working document for SIDA, entitled 'At the nexus of vulnerability: Multilingualism in development' (now published for the first time as Hyltenstam & Stroud, 2016). Plenary papers addressed the various themes covered in the pre-circulated document; these were presented by: Ayo Bamgbose (Department of Linguistics and African Languages, University of Ibadan, Nigeria) who spoke on 'Multilingualism and democracy'; Paulin Djité (then at the School of Languages and Linguistics, University of Western Sydney, Australia) who presented a paper on 'Multilingualism and economy'; Claire Penn (Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa), who spoke on 'Multilingualism and health'; and Kathleen Heugh (then at the Human Sciences Research Council, South Africa, today at the University of South Australia in Adelaide), who presented a paper on 'Multilingualism and education'. A number of other participants offered presentations that addressed country-specific issues: Ethiopia (Alem Eshetu, Institute for Language Studies, Addis Ababa University), Mozambique (Feliciano Chimbutane, Faculdade de Letras, Eduardo Mondlane University), Tanzania (Casimir Rubagumya, Department of Foreign Languages and Linguistics, University of Dar es Salaam), South Africa (Peter Plüddemann, PRAESA, University of Cape Town, and Caroline Kerfoot, then Faculty of Education, University of the Western Cape) and Zambia (Kyangubabi Chiika Muyebaa, Ministry of Education). Paul Bruthiaux (then Department of English, Hong Kong Institute of Education, Hong Kong) played a vital and energetic role as discussant to the papers.

The second workshop in the series was held at Stockholm University in 2006 with the title 'Transnational Politics of Language and Development'. The goal for this workshop was an exploration of the idea of multilingualism as a set of politically embedded social practices and ideologies that serves to organize and regulate social life in systematic ways, and that like other forms of social categorization (such as gender or race) are involved in complex, structurations of power. Speakers included Lionel Wee (National University of Singapore), Paul Bruthiaux (then of the National Institute of Education, Singapore), Kathleen Heugh (then of the Human Sciences Research Council, Cape Town), Feliciano Chimbutane, (University of Eduardo Mondlane, Maputo), Matthews

Makgamatha, Human Sciences Research Council, Pretoria) and Caroline Kerfoot (then University of the Western Cape).

Towards Linguistic Citizenship

The third and final workshop in the series makes up the contents of this volume. The papers for 'The Multilingual Citizen: Towards a Politics of Language for Agency and Change'[1] were initially presented at the Two Oceans Aquarium in Cape Town in 2007. The invitation to the participants referred to recent developments in African societies, where civil society and non-state actors more generally (churches, non-government organizations (NGOs), associative networks of economy) were increasingly contributing to processes of democratization and development within and across national borders. New discourses of health, sexuality, economy education and workers' rights – often promoted in part by organizations with a transnational reach – are reconfiguring the relationship between state and civil society, and notions such as re-traditionalization, decentralization and participative democracy are bringing in more complex and layered concepts of citizenship (Benhahib, 2002). Considering the important strategic role of language for equitable and participative access to valuable symbolic and material markets, the overarching question posed for the event was what implications such societal transformations carry for the role of local linguistic resources specifically (in education, politics, health and the economy), and for a politics of language more generally. The invitation to participants noted how one important approach to managing local linguistic resources had been that of linguistic human rights, a notion that was increasingly being seen to be both conceptually and practically problematic (compare Blommaert, 2005; Stroud, 2001; Stroud & Heugh, 2004; Wee, 2005, 2006), although it continued to rally support in many circles (e.g. Grin, 2005; May, 2005).

To a greater degree than the two previous occasions, this workshop came to focus more attention on discussing a blueprint for what might comprise an empowering politics of language for agency and change. We were particularly interested in listening closely to the experiences of our participants from a variety of contexts with respect to the practicalities – and ideologies – of working with vulnerable and disempowered speakers in multilingual contexts, often minority speakers. We had begun developing a notion of *Linguistic Citizenship* that we felt to be more productive in offering a strategic framework for conceptualizing linguistically mediated change than that of linguistic human rights (LHR). Authors such as Blommaert (2005), Stroud (2001), Stroud and Heugh

(2004) and Wee (2005), among others, had suggested that the notion of rights is applicable to language only with difficulty; that rights discourses *de facto* create many of the problems they were originally set to resolve; that rights discourses assume a particular type of political agent, social order and form of governmentality that is non-existent in many societies; that rights policies tend to ignore the many contingent materialities needed for their successful implementation; and that rights discourses construct unequal opportunities for individual and social agency. Many of the issues have to do with the legal and institutional structures that LHR sets up, through which language mediates agency and participation. These are structures (e.g. watch-dog institutions, such as the Pan-South African Language Board, PANSALB) that simultaneously define what may count as a legitimate language, and who can be considered a legitimate speaker (often ruling out non-standard varieties of a language). The structures of LHR also assume a particular type of *politico-lingual subject*, namely a community (group rights) or speaker (individual rights) with adequate economic and symbolic resources with which to engage politically around language issues in Habermasian public spaces (compare Stroud, 2009, for a comprehensive discussion of these points).

Linguistic citizenship refers to cases when speakers exercise agency and participation through the use of language (registers, etc.) or other multimodal means in circumstances that may be orthogonal, alongside, embedded in, or outside of, institutionalized democratic frameworks for transformative purposes. On occasion, this may involve engaging with language through a rights framework, but often – given the constraints noted in the previous paragraph and the narrow focus on language *tout court* rather than what language practices do and mean – linguistic citizenship involves more. It refers to what people do with and around language(s) in order to position themselves agentively, and to craft new, emergent subjectivities of political speakerhood, often outside of those prescribed or legitimated in institutional frameworks of the state. So-called 'service delivery protests' on the streets of South Africa, with their highly multilingual and multimodal articulation in chants, placards, songs – and violence – comprise examples of how forms of semiosis are creatively deployed to create a disruptive space for 'citizen' engagement for those whose voices are habitually silenced. It is also a space where the medley of languages and song, and the temporal and rhythmic unfolding of the march, create new socialities, if only momentarily, that break down or traverse conventional distinctions and socialities based on race, ethnicity or language in an exercise of what Phelan (1995) calls a 'politics of affinity'.

Likewise, Somali refugees in Ugandan camps are also exercising linguistic citizenship when they use the resources – teaching spaces under trees, chalk and boards, etc. – provided by a foreign NGO to teach English literacy for their own purposes of learning to read the Quran (Kathleen Heugh, personal communication, August 2015). They are exercising their agency, and pursuing a goal that is important to *them*, but likely not to the 'keepers' of the programme. They are doing so on the sidelines and margins of the formally structured literacy programme, taking part in 'informal' networks of learning at the same time as they create the conditions for participating in new roles in alternative communities of practice.

In both of these cases, we see how people use a variety of (self-authored) linguistic (and multimodal) practices to sculpt alternative political and ethical, religious and epistemological subjectivities to what is otherwise given. It is the linguistic/multilingual practices in the emergence, negotiation, refusal or engagement with these (often) tenuous and non-authorized subjectivities that is the focus of linguistic citizenship as an area of enquiry. Thus, one way of looking at linguistic citizenship is as an approach to a politics of language and multilingualism departing from a notion of *vulnerability*, understood here as the emergent and sensitive process of *disinhabiting* imposed and linguistically mediated subjectivities.

What this might mean in practice, and the wider implications of entertaining, such a notion as linguistic citizenship, can be illustrated with the following example from an initiative in the use of local indigenous languages at primary school level in a rural educational district in Mozambique.

Vegetables and Language

In a district approximately one hour outside of Maputo, Mozambique, an interesting primary school feeding initiative is underway that exhibits many of the characteristics of linguistic citizenship. Mozambique has long had experimental programmes in mother-tongue-based bilingual education, first under the auspices of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and subsequently under the directorship of various NGOs. Although indigenous African languages are recognized and affirmed as a national resource, the affirmation of rights to national languages has been of little consequence for the provision of these languages in the state National System of Education. For the last 15 years, the programmes have carried the status of experimental ventures, still to be fully evaluated, and in recent years, under a new Minister of Education, the national programme has come to a more or less complete standstill.

The disjunct between rights accorded and languages denied underscores how citizenship and rights are not co-temporaneous or identical discourses. Whereas citizenship is contingent, historical and political, rights are depoliticized, ahistorical and universal (Yeatman, 2001). The paradox of rights is that, although they are universal, appeals to them are situated in local space and time and filtered through contingent local political, social and economic structures by which the specifics of each nation-state polity constrain the choice of rights and to what extent that choice is actually provided for. Language practices, as well as thinking on language, are highly situated, historical and contextualized phenomena. It is these local contingencies that – in situations where rights may be recognized or not – frame the real work of (linguistic) citizenship.

Despite the lack of provisions, or rather because of it, a group of teacher educators have taken the unique initiative to insert a mother tongue/bilingual component into an ongoing NGO-initiated programme to stem immediate drop-out and improve pass-rates across the compulsory school system (compare Hyltenstam & Stroud, 1993). The ostensible motivation for this component is to reinforce early literacy.

Language, Subjectivity and Vulnerability

One important feature of this context is that the literacy materials used are worked out and developed on site by teacher educators and linguists in consultation with community members. The consultative production of materials has brought with it an ongoing revision of the 'official' orthographies and lexica of the local languages, as well as methodologies, such as the ordering of graphemes taught, etc., of teaching them. The importance of this event becomes clear when seen through the lens of historical dispossession.

Frantz Fanon, psychiatrist and revolutionary from Martinique, in the first line of his first chapter in *Black Skin, White Masks*, had noted 'the fundamental importance' of language in the (violent) formation of racialized, colonial, subjectivities. He remarks on how 'speaking pidgin means imprisoning the black man and perpetuating a conflictual situation where the white man infects the black man with extremeley toxic bodies' (Fanon, 2008: 17), and says how 'addressing a black man in pidgin means "you stay where you are"' (Fanon, 2008: 17). According to Fanon (2008: 1), for a colonial subject to speak means 'to exist absolutely for the other', bringing home how language was/is very much a part of a powerful system of (racialized) subjugation and production of vulnerabilities.

Critical studies of colonial linguistics are rife with examples of the strategic use of language to define non-metropolitan languages as 'native',

'incomplete', 'inadequate', and their speakers as 'childlike', 'ignorant' and 'uncivilized', labels that effectively invisibilzed and silenced the voices of the colonial subject (Stroud, 2007). These (socio)linguistic processes were a key dimension in the construction and replication of a societal order built up around particular types of *sociality,* such as race, ethnicity, gender (compare Stroud, 2007).

Contemporary vestiges of colonial conceptualizations of language and otherness are found in how ex-colonial languages are indexically organized in relation to indigenous languages. In the Mozambican context, for example, African languages and Portuguese continue to be framed *discursively* as inhabiting distinct temporalities. Indigenous languages are spoken about either as languages of the pristine past or languages in dire need of intellectualization/modernization in order to become viable for future use. They are seldom seen in their present forms as anything but incomplete, and often disregarded as languages able to voice the contemporary concerns of their speakers.

It is here that the engagement of the community in working with the graphemes, sounds and lexicon of the language gains its significance. Modernization and intellectualization of languages are usually the purview of specialist linguists and lexicographers. However, the active involvement of the community shifts the epistemological authority in deciding what languages are and what they may mean, together with the production of materials, to the local collective of stakeholders. This is an empowering tactic in the sense that the voice of the community stakeholders is being put into text and made legitimate.

LHR, as currently conceived, tends towards a privileging of official values and perceptions of what might constitute the language in question, and can only entertain the legitimacy of alternative language practices as part of the 'language' with difficulty. Although authors such as Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) do recognize the legitimacy of non-standard varieties and the difficulty of distinguishing, say, speakers of lectal or perceived substandard varieties of 'standard languages', such as Tsotsitaal, from 'languages' such as Afrikaans, other authors such as Petrovic (2006) and Wee (2005) have pointed to a number of fundamental difficulties in attempting to extend a rights framework to such varieties.

Linguistic citizenship, on the other hand, highlights the importance of practices whereby vulnerable speakers themselves exercise control over their languages for a variety of purposes precisely to avoid the othering that comes with linguistic imposition. It draws attention to the ways in which alternative voices can be inserted into processes and structures that otherwise alienate. When speakers exercise linguistic citizenship, they

also forge decolonial subjectivities, built on the foundation of other forms of sociality than identity in terms of ethnicity or race.

Multilingualism as an Ethics of Others

Linguistic citizenship carries an injunction to critically rethink the notion of 'multilingualism'. This is because reformatting vulnerable subjectivities in re-working language also has implications for understanding the politics of how linguistic diversity has been constructed and constrained, and how encounters across difference have been framed linguistically. Despite the majority of postcolonial states at independence replacing structures of colonial patriarchical and paternalistic liberalism with new forms of coexistence, the ideological blueprints of colonial orders across society have remained resiliently in place. Multilingualism, commonly understood as the co-existence and juxtaposition of more than one language, is one such mechanism whereby essential features of colonial social logics are reconfigured in contemporary 'postcolonial' societies. While ostensibly promising a trope for linguistic (and cultural) diversity, multilingualism is best seen, in common with other forms of neoliberal governance, as a response to 'the effects of anti and postcolonial movements in the liberal world'. It does this by 'allowing cultures a space within liberalism without rupturing the core frameworks of figuring experience' (Povinelli, 2011).

LHR is one such mechanism in the construction of disempowering forms of multilingualism, as they have tended to channel discourses on diversity into specific predetermined cultural and linguistic identities (Stroud, 2001; Stroud & Heugh, 2004), often undergirding ethnolinguistic stereotyping in the form of monolingual and uniform identities. These are not necessarily 'socialities' or forms of social engagement in encounters of difference that speakers themselves feel comfortable with, and may very well perpetuate insidious forms of coloniality-modernity. Often, in such cases, rights become a technique of social discipline that orders and regulates citizens into state-accepted social taxonomies, or that strategically disadvantages some groups over others (Stroud, 2009).

Mbembe (2017), echoing Fanon, has argued the need to find other forms of sociality through which to engage others outside of the conventional collectivities based in race, ethncity, etc. Such a suggestion opens up exciting vistas for also rethinking multilingualism as a site for a more ethical engagement with others across difference. Although the area where the Mozambican school is located is fairly homogeneous in terms of what

languages speakers identify with, other work across Africa is exploring ways of developing literacies in multiple languages simultaneously, using the resources of all languages in one teaching/learning space (compare Lupke, in press, on language-independent writing in West Africa).

Contingent Materiality

Many of the minority and vulnerable populations that are in need of language/multilingual provisions are also in need of access to health, housing, clean water and a sustainable economy. This is particularly the case in contexts of the South, but easily applies to many migrant contexts in the geopolitical north. Linguistic citizenship emphasizes that language collectivities (affiliations, communities, etc.) are what Nancy Fraser (1995: 85) has called *bivalent collectivities*. This means that neither recognition nor social-economic redress alone is sufficient to alleviate vulnerability, but that *both* recognition of a language and the economic viability of its community of speakers must be attended to.

Circumstances differ for different collectivities. Different linguistic minorities have different histories and hold different positions in networks of political discourses. Universal definitions of social categories, such as 'language minority', may obscure these potential differences (Maher, 2002: 21). As Cowan *et al.* (2001: 11) point out, the '[d]iscourse of rights is neither ethnically unambiguous nor neutral', and, in practice, rights discourses carry widely divergent implications and produce very unequal subjects with different opportunities for agency (compare Stroud, 2009).

In the Mozambican initiative, activities around language have been inserted into an existing school feeding programme designed to alleviate the poor nutrition and everyday hunger of rural children. Food is a problem in the poverty- and drought-stricken communities of rural Mozambique, and the school feeding programme, together with nutritional information, and the vegetable gardens run by volunteers from the communities themselves, are crucial contributions to the health and well-being of the young students. However, school efficiency (which has yet to be fully documented) is importantly a combination of linguistically focused strategies and an economics of food. We see here the intimate connection in this case between the material contingencies of the local situation and the successful/feasible introduction of a set of activities and practices around local languages. No less importantly, this is part of a larger set of community-driven involvement in vegetable gardens, in school clubs, etc., that introduce new structures of sociality and engagement within and across communities.

Linguistically Mediated Futures

Linguistic citizenship entertains a wider conception of how linguistically mediated change is brought about. The consultative community-driven local language activities are ostensibly adapting to and reinforcing the official monoglot Portuguese programme of schooling. In the case of this school, what goes on in the classrooms is children learning to read and write, sitting up straight and learning to be disciplined. For all intents and purposes, the materials are reinforcing the national curriculum. However, with each input from the community, the programme screws are being loosened another notch. The introduction of other voices and agents into the process of teaching/learning shifts its significance slightly. In the everyday iteration of teaching/learning, the signature literally is changed, as lines of power, chains of authority are dispersed and made more rhizomatic. New structures of consultation, production and witness alter the import of 'the school system'.

Linguistic citizenship attends to those occasions where a 'taking hold of language' goes hand in hand with the transforming of sociopolitical structures and institutions. Linguistic citizenship works to change or shift – however minimally, for example in terms of orthography, or in terms of a purpose of an activity – the rules of engagement: it shifts the chain of command of a programme or institution, away from those tasked with authoring or participating in terms of other, more included actors; it works in subtle ways to alter or create a tributary while the programme unfolds, creating a crease in the unfolding, a perturbation, an interruption. The slow build-up of a confederacy of singular actions and events across different scales – from the everyday practices of classroom interaction, to the higher order lobbying of NGOs with officials from the Ministry – contributes to building a momentum that will ultimately lead to a turbulent tip and the introduction of a new normative regime (Stroud, 2015, 2016). Change is taking hold in the cracks and fissures of the system.

Linguistic Citizenship: A Politics Through/of Language for the Present

The two frameworks offer two distinct, but overlapping, construals of the broader semiotic resources and institutional practices required for political engagement around contentious issues of equity and justice of vulnerable populations.

Linguistic citizenship is a semiotically mediated politics of the present. It situates agency and participation in a different mesh of political,

administrative and discursive practices to LHR, interrogating how change and transformation are linguistically mediated outside, alongside or on the margins of state structures and institutions that are designed to selectively service or deny language rights to speakers. In contradistinction, the resources that LHR discourses produce are accessible mainly through state-sanctioned institutions that promote practices, such as the description and normalization of (competing) hegemonic standard varieties of language connected to (strategically) essentialist identities.

The contradictions and tensions specific to the politics of LHR revolve around authenticity of group membership and ownership of particular speech practices. This offers minorities a very limited political space and privileges a select set of semiotic practices for how marginalized speakers may express themselves and be heard. Not surprisingly, these aspects of rights discourses disadvantage significant factions of speakers who, for lack of symbolic and human capital, or for contingent material reasons, subsequently lack agency and voice. Linguistic citizenship, on the other hand, engages with the contradictions and tensions arising from the historical imposition of vulnerable subjectivities and the manufacture of multilingual spaces as sites of contention and competition for scarce resources. Instead, it looks to how linguistic practices and forms accompany the emergence of more autonomous senses of self, and how multilingualism may be reconceptualized as spaces for an ethics of (linguistically mediated) engagement across difference. Such a politics of affinity (Phelan, 1995) and broad alliance deconstructs old socialities, such as race and ethnicity, in favour of agency through 'whatever singularities'. In contradistinction to LHR as an *affirmative* politics of multilingualism that takes its rationale from a politics of identity and recognition rooted in a colonial construct of language, linguistic citizenship as a *transformative* politics deconstructs vulnerable identity ascriptions layered into languages and the structural mechanisms of their maintenance. In so doing, it also carries the potential to deconstruct arbitrary divisions between groups in favour of broad coalitions that cut across linguistically based groupings in the interests of a larger, more comprehensive and inclusive strategy. At the same time, linguistic citizenship highlights processes and forms of linguistically mediated structural change that often go unnoticed.

The Volume

This volume is a selection, with section commentaries, of some of the papers delivered at the workshop. Our ambition with the volume, as with the workshop, was to take a step beyond a politics of language framed in

terms of LHR towards one firmly anchored in a transformative notion of linguistic citizenship. We were particularly interested in drawing out what implications these two approaches might carry for work on marginalized and vulnerable language communities and speakers. Ideally, we wanted to be able to conceptualize productive perspectives on linguistic citizenship on the basis of well-construed, empirical case studies. We therefore invited authors to discuss this issue with respect to their own work in the areas of multilingualism, marginality and development. We asked for their experiences and reflections from concrete attempts at promoting minority languages – in particular, perhaps, the adequacy of the legal frameworks in place to mediate and enforce linguistic rights. We wanted to know under what conditions, for example community mobilization, rights solutions work, and in what ways they fail. More importantly, are there forms of engagement that are best accounted for in terms of linguistic citizenship? To what extent did civil society organizations raise (and resolve) language issues outside of state structures? For what purposes? And how might a distinction between a public and subaltern sphere impact on questions of power, agency and voice with respect to language?

These were questions that we felt could initiate a productive dialogue on the theme. Not all the themes were dealt with equally, and some themes not at all. However, in general, much of the ground we had hoped to cover has been covered in the chapters of this book. We therefore offer this collection as a set of ongoing conversations on critical topics of importance to a more equitable and ethical engagement with marginalized and vulnerable speakers and their languages.

Note

(1) Most of the participants at the workshop are represented with chapters and commentaries in this volume. Notable absences are Marcelino Liphola (University of Eduardo Mondlane), Omondi Oketch (Maseno University, Kenya), Casimir Rubagumya (University of Dar es Salam) and Barbara Trudell (Summer Institute of Linguistics).

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1 Linguistic Citizenship

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The capacity to live with difference is, in my view, the coming question of the 21st century
Stuart Hall

Introduction

A major challenge of our time is to build a life of equity in a fragmented world of globalized ethical, economic and ecological meltdown. In this context, language takes on singular importance as the foremost means whereby we may engage politically and ethically with others across difference. Howevever, any attempt to address this concern would need to comprise a critical and fundamental rethinking of the idea of 'multilingualism' itself. Contemporary understandings of multilingualism are the nomenclature par excellence of how we have come to conceptualize and regiment our relationship to different others. However, the construct, with its colonial pedigree, continues to engage and contain diversity in ways that reproduce essential features of colonial social logics in contemporary 'postcolonial' societies (compare Stroud & Guisemmo, 2015). Non-metropolitan languages, for example, especially in the African context, are positioned vis-à-vis metropolitan languages (English, French, Portuguese) in a different temporal discourse as languages in the 'becoming' (in need of intellectualization), or languages of times past (in need of revitalization). In both cases, the temporal displacement of speakers of these languages produces a subaltern who is only able to engage linguistically in the present through the words of the metropolitan language. (For an extended argument, see Stroud & Guissemo, 2015.) In other words, there is an important sense in which the crisis of humanity we are experiencing as a crisis of diversity and voice is deeply entwined with a subterranean crisis of a politically fraught notion of language itself. Thus, if we are to engage seriously with the lives of others, an imperative is reconceptualizing language in

ways that can promote a *diversity of voice* and contribute to a *mutuality and reciprocity* of engagement across difference.

This chapter offers the notion of *linguistic citizenship* as a blueprint for a conceptual space within which to think differently – politically and ethically – about language and ourselves. In what follows, I provide a short chronological overview in the second section of the idea of linguistic citizenship. I emphasize how acts of linguistic citizenship do not only challenge ideas we hold about language and multilingualism, but also contribute to an agentive and transformative understanding of the idea of citizenship itself. In the third section, I illustrate this argument further with a case study of Kaaps, a stigmatized variety of Afrikaans spoken in the Cape Flats of South Africa. The section offers an analysis of a performance of a Hip Hop Opera called *Afrikaaps*, as well as a documentary on the making of the opera, which shows how a new sense of language emerges simultaneously with a new sense of self, dignity and citizenship.

In the final section of the chapter, I discuss how the idea of linguistic citizenship might contribute to a construal of 'multilingualism' as a *space of vulnerability*. This is a space where speakers meet different others in disruptive and unsettling encounters that *interrupt* the status quo (Pinchevski, 2005), and where senses of self may be juxtaposed and refashioned as part of the deconstruction of dominant voices and more equitable linguistic engagement with others.

Linguistic Citizenship: Early Beginnnings

Linguistic citizenship is fundamentally an invitation to rethink our understanding of language through the lens of citizenship and participatory democracy, at the same time that we rethink understandings of citizenship through the lens of language. The conjuncture of these two terms troubles both our conventional ideas of the 'linguistic' as well as how we think about 'citizenship'.

The concept of linguistic citizenship is a Southern and decolonial concept that arose out of the contradictions surrounding programmes and practices of mother tongue and bilingual education in the 1990s in the context of the geopolitical South. The contradiction lay in the fact that similar investments in language teaching provisions for mother tongue/bilingual education, such as literacy materials, grammars, orthographies, dictionaries, teacher-training programmes and infrastructure delivery, resulted in very dissimilar outcomes in different contexts. An extensive meta-analysis suggested that a key parameter distinguishing successful from failed programmes was whether, and to what extent, community

members found vernacular/local language provisions useful in their everyday management of issues, such as employment, economy and (local/provincial) politics of housing, education and health (Stroud, 2001). Importantly, the longer-term viability of mother tongue/bilingual programmes was dependent on the degree to which the community itself was actively involved in developing and administering the programme, for example, by contributing to the establishment of orthographic conventions or choice of curriculum content (Stroud, 2002). A good example of the importance of participation was a local mother-tongue programme in Ghana developed in conjunction with an HIV prevention programme for youth and adults – also involving an adult literacy programme – by a consortium of stakeholders (including Lufthansa, Nestlé and a German non-government organization (NGO)), the success of which was due to the local community engagement it inspired (Stroud, 2001). The importance of an engaged, committed and agentive community for successful programme outcome was thrown into relief by the relative unsustainability of the then prevailing models of top-down interventions designed in the North, often administered by foreign NGOs and aid organizations. The notion of linguistic citizenship was thus born out of the felt need for a perspective that situated linguistic practices and representations of speakers firmly within their everyday sociopolitical strivings for agency, transformation and participatory citizenship.

At the time, the prevailing political and educational philosophy of language relevant to multilingualism was that of Linguistic Human Rights (LHR). The idea of linguistic citizenship challenged LHR by referencing Nancy Fraser's (1995) distinction between 'affirmative remedies' and 'transformative remedies'. The argument was that LHR was in all essentials an affirmative remedy, an instance of a politics of recognition that, quite contrary to the intentions of its proponents, maintained and reproduced the status quo to the detriment of minority languages and to the disadvantage of their speakers. One reason for this is that LHR discourses are subject to all the exigencies of how power is exercised and structured in a State, with the resulting technologies and tropes of language description reproducing specific political and local construals of language.

Alexandre Jaffe (1999: 28) had earlier noted how 'forms of language activism that reproduce a dominant language ideology also reproduce the structures of domination', replicating in this way a colonial linguistic dynamic in contemporary time. An illustrative case in point is that of the South African Northen AnaNdebele National Organization that lobbied parliament to accord official status to siNdbele in the South African constitution (Stroud & Heugh, 2004). In response, the state agency responsible

tasked the speakers of the language themselves to *prove* that siNdebele was *de facto* a distinct language and therefore eligible to be considered for official recognition. This led to the community actively contesting an earlier classification of siNdebele as a 'variety', thus creating a situation of conflict and division both within and between the designated linguistic groups. The siNdebele case illustrates how a linguistics of standardization, officialization and intellectualization reconstructs minority languages in the image of official standard languages; by excluding and reconstructing forms that articulate alternative voices, minority languages come to embody the social ideologies, class differences and standard/non-standard distinctions that led to the oppression of these languages and the hierarchization of their speakers in the first place.

This is just one example of how seemingly expert and technical procedures of linguistic codification mask contested legislation, competing ideologies and social conflict in a community, as well as disguises the selective agency of its workings (Stroud, 2001, 2009; Stroud & Heugh, 2004). Multilingualism seen in a LHR framing appears as one technology among a broad battery of disciplinary and regulatory practices (Comaroff, 1998: 32) deployed by the state in pursuit of its continued reproduction – including the *de facto* marginalization of minority languages.

If LHR remains mainly silent on the issue of how it is imbricated in the replication of existing institutional power structures of particular nation-states, linguistic citizenship seeks instead to lay bare this conspiracy by offering a different approach to language and multilingualism. Linguistic citizenship is a transformative concept (Fraser, 1995). It critically interrogates the historical, sociopolitical and economic determinants of how languages are constructed, at the same time as it pinpoints the linguistic, structural and institutional conditions necessary for change. Linguistic citizenship sees linguistic collectivities as *bivalent*, a notion that refers to the fact that, for language, 'neither socioeconomic maldistribution or cultural misrecognition are an indirect effect of the other, but … both are primary and co-original' (Fraser, 1995: 85). It is the bivalency of linguistic collectivities that ties the refiguration of language to a deconstruction and reconstitution of social life and its institutions. This is why, when local languages were perceived by their speakers as central to community transformation, in a context where linguistic decisions were managed by the speakers themselves in structures of participatory engagement, the mother tongue/bilingual programmes could boast a successful implementation. It is also the bivalency of linguistic collectivities that allows us to see language and citizenship as two sides of the same coin – citizenship as mediated by forms of language, while

forms of language in turn emerge out of the fluid and shifting entanglements of social engagement (Stroud, 2009: 217).

'Citizenship' in linguistic citizenship

The sense of citizenship referenced here is not the limited notion of nation-state citizenship that the term usually calls to mind. Isin (2009; see also Isin & Nielsen, 2008) has argued that 'our dominant figure of citizenship has changed throughout the 20th century' (2009: 368), and that we need a 'new vocabulary of citizenship' (2009: 368). He notes how in today's world:

> new actors articulate claims for justice through new sites that involve multiple and overlapping scales of rights and obligations (…). The manifold acts through which new actors as claimants emerge in new sites and scales are becoming the new objects of investigation. (Isin, 2009: 370)

Isin introduces the notion of 'acts of citizenship' to refer to those 'deeds by which actors constitute themselves (and others) as subjects of rights' (2009: 371), or, alternatively, as those with 'the right to claim rights'. He argues that 'the manifold acts through which new actors as (rights) claimants emerge in new sites and scales' forces us 'to theorize citizenship as an institution in flux embedded in current social and political struggles that constitute it' (Isin, 2009: 368). Today, those who engage in such 'acts of citizenship' do not necessarily hold the conventional *status* of citizen (as, in Isin's conception, citizenship is not a status, but an act). Rather, acts of citizenship are the practices whereby new actors, seeking recognition in the public space in order to determine a new course of events, shift *the location of agency and voice*. In this respect, 'acts of citizenship' contribute to 'transformative' remedies in the sense of Nancy Fraser (1995), viz. remedies that attempt to deconstruct and restructure the political economic status quo and its institutions, and to bring about new social relations.

Isin's emphasis on the fluidity and dynamism of the 'fields of contestation around which certain issues, stakes, interests, etc., assemble' (e.g. sites, such as gender, sexuality and language), and the 'scopes of applicability (so-called "scales") that are appropriate to these fields' (going beyond conventional scopes such as state, nation, to include also sub- and supranational groupings), is borne out by the contemporary multiplication of 'citizenships', such as *sexual citizenship*, or *intimate citizenship*, and similar constructions. This is in keeping with the way in which struggles to extend the meaning of citizenship have historically brought about

different ways of 'knowing' political subjects onto arenas of public and political discourse, with important consequences for key reforms in the social, political, economic or sexual rights of citizens. A *political* notion of citizenship emerged with the vote, and linking citizenship to economic rights and obligations accompanied the rise of trade unions and the development of welfare legislation. In the earlier years of the 20th century in Europe, and in the wake of the women's suffrage movement, the notion of citizenship was extended to also encompass issues of gender, and more recently also race and ethnicity. It is in this sense that 'citizenship' is used in conjunction with 'linguistic' – as an acknowledgement of the deeply entangled dependencies between language and politics, and as a pointer towards how a different construal of language may open up new political scenographies. Attention to complexities and subtleties of language practices (just as with an appreciation for different sexualities) can initiate and sustain state remedies for more encompassing and inclusive forms of citizenship agency and participation.

The 'linguistic' in linguistic citizenship

The other side of the coin is that the diverse and complex configurations of citizenship outside of the conventional understandings of politics usher in alternative construals of language. This point is well illustrated by the recent years' insurgent citizenship (Holsten, 2007) movements: From Occupy movements, such as the Greek *Outraged* or the Spanish *Indiginados*; through movements, such as *Black Lives Matter*; to Fall movements, such as *Rhodes Must Fall*. Each of these groups articulate their protest and claims to agency through a variety of semiotic means (compare for example Stroud, 2016, on the turbulent semiotics of a South African occupy movement). In like manner to the complexities of citizenship, linguistic citizenship recognizes that speakers' expression of agency, voice and participatory citizenship may require the use of a variety of semiotic means ranging over unconventional, non-institutionalized uses of language, to forms of embodied semiotic practice, such as the bearing of tattoos or corporeal use of space. Importantly, in the process of engaging with the social and political issues that affect them deeply – wrestling control from political institutions of the state, putting forward claims for new forms of inclusion or promoting and deliberating on contested stakes and interests – speakers reconfigure language through the creation of new meanings, repurpose genres and transform repertoires by using their language over many modalities (compare Williams & Stroud, 2013, 2015 for an analysis of performance genres, such as stand-up comedy, in this latter

regard). In other words, just as the term 'citizenship' points to a fluid space of contestation, so should the term 'linguistic' not be confused with the idea of language as the artefactual product of formal linguistic analysis only. Speakers use a spectrum of expression outside of what is normatively (and narrowly) considered institutionally appropriate language to express agency, voice and desire for inclusiveness and participation. Linguistic citizenship encourages us to critically rethink the notion of 'linguistic' as practices that can be known through a variety of discourses and modalities.

Linguistic citizenship and utopia

An important feature of citizenship as a notion is what Anderson (2008) refers to as its 'utopian surplus'. The contestations played out in 'acts of citizenship' frequently *prefigure* a better world. Fighting for sexual or transracial citizenship is tantamount to anticipating or imagining a world in which harmful categories and systems of othering are deconstructed. The 'utopian' in this case does not refer to the conventional idea of a non-place in a non-time usually associated with the concept, but the condition detailed by Ernst Bloch (1986) that references a better way of living that is *foreshadowed* in the present (and past) but is as yet *unrealized* (compare Anderson, 2008). These foreshadowings may often be experienced as aesthetic or euphoric resonances of subjectively experienced events or states: Linguistic citizenship carries a utopian surplus in this sense. It is about the experiences that people may have of language practices and representations that capture – however fleetingly – a different significance of language to life, and life to language. Thus, the conjuncture of 'citizenship' with 'linguistic' also references an idea of language that has disruptive and interrogative qualities (compare Anderson, 2002, 2008; Bloch, 1986), and that functions as an affordance to point us toward how language and speakers might appear 'otherwise' (compare Povinelli, 2011).

It is this utopian dimension of linguistic citizenship that is illustrated in the next section in the analysis of the performance of the Hip Hop opera Afrikaaps. In the performance, Afrikaans is re-imagined at the same time as the institutional and interactional conditions for this reimagining are refigured.

Afrikaaps

Performance/popular culture is a key site for a politics of the everyday that bears many resemblances to other acts of citizenship where actors seek to constitute themselves as subjects of rights. Speaking of the African

context generally, Dolby argues that 'people's everyday engagements with popular culture [...] must be a central component of understanding emergent public spaces and citizenship practices in Africa, present and future' (Dolby, 2006: 34); popular culture is 'a site of struggle, a place for the negotiation of race, gender, nation and other identities and for the play of power' (Dolby, 2006: 33). Simone (2008: 76) talks of popular culture as a 'form of collective endeavor that converts differences of power and legitimacy into forms of which everyone can participate and benefit from, without the outcomes being the product of consensus, conciliation or brokered deals'.

The musical *Afrikaaps* is such a politically significant performance, and it is an excellent example of linguistic citizenship in action. In order to grasp the import of the event of *Afrikaaps* (performance and documentary) for linguistic citizenship, it is necessary to contextualize it in the racialized history of South Africa. Post-apartheid South Africa inherited a complex, shifting and divisive system of racial classification that continues to seep into the minutiae of everyday life of the majority of South Africans. The structural category of race remains a primary mould into which everyday interactions and identities are cast, providing an enduring and familiar trope, a point of certainty amid the messy ambiguities of post-apartheid transformation. Despite the persistence of race as a lived category, *discourses of racialization* – that is, the words and ways through which people construct and navigate race on an everyday basis – are fluid, shifting and entangled, 'a complicated multiplicity of identifications producing, reproducing and transforming identities under changing social and historical circumstances' (Walker, 2005).

Practices and representations of language comprise a particular category of racialization discourse. Afrikaans was one of the two official languages of South Africa up until the transition in 1994, when the new constitution recognized 11 official languages. It is a language born out of early encounters across difference: Slave creole contact between speakers of Early Dutch, Portuguese, French, English, Malay, Tamil and Arabic, with local speakers of Khoi and San languages, forged through colonial language and ideology struggle, and consolidated in the hegemony of apartheid (Giliomee, 2005). This lineage, however, does not figure strongly in mainstream representations of Afrikaans, which remain predominantly resonant with discourses of ethnic/racial purity. Its creole origins notwithstanding, or rather because of this, Afrikaans has been stringently policed with white Afrikaans practices designated as 'pure' Afrikaans or Standard Afrikaans, and offset against particular ideologically loaded named varieties closely tied to coloured identity that were seen as distorted speech (Adhikari, 2005, 2006; Alexander, 2013).

It is in this complex of race and language that *Afrikaaps* gains its significance for understanding the idea of linguistic citizenship. The *vulnerability* of fragmentation, uncertainty and confusion said to accompany the notion of coloured (e.g. Adhikari, 2006) finds rich expression in contestation over the 'stigmatized language of coloured speakers: Kitchen Afrikaans, coloured people's parlance or patois, coloured language, coloured Afrikaans, "Capey" or "Gammat-taal"' (Blignaut, 2014: 2; Small, 1972; for a debate on mainstreaming Afrikaans and the focus on its varieties, see Alexander, 2013; Dyers, 2008: 52; Hendricks, 2012; Hendricks & Dyers, 2016; Prah, 2012). *Afrikaaps* is the more recent articulation of these contests, one that not only dares to question the very ownership of Afrikaans itself, but reveals it to be born out of 'erasure' of other speakers.

The theatre piece *Afrikaaps* is fundamentally about reclaiming ownership and authority over Afrikaans – a powerful tool of white racial hegemony throughout South Africa's history. It offers an alternative narrative about Afrikaans by recuperating lost meanings, and by linking the language and its history to the lives of its speakers long hidden or ignored. The blurb from the 2010 Encounters film festival tells us that:

> On the surface, *Afrikaaps* appears to be a theatre piece within a film, based as it is on the creative processes and performances of the critically acclaimed stage production of the same name. But rather than depending on the drama on stage and the production's prominent characters to carry the narrative, Valley finds revealing moments from the cast's and production crew's personal narratives that transcend what happens on stage. *Afrikaaps*, the film and the stage play, breaks ground by boldly attempting to reclaim Afrikaans – so long considered a language of the oppressor – as a language of liberation.

The Hip Hop opera presents a richly alternative representation and celebration of Afrikaans that simultaneously reveals the historical and contemporary processes of invisibilization, and social and racial disengagement that still go into the making of Standard Afrikaans, encouraging us to imagine a world of racial entanglement, mutual susceptibility and an alternative ethics of encounter.

The documentary on the making of *Afrikaaps* is directed by Dylan Valley. It highlights the temporal unfolding of what came to be known as the Afrikaans language: from its creole beginnings and its Arabic scripture to its latter-day standardization. By drawing on hip-hop, traditional Malay humour and personal narratives, the documentary follows the staging of the Afrikaaps theatre (the participants involved in it), the expert and non-expert definitions of Afrikaans, and the history of Afrikaans

from colonialism into post-apartheid South Africa. The story of the complicated history of Afrikaans is elegantly performed by hip-hop artists Emile XY?, Jitsvinger, Bliksemstraal, Blaq Pearl and artists Jethro, Kyle Shepherd, Moenier Parker and Shane Cooper.

We can identify four main themes around which the documentary is structured: Afrikaans as borne out of the *pain and turbulence* of a colonial power that elided and misrepresented encounters and entanglements with others; *multivocality*, emphasizing how Afrikaans comprises a multitude of more or less audible voices; *embodiment, aesthetics and performance* as central to the reclaiming and reconstruction of the language voices; chronotopical speakerhood, where to be a speaker of Afrikaans is to (re)invoke and echo historical voices and genres. Ultimately, the opera comes to foreshadow a notion of legitimate speakership tied to the *euphoric sensibility* of a new-found dignity.

Turbulence and pain

As mentioned earlier, Afrikaans was born out of encounters of difference in the cackle of contesting voices – the slave-owners, the Khoi inhabitants and the various migrant demographics. Rather than ignoring this turbulence, the documentary structures its representation around this trope throughout – in the choice of voices it chooses to highlight, in the personae it casts as commentators and in the themes and contents of the lyrics it presents. Catherine, the producer, highlights its turbulent history in her introductory comment:

> The purpose of the show is that we deal with the history of Afrikaans and it goes on into the 50s where people are then not only dispossessed of their language but they are also dispossessed of their homes and in that process their identities are fractured.

Neville Alexander, the iconic Director of the Program for Alternative Education in South Africa (PRAESA), and, before his death, one of the country's most influential language activists, remarks explicitly on the violent roots of Afrikaans:

> As die Kho', die San, en die Slawe veral nie gedwing was om Hollands of Nederlands te leer nie of te praat nie, dan sou die taal Afrikaans eintlik nie onstaan het nie.
>
> 'If the Khoi, the San and especially the slaves had not been forced to learn Dutch then Afrikaans would not have existed'.

The turbulent history of Afrikaans is hammered home in the documentary through the insertion of old newsreel shots of the demolition of District Six, a coloured area in Cape Town out of which residents were forcefully removed under the apartheid Group Areas Act. The participants in the documentary are laying bare the violence and revoicing to which they have been subjected throughout history – the darker side of a politics of institutionalized linguistic recognition. This historical perspective is cleverly inserted via Afrikaaps into the quotidian reality of contemporary South Africa. Valley recounts, for example, how a cast member was arrested during the production of the theatre piece, stitching this event into the documentary as an illustration of 'racial' unfairness of South African justice.

Multiple voices

The second theme running through the theatre piece is found in the framing of *Afrikaaps* as 'attuned to multitude of identities, subject positions and positions of interest' (Stroud, 2009: 213). This is a core aspect of linguistic citizenship that recognizes citizenship/language as the syncretic outcome of 'a capacity to act *in relation*' (Osborne & Rose, 1999: 758), often on the cusp of normative regimes of language and citizenship.

The multivocality of *Afrikaaps*, simultaneously underscoring the power differentials between voices, is brought out by Moenier, one of the participants in the opera, in the following verse:

(1)
MOENIER:

1. Ek is 'n *number* met 'n storie ou pel
   'I'm a number with a story old pal'
2. Van hoe my mense hulle *feelings* en geheime vertel
   'About how people talk about their feelings and secrets'
3. Ek was gebore daar in *Europe* met 'n ander taal
   'I was born in Europe with a different language'
4. Maar innie Kaap was ek gekap met 'n creole style
   'But in Cape Town I was produced with a creole style'
5. Ek is ook baie gesing met 'n ghoema sang
   'I've been sung a lot with a ghoema song'
6. Ek vat jou hand Zanzibar en Dar Es Salaam
   'I take your hand from Zanzibar to Dar Es Salaam'
7. *Dutch Sailor Boy*
8. Wat sing jy daar?
   'What are you singing?'

9. Sal jy mind as ek vir jou 'n klein vragie vra
'Do you mind if I ask you a question'
10. Sing jou *song* gou weer, en dan 'n nogger keer
'Sing your song again, and then again'
11. Nou kan ek mos al my broese dai *song* leer
'Now I can teach all my brothers that song'
12. Oor 'n uur of twee sal ons dai *number* ken
'Over an hour or two we'll know that song'
13. Met 'n *smile* sing ons hom *now and then*
'We'll sing that song now and then with a smile'

Moenier's thematization offers an account of Afrikaans that not only challenges the taken-for-granted trope of Afrikaans as a 'European' language, but also (albeit indirectly) interrupts ideas of language as something that is abstract and disembodied. In his lyric, Moenier traces the origins of Afrikaans in migration and creole entanglements, with roots stretching from Zanzibar and Dar Es Salaam, with important milestones celebrated in the *ghoema* song. The *ghoema* harks back to the musical culture of the 17th-century Malay slaves, and was a celebration of their being granted freedom in 1834. His words draw attention to how one effect of cycles of disruption, re-formation and juxtaposition is that *no single group of speakers can lay claim to ownership or authenticity* of the language, as successive encounters across difference and layered entanglements of speakers have contributed to the rhizomatic character of Afrikaans today.

At the same time, his words invite us to rethink the relationships of power underlying particular practices and understandings of language(s) – such as who may decide what a language is, or which speakers count as legitimate, a central aspect of linguistic citizenship. Moenier, in line 11 'Now I can teach all brothers that song' and in line 13 'We'll sing that song now and then with a smile', is indicative of how this act of linguistic citizenship opens Afrikaans up for a broader-based engagement, and new-found sense of ownership of a language on behalf of its speakers.

Corporeal entanglements

The third theme of the piece frames the multivocal imaginary of Afrikaans as *entanglements* of circumstances and people. It invites us to imagine Afrikaans as something that gives voice to a diversity of experiences and life-forms in place of Afrikaans as hegemonic monologue.

The following verse from the scene production by Emile XY?, perhaps one of the best known rappers in South Africa, highlights the complexities and extent of entanglements.

(2)
EMILE:

1. Ek is dai dammies player
   'I'm that dominoes player'
2. Kennetjie en als doels
   'Kennetjie and other games'
3. Ek was n ANC supporter
   'I was an ANC supporter'
4. En nou se ek sy Ma se…
   'Now I say they're Mother…'
5. Ek is dai Boesman taal tolke
   'I'm that Bushman language translator'
6. Corner Broker
7. Gooi nee jou tol
   'Throw down your spinning top toy'
8. Want hiesa gaan djy stoeke
   'Cause here you'll have to play'
9. Ek is dai mass murderer
   'I'm that mass murderer'
10. Tyre Burner
11. Minimal wage, sub-economic earner
12. Ek's dai dokter, lawyer, politician
    'I'm that doctor, lawyer, politician'
13. Innie ghetto
    'In the ghetto'
14. Wait a minute
15. Most of them moved out
16. Awe!
    'Cool!'

In the above, Emile performs his lyrics indexing local cultural practices and performances. He rhymes about favourite past-times and games: playing dominoes and little chin (*kennetjie*), the latter a children's game where an opponent hits a short stick with a longer stick in the air to be caught by fielders. In lines 2 and 3, the performer suggests that he was once a supporter of the African National Congress (ANC), but now he chides the party (quite probably due to its inability over the years to deliver on its promises to create a racially just society). He further rhymes that he sees himself as a translator of Bushman language (possibly Khoi or San languages), thereby embodying the historical development of Afrikaaps. And

he suggests that when people encounter him, they will expect that he will be able to stylize his language like a Corner Broker (line 6), an informal trader who sells fruit and other affordable products on the corner of streets in the townships of Cape Town, known for their loquacity. But, we note, how he in is Afrikaap's cloak, he is also the mass murderer, the tyre-burning protester and the professional who has fled the ghetto.

There is an embodiment of language and linguistically mediated identities in this skit. These do not manifest as narrow racializations, but rather as a corporeal kaleidoscope of entangled selves. The significance of Emile XY?'s verse lies in his breaking down of identity stereotypes by merging and mixing different personae in the body and voice of the same speaker. He is using Afrikaans to literally mediate an embodiment of diversity (compare Jean Nancy's 'being singular plural' or 'being-with') – ethnic, racial, social class – in contradistinction to how the language is usually represented as located solely in the body of the white, middle-class, 'Afrikaner'.

Chronotopical selves

The embodied representation of Afrikaaps is echoed in the fourth theme running across the theatre piece, the chronotopical self.[1] The wealth of different genres articulated across a range of semiotic, multimodal resources – poetry, Hip Hop, song, dance and speech styles in character sketches – allow the linking of selves across historical time and colonial/postcolonial space. The students interviewed in the documentary configure themselves as present-day embodiments of historical personae, echoing Moernier and Emile XY?'s spatio-temporal reach of entangled bodies and voices (Soudien, 2014). In Figures 1.1 and 1.2, the learners are demonstrating their skill in the age-old genre of Ghoema, a central feature of contemporary Cape coloured dance culture.

In Figure 1.1, the three pupils are dancing to the rhythm of a banjo, with the pupil on the left swinging his arms, the one in the middle slapping his chest and the pupil on the right acting the fool and pulling funny and weird faces. Their performance intimately glues together varieties of Afrikaans, body movement and facial expression into a chronotopical and embodied representation of Afrikaans that reaches back to, and indexes, the historical liberation of the Malay slaves. An interesting take in the documentary, visible in the figure, is that the backdrop to the Afrikaaps dance is the Afrikaans lesson teaching Standard Afrikaans comparatives on the board behind the student. The Standard Afrikaans framing of the fronted, student performance serves to sharpen the sense of physical transgression carried in Afrikaaps.

Figure 1.1 Students performing Ghoema, from *Afrikaaps* documentary

Dance, song, gesticulation, mimicry allow for the insertion of current language practices and their speakers in a multidimensional historical narrative on the origins, continuities and ruptures of language. The dance, gestures and facial expressions also bring an *aesthetic* framing to Afrikaans, a form of reclaiming of an authoritative voice, unconventionally articulated, that offers an appreciation of Afrikaans that goes well beyond standard accounts of what it means to 'know' a language.

Figure 1.2 Ghoema performers, from *Afrikaaps* documentary

The euphoric speaker

In the documentary, knowing a language 'bodily' comes with a euphoric sense of well being. Throughout the documentary, we note an ecstasy of liberation, dignity, autonomy, agency and inclusivity as one voice after the other tells its story of Afrikaans in the documentary, morphing Afrikaans into a vision of *Afrikaaps*. We get a sense of this aesthetic and euphoric experience of Afrikaans in the following excerpt from the opening scene of the documentary in the voices of the school children. After watching the play *Afrikaaps* at the Baxter theatre in Cape Town, three pupils briefly reflect on how it has overturned some of their preconceived ideas of not just the language they speak, but also their sense of self.

(3)
Multiple school pupils:
Pupil 1: I feel 'Uh!'
'It was mind blowing'
Pupil 2: Ek het noot gewiet van my voorvaders
Praat deur my nie.
'I never thought that my forefathers speak through me'.
Pupil 3: Ek gat nie meer soe skaam wees om te praat soes ek praat nie.
Ek gat nie weer compromise op die taal vir ander mense nie.
'I will not be shy anymore to speak the way I speak'.
'I will not compromise anymore on the use of my language because of other people'

From initially expressing strong surprise and revelation, the first two pupils' comments reveal how they see themselves and their forefathers differently through their 'discovery' of Afrikaaps. It is notable here how acts of linguistic citizenship serve to carry cowed bodies and souls into a transformed space, where speaking Afrikaans allows participants to – momentarily, at least – feel and act with dignity.

This sentiment is also echoed in the words of Dylan Valley: For Valley, the making of the Afrikaaps documentary and the theatre production involves a personal journey as well as understanding of the history of his own community (AfricAvenir Windhoek, 2010):

> I think that young South Africans especially will enjoy it, particularly the 'coloured' community as it might reveal parts of their heritage they have never known about. I myself certainly never knew the extent to which the Malays, the Khoi and the San had shaped the language until I started researching this for myself.

Afrikaaps as an act of linguistic citizenship

The documentary scopes how contentious issues in the practice and representation of a local and racially stigmatized version of Afrikaans are at the heart of speakers' search for a politically transformative agency, and its structural and institutional conditions. The participants *collectively* toppled a well-established regime of language that for years has relegated Cape Flats Afrikaans to a 'kitchen jargon', and reconstituted it as something removed from the straitjacket of the artefact of language. Rather than promoting a story of an emerging and focused linguistic standard, and far from fixing the language to a specific time, place or embodied identity, the various characters that personify Kaaps celebrate a broad span of non-standard ways of talking, made up of a wide range of registers (criminal argots, children's rhymes and poetic adoptions of Khoisan languages, playful exercise of clicks), forms of play and musical gigs, dance moves and comic forms and rhythms. We witness a highly chronotopical rendition of the 'language', fluid and scripted for and by the different individual histories, repertoires and biographies.

The processes at work in rethinking Afrikaans are not those of any one social identity or political alignment, but emerge out of a web and multiplicity of relations and histories. Instead of a singular, determinate authenticity with an immaculate and unsoiled pedigree, Afrikaans is represented as heteroglossic and polyphonic, evident in the variety of tropes and genres through which knowledge of Afrikaaps is reclaimed. This is nothing less than an ontological refashioning of what it means to be an Afrikaans speaker through engaging in practices of language that 'interrupt' the linguistic status quo, and that refigure language as a *repertoire* of multiple registers and varieties, linguistic or multimodal/transmodal.

Discussion

I opened this chapter with a concern about the constraints on an ethical engagement with difference posed by conventional understandings of multilingualism. I suggested that we needed to reshape the linguistic ground on which such engagements with others are made, and went on to discuss the idea of linguistic citizenship as an inroad to such a reshaping. I argued that linguistic citizenship points to a construct of language that differs in important ways from the colonial construct we continue to struggle with.

The colonial construct of language was one of the Cartesian knowledge structures that undergirded a global project of subjugation. Grosfoguel (2013) writes about how the development of the human, social

and physical sciences went hand in glove with the four genocides of the modern world: The expulsion of the Jews from Spain; the Spanish conquest of the Americas; the Witch burning of the Middle Ages; and the black Atlantic slave trade. One consequence of the genocides was to engineer a violent proliferation of Otherness – a systematic creation of insurmountable difference and division.

Linguistics as a field of knowledge grew out of a colonial project intent on capturing the voices of the colonial subaltern. As a technology for constraining and containing the diversity of others, it scoped constructs of language out of processes of invisibilization of voice, denial of (racial) entanglements and suppression of histories, processes that were more or less violent and trauma laden. Not surprisingly, the imposition generally of alien structures and meanings onto local languages, and the revoicing of local knowledge, produced in the colonial subject a sense of existing 'absolutely for the other' (Fanon, 2008), a Fanonian psychic split characterized by feelings of disconnect from a dignified sense of self and human value. The story of Afrikaans as told in the theatre piece and recounted in the documentary is exactly this story. To speak Afrikaans is to enact the story of the *re-voicing* of the colonial other. Afrikaans is the silencing of histories, and the authoring of different shades of speakerhood on indexical markets of race, ethnicity and social division. Processes of linguistic codification and translation determined what was 'sayable' about and within the language, erasing speakers' local knowledges about Afrikaans in the process. These events comprised, to all intents and purposes, an effective form of *epistemicide* (de Sousa Santos, 2010), that is, the eradication of a body of knowledge through epistemic violence. It is this we have seen in the construct of Afrikaans, and it is this construct of language that underpins an *affirmative* strategic understanding of multilingualism.

A *transformative* construct of languages is visible in the acts of linguistic citizenship that refigure Afrikaans into Afrikaaps. These acts reframe semiotic practices of citizenship away from a totalizing sense of language, building a new sense of language that is radically different, one that is literally staged as an exercise of participatory citizenship that de-links the chains of hegemonic thought about language, its institutions and their history. In contradistinction to a colonial construct of language, the Afrikaaps performances highlight complexity of entanglement, display the rhizomatic roots of Afrikaans, and convey its turbulent and disrupted historical unfoldings. What has been perceived or presupposed as a stable regime of structure and meaning is laid open for contest. The re-voicing of Afrikaans means that authority over and ownership of the language is – momentarily at least – 'shifted' away from the grammarians and lexicographers to the *speaker* of

Afrikaans. Simultaneously, acts of linguistic citizenship such as these not only interrupt and reshape forms of speech and practices of speaking. They also unsettle the existing racialized tensions and power relations bound up in linguistic forms as part of a more general transformative dynamic in contemporary South Africa. Thus, the rethinking of Afrikaans takes place together with an articulation of a utopic and disruptive act of (inclusive) citizenship. Afrikaaps carries with it a new sense of self and future, as well as, importantly, a transformed understanding of the self in the past. The *linguistic reconnect* of self and language through Afrikaaps is something very different to the experience of *alienation* and disempowerment that typified the Fanonian colonial condition of a linguistically induced 'psychic split'. Both the musical itself and the documentary reveal ways of living differently through language, going against the grain. Together with the emergence of 'Afrikaaps', selves are refigured and a new, vocal, political voice that seeks to reclaim ways of speaking deeply entwined with alternative thinking of what it means, and has meant, to be a speaker of Afrikaaps emerges. In this sense, it is an act of linguistic citizenship that is *transformative* in the sense of Nancy Fraser. It is also a utopian act in that the documentary foreshadows through tropes of euphoria what still needs to *become*.

Linguistic citizenship, then, offers a construct of language deeply entwined with, and productive of, a different form of engagement with difference. Instead of 'invisibilization', we find 'appearance' and 'emergence'; alongside 'recognition' or 'affirmation' by others, we find more *agentive* forms of visibility, such as 'spectacle' and 'performance'. And beyond a bloodless understanding of language as a disembodied structure, we see language through the lens of bodies and souls. Interesting is the *euphoria* speakers feel in coming across linguistic moments of unpredictability and surprise (as in the dawning realization of the cast that the young school pupils are accomplished practitioners of Ghoema); or the 'mind-blowing' revelation experienced by the school children that Afrikaaps also foreshadows the potential to live otherwise.

Linguistic citizenship might (wrongly) be construed as a flight of fancy, an imaginative excess, referring as it does to a 'pre-dawning of language and society that is "not-yet-conscious"' (Anderson, 2002: 216) and for which the material and objective conditions of fulfilment may not yet exist. However, it is precisely in this utopic potential that the notion of linguistic citizenship finds its rationale and its full transformative promise. Acts of linguistic citizenship, such as Afrikaaps, illustrate how the euphoric and aesthetic refiguration of language may reshape the ground on which engagements with others are made and simultaneously rejuvenate or transform the chronotopical self. Linguistic citizenship is

fundamentally about a different ethics of linguistically mediated alterity, an alternative way of living with and through difference. As an idea of language that has disruptive and interrogative qualities (Anderssson, 2002, 2008; Bloch, 1986) it points us toward how language and speakers might appear 'otherwise' (compare Povinelli, 2011), a pre-requisite for the planning of more equitable futures.

Multilingualism seen through the lens of linguistic citizenship can be understood in like manner as a site that has traditionally worked to order speakers through languages into differential spaces of erasure, surveillance, censorship or recognition (compare Kerfoot & Hyltenstam, 2017, on the notion of 'orders of visibility'). The different temporalities in which African languages are placed vis-à-vis colonial languages such as Portuguese, English or French – with African languages as languages of a glorious past or a yet-to-be intellectualized future as opposed to the ever-present, fully fledged languages of the metropole – determines, and legitimizes, inequality of encounter and power relations in contemporary time in important institutions, such as education, politics, science, etc. (compare Stroud & Guissemo, 2015). As with the case of Afrikaaps, speakers come to relate to their languages and histories (and relate themselves to metropolitan languages and histories) in ways framed by particular circumstances of (post)colonial encounter.

Rethinking 'multilingualism' through the lens of linguistic citizenship would offer some traction in thinking about new, future, orderings of speakers and languages that go beyond or side step the more familiar affirmative politics of recognition with its dangers of colonial replication. Linguistic citizenship seeks to interrupt such colonial regimes of language by building an inclusiveness of voice in ways that repairs and rejuvenates relationships to self and others. Such rethinking would be cognizant of the historical particularities and context dependencies of different *multilingualisms*.

Linguistic citizenship would help bring to prominence the centrality of multivocality and aesthetic, euphoric 'appreciation' of language for how selves come to inhabit speakerhood, with possible implications for a variety of ways of 'knowing language' that linguistics is only just beginning to explore. No less importantly, it could provide a script to help (re)position questions of language in the flesh and blood of their speakers. This could have ramifications across a spectrum of social arenas: From education and language socialization (e.g. the importance of embodied genres in diasporic childrens' language learning; compare Pennycook, 2015), through more nuanced understandings of the reach and nature of 'hate-speech' (challenging the militant liberal claim that 'sticks and stones may break my bones but names can never hurt me'),

to acknowledging cosmological genres of ancestor dialogue (e.g. in arbitrating land claims in Australia or on the African continent; Kathleen Heugh, personal communication, 2015).

Linguistic citizenship implies a process of engagement that opens doors for respectful and deconstructive negotiations around language forms and practices, lays the groundwork for a mutuality and susceptibility to alternative forms of being-together-in-difference. This is the 'utopian dynamic' of linguistic citizenship that could help reconstruct multilingual encounters as a moment for the celebration of difference rather than the suppression of voice (in language, speech norms or social identity) (compare Stroud, 2001). In this sense, it could also suggest registers with which to talk about the learning of conventionally designated (other) languages in terms of refashioning senses of self at the same time as alternative ways of relating to the susceptibilities of others are created.

Kulick (nd) in a note on Levinas has underscored how 'to engage in language is to enact and express dimensions of the vulnerability and mutual susceptibility that are constitutive of human existence'. It is such an ethics of alterity that is immanent to linguistic citizenship and that provides the vantage point from which to think critically about multilingualism in novel ways.

Note

(1) For some recent and valuable work on chronotope in sociolinguistics, see Blommaert (2015) and Blommaert and De Fina (2017).

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