Language and (in)hospitality

The micropolitics of hosting and guesting

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Based on a long-term ethnography of Sub-Saharan African migrants in Cape Town, South Africa, this article examines how language as ideology and practice shapes the rules of guesting and hosting and helps (re)configure the on-going positionalities of both the nation-state-defined-host and the foreigner-guest, making murky the distinction between the two. The key notion of HOSPITALITY developed here is examined as *practices* rather than as *identities*. I argue that this theoretical shift makes it possible to unsettle the host and guest positions by not positing them a priori or conceptualizing them as immutable. It likewise makes it possible to deconstruct the categories imposed by the State and by which scholars and policy makers alike abide, such as the dichotomy between *migrants* and *locals*. At a broader level, the paper draws attention to the Occidentalism that has plagued academia, particularly in the work done on migration. I show how the South African case challenges many scholarly assumptions on language and migration overwhelmingly based on the examination of South-to-North migrations, which do not adequately represent worldwide migrations.

Keywords: migration, hospitality, language practices and ideologies, South Africa, Occidentalism

1.   Introduction

In this paper, I offer an analysis of the ways contemporary South Africa produces "its own kind of strangers and produces them in its own inimitable way" (Bauman, 1997:17). I particularly examine the priority given to language and its entanglement with race in how Black African migrants are Othered in South Africa. My discussion is framed around the "politics of hospitality" as performed in the fleeting moments of daily encounters. I show how language as ideology and practice shapes the rules of guesting and hosting and helps (re)configure the

on-going positionalities of both parties making the distinction between local-host and migrant-guest often murky.

Since the early 1990s, Sub-Saharan African migrants have significantly transformed South Africa's urbanscapes. Their conspicuous presence has triggered negative attitudes within the local population. The media have typically categorized them as "illegal" and crime perpetrators (Danso & McDonald, 2000). Over the years, the State has framed them as economic predators coming to reap the benefits of the years of Black South Africans' harsh struggle against apartheid. It has also resorted to a nativist rhetoric playing the latter against the former. This discourse has strengthened immigration policies aimed at limiting admission of Sub-Saharan immigrants to the country and impeding their social mobility.

Since 2008, thousands of xenophobic events have taken place, ranging from small-scale attacks to fairly well orchestrated mob violence against the immigrants. Reports indicate that over four hundred have been killed, thousands wounded, dozens of women have been raped, and hundreds of thousands displaced. Every month, dozens of foreign-run shops are looted. The assaults have typically targeted African foreigners in socioeconomically disadvantaged Black urban neighbourhoods.

The xenophobic rhetoric is not peculiar to South Africa, as Geschiere (2009) demonstrates. Similarities with other polities are undoubtedly worth investigating in order to understand the socioeconomic and cultural conditions under which it emerges, is entextualized and resemiotized from one ecology to another, and the modalities of its circulation and adoption by some groups or individuals.

However, there are reasons why I purposely do not engage in this comparative exercise. As an Africanist, I have often been asked to connect my work to the "better known" European and North American ecologies to show the "relevance" of the phenomena I analyze. The request undeniably highlights the Occidentalism that drives academia, evidenced in the various forms of invisibilization of the non-Western world, starting with how research questions are framed and the politics of citations. This is especially evident in the scholarship on migrations, in which the population movements have typically been discussed as proceeding from the South to the North (Vigouroux, 2018). Consequently, our scholarship has not accounted so adequately for other migrations across the world and the differing societal dynamics associated with them. The imbalance of knowledge on worldwide migrations has unwittingly fed European and North American nationalist discourses that portray some places mainly as "sending countries" and some people as the epitomes of migrants.

Linguists, along with political scientists, have endorsed the 20th-century political construction of migrants as the *new proletarians* especially those from the Global South. To be sure, this discourse has made it possible to address issues of

race, for instance in Europe, where racial considerations have traditionally been erased from the scholarly discourse, and to tackle issues of social class dynamics although often without reference to them. In other words, the migrant has been constructed in our scholarly work as a predominantly classed, racialized, and geographically situated figure.

The South African case unsettles many assumptions that have prevailed in the scholarship on language and migration. For instance, the socioeconomic minority/majority opposition that migrants and locals respectively embody in the Global North doesn't apply so well in South Africa, where the majority of the host population are Blacks and live in socioeconomic precarity. The language issues related to migrants' access to the labor market arise differently in this country, where the majority is disempowered linguistically, having to function in a non-indigenous language, English, in which many have limited or no competence. Consequently, the injunction to migrants to learn the local language(s) in order to be "integrated" is not part of the South African public discourse. Finally, the colonial-postcolonial relationships between "sending" and "receiving" countries, the often binary racial approach to account for the socio-political tensions between migrants and host populations, and the ways alloglots dispute the Nation-States' ideologies of monolingualism are very removed from the dynamics described here.

My analysis rests on two decades of ethnographic work conducted in Cape Town among Sub-Saharan Africans from former French and Belgian exploitation colonies. They come from all walks of life (viz., fitness instructors, street traders, hairdressers, etc.), have varied educational capitals (from unschooled to highly educated), occupy different positions in Cape Town's social fabric, and live in different parts of the still highly segregated city. Unlike other intra-continental migrations to South Africa (see below) this wave is very recent, dating back from the early 1990s. The term *Francophone* is used here both as an etic and emic category. As discussed in Section 5, *francophonity* – invoked in reference to being educated according to a set of ideologies on French and Frenchness – is a symbolic capital that my interlocutors use to distinguish themselves from the Black South Africans. FRANCOPHONE is a social category constructed under the particular social and historical conditions the migrants find themselves in South Africa (Vigouroux, 2005). Therefore, their self-ascription as Francophone does not necessarily mean that they speak French. In addition to semi-guided interviews and fieldwork observations, my data include institutional and lay discourses on African migrations to South Africa.

I start this article by highlighting the theoretical and methodological relevance of the "hospitality framework" to examining migration from a sociolinguistic

perspective.[1] I then provide a short account of contemporary African migrations to South Africa in order to understand the dynamics at play between the non-indigenous Black Africans (henceforth NIBAs) and Black South Africans. In Section 4, I argue that the hospitality-hostility toward African migrants have been partly shaped by apartheid-based policy of race, language, and territory and the legacy of colonialism that made Black South Africans aliens in their own country. I advance the argument that the discursive and physical violence exerted on the NIBAs is part of Black South Africans' performance of their hosthood in a country from which they themselves were historically excluded. Finally (Section 5), I discuss how the presence of the NIBAs disrupts the Black-and-White dynamics in post-apartheid South Africa, where socioeconomic disparities are still constructed along racial lines and racism still shapes potential encounters between all parties.

2.   Language as (in)hospitality

According to Derrida (2000a), language is central to the performance of hospitality. It is through language that guests ask for hospitality. Language constitutes the "first violence" exerted on them, because hospitality is often requested in a language that guests don't understand (Derrida, 2005:7). Many sociolinguistic studies have provided ample evidence of this symbolic violence, for instance, by examining interactional dynamics in asylum-seeking procedures (e.g., Extra et al., 2009; Hogan-Brun et al., 2009). These studies have shown that hospitality as institutionally enforced in many democracies is linked with a process of identification: language testing is used to "ascertain to which category the guest belongs" (Rosello, 2001:37). The notion CATEGORY here prompts the question of *whom* hospitality is really extended or denied to. Is it to an identifiable individual or to an abstract social and legal subject (Derrida, 1997)? As Derrida (2000b) argues, "pure hospitality" implies welcoming the unknown and the unnamed; it suggests that the newcomer may threaten or endanger the host. According to him, HOSPITALITY is self-contradictory as it implies both opening and closing movements. In fact, it presupposes and ratifies the existence of a physical and/or sociopolitical bounded entity (*viz.*, a home, a nation) to which an *Other* is related. Yet, the very existence of boundaries is what prevents hospitality. The impossibility of unconditional hospitality is the very condition of its possibility (Derrida, 2000a).

The social and institutional identities that HOSPITALITY mobilizes along dichotomies such as *stranger* vs. *local* and *migrant* vs. *citizen* emerge through the

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1. For an informative review of the notion of hospitality as debated and applied in different fields, see Germann Molz & Gibson (2007).

rules of hospitality, which identify the respective institutional rights and moral duties of both *hosts* and *guests*. In Vigouroux (2017) I point out how the learning of the host language(s) is often framed as a moral duty, a "debt of hospitality" (Chan, 2005) that migrants are expected, if not summoned, to pay. Failure to do so (for whatever reason) is taken as a deliberate act against the "welcoming" host society and as indexing the migrants' unwillingness to integrate. However, it is unclear to what extent societies vary in their interpretations of this behavior. Nonetheless, this judgment shows how the burden of hospitality is bestowed to the newcomers who are expected to be good guests. In addition, it naturalizes the ideology-laden equation of language and nation according to which an individual's right and claim of belonging is assessed or denied.

Language is also what gives away the guest as a non-local, for instance, through their way of speaking identified as "non-native". A perceived accent can condemn someone to a life sentence of guesthood. For instance, the question "where are you from?" often prompted by an identified non-native accent is a way of telling someone "I recognize you as not being from here". This question is informed by a nativist-based language ideology that maps "ways of sounding" with national membership. Although this question may well be a welcoming gesture, for the addressee it can refer to the inescapable state of strangeness, which is permanently ascribed to them by the Natives, and according to which they are asked to position themselves.

Like other scholars of migration (e.g. Papastergiadis, 2000) I am dissatisfied with the available terminology to categorize migrants, because it does not capture the complexity and granularity of their experience of mobility and the encounters that this entails. In Vigouroux (2017) I draw attention to the theoretical and methodological issues arising from using etic categories such as *refugees, low-skilled*, and *economic migrants,* because they are not always relevant for explaining dynamics of language contacts and practices in settings of encounters. These categories can obscure rather than highlight the processes that the analyst wishes to account for, in part because they project fixed inhabited identities. They construct the fact of being a migrant a priori, outside the context where it is experienced.

I submit that framing migration as *hospitality* yields new insights into the role of language as ideology and practice; it shapes the positionalities and potentialities of both the *host* and the *guest*. The *host-guest* dyad emphasizes the fact that they are mutually constitutive of each other. One is always shaped in interaction with the other, does not exist independent of the other. As will be illustrated later, the host-guest relations are mediated and shaped by other past and present relationships, which extend the dyadic frame of reference in traditional analyses.

In line with Herzfeld (1987), host and guest are analyzed here as *shifters*, as their referential meanings are context-dependent. This approach has at least

two important theoretical consequences. First, it prompts us to shift the focus of analysis from that of *identity* to that of *practice* by examining *how* "guesthood" and "hosthood" are performed, achieved, or denied, *by whom, when, why,* and *in relation to whom*. This shift unsettles the host and guest positions by not positing them a priori or analyzing them as immutable. We no longer assume who the host is or consider the migrant as the epitome of the guest. Second, it permits the shifting of the scales of analysis by no longer considering the Nation-State as its primary or sole unit, as the notions of *migrants* and *foreigners* tend to do. In other words, it helps us get away from the "methodological nationalism" (Wimmer & Glick-Schiller, 2002) that still dominates migration scholarship. As the following sections illustrate, this approach also enables us to deconstruct the unsophisticated migrant/local dichotomy, which, I contend, is shaped by categories of thoughts manufactured by the State and enforced through governmentality (Foucault, 1975). In order to contextualize the linguistic data analyzed in the next sections, I start by providing background information on post-apartheid African migrations to South Africa.

3.   The "new geography of encounters"[2]

Since the 19th century, modern capitalist South Africa's mining industry has greatly depended on migrant labor from neighboring States (Bouillon, 1999). The struggle against the capitalist system of exploitation and the unionization of the workers in the 1980s created a working-class identity that transcended national differences despite the politics of ethnicity during apartheid (Neocosmos, 2010) and the fact that companies played foreign workers against their local counterparts to reduce labor-costs. The solidarity between local and foreign Black workers was also shaped by solidarity against the repressive apartheid regime, which equally regulated their social and geographic mobility (Section 4). Class oppression as experienced by local and foreign workers was therefore reinforced by White racism.

   In the early 1990s African migrations to South Africa diversified, triggered by local and international socioeconomic and political factors briefly summarized here. The release of Nelson Mandela from prison, followed a few years later by the first democratic elections (1994), recast the previously "disgraced country" into an appealing place of economic opportunities, peace, and security for those fleeing conflicts and economic precarity elsewhere. The ensuing migrations were triggered by the structural adjustment programs implemented by the World Bank and

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2.   I borrow this heading from Valentine (2008).

the IMF during the 1980s and early 1990s, which resulted in the pauperization of the African urban working and middle classes, the decline of wages, and the rise of job insecurity (Tobias, 2012).

On the other hand, in South Africa, the rise of informal economy yielded by the neoliberal turn taken by the successive post-apartheid governments has created a new class of vulnerable workers whose economic interests are no longer defended by trade unions during apartheid. As shown by the ambiguous position toward xenophobia taken by the Congress of South African Trade Unions, tensions now exist between, on the one hand, a nationalist agenda, which gives priority to local workers and frames foreigners as a threat to local employment, and, on the other, social class solidarity, which had been a powerful mobilizing tool for transcending politically instrumentalized differences among equally vulnerable people (Hlatshwayo, 2012).

Finally, the implementation of the Schengen visa on March 1995 prevented many Africans from relocating to the former European metropoles. South Africa has then become an alternative migratory destination and, for many, a way station toward Europe, North America, or Australia.

This short account highlights how the growing socioeconomic precarity that increased NIBAs' migrations has in turn fueled anti-immigrant sentiments from South Africans who perceive the migrants as a direct threat to their own precarious economic survival. The hostility towards these newcomers is discursively articulated by the derogatory category MAKWEREKWERE, which refers to someone's linguistic ineptitude. In the next section, I examine *how* and *why* language is selected as a marker of social stigmatization of the NIBAs.

4.   What's in a name?

Populations around the world differ in the ways they identify themselves and assert their ethnic or national belonging in relation to that of the *stranger*. The markers of inclusiveness or distinctiveness that groups mobilize may include religion, values, political institutions, physical appearance, common ancestry, shared geographical space, or language.

In South Africa, the Othering of NIBAs starts with singling them out as one group, regardless of their origin, socio-economic positions, religion, phenotypes, or language. They are generally subsumed within the homogenizing and derogatory category MAKWEREKWERE or KWEREKWERE, whose etymology and definition have been the subject of many speculations. Its introduction to the 2002 *South African Concise Oxford Dictionary* highlights its strong foothold in the country's discursive landscape since the late 1990s:

pl. South African informal, derogatory: immigrants from other African countries. Origin from *ikwerekwere* "foreigner". (imitative of attempts to speak a foreign language)

Whereas all the definitions in circulation in the scholarly literature and in the media seem to agree on MAKWEREKWERE denoting the inability to speak a language, they vary regarding the specific language(s) this characterization applies to. For instance, Reitzes (1995: 24) argues that it is used in reference to the way "illegal immigrants (…) speak English", whereas for Sichone (2002: 36) it defines Africans who cannot speak "a black man's language or Africans who speak French or Portuguese".

Because little is known and discussed about the ways those designated as *makwerekwere* interpret the category, I elicited the definition of the term by asking 83 NIBAs to provide their own interpretations, which I summarize in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Meanings of *makwerekwere*

MEANINGS OF *MAKWEREKWERE*	NB. OF ANSWERS
Neutral term for *foreigner*/ someone coming from another country	30
Reference to language	23
Doesn't know how African foreigners are called	18
Doesn't know the word *makwerekwere*	5
Derogatory term for *foreigner*	1
Someone very dirty, with bad manners. Equivalent to *Pygmy*	1
Someone illegal	1
A miserable person who comes from a desert area	1
Not circumcised yet	1
Someone of a lower rank	1
Meaning of *caterpillar*	1
TOTAL	83

Outside the formal interview, these differing interpretations are generally produced in and circulated within the respondents' migrant-based social networks. Few mention the media as their source of reference. Those who had asked the meaning to their Black South African acquaintances have a more neutral evaluation of the term compared to those who relied on other sources. One can surmise that either these acquaintances don't consider the term as being derogatory or erase it to save face.

The significant number (18) of those who claim not knowing the term may be partly explained by the format of the interview, which prompts people to produce

"propositional" (i.e. know-that) rather than "procedural knowledge" (i.e. know-how) (Duranti, 1997). Indeed, declaring not knowing a term in answer to a question may not necessarily mean that the person is not being familiar with it; they may have heard it used without understanding it.

Although for many (21) MAKWEREKWERE is believed to be equivalent to the French neutral term *étranger* "foreigner", Excerpt 1 illustrates the racial dimension generally associated with it:

Excerpt 1.
1. Cécile: do you know what African foreigners are called here by
2. some South Africans?
3. Mohammed: they are called *makwerekwere* ((laugh))
4. Cécile: what does it mean?
5. Mohammed: it means a foreigner, a foreigner but he means it as an insult
6. in their conscience it's an insult
7. Cécile: and me for example as a French person they would call me
8. *makwerekwere* too?
9. Mohammed: often you Whites ok, they are scared of you, I don't
10. know if in their environment they criticize but often me I know that they
11. are scared of you, they trust you, because it is thanks to you the
12. country here, yeah that's it[3]

In this excerpt, Mohammed reframes my self-categorization ("French person", line 7) into a racial one. This recategorization is performed trough the erasure of my status as foreigner in South Africa. I am treated as equivalent to the local Whites and repositioned according to the local racial dynamics: line 9 "often you Whites ok, they are scared of you". In this excerpt, *makwerekwere* is implicitly constructed as a relational category between the NIBAs (as the category applies exclusively to them) and the South African Blacks, who predominantly use it. Note that Mohammed, like the majority of my informants, interprets *South African* as denoting "Black South African". When referring to other segments of the local population, the race modifier *White* or *Coloured* is generally added or used alone.[4]

In actual interactions the connotations associated with MAKWEREKWERE and the reactions to it by the targeted individual are murky. For instance, one morning, sitting with Gaston, a Congolese who trades cigarettes on the street, I witnessed him laughing while gesturing at a Black South African across the street. His interlocutor was shouting and gesturing what looked like handcuffed hands

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3. Because of space limitation, I only provide the English version of the French original.

4. COLOURED are people of mixed descent, classified as a separate racial category during apartheid (Martin, 1998). The majority are Afrikaans-English bilinguals. In Cape Town, Afrikaans tends to be their first language.

while pointing his chin to the passing policemen. Gaston explained that, for years, they've been trading jokes on him being kicked out of the country as an "illegal" migrant. When I asked him if his partner-in-joke sometimes addresses him as *kwerekwere* he suddenly changed the tone of his voice and replied: "oh no this he cannot". I understood by the gravitas of his voice that the term is socially constrained. Using it in this context would reframe a playing interaction into a threatening act or an insult. He then recalled how in the midst of the 2015 xenophobic attacks, the same man came to his stall and joked about what "we did to the illegal Africans and how they should be thrown out of the country." Gaston recounted how appalled he was by this comment at a time when he was fearing for his own life. After trying to argue with the man, he decided to avoid any contact with him. It is only several months later, without any apology from the offender, that they resumed their joking-like interactions under the tacit understanding of the discursive limits to be respected.

A few days after Gaston recounted the above incident, an event made me reevaluate in another light his take on the term *makwerekwere*. I had just witnessed an interaction between an old White man who, while handing money to Gaston to pay for his cigarettes, got disrupted by a younger Black South African man who playfully tried to take his money away. The episode lasted for about two minutes with the young man's repeated attempts to take the money away. At each attempt, the White man annoyingly uttered a "fuck off monkey" to his Black interlocutor, who responded with loud laughs and obvious enjoyment. A few minutes after the event, I confided in Gaston how distressed I was by the whole interaction and the racist slur *monkey*. Gaston looked amused and responded that I shouldn't worry; they were old friends and I had just witnessed a playful interaction between people who know and like each other". In order to stress his point, he mentioned how he is often addressed as *kwerekwere* by his South African "friends". He was also quick to underscore that he can only be called this name when "no one else is around".

It appears that, whereas the use of the term may index the close relationship between the interactants, its restrictive usage signals how derogatory and offensive its basic connotation is. Gaston's assessment of *kwerekwere* as a xenophobic slur or a term of endearment depends on how he frames his relationship with his interlocutor. The use itself is always reassessed in the here-and-now of the interaction. Addressing or referring to people with whom one is not intimate with racial or xenophobic slurs is typically construed as offensive and hurtful. The line between appropriate and derogatory naming is always very thin and often volatile even within the same interaction as highlighted in the scholarship on slur (e.g. Croom, 2013). The layered and context-dependent meanings just illustrated here can never

be captured in the format of the interview. Nonetheless, the latter helps respondents produce a meta-discourse worth investigating.

The breakdown of the 23 answers where the definition of MAKWEREKWERE contains a reference to language shows the following results:

Table 2. Meanings of *makwerekwere* in reference to language

REFERENCES TO LANGUAGE	NB. OF ANSWERS
Someone who speaks a language South Africans don't understand or don't know	11
Someone who speaks their own language very fast	3
Someone who doesn't speak *the* language (i.e. isiXhosa)	3
Somebody who speaks a language that sounds like [krkrkr]	2
Somebody who doesn't speak the same language or somebody who comes from elsewhere	1
Somebody who doesn't speak a South African language and doesn't understand anything	1
Someone who speaks a dog's language (*Kimbwá*)	1
Someone who takes the job of the locals and who doesn't speak *the* language (*viz.,* isiXhosa)	1
TOTAL	23

Noteworthy is that although all the respondents are plurilingual and operate in Cape Town's multilingual environment, "language" is always used in the singular form, regardless of whether the comment involves NIBAs or South Africans.[5] Consistent with the former's definition of *South Africans* as primarily Black, *language,* either used with the possessive *their*, the definite article *the*, or indefinite article *a*, refers to isiXhosa, the dominant non-Indo-European language spoken in Cape Town. This also points to the fact that *makwerekwere* is believed to be used primarily by the local Blacks. The respondents typically refer to their own African languages with phrases such as "my/our patois", "my dialect", "a/the/our language", "non-local language", and "foreign/another language". These labels index their different stances: Those who use the (in)definite articles "a/the" or the adjectives "non-local", "foreign", and "another" animate the point of view of those who call them *makwerekwere*.

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5. According to the 2011 South African census, the Western Cape Province, where Cape Town is located, is made of 48.8% of self-identified Coloureds, 32.8% Blacks, 15.7% Whites, and 1.0% Indians. English, isiXhosa, and Afrikaans are the dominant named languages in the Province.

Although it remains unclear whether the terms "patois", "dialect" and "my/our language" index the interviewees' vernacular or vehicular languages – different for some speakers – they undoubtedly refer to an African language. This reflects a colonial legacy according to which non-European languages were generally referred to as *dialect* (in the non-linguistic sense) or *patois* (Wolff, 2017).

These different stances are also indexed by the respondents' way of framing the speakers categorized as *makwerekwere*: a competent speaker of (a) language(s) other than those spoken in South Africa vs. a person defined negatively by their lack of competence in isiXhosa somebody who doesn't speak the South Africans' language), or as a listening subject also defined in negative terms (who doesn't understand anything). The listening subject here is very different from the one described by Rosa and Flores (2017) who build up on Inoue's (2003) work on perceived female accents by Japanese males. First, the process of inferiorization is performed by the speaking subject (the Black South Africans) on the listening subject (i.e. the "makwerekwere") by constructing the latter as fundamentally inept in engaging in a communicative act. Second, although a racialization process is at work here, as *makwerekwere* only refers to NIBAs, it is performed from the position of Black South Africanness on other Africans, a point to which I return below.

Many authors, including myself, lean toward the onomatopoeic interpretation of the formation of MAKWEREKWERE that Edmond and Patrick respectively describe as:

> 'people who speak a language that makes noise like a pig who is eating'

> 'those who speak dogs' language, *Kímbwa* (Lingala word: Gloss: *ki-* PREF. CLASS 7 *mbwa*: noun 'dog')

These explicit references to an animal-sounding like language are reminiscent of the "clangour of birds" (Hall, 1989:179), which the term *barbarian* was believed to reproduce in 5th-century Greece, with its speakers constructed as incapable of producing any "significant sounds of human speech" (Lévi-Strauss, 1987:44). BARBARIANS and MAKWEREKWERE both illustrate a process of "fractal recursivity" (Gal & Irvine, 1995) whereby a cluster of sounds unintelligible to its listener no longer indexes the foreignness of the language but the speaking-subject and their alleged cultural backwardness.

Makwerekwere in its formation and connotation could also be compared to the colonial term *Hottentot*, which early Dutch settlers in the Cape Colony used to denote the indigenous Khoe people on account of the alleged animal-like noise of their click language. To their ears it sounded like "turkeys clucking" or "[people] farting with their tongues" (Raven-Hart, 1971, cited in Hudson, 2004:311). The

striking difference between the two acts of naming lies in the power of mapping the inhuman: undertaken by the nation-state-defined-host (i.e. the South African) in the case of *Makwerekwere* and by the guest-in-becoming-host (i.e. the European colonizer) for *Hottentot*. This historically layered account of the Othering process shows "fixity in the ideological representation of otherness" (Bhabha, 1983:18) in South Africa. In Section 4, I examine the ideological apparatus that helps construct this "discursive memory" (Courtine, 1981:53).

Categorizing people is much more than a taxonomic activity by which individuals are grouped together based on socially constructed similarities and differences and ranked according to a certain value scale (viz, less human). As I discuss now, its operational value lies in how it organizes social practices, for instance, by bestowing rights and duties to both the named and the "namer" and by mediating relationships on the ground.

5.   Hosting and guesting as performance

Many of the examples of verbal violence – including being categorized as MAKW-EREKWERE – recounted by my interlocutors take place in the confined space of a taxi-bus or a train where bodies are in close contact and temporality is frozen by the ride. Taxis and trains produce "a complex network of performances of hosting and guesting" (Bell, 2007:31) which arises from these particular fleeting moments of encounter. Caused by their heightened awareness of being the potential targets of violence many of the NIBAs engage in various forms of invisibilization performances in public settings.

They deploy strategies, similar to those articulated below, which Zimbabwean blogger Baynham Goredema recommends as part of the "8 Ways to Avoid Becoming a Victim of Xenophobia".[6] Shortly after the 2015 xenophobic attacks, different versions of these recommendations circulated in my interlocutors' WhatsApp network along with horrific videos of alleged migrants being "necklaced" (i.e. burnt alive with a rubber tire wrapped around their arms and chests) or beaten to death in South Africa.

Three of the eight recommendations pertain to language use taken as an index of foreignness:

1.   Do not talk on the phone: Receiving calls was a definite no – no. I kept my phone on silent as soon as I left the office until I got home. I often get carried

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6.   http://thesovereignstate.org/8-things-you-can-do-to-avoid-becoming-a-victim-of-xenophobia/. As of February 22, 2018 the link has been deactivated.

away while speaking on the phone and ended up talking in Shona, not that it helps to speak only English.

Scholars have stressed how mobile phones tend to make the boundaries between public and private space porous, as a given talk directed to a ratified addressee can be followed by any eavesdropper or overhearer (Goffman, 1981). Snippets of a cell-phone conversation, be they in a language the nearby person understands or not, transform the anonymous speaker into a person with a history: a husband talking to his spouse, a friend complaining about another friend, or a person with a "non-local accent". Because silencing in public space can protect only those of the migrants who can pass for locals thanks to their phenotypes, it can shelter only those who are already invisible.

The second recommendation is no longer about the migrant as a speaking but as a listening subject:

2. Wear headphones: Even if there is nothing playing just bob your head and act as if you are really into your beats and you don't want to be disturbed and even if someone talks to you, you have to act like you can't hear them and ignore them till they get the message that you do not want to talk. All the while avoiding eye contact.

Active avoidance of unsolicited interactions is enacted through body performance: "bob your head" and "avoid (…) eye contact". It is about carving and securing one's personal safe space within the shared public space. Headphones function here as shields both physically and metaphorically by making oneself unreachable.

For many of my informants, body performance is a critical part of making themselves unnoticed in Cape Town public space. They use a multiplicity of semiotic resources to perform (their own representation of) being a "local Black". Those who consider *walking* as an important signifier that gives away an individual's national origin say to mimic the "Xhosas' way of walking". Although it remains unclear what the latter really looks like, my informants' attention to walking as an index of ethnic or national identity is not surprising. Mauss (1934) was the first to draw attention to walking as bodily dispositions acquired through habitus and not just idiosyncrasies pertaining to an individual. Body performance also involves sartorial disguise. Madeleine from Congo Kinshasa mentions how she refrains from wearing custom made non-indigenous African attires by fear of being singled out, especially when walking in predominantly Black neighborhoods. Godard from Congo Brazzaville explains that on some bus rides he chooses to wear a hat to hide his "Congolese haircut style" and trades his high-waist pants for low-waist shorter ones to conform to the "black South African

fashion way". Ironically, he measures the success of his disguise by the number of Blacks who address him in isiXhosa, a language he doesn't speak and could potentially blow up his "cover" (see below). This daily *mise en scène* of one's bodily presence as foreigner is reminiscent of the different "techniques" described by Goffman (1963) in the management and concealment of stigma. For my informants, it also comes with the mapping of their own mobility within the city: big detours are taken to avoid specific taxi-bus or train routes, trajectories are scheduled only in mornings and early afternoons, and housing opportunities are discarded in some neighborhoods.

The third recommendation is an injunction to learn an indigenous African language in order to pass for a local, at least when needed:

3.   Learn fluent Zulu: The key word there is fluent. The fact that it HAS to be Zulu out of the 11 official languages is a no brainer because the Zulus are the ones you are going to have a major problem with. If you just "ngiya zama" you will be sniffed out. You need to know what odd words are in Zulu e.g. funny bone or the baby toe.[7]

Many NIBAs cite their lack of knowledge of isiXhosa as a give away of their foreignness in Cape Town multilingual context. The reason has to do with the way they frame their interactional experience with their Black South Africans interlocutors (especially those they don't know) who generally address them first in isiXhosa.

The reasons from the other side are hard to extricate: either the isiXhosa speakers don't recognize their interlocutors as non-local or they expect them to speak isiXhosa. The latter may also be an unmarked code used by Black South Africans, who feel more confident in it, although they recognize their interlocutors as non-local. Whatever set of explanations one favours, it appears that my informants generally interpret the choice of isiXhosa as a linguistic test intended to determine whether they are local or not. As evidenced below, this framing is informed by linguistic practices that took place during the 2008 and 2015 xenophobic mass attacks.

The injunction to "learn fluent Zulu" (or any other indigenous African language) in recommendation three is not constructed as part of the hospitality protocol in the host country – *viz.*, I learn your language to know you and welcome you into my world – but a way of shielding oneself from the (feared) hostility. While the act of passing highlights the performance-related and relational character of identity formation, it also exhibits the passer's awareness of not being

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7.   IsiZulu is the main indigenous vehicular language spoken in Johannesburg which blogger Baynham Goredema speaks about his experience of xenophobia.

welcomed into a group or a community as a distinctive and (always) potentially threatening Other. Extending hospitality to only those who look and/or sound like oneself is not true hospitality, as Derrida (2000a: 15–17) aptly remarks:

> must we ask the foreigner to understand us, to speak our language, in all the senses of this term, in all its possible extensions, before being able and so as to be able to welcome him into our country? If he was already speaking our language, with all that that implies, if we already shared everything that is shared with a language, would the foreigner still be a foreigner and could we speak of asylum or hospitality in regard to him?

What if the nation-state-defined-host would learn the language of the foreigner-guest? How would it reframe each other's positionalities, their respective rights to belong, and the locale they both inhabit? In 2015, in response to the xenophobic attacks, a few Black activists living in Khayelitsha, one of Cape Town Black townships, initiated the teaching of kiSwahili, Portuguese, and kiShona to its residents. The project coordinator who had learned kiSwahili when residing in Tanzania as a member of the armed wing of the African National Congress (*uMkhonto we Sizwe*) hoped that by teaching some of the non-indigenous African languages to locals, the latter would find "no need to argue and call each other names" (*West Cape News* April 10, 2016). In this quote, xenophobia is reframed as a problem of communication, which prevents people from getting to know each other. Interestingly, it recasts NIBAs from an abstract institutional category (e.g. "African foreigners", "refugees", etc.) to that of *speaking subjects* with histories and traditions associated with particular languages.

As is evident from the informally produced files given to the students of kiShona, language classes aimed at sensitizing the local residents to their new neighbors' sociocultural practices and to foster a pan-African culture:

> our approach is to build bridges between Africans to be able to understand each other. This will in our view be an opportunity to contribute towards a borderless Africa.

Here, learning the language(s) of the NIBA neighbors implicitly challenges the state manufactured categories – according to which individuals are defined as migrants – by shifting the scale on which belongingness is assessed: no longer on that of national borders but on that of the African continent. This rescaling comes along with a shift of temporality: the shared experience of colonial exploitation becomes a rallying factor that transcends the arbitrary 19th-century African national borders.

To my question why choose kiSwahili, Portuguese, and kiShona, the project manager responded that they are those spoken in many corners of the township;

and therefore, he added, it was necessary for every resident to start learning them. These particular languages are redefined here as *local* languages through their rescaling from the national to that of the micro scale of the neighborhood. Indeed, the very categorization of a language as *foreign* rests on the homology between a language and a nation according to which the latter constructs the status of the former. When examining languages from the perspective of the locality where they are used and which they help construct, sociolinguistically, the notion FOR-EIGN (as in "foreign language") no longer stands and, by extension, the dichotomy between nation-defined-host and migrant-guest dissipates.

Coming back to Goredema's third recommendation about "being fluent in Zulu", including acquiring "odd words", it is an implicit reference to what has been termed the *elbow test*. People suspected of being foreigners, often based on their dark complexion, were asked to answer the question during the xenophobic mass attacks. Ignorance of the word for "elbow" in Zulu resulted in severe beating and, in some cases, death. Meant to ostracize an identified Other, linguistic tests can be interpreted as a crucial confirmation of one's status as a host since one becomes a host by practicing (in)hospitality. It also shows that granting hospitality comes with the host's entitlement to set up the criteria for establishing the guesthood of the guest. Note that, for years, the South African police have been using similar tests to identify Black African migrants.

I suggest analyzing the linguistic testing as performed by self-proclaimed language authorities in light of the ways the South African State interpellates its citizens and those categorized as foreigners (Neocosmos, 2006). As illustrated in Section 45 of the 2004 immigration amendment act (#19), the State's interpellation shapes the rights and duties of both parties:

> Prescribed institutions or persons other than organs of [**State**] may, in the prescribed manner, be required [**by regulation**] to endeavour to ascertain the status or citizenship of the persons with whom they enter into commercial transactions, as prescribed, and shall report to the [**Department**] Director-General any illegal foreigner, or any person whose status **or** citizenship could not be ascertained, provided that such requirement shall not prevent the rendering of services or performance to which illegal foreigners and foreigners are entitled under the Constitution or any law [**including the law of contract**].

The empowerment of the citizens-hosts comes here with an institutional duty ("be required") to report on a foreigner-guest's administrative status. Citizen-hosts are interpellated here as agents of the State in charge of "protecting" the Nation. Crush and Ramachandran's (2014) survey shows that a significant number of South Africans would likely perform this duty as representatives of the State: 36% declare willing to report African foreigners to the police and 27%

to their employers; 25% would likely stop them from running a business in or moving into their neighborhoods (23%); 20% would prevent their children from being in the same classroom; and a staggering 26% declare being ready to use force against them.

The instrumentalization of language in the performance of identity politics in Africa has a long history that dates back from European colonization (Irvine, 1993). However, as discussed in Vigouroux & Mufwene (to appear), the claim that one's first language ipso facto indexes their ethnic identity is disputable. A person can claim allegiance to an ethnic group without necessarily speaking its language. By the same token, a person speaking an African vehicular language as (their only) mother tongue need not trace their ancestry in the region where the language originated, nor need they pledge some ethnic allegiance to it.

A word of caution is in order here. It is tempting to interpret the South African shibboleth-like tests as indexing Africa's singularity in comparison to the rest of the world. As McNamara (2005) shows, it is far from being the case. As a matter of fact, linguistic testing as applied in Europe to assess asylum seekers' national origins is informed by the same underlying ideology, according to which language is taken as unquestionably indexing national or ethnic identity. The fact that, in the latter case, language testing is institutionalized doesn't make it radically different from the South African lay process, as the Belgian immigration officers described by Maryns (2006) aren't language experts either. Yet, in both contexts "language examiners" feel equally invested with the authority of deciding who belongs and who doesn't. In both cases failure to pass the tests is consequential for the tested although in different ways.

The South African Shibboleth-like language testing illustrates the extent to which language is conceived of as a defining criterion of Black South Africanness: Those who don't speak a local African language cannot be anything but foreigners. This type of linguistic exclusion is strongly informed by the State's conception of citizenship as granted by birth and territory. Language is used as indexing both. This comes with the essentialization of the speaker based on the strong correlation between *language* and *territory*, where each of them is interpreted as constructing the other. Although this conception is not exclusive to South Africa, the exclusionary rules of hospitality as applied now to NIBAs have historically been shaped by that older apartheid-based policy of race and language. Indeed, before the identification of the Black African aliens as the ones coming from outside South Africa, Black South Africans had themselves been considered as aliens from within, as explained below.

6.   Historical haunting of contemporary hospitality[8]

Racial categorization has informed each aspect of South Africans' lives, including that of being granted or denied South African citizenship during apartheid. The administrative production of racial categories prior and after 1948, which marks the Afrikaners' ascent to State power and the official beginning of apartheid, shows ambiguities and inconsistencies in the classification of people. For instance, the Population Registration Act passed in 1950 (No 30) which required the whole South African population to be registered and classified as *White, Coloured*, or *Native* shows subjectivity in defining racial categories. Those in charge of administrating the legislation saw racial classifications "as discretionary judgments, drawing on multiple sources of evidence" (Posel, 2001: 91) which varied from case to case. Officials used language as part of the evidence to assess someone as "Natives", such as when other criteria couldn't help tell people apart:

> The Secretary for Native Affairs was sometimes asked to rule on how to manage the tensions between its various criteria for racial membership – for example, in the cases of people who looked coloured but lived in native locations, spoke a native language, had paid lobolo ['bridewealth']; or obversely, people who looked native but had married coloured women, lived in coloured areas, spoke Afrikaans, and were devout Christians.   (Posel, 2001: 95)

In 1970, the National States Citizenship Act (No 26) made Black South Africans, nationals of "Homelands" (*aka* "Bantustans"), to which they became linked de jure, even if they had had no prior connections with these territories.[9] The formation of the homelands, in effect zones of the relegation of Blacks to the socio-political and economic margins, helped redefine South Africa in geographic, racial (i.e. white), and linguistic (i.e. Afrikaans and English) terms.

Language and ethnicity – themselves products of a contentious colonial classificatory process (Harries, 1988) – were instrumentalized to become defining features for allocating Africans to the 10 Bantustans, which covered only an estimated 13.8% of the total land area of South Africa (Egero, 1991). For instance, the areas of Transkei and Ciskei became officially the Homelands of the Xhosa people, Bophuthatswana that of the Tswana, and KaNgwane that of the Swazi.

In the mid-1970s, the independence of Transkei (October 1976), Bophutatswana (December 1977), Venda (September 1979), and Ciskei (December

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8. I borrow this heading from Germann Molz and Gibson (2007: 18).

9. In 1960, 39% of Africans lived in Bantustans. The figures increased to 53% in the 1980's as a result of deportations (Egero, 1991). The remainder lived in so-called white-areas. A tiny proportion resided in Bantustans other than those they were allocated to (Butler et al. 1977).

1981) engendered the "denationalization" of 8 million Blacks who were stripped of their South African citizenship and became *foreign natives* (Dean, 1978). Those who would renounce their homeland citizenship would de facto become stateless. By applying only to speakers of isiXhosa, tshiVenda, and seTswana, the denationalization of targeted segments of the black population reinforced the process of exclusion based on language and culture, while, at least on the surface, downplaying race:

> On the *ideological* level, the Bantustan strategy has been able, by exploiting language difference among the African people, to shift the ruling class fulcrum from 'race' to 'nation' without thereby doing away with the colour-caste lever.
>
> (Molteno, 1977: 30)

This short historical account shows the entanglement of race, language, and territory in fostering ethnic and national identities in apartheid South Africa, including that of Afrikaners (e.g., Dubow, 1992; Kriel, 2010). I submit that host and guest statuses as they are enacted in post-apartheid South Africa cannot be understood outside the historical relations of colonialism that made Black South Africans aliens in their own home (i.e. country of birth). Therefore the (in)hospitality of Black South Africans toward the NIBAs can be analysed as a way for them to (re)claim South Africa as their home, from which they were historically excluded. The reinstatement of their legal rights has implicitly entitled them to determine who is welcome and who is not. As pointed out by Derrida (2000a), the question regarding whether ownership of ones' home or hospitality comes first is fundamental. In other words, does one extend hospitality because one is at home, or does extending hospitality make oneself feel at home? Because being (in)hospitable is intrinsically part of being at home, it can be argued that the power (not) to grant hospitality is fundamental to the formation process of the disenfranchised post-apartheid Black South African national subject.

The fact that only the status of the "Black foreigner-guest" is questioned – in both the literal and metaphorical senses of the term – also highlights the sociocultural and political legacies of the apartheid regime that constructed South Africa as socially and culturally closer to Europe than to its African neighbours. On the other hand, Black-Africanness is re-appropriated by some NIBAs to assert their right and legitimacy to live in the country. They dispute the Whites' claim of indigeneity to South Africa as Ali, a Guinean entrepreneur, explains:

> When I see a local White who claims to be South African ok, I think that there's how could I say? there is an untruth here ok at home, the African is black, that's like that, Africa is for the Black man, there are no Whites in Africa, as you know it as you know well from History, ok there are people who came from elsewhere

ok that's it they took citizenship they have stayed here what is certain I, you ask me even if you burn my hand, I tell you that, in Africa we don't have Whites here.

Belongingness or citizenship as State-produced is opposed here to a borderless construction of Africa as Black. The chronological order of settlements according to which the host and guest positioning is generally assessed is disputed here by territorial and autochthonous claims of ownership informed by an essentialist and racialized definition of Africanness as Black. Note that the very category *Afrikaner* (lit. "African"), first used in 1707 by the young Huguenot Hendrik Bibault, epitomizes similar claims of territorial belongingness in the then Cape Colony (Lory, 1998). Bibault's new self-categorization initially used to reject Dutch authority marks a deep ideological and identity shift from the status of *settler* to that of *native*. This shift was achieved through disempowering the Khoe and the Black African hosts whose territory was reconfigured according to the rules of the new self-proclaimed hosts. As explained below, in post-apartheid South Africa, the presence of NIBAs complicates the Black-White racial dynamics, which, until recently, have shaped relationships between the different segments of the national population.

7.   Unsettling the white-black local divide

Affiliation based on race in Cape Town doesn't seem to play an important role for the NIBAs I investigated. The latter tend to position themselves along social class distinctions; and middle class White South Africans are the socioeconomic models they emulate. Before I analyze how Francophone African migrants articulate class distinctions and their own racialization in their discourse on language, it should be borne in mind that unlike more socially and racially integrated cities in the country, Cape Town is still highly segregated. Black South Africans live predominantly in marginalized geographic and socioeconomic zones, viz. the Black townships and shanty settlements around the city and, for the majority, in a state of high socioeconomic precarity. In other words, the alignment of economic wealth and power with race is so real to them.

Francophone Africans capitalize on the French language as symbolic capital to distinguish themselves from Black South Africans. This assumption of cultural superiority may be a compensatory strategy to downplay the stigmatization they have been subjected to. It is a strike back against the status of *makwerekwere* ascribed to them. Edmond's harsh and pretentious assessment illustrates this: "We, the Francophones came to educate them", (i.e., the Black South Africans). This adoption of the colonial discourse about civilizing the "African savage", which

has been associated particularly with France's *mission civilisatrice* (Conklin, 1997), in speaking of Black South Africans reframes the nature of the relationship between themselves as foreigner-guests and their local-hosts. Edmond pretends they can emancipate "backward" Black South Africans from their social condition. Ironically, this discourse reproduces and reinforces hegemonies and race-based inequalities they think they, as Francophone Africans, challenge.

The valuation of French and the symbolic capital my informants hope to derive from it are also evident in the construction of the language as referring to France, therefore as a language to be dissociated from the African context in which it was learned and serves primarily a vehicular function. According to Stéphane:

> South Africans think that Francophone Africans are extraordinary since we speak French – when they see a Black person speak French – they think that you come from France, that you are not an African.

The value associated with French in the South African context is purely symbolic as this language is of low economic convertibility on the local job market. Also, in situations where knowledge of the language is a required job skill, French-speaking Africans tend to be disadvantaged based on their non-European and non-native accent in the language. For instance, most of the highly educated migrants who had hoped to be hired as French instructors at the Alliance Française often have had their applications turned down in favor of European French native speakers.[10] This selection is informed equally by the linguistic ideology of the learners and by that of the teaching institution, despite the Alliance Française's rebranding of French as an "African language", in order to appeal to a new post-apartheid audience. Indeed, the Alliance's advertising message in 1994 was rather explicit: "French: Connecting South Africa to the rest of Africa".

The presence of NIBAs also sheds a different light on the complex relationship that many upper middle-class White South Africans entertain with their Black fellow citizens. Andrew, a self-proclaimed White liberal argues that the relationship with Black African migrants is easier and smoother than with the local Blacks primarily because it is not informed by a still vivid history of subjection and humiliation, especially in an economic context where the long fought political struggles have not yet benefited the local Black majority:

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10. This assessment is based on my two-year experience (1994–1996) as a French instructor at the Alliance Française in Mitchells Plain, a Coloured township in Cape Town. My 2018 fieldwork shows that this situation doesn't seem to have changed.

> The white [South African] relationship with Black labor is a little bit like the relationship between a pedophilic uncle and his ten year old nephew who he's been fiddling with for the last teen years, now the nephew is eighteen or twenty and maybe the family's now discovered the abuse, and the uncle has apologized, and it's out in the open, but there's still a tremendous resentment (…) and then along comes, Jean-Paul from the Congo (…) there's no bad blood between you and Jean-Paul, you didn't fuck over Jean-Paul's parents you know, you didn't exploit the parents or mistreated them there's no history between you and Jean-Paul and Jean-Paul is thankful for the job, and works extremely hard, and has no resentment to you and suddenly you think to yourself my God I'm not a racist because he is a Black person who I actually like.[11]

Here the figure of the GOOD GUEST ascribable to Jean-Paul helps construct, as a counterpoint, that of the defiant, resentful and ungrateful Black South African who refuses to labor for the White middle class. The White South Africans' claiming of the position of the "hospitable host", as can be inferred from Andrew's quote, expunges the question of their own territorial presence in South Africa; it erases the historical social relations of colonialism, which involved their own "transformation [from] guests into hosts" (Ahmed, 2000:190). As noted above, the former Dutch and British settler guests claimed South Africa as their "home" by depriving its Khoe and Black hosts of their rights over their own territory and of their power to decide who is welcome and who is not. Moreover, the guests redefined the conditions of hospitality to their advantage by expropriating the host from their own land and marginalizing them culturally, politically and socioeconomically.

In this new *ménage à trois*, language is used to reinstate the (local) old binary Black-and-White positions that the presence of the NIBAs destabilizes. For instance, Andrew mentions how isiXhosa-speaking beggars in Cape Town now resort to Afrikaans instead of English when addressing him as a way of distinguishing themselves from the NIBAs and casting themselves as more legitimately related to him, even though he is White:

> Here's Jean-Paul who comes from nowhere and the boss just loves Jean-Paul for the reasons I've just given, and then you have a very strange phenomena where Black South Africans begging on the street will address me in Afrikaans (…) and I sort of analyze it a kind of like remember me? I was the guy who was here before Jean-Paul, Jean-Paul who can't speak Afrikaans yeah (…) I'm part of your history kind of thing the history that I'm trying to get away from, you know (…) so now it's like it it's a triangular relationship basically.

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11. (…): indicates deleted discourse.

Historically associated with the political oppression of Black South Africans during apartheid (Van Rensburg, 1999), Afrikaans is reframed, in this recounted interactional context, as indexing the sharing of South Africanness, from which the NIBAs are excluded as non-speakers of a local or indigenous language. Speaking Afrikaans or any other local languages would not suffice for them to be recognized as being "at home" in Cape Town, for all the reasons this essay has sought to disentangle. Yet, as shown earlier, in post-apartheid South Africa, the NIBA-guest is crucial in the shaping and reclaiming of the hosthood of the nation-state-defined-Black-host.

8.   Conclusions

The South African case examined here calls for a shift of our analytical gaze from the traditional ways in which issues of migrations (including those related to language) have been examined, especially in the scholarship that is overwhelmingly dominated by a South-to-North perspective on population movements and contacts. This perspective, I argued, has framed the research questions on migration, the perception of contemporary human mobility and contacts, and more crucially the representation of the migrant as predominantly a classed and racialized figure.

The "hospitality framework" I advocate in this paper aims to deconstruct the unsophisticated dichotomy between *migrant* and *local* which are categories of thoughts manufactured by the State and defined solely according to a Nation-State frame of reference. This framework makes it possible to shift the scales of analysis and to account for the shifting positions of the host and the guest shaped by the context. I showed how languages as ideologies and practices are mobilized as key symbolic resources in the performance of hosthood and guesthood.

Finally, this paper points out how imperative it is to refine our descriptive categories and understanding of race-based language ideologies and practices often overwhelmingly analyzed in binary terms (viz., Black or Brown or Yellow vs. White). This binary framing tends to reify racial categories through the erasure of the tensions, dissenting voices, and hegemonic positions *within* each of these historically produced and socially enacted categories. The South African case undoubtedly complicates the issue of race and xenophobia as accounted for in sociolinguistics and related fields.

Acknowledgements

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