An Exploration of South African Englishes

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1   Introduction

Throughout South Africa's history, its people have continuously been facing trials - from colonisation by the Dutch and the British, through numerous wars in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, to the era of Apartheid that only ended in 1994 with South Africa's first democratic election. Despite these challenges, the country has finally begun to embrace its rich culture and diversity, earning the affectionate nickname *Rainbow Nation* from its inhabitants. The constitution reflects this appreciation of South Africa's diversity and states that "the official languages of the Republic are Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu" (The Department of Justice and Constitutional Development 1996, Section 6.1) and that "all official languages must enjoy parity of esteem and must be treated equitably" (Section 6.4).

With eleven official languages, it is not surprising that the varieties of English spoken in South Africa are as diverse as the languages of South Africa themselves. The linguistic landscape in South Africa reflects its rich multicultural heritage, with each variety of English influenced by historical, cultural and sociopolitical factors. For instance, the English spoken by someone who grew up in KwaZulu-Natal will differ significantly from that of a Karoo farmer. This paper aims to identify the distinctive lexical, morphological and phonological features of the *Afrikaans Variety* and the *Cape Flats Variety* spoken by both first or second-language speakers of Afrikaans. Subsequently, it seeks to contrast these features to those of South African Standard English, which shall serve as a benchmark for the comparison.

Understanding the attitudes towards these varieties is a first step towards understanding the sociopolitical connections that arise between the speakers of these

varieties and the underlying prejudice that hinders the country from complete reconciliation. Language constitutes an important part of an individual's identity, where the significance of language as a catalyst for fostering mutual understanding and acceptance amongst all South Africans is also recognised by the South African government itself (Government Communication and Information System 2012). Insights gained from studying these varieties can enhance the understanding of South Africa's cultural diversity and promote inclusivity in a multicultural society.

Some previous studies have already examined the perception of different varieties of English. Wood, for instance, examines attitudes towards the *Cape Flats Variety* while also discussing the socio-cultural factors influencing these perceptions (Wood 1987). More recent research on attitudes towards *Afrikaans English* and the *Cape Flats Variety* has been conducted by Branford (B. Branford 1996), Sanderson (Sanderson 2014) and da Arista (Arista 2008). Building on the insight gained from understanding attitudes towards these Englishes, research on bilingualism and multilingualism in South Africa provides an important fundament for many societal aspects, particularly the education system. Sanderson provides a hands-on approach to multilingualism in South Africa (Sanderson 2014), while Anthonissen (Anthonissen 2013), Antia and Dyers (Antia and Dyers 2015) and Finlayson and Slabbert (Finlayson and Slabbert 1997) provide a more theoretical background on English and Afrikaans bilingualism.

A historical overview of the development of Englishes in South Africa is given by Lanham (Lanham 1996), Lanham and Macdonald (Lanham and Macdonald 1979), and van Rensburg (Rensburg 1999), and is paramount to understanding the evolution of the individual features of South African Englishes. A more in-depth analysis of how the *Afrikaans Variety* and the *Cape Flats Variety* are influenced by Afrikaans is provided by Kruger and van Rooy (Kruger and Rooy 2019) and Mesthrie, Bowerman and Toefy (Mesthrie, Bowerman, and Toefy 2017). There exists extensive literature investigating the phonological, morphological and syntactic aspects of these varieties, some of which are (Bowerman 2004b), (Bowerman 2004a), (McCormick 2004), (Finn 2004), (Watermeyer 1996), (Malan 1996) and (Rooy 2020). However, while existing research has explored general attitudes towards South African Englishes and examined linguistic aspects of the different varieties, there remains a scarcity of studies focusing on how speakers of different Afrikaans-based varieties view one another. Moreover, little attention has been given to understanding how potentially derogatory references to speakers of *Afrikaans English* and speakers of the *Cape Flats Variety* are perceived by speakers of the same variety and by those of the other variety. The research objective of this paper is to assess which features make Afrikaans English and the Cape Flats Variety distinctive from other varieties of English, in particular South African Standard English, based on existing research as well as empirical data gathered through interviews and questionnaires in the Western Cape Province. Furthermore, this paper seeks to evaluate people's attitudes towards the different En-

glishes spoken in South Africa, in particular towards the abovementioned varieties, and analyse to which extent terms such as 'person of colour' versus 'coloured person' are politically correct within the context of South African Englishes. In doing so, this paper aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the linguistic and socio-cultural dynamics within South Africa's linguistic landscape.

2   History of South African Englishes

Although the history of Englishes in South Africa only starts with its colonisation by the British in 1806 (Lanham 1996, pg. 19), southern Africa had a rich and diverse linguistic landscape long before that. The two primary language branches that developed in South Africa were the *San* and *Khoi* languages. Bantu languages arrived much later from the North, with some of the languages belonging to this group, such as Xhosa, Zulu or Tswana, still being spoken in South Africa today (Mesthrie 2002).

Due to its geographically convenient location as a restocking point for naval transport, the Cape became a valuable stopping point for ships travelling eastwards from Europe via the oceanic route. What had started off as trade between the sailors and the indigenous *Khoi Khoi* started to become a settlement with the arrival of the Dutch seafarer *Jan van Riebeeck* in 1652 (Thompson 1996, pg. 32). While the Cape Colony was initially not a slave colony, slave labour was eventually introduced in 1658 from Angola and later from several Asian countries. Notably, the *Khoi Khoi* people were never subjected to enslavement and upheld peaceful trade relations with the Dutch settlers until 1659 (pg. 40).

With the arrival of the British came yet another power struggle, which was to continue with varying amounts of violence up to modern times. In 1822, nearly two centuries after the Dutch had established their colony in the Cape, the British declared by law that English would replace Dutch as an official language (Lanham 1996, pg. 20). As the settlers began to speak English, the first variety of South African English emerged in the Western Cape: Dutch English. During this era, British English quickly became the variety of prestige. It was predominantly spoken in urban areas, whereas Dutch (which had by then evolved into Afrikaans) and Afrikaans English were spoken mainly in the countryside, and often faced stigmatisation (pg. 24). Even though the British had substantial legislative control over South Africa at the time, Afrikaner nationalism grew, and language became a vital part of the Afrikaner identity, encapsulated in the *taalstryd*, or language struggle (pg. 25). However, English retained much of its British character in Natal and was regarded as South Africa's most prestigious variety well into the 19th century.

During the Second World War, South Africa fought by the side of the British and, with that, took a political stance that was widely controversial in the country. The end of the war saw a change in government, and with the Afrikaner Nationalist Party in power, the role of Afrikaans in society was significantly strengthened (pg.

26). The Afrikaner Nationalist Party implemented a policy of racial segregation called *Apartheid*, which advocated for the separation of South Africans according to race and ethnicity. In 1950, the *Group Areas Act* was imposed, mandating and calling for separate living areas for different racial and ethnic groups (Thompson 1996, pg. 15). Only three years later, the government issued the *Bantu Education Act*, which intended for Afrikaans to be used as the primary language of instruction in high schools across the country (Lanham 1996, pg. 27). Not only did this reduce the chances of attending Universities significantly for South Africans of colour, but it also increased the number of Afrikaans speakers throughout the country.

The impacts of the Apartheid regime could be felt throughout South Africa and lasted long after its official end. In the Western Cape, the regime's policies led to the forced relocation of many coloured South Africans into townships, where they faced living conditions that were far beneath the standard which they had previously known (one of the most well-known and horrendous examples of the effects of the *Group Areas Act* is perhaps the demolition of *District Six* in Cape Town, where officers forcefully removed residents from their homes, and their houses destroyed). The forced segregation gave rise to the Cape Flats Variety of English, which developed in the townships and was heavily influenced by Afrikaans, the first language of many of the inhabitants.

Today, literature identifies three distinct varieties of English in South Africa, each influenced to varying degrees by Afrikaans. South African Standard English, which originated from the English brought to South Africa by the British in the nineteenth century, adopted some features from the settlers' English but remained otherwise distinct in its own right. The Afrikaans Variety developed from the Dutch Variety that came into being when the British declared English as the sole official language of South Africa. The Cape Flats Variety emerged during Apartheid and is primarily spoken by coloured South Africans in the Western Cape. With the end of Apartheid came the end of the *taalstryd*, the competitive struggle between English and Afrikaans for linguistic dominance, and South Africa now has eleven official languages of equal status (The Department of Justice and Constitutional Development 1996, Section 6.4).

3 Methodology

In order to gather new data on the *Afrikaans Variety* and the *Cape Flats Variety*, a quantitative approach was employed. A structured questionnaire was designed to gather information on each variety's lexical features and the attitude towards specific words or phrases. This questionnaire was then shared via various social media platforms to recruit participants.

3.1   Structure of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was divided into seven sections. In the first section, the participant was provided with information about the survey procedure and the terms of confidentiality of their data. They were further informed that their participation was voluntary and that they were allowed to withdraw their consent to participate at any time. The subsequent section asked them for their demographic information, specifically regarding their language background. The third and fourth sections of the questionnaire were designed to gather lexical information from the participants. Section three provided the participant with an image of a term that was commonly used in *Standard South African English*, *Afrikaans English* or *Cape Flats Variety* and prompted them to provide an image description. The image for the term *bakkie* (a small open motor truck (Dictionary 2004, 33)), for instance, is given in Figure 1. Ten of the eighteen terms prompted for were selected from the *South African Oxford School Dictionary* to elicit an image description that could be categorised as belonging to a variety of South African English. The remaining terms served as fillers so that the participants would not feel prompted solely on terms that were part of the lexica of South African Englishes.

Figure 1: A Bakkie

Section four was set up in a short "fill the gap" format, in which the participant was given a brief dialogue snippet between *Person A* and *Person B*. They were then prompted to complete *Person B*'s response in a manner reflective of their natural speech. This format was selected with two intentions: Firstly, to prompt specific terms that could not be drawn or could only be drawn with difficulty and thus could not be used in section three of the questionnaire, and secondly, to observe the natural linguistic choices that participants made. An example of a dialogue prompting for the terms 'now', 'now now', 'just now' or any certified amount of time is given below:

Person A: "When are you finally going to wash the dishes?"

Person B: "I'll do them _____ ."

Responses to this question show that the prompting was successful as 70% of the participants answered using one of the above terms. In total, this section comprised ten questions.

The subsequent section explored participants' attitudes towards selected terms referring to specific demographic groups using a five-point Likert scale. This part of the study aims to determine whether the term 'coloured person' is perceived as more, less or equally offensive compared to 'person of colour' in South African Englishes. As a final question, the participants were asked to rate the prestige of three of the varieties of English spoken in the Western Cape Province: *Standard South African English*, *Afrikaans English* and *Cape Flats English*, categorising them as 'very prestigious', 'slightly prestigious' or 'not prestigious at all'. In the evaluation of this section, particular attention is given to the demographic background of participants.

After surveying participants' attitudes towards different varieties of English, a more detailed analysis of a selection of words and phrases prompted in Section Four was conducted. Participants were asked to assess how likely they were to use a particular expression in daily conversations. Further, the temporal distinctions between the terms *now* and *"now now"* were examined. In the final section of the questionnaire, participants were allowed to provide open-ended questions or comments regarding the survey content.

3.2   Participants of the Survey

The study included 31 randomly selected participants and contacted through various social media platforms. Of the 31 participants, 48.5% were female, and the remaining 51.5% were male, with ages ranging from 18 to 72, a mean age of 39 and a median age of 25 years. Almost all participants (95.5%) had either English or Afrikaans as their first language and spoke Afrikaans or English as their second language respectively. Every participant had completed their schooling up to matric level, and 58.5% had gone on to pursue a higher education.

Most participants (96.8%) were residing in South Africa at the time of taking the survey, with the majority (93.3%) living in the Western Cape. People were further asked how long they had been living in South Africa, and the results of any participants who had been staying in South Africa for less than ten years (3.2%) were excluded from further analysis. Of the remaining participants, 75.9% identified as *caucasian*, 10.3% as *black*, and 13.8% as *coloured* South African residents.

3.3   Methods of Data Analysis

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to analyse the data gathered. Responses from sections three and four were examined through a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches to capture a comprehensive understanding of the usage of these terms in the context of South African Englishes. Specifically, the

quantitative analysis assessed the frequency of use of a given word or phrase and compared these findings with existing literature, while the qualitative analysis focused on understanding the context behind participants' responses. Answers from sections five and six were also analysed statistically, with a particular focus on discussing the results of section five within the historical and socio-political context of South Africa.

3.4   Limitations of the Study

With $n = 31$ participants from diverse ethnic backgrounds, this study has a relatively small sample size. This paper attempts to generalise the findings of the study to the *Cape Flats Variety* and the *Afrikaans Variety* by comparing the results of the study to the research conducted by Watermeyer 1996 and Malan 1996, as well as the description of "standard" features of these varieties as described by McCormick 2004, Lanham 1996 and Bowerman 2004b. However, it should be noted that the sample population resided primarily in the Western Cape Province, in particular in the area of Cape Town, and while the area in and around Cape Town constitutes a major variety of South African English (the *Cape Flats Variety*), these geographical limitations should be kept in mind.

4   Standard South African English

4.1   Introduction to Standard South African English

This chapter introduces the features of 'standard' South African English. While the term 'standard' might suggest a hierarchical position, this is not the intention here. Instead, the term is used to distinguish it from other South African Englishes, mainly because it is recognised in standardised references such as the Oxford Dictionary of South African English. Some literature (e.g. Bowerman 2004b) refers to this variety as White South African English. Still, this term can be misleading for two reasons: First and foremost, standard South African English (henceforth referred to as SAE) is spoken by people across all ethnic groups. The study covered by this paper classified speakers of SAE as L1 English speakers who also primarily speak English at home. Secondly, a large proportion of the white population in South Africa, namely Afrikaans speakers, use a different variety known as Afrikaans English.

South African English was first referred to as its own variety of English by Hopwood in 1928 (Hopwood 1928), who theorised that it descended from Cockney English and thus shared some features with Australian English. While Hopwood viewed South African English as a descendant of British English which erred in its pronunciation and was thus inferior, Hooper advocated that South African English was equal in quality to British English in its own right, and that "a South African Standard [needed to be established], based on pronunciation which [was found] in practice … and [which] is acceptable among cultured South African speakers" (Hooper 1944,

pg.25). The first assessment of South African English on a larger scale was conducted by Lanham and Macdonald in their study *The Standard in South African English and its Social History* (Lanham and Macdonald 1979). While they considered factors such as class and area of residence, they excluded some responses based on arbitrary factors to reduce their sample size. In a previous publication, Lanham distinguished between 'Conservative South African English', which remained the most true to British English, 'Respectable South African English', which contained some features from the languages of the linguistic melting pot of South Africa, and two Afrikaans varieties: 'Afrikaans South African English' and 'Extreme South African English' (1978, pg. 146).

It is essential to note that while such distinctions can be helpful on a broader scale, their boundaries cannot necessarily always be drawn clearly. Respectable South African English, as Lanham called it, can, for instance, be indistinguishable from Extreme South African English if the former is developed more strongly. Extreme South African English can, in turn, sound very similar to Afrikaans South African English (this gradient is visualised in 2). In this paper, the groups Lanham referred to as 'Conservative South African English', 'Respectable South African English' and 'Extreme South African English' were combined to SAE, whereby this was primarily based on the L1 of the participant rather than the features of their pronunciation. The variety that Lanham calls 'Afrikaans South African English' is called 'Afrikaans English' in this paper.
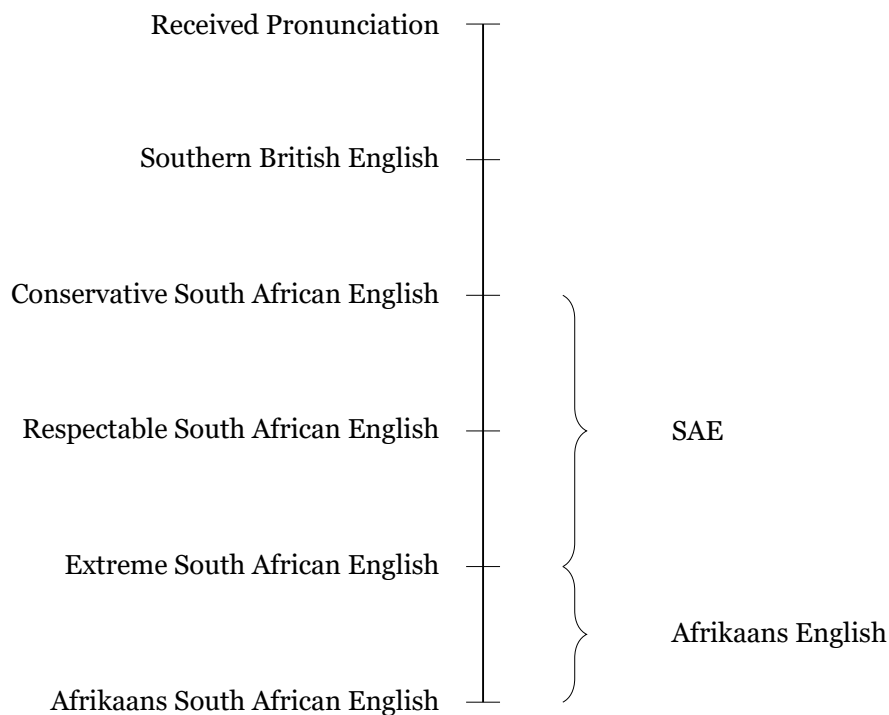

Figure 2: Lanham's Categorisation of Englishes

Lanham's categorisations were largely taken over and can be found throughout literature, e.g. in 1982 or 1995. The latter proposes a re-classification of the categories

based on the societal background of their speakers (pg. 94).

4.2 Phonological Features of SAE

This section will discuss the phonological features of SAE based primarily on observations from Bailey 1948 and Bowerman 2004b, whereby the words exemplifying these features are adapted directly from Bowerman's article in *A Handbook of Varieties of English*. It is important to note that some phonological features of SAE may overlap with those of Afrikaans English, as the proximity between English and Afrikaans speakers in South Africa has influenced SAE.

4.2.1 Monophthongs

While certain features of pronunciation melted into SAE from the languages it came into contact with, others were carried over from southern London English in the 19th century (Wyld 1920, pg. 99). Bowerman (2004b, pg. 936), for instance, argues that the pronunciation of words such as *TRAP*, *DRESS* or *KIT* likely originated in 19th century London English, demonstrating the transfer of specific phonological features from British English to SAE. Indeed, the history of English in South Africa saw a chain shift that was not at all untypical for Englishes in the Southern hemisphere - Lass and Wright 1987 found that a shift occured where the "trap"-vowel (/æ/) was raised to the more fronted /ɛ/ as would occur in the word "dress", which was in turn raised towards an /e/ or an /ɪ/. The "dress"-vowel was now pronounced similar to the /ɪ/ in "kit", and so the "kit"-vowel moved to a more central position in the mouth if it occurred in certain syllables. The following section will provide a more detailed discussion of these phonological features. *TRAP*

One such feature is the raising of the /æ/ to a more fronted /ɛ/, so words like cat (/kæt/) or trap (/træp/) would be pronounced as 'cet' (/kɛt/) or 'trep' (/trɛp/) respectively (Bowerman 2004b, pg. 936). Although 1948 claims that "trap" vowels are broken in their first syllable, this has not been backed up by other literature and may require further investigation (pg. 13).

DRESS

The raising of the /ɛ/ sound to a more tense /e/ (or, in some areas, even to an /ɪ/) is one of the most characteristic features of SAE. Similar to the "trap" vowel, it may be a remainder of settler English brought down to South Africa from Great Britain. If one were to ask a speaker of SAE what accent they had, they would most likely respond that they spoke in a South African accent, whereby the word "accent" might be pronounced as /ˈaksɪnt/. Similarly, words such as bell (/bɛl/), dress (/drɛs/) or yes /jɛs/ might be pronounced as /bel/, /dres/ or /jɪs/ respectively (Bowerman 2004b, pg. 937).

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Kit

In Afrikaans, we can observe that the *schwa* sound occurs predominantly before nasals, and the /ɪ/ sound (of which two variants exist in the language) is primarily found in closed syllables (Lutrin 1999, pg. 7). Bailey 1948 examines the transfer of these features to SAE in both stressed and unstressed syllables. According to Baily, the allophone /ɪ/ generally occurs after veler consonants or, to a lower extent, after glottal stops in stressed syllables. It may also occur when followed by a velar of palatoalveolar fricative, so for instance in words such as 'dish' (/dɪʃ/) or 'vision' (/ˈvɪʒən/). If these conditions are not met, then the vowel /ɪ/ is pronounced as /ə/ (pg. 17). Thus, words such as 'ship', 'bit' or 'did' might be pronounced with a *shwa* sound in SAE. In unstressed syllables, /ɪ/ is realised as a *shwa* if it does not occur before velar consonants, palatoalveolar fricatives or palato-alveolar affricates (pg. 17).

The frequency of the substitution of /ɪ/ with /ə/ may vary regionally and depends strongly on the L1 of the speaker. Ironically, L1 English speakers in South Africa are more prone to use /ə/ instead of /ɪ/ in their everyday speech than L1 Afrikaans speakers as the latter may tend to hypercorrect the vowel (Bailey 1948). A notable example provided by Hooper 1944 is the pronunciation of the word 'milk' as either 'meelk' or 'mulk', depending on both where the location of the speaker and their L1. Such differences illustrate how features such as the substitution of /ɪ/ with /ə/, which are likely to have originated from Afrikaans, may no longer be realised in Afrikaans-based varieties of English, even after being integrated into SAE.

Goose

Another phonological feature that SAE shares with Afrikaans is the fronted /yː/ vowel, as in the word "goose". It was considered by Lanham and Lass to be a feature of respectable SAE, used predominantly by white speakers of the variety (Prinsloo and Lanham 1978, pg. 155, Lass 1995, pg. 99). However, Branford argues that it did not originate from Afrikaans, but was instead picked up by South African scholars from their Scottish teachers (W. Branford 1994, pg. 471).

Though these features are particularly prominent, SAE also includes a range of other monophthongs which differ across the various regions in South Africa. While some of these regional variations are distinctive within specific areas, they may not represent the pronunciation of SAE in general. The monophthongs discussed here are amongst the most notable and characteristic of SAE, but a more comprehensive list is, e.g. given by Bowerman 2004b in *A Handbook of Varieties of English*. The following section will focus on the distinctive diphthongs of SAE.

4.2.2 Diphthongs

FACE

The pronunciation of the diphthong /eɪ/ in words like "face", "make" or "grace" may differ depending on the variety of English in South Africa. In SAE, the diphthong may become more centralised, with variations ranging from /eɪ/ to /aɪ/. More extreme forms of SAE or Afrikaans English may show a shift towards a pronunciation like /ʌɪ/ (Lanham and Macdonald 1979, pg. 46, Lass 1995, pg. 99). For example, someone from Britain may introduce their friend Grace as /greɪs/, while Grace, coming from an Afrikaans family and never having left South Africa, has only ever heard her name pronounced as /grʌɪs/. In her paper, Silva 2008 observes that in the Cape, there is a trend towards simplifying the diphthong to the monophthong /eː/. However, she acknowledges that there is no substantial evidence in literature to back this claim (pg. 94).

PRICE

Typically in SAE, the "price" vowel does not differ significantly from its pronunciation in RP, as it is usually pronounced as a diphthong starting with /a/ and then gliding into /ɪ/. However, as we approach the extreme end of the spectrum of SAE, we can observe a monophthongisation of the vowel to a more backed /aː/ (Bowerman 2004b, pg. 938). Consequently, a speaker of extreme SAE might pronounce "like" as "lark" (/laːk/), or "nice" as "narse" (/naːs/). While Bowerman suggests that this monophthongisation is a feature of general SAE, Prinsloo and Lanham 1978, 153 argues that it is predominantly present among upper-class speakers of SAE, acting as a social marker within the variety.

CURE

Similar to the "price" vowel, the "cure" vowel also undergoes monophthongisation in SAE. Whereas it is typically pronounced as a diphthong (/ʊə/) in RP, this vowel often shifts to a single sound in SAE (Bowerman 2004b, pg. 939). This has the effect that the word "sure" might be pronounced as "shore", where the enlengthened monophthong (/oː/) replaces the diphthong. One case where this shift in pronunciation may lead to ambiguity are the words "your" and "you're", the oral indistinguishability of which may have led to numerous errors in published and unpublished works (pg. 939).

4.2.3 Consonants

In SAE, there is a clear distinction between voiced and voiceless plosives. For example the words "cap" (/kæp/) and "cab" (/kæb/) are clearly distinguishable from each other due to this contrast. However, in SAE, voiceless plosives are generally unaspirated,

meaning that where "top" (/tʰɒp/) and "stop" (/stɒp/) may differ in that the former has an aspirated /t/ whereas the latter does not in other varieties of English, SAE does not make this distinction (Bowerman 2004b, pg. 939).

Although the tapped or trilled /r/ is sometimes regarded as a marker for SAE, this is only the case for extreme SAE and Afrikaans-based varieties of English. Indeed, the /r/ is usually pronounced as a postalveolar c. Similar to other varieties of English. SAE has a non-rothic /r/ with the insertion of an intrusive /r/, vowel deletion or glottal stops to manage the hiatus between vowels.

While these phonological features are perhaps the most noticeable of SAE, they are not the only elements that define this variety of English. Equally significant (though less immediately apparent) are the grammatical features of SAE, which shall be explored in the following section.

4.3   Morphology and Syntax of SAE

One of the most prominent influences Afrikaans may have had on SAE is the way in which it expresses the aspect of continuity. In Afrikaans, the present participle aspect can be expressed in one of two ways: The first method involves using the verb as a descriptive adjective placed right in front of the noun (Lutrin 1999, pg. 20). For example, *the children are playing in front of the church* would become *die spelende kinders voor die kerk* (*the playing children in front of the church*). However, this alternative requires quite some shifting and re-forming of the sentence, and may even require some additional information to be added.

The second and more commonly used method is to insert the word "besig" (busy) using the structure *[is] + besig + om* + infinitive verb. Thus, the above sentence would be expressed as *die kinders is besig om voor die kerk te speel* (*the children are busy playing in front of the church*) (pg. 20). This method has made its way into SAE, where *busy* + progressive is used to express the present participle. Consider the following anecdotal examples that highlight this construction in practice:

1. *To get to the solution, we're busy adding all those terms up.*
2. *Sorry, I didn't hear your call, I was busy sleeping.*

Bowerman also identifies the substitution of the past tense "did" + infinitive in place of the perfective aspect as a feature of SAE (Bowerman 2004a, pg. 949). As an example, he gives the sentence 'Have you had lunch yet?' or 'Did you have lunch yet?', whereby the latter is allegedly SAE. One might argue that this distinction between aspect might simply be dependent on the context and the level of formality required in a given situation. However, more research is needed to verify this.

Another distinctive feature of SAE is the use of *how come* as a substitute for 'why'. Additionally, the preposition *by* often stands for other prepositions such as 'at',

'close to' or 'in front of'. Both expressions originate from Afrikaans, where the term "hoekom" translates directly to the English 'why', and the term 'by' is used in various prepositional settings Lutrin 1999, pg. 61. Thus, in SAE, one might hear a person ask 'How come she is still waiting by the station?', and remain entirely unfazed.

SAE is also characterised by its unique use of the modal verb 'must'. The substitution of this modal verb for the internationally more commonly used 'should' or 'shall' may be initially of-putting for newcomers to South Africa, but is indeed quite common in SAE Bowerman 2004a, 953. The following example of a conversation which may in some similar form be overheard in a shopping mall between an American and a South African shows this in effect:

Person 1: *Jen, I quickly need to run to the ATM, could you maybe...*
Person 2: *Must I now hold your bags for you until you're back?*
Person 1: *No, sorry, of course you don't have to...never mind, I'll just take them with me.*

This left Person 1 slightly upset about how Jen would simply refuse their request and left Jen - who had no ill intentions - rather confused. It also brings us to the next feature of SAE, namely the use of present tense + *now* as a marker of something happening in the near future (953). In the previous example, Jen used the marker because she knew she would have to hold the bags right after their conversation ended. The term 'now' is very versatile in SAE, where it can appear as 'now', 'now now' or 'just now', depending on the proximity of the event ahead. The subsequent chapter will discuss the temporal distinctions between these variants in more depth.

South Africans may sometimes start their sentences with 'no' (or alternatively, 'yeah, no'). This does not mean that they disagree with what someone is saying - on the contrary, they use it as an introduction for an affirmative clause (955). Thus, if one were to ask an SAE speaker if they wanted to go to the cinema the next day, the affirmative response might be 'no, I'll be there'.

The final syntactical feature discussed in this section is the phrase 'is it' (957). Pronounced somewhat like 'izzit', it is an all-rounder that can be used to respond to almost any question in SAE. Depending on the speaker's tone, it can be a form of agreement, disbelief or even a sign of extreme boredom with the conversation. Thus, if Person 1 came back from the ATM and told Jen that after waiting in line for twenty minutes, the ATM broke just before it was his turn, Jen's 'Is it?' might mean anything from 'Oh no, how inconvenient. And after waiting twenty minutes at that!' to 'I could not care less about this, let's go home'.

SAE syntax and morphology can be quite confusing to those unfamiliar with it. South Africans are 'busy' speaking their very own version of English, but one 'mustn't' be deterred from engaging with it - for the use of expressions such as 'is it', 'how come', or 'no' as an affirmative are just a few examples of how SAE reflects

the country's diverse history.

4.4 Lexical Features of SAE

Given the rich linguistic landscape of South Africa, it is also no surprise that SAE has developed its own distinctive lexicon shaped by multiple language influences. The interplay of indigenous languages, Afrikaans, and several languages from the East has led to the incorporation of numerous calques and loanwords into SAE. This unique vocabulary has been a subject of interest in the literature. However, as is generally the case with languages and their varieties, SAE is dynamic, and its lexis is subject to change. This section will compare the lexical descriptions found in Bowerman 2004b with the results of the current study to determine which words are still in use in contemporary SAE.

Indeed, some words found in SAE originate from British English but are no longer used (or were never used in the sense in which they are used in SAE) in the United Kingdom. The perhaps prominent example of such a case is the term 'robot', which the *South African Oxford School Dictionary* describes as a traffic light. One theory is that the term originates from the time at which traffic lights replaced police at intersections, and the traffic controllers became robotic traffic controllers, which eventually became robots. However, no research has been done on the actual origin of the term. The study confirms that the term 'robot' is, indeed, still used in SAE, and quite frequently at that: 75% of L1 English participants gave the term 'robot' when prompted with the image of a traffic light (Figure 3).

Figure 3: A Robot

Another term in SAE that may have originated in English is the term 'township'. Bowerman (pg. 958) describes it as a 'town or suburb, usually poor, formerly reserved for Black people'. The *South African Oxford School Dictionary* describes it more euphemistically as 'an urban area which was set aside for African people under apartheid' or 'an urban area which is new or going to be developed'. When participants were prompted with a picture of an informal settlement (Figure 4), 37.5% of L1 English speakers described it as a township. The term 'bioscope' (cinema) was also mentioned by Bowerman, but is no longer used in SAE today.

In his article, Bowerman 2004b also gives a gloss of terms of SAE, which

Figure 4: A Township

are borrowed from other languages (pg. 959). While it is true that terms such as 'tannie' (aunt), 'suka' (go away) or 'weggooi' (disposable) may be part of SAE, they are not commonly used, and the latter two are not listed in the South African Oxford School Dictionary. Bowerman 2004b also gives the names of indigenous South African plants, such as the *Rooibos* (though he describes this as tea, which is technically not the case - Rooibos is the plant of which the tea is made, and the tea itself is referred to as *Rooibos tea* or *red cappucino*) and typical South African meals, such as the *potjiekos*. While these words are uncontested parts of SAE lexis, this paper shall focus on something other than proper nouns describing phenomena unique to South Africa, for there are several thousands of them. For interested readers, the Dictionary of South African English (Niekerk and Le Du 2024) provides a growing and well-researched list of over four thousand words belonging to SAE.

Instead, this section will explore how words describing universal phenomena differ from their usage in other parts of the world. One such word is 'cool drink', which the South African English Dictionary describes as a 'soft drink', i.e. a non-alcoholic beverage often enjoyed cold. Indeed, the study confirmed that this term is still frequently used today, as 31.25% of speakers of SAE described a picture showing cans of soft drinks as 'cool drinks'. Next to the denotative meaning, the term 'cool drink' also has a unique connotative meaning in South Africa: If one finds themselves in the situation of being stopped and fined by a police officer, one may attempt to ask the officer if they want a cool drink. If the police officer is so inclined, they may accept this 'cool drink' (usually a small sum of money) in place of the fine, and both parties will leave the scene having made some profit. This practice, which is both corrupt and illegal, complicates the availability of literature on this connotation, though reports from newspapers such as *The Mail and Guardian* (Rambourg and Doyen 2023) provide some insight.

Another term unique to South African Englishes and likely to have originated from Afrikaans is the word 'takkie' (/tæk.i/). It is the word for 'sneakers' or 'trainers', described in the South African Oxford School Dictionary as 'a laced canvas shoe with rubber soles'. What is perhaps noteworthy is the variation of spelling of this term: In the dictionary, it is spelt as 'tackie' - however, this variation is seldomly used, as is shown in the studies: Of the 75% of the participants who described an image of

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running shoes as some variant of 'takkies', precisely half of them spelt the word as 'tekkies', whereas the other half spelt it as 'takkies'. This variation in spelling may be due to the raising of the /æ/ in SAE, or due to the fact that in Afrikaans, the word is spelt as 'tekkies'.

Some argue that a southern hemisphere variety of English is only a variety of English if it has its own word for 'barbeque'. In South Africa, the term 'braai' (/brɑːi/) does not merely convey the sense of the term 'barbeque', but rather a whole culture of gathering with friends and family around a traditional meal. It originates from Afrikaans, where it literally means to 'roast' or 'grill'. The results of the study show that South Africans take braai culture very seriously, with 100% of SAE-speaking participants describing a picture of a barbeque as a 'braai' and one of the participants claiming that 'any other answer is wrong'.

South Africans are also very unique in their timekeeping. To test the understanding of the concept of time of speakers of SAE, the study asked them to complete the following conversation:

Person A: When are you finally going to wash the dishes?
Person B: I'll do them _____

43.8% of the participants answered with 'now now', and 18.8% gave 'just now' or 'now' as an answer. To study the difference between the South African 'now' and 'now now', the participants were asked to assign each term a specific amount of time. The results are illustrated in the following pie charts. From this, we can see that the term 'now' refers to events that will happen in the immediate future, whereas the phrase 'now now' is used if the time of an event is not certain.
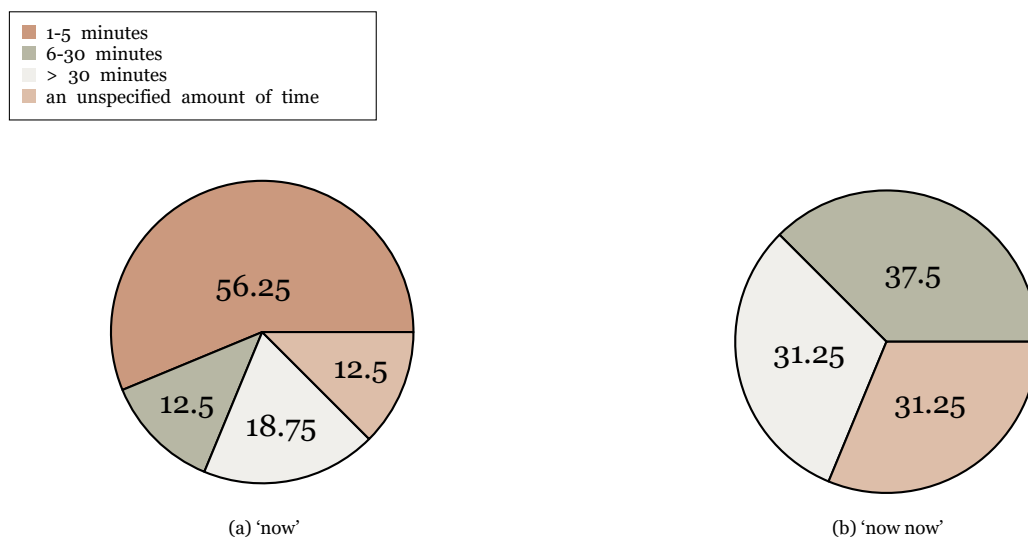

Figure 5: Duration of 'now' vs. 'now now' in SAE

The final term discussed in this chapter is 'shame'. Contrary to its singular sense in most other varieties of English, this little word is quite versatile in SAE and can be used in almost any scenario. The following sentences are anecdotal examples of the usage of the word in SAE:

1. *Shame on you for not doing your homework.*
2. *Oh, is that your baby? Shame, she's very cute.*
3. *Shame, I heard your brother isn't doing too well. He must get better soon!*
4. *Did you watch the game the other night? Agh, shame, man; I really hoped the Bokke would win.*

Example (1) shows the word ´shame' in its sense of an action being shameful; the remaining examples show the use of the word in the empathetic sense unique to Englishes spoken in South Africa. In example (4), the word 'shame' is used within the set phrase 'agh shame man', of which 68.8% of SAE speaking participants said they were likely to use it in everyday speech. Another setting in which the word 'shame' is often used is the phrase 'shame man, that's hectic' in response to a story where the speaker recalls something unpleasant or unexpected. In both cases, the word 'man' does not refer to the male persona but is used as a gender-neutral filler.

As this paper now proceeds to describe the Afrikaans variety, it is crucial to remember that extreme SAE and Afrikaans English share several features and may even sound indistinguishable to the listener. In fact, one might roughly consider SAE as a subset of Afrikaans English, as it displays some of its characteristics and vocabulary (but lacks many others).

5   Afrikaans English

5.1   Introduction to Afrikaans English

It is difficult to pinpoint the precise time at which the Afrikaans language was born. Perhaps it developed over the course of the centuries that Dutch settlers spent at the Cape, mingling with the Xhosa people and the enslaved people brought down from East Africa and Malaysia (2004). Alternatively, perhaps it took shape when some of the settlers moved northwards, away from Dutch legislation, in what would become known as the *Voortrekker movement*, isolating themselves entirely from Dutch influence. Either way, the first evidence of Afrikaans as a distinct language can be found in the *Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners*, an Afrikaans grammar published in 1876 (2004, pg. 2).

From then on, Afrikaans became a beacon of the Afrikaner identity, serving as a unifying force for the community as they resisted British rule. To the indigenous peoples, it also became known as the *witmans taal* - the white man's language - a role

that Afrikaans would expand on during Apartheid (2004, pg. 9). Under Apartheid, Afrikaans was wielded as a tool of oppression by being mandated in schools across the country as a language of instruction, which fueled resistance and resentment amongst those who were forced to abandon their own languages. Further, a distinction was made between speakers of 'pure' Afrikaans, which were primarily white Afrikaners, and 'mixed language speakers', which were speakers who had originally come from a different language background (2004, pg. 276).

Even today, Afrikaans-based varieties of English spoken by speakers of 'pure' Afrikaans are often regarded as more prestigious compared to other Afrikaans-based varieties, such as Cape Flats English. In the study, participants were asked to rate different varieties of South African English for their prestige, where two points indicate that a variety is very prestigious, and zero points indicate that a variety is not prestigious at all. On average, South African Standard English scored 1.52 points, Afrikaans English scored 0.55 points and the Cape Flats Variety scored 0.29 points. These distinctions highlight ongoing social inequalities in South Africa, reaffirming that while speakers of 'pure' Afrikaans (which are primarily of European descent) enjoy more prestige within Afrikaans-based varieties, SAE, which has its roots in British English, remains the most prestigious of Englishes in South Africa.

5.2   Phonological Features of Afrikaans English

It would be inaccurate to regard Afrikaans English merely as an extreme form of SAE. Instead, it has some distinct features of its own, and some features of SAE may disappear entirely due to hypercorrection (Watermeyer 1996, pg. 105). It is also important to note that while speakers of Afrikaans English may have Afrikaans as their L1 and English as their L2, they are generally proficient in both languages as English is used as a lingua franca throughout most of South Africa. This section will briefly outline some of the key phonological features of Afrikaans English, whereby only the features that differ from SAE shall be discussed.

5.2.1   Monophthongs and Diphthongs

L1 Afrikaans speakers often make an effort to maintain clear distinctions between Afrikaans and English in their speech. Particularly amongst the older generation, there is a strong inclination to preserve the 'purity' of each language, which may lead to the hypercorrection of specific sounds, where speakers overcompensate for perceived deviations from standard pronunciation norms (even if those deviations may themselves be the standard in the country, as is the case with some features of SAE). The effects of this phenomenon may be seen in the pronunciation of words such as *bit* or *trap*, where hypercorrection of L1 Afrikaans speakers leads to a pronunciation that differs from that in SAE.

Hɪᴛ

Whereas in SAE, the /ɪ/ is often realised as /ə/, this is usually not the case for L1 Afrikaans speakers, as they tend to hypercorrect this feature and thus the /ɪ/ either remains unchanged or is realised as /ï/ (Bailey 1948, pg. 17). Thus, whereas speakers of SAE may pronounce 'bit' as /bət/, speakers of Afrikaans English will pronounce the word as either /bɪt/ or /bït/. However, there is an exception to this trend of hyper-correction: If the /ɪ/ follows a voiceless glottal fricative, it is raised and lengthened to /iː/. Watermeyer 1996 describes this as a characterisation of Afrikaans "as the variety of English in which *hit* and *bit* do not rhyme" (pg. 106).

Goose

Similar to its realisation in SAE, the vowels in words such as *goose* or *boot* become fronted and are realised as /yː/ in Afrikaans English (pg. 106). The same terms might be pronounced as /gyːs/ and /byːt/ respectively by an L1 Afrikaans speaker.

Trap

As discussed in Chapter 4.2.1, the raising of the /æ/ vowel to a more fronted /ɛ/ is a typical feature of SAE (Bowerman 2004b, pg. 936). A speaker of this variety might, for instance, pronounce *cat* as /kɛt/ or *let* as /lɛt/. In Afrikaans English, this is seldom the case, as speakers tend to hypercorrect to an /äː/ sound (Watermeyer 1996, pg. 106). This hypercorrection results in the pronunciation of words such as *cat* sounding closer to /käːt/ and *let* to /läːt/.

Price

Similar to extreme SAE, the diphthong /aɪ/ undergoes a monophthongisation in Afrikaans English, so that words such as *price* or *nice* are no longer pronounced with two distinct subsequent vowel sounds, but instead as /praːs/ and /naːs/ respectively (pg. 106, Bowerman 2004b, pg. 938).

5.2.2 Consonants

While Afrikaans is a Germanic language and shares many similarities with English, particularly in its 'klanke' - its vowel sounds (Lutrin 1999, pg. 7). However, when it comes to consonants, there are distinct differences. Afrikaans includes unique consonants that are absent in most varieties of English, such as the voiceless uvular fricative /χ/ (Watermeyer 1996, pg. 107). This phoneme sounds somewhat similar to the sound made when clearing one's throat and is also found in Scottish English in words such as 'loch' (/lɒχ/). Conversely, English also contains several consonants that do not occur in Afrikaans. Among these are the dental fricatives /θ/ (as in *think*) and /ð/ (as in *this*), as well as the palato-alveolar fricatives /ʃ/ (as in *shoe*) and /ʒ/ (as in *measure*) (pg. 107). This can make it difficult for some L1 Afrikaans speakers to

pronounce these sounds when they encounter them in the English language.

BATH

Since speakers of Afrikaans English do not encounter the dental fricative /θ/ in their L1, they might pronounce it as /f/, which is more familiar to them Bowerman 2004b, pg. 939. Someone speaking Afrikaans English might, for instance, pronounce *bath* as /bäːf/ or *thanks* as /fäːŋks/. As the speaker approaches L1 proficiency in English, this feature becomes less noticeable.

BREAD

One feature that remains distinctive among speakers of Afrikaans English, regardless of their English proficiency, is the use of a tapped or trilled /r/. Depending on the dialect of Afrikaans spoken, the /r/ is pronounced as a tap or trill. This dialect-specific pronunciation is carried over to their English speech, affecting how the /r/ is realised in English (Watermeyer 1996, pg. 107). Thus, the word *bread* would be pronounced with an alveolar tap or trill instead of the standard rothic /r/ by speakers of Afrikaans English.

HISTORY

Another feature exhibited by speakers of Afrikaans English is the pronunciation of /s/ as /ʃ/ (or, to a lesser extent, the pronunciation of /ʃ/ as /s/). Thus, a speaker of Afrikaans English may pronounce *history* as /ˈhɪʃtəri/ or *spleen* as /ʃpliːn/. This is particularly prominent in speakers from more rural areas, and more research is needed to confirm that this feature is indeed a widespread feature of Afrikaans English.

5.3   Morphology and Syntax of Afrikaans English

While most morphosyntactical features of SAE can be found in Afrikaans English as well, the latter also has several features which are unique to this variety. Though these features primarily come from L1 influence and can vary depending on the L2 proficiency, some features of Afrikaans English remain even when speakers have reached L1-level English proficiency. One such feature is the subject-verb concord as demonstrated by the following anecdotal examples:

(1) *We always got hope.*
(2) *In most cases when you use the word 'shame' you referring to someone.*
(3) *There is probably many memories, and to pick one will be tricky.*

Since there is no subject-verb agreement in Afrikaans, the disagreement between sub-

ject and verb in Afrikaans English is likely an influence from the speaker's L1 (Lutrin 1999, pg. 20, Watermeyer 1996, pg. 114). Lack of concord can also occur between demonstratives and nouns, demonstrative determiners and nouns as well as pronouns (pg. 115). Bowerman 2004a describes how, interestingly enough, disagreement between determiners and nouns occurs only between singular demonstrative pronouns and plural nouns (pg. 956) as demonstrated by the following examples:

(1) *It's always this frogs making such terrible noise, you must really do something about it.*
(2) *You keep running around with your nose stuck in that books of yours.*

Similar to English, Afrikaans has three types of adverbs describing the place, manner and time at which an action is performed. In sentences, they occur strictly in the order *time - object - manner - place* (Lutrin 1999, pg. 18). For example, in Afrikaans, one could say "Vandag het ek vinnig die boek hier gelees", translating directly to "Today (*time*) has I the book (*object*) quickly (*manner*) here (*place*) read." This word order is sometimes used in English by L1 speakers of Afrikaans (Watermeyer 1996, pg. 113). Thus, instead of saying "They are going to be wed by the old pastor at the Stellenbosh church next week," a speaker of Afrikaans English might say "They are going to be wed next week by the old pastor at the Stellenbosh church".

The final two discourse markers discussed in this section are the words 'agh' (alternatively spelt 'ag') and 'ja'. 'Agh' is an exclamatory particle, and although it is used in SAE as well, it is predominantly regarded as a feature of Afrikaans-based varieties (Bowerman 2004a, pg. 957). It can be used either by itself at the beginning of a sentence expressing disbelief or annoyance, or in the form of set phrases as in the following examples:

(1) *Agh no man, I was really hoping the Bokke would win against Ireland today - I can't believe we lost.*
(2) *Agh nee man, that's not how you're supposed to do it at all, let me help you.*
(2) *Agh shame man, I'm sorry to hear you failed your final. Better luck next time.*

In the first phrase, *agh shame man*, the discourse marker 'agh' is part of an expression of disappointment, i.e. its original function is extended onto the entire phrase. Sentence (2) shows an example of code-switching, which is common in South Africa, particularly among younger speakers. The study confirms that the expression 'agh shame man' is a set expression, as some participants answered the following open-answered question with the exact phrase when asked to come up with a reply to the following question:

Person A: *"I've been waiting for the bus for over an hour."*

Person B: _____

Some other examples given by speakers of Afrikaans English equivalent in meaning to the above phrase are "Jo that sucks man" and "Shoh". The term 'yoh' in all its spoken and spelt variations may also be an exclamatory particle in Afrikaans English. However, more research needs to be done on the term's usage to establish its place in Afrikaans English as a fact.

Finally, the term 'ja' (/jɑː/), Afrikaans for *yes*, functions both as a conversational filler and an affirmative response in Afrikaans English. In the study, 10% of speakers of Afrikaans English used 'ja' as a conversational filler to answer the following question:

Person A: *"This is my baby, he just turned one."*
Person B: *"_____, it is really cute."*

Because 'ja' is seldom used in written language, the study did not prompt for it as an affirmative response. However, its use serves as a clear example of how Afrikaans shapes this variety, particularly in terms of conversational dynamics. This influence is further reflected in the lexis of Afrikaans English, where speakers incorporate several words of their L1 for both the sake of function and style (Watermeyer 1996, pg. 119).

5.4   Lexical Features

As an Afrikaans-based variety of English, it does not come as a surprise that Afrikaans English incorporates numerous lexical items and expressions directly borrowed from Afrikaans, extending beyond those already adopted in Standard South African English. These borrowings enrich the language in their own way and add a distinct touch of Afrikaner identity to the variety. This influence is particularly evident in everyday speech, where Afrikaans idioms and expressions are used frequently.

Perhaps the most telling word of the Afrikaans variety is the term 'lekker' (Bailey 1948, pg. 28). 'Lekker' - Afrikaans for *nice* - can be used to describe just about anything that is good in this world. Although in his book, Lutrin 1999 provides a list of alternative words to use instead of 'lekker', the average Afrikaans person will agree that this word cannot be used too much and will not hesitate to use it whenever possible (pg. 111). One can have a 'lekker' chat in a 'lekker' place, and even a 'lekker' time when speaking with someone in Afrikaans English. However, it should be noted that this term is not used as frequently in the L1 of the serious Afrikaans speaker as, similar to the English *nice*, it should not be overused. Thus, if one is invited to the home of an Afrikaans person, one can compliment the view from their house by saying that it is 'lekker', but when speaking to them in Afrikaans, one should say that

'die uitsig is pragtig' - the view is beautiful.

The next term discussed, 'gatvol', comes from Afrikaans and means *annoyed* or *fed up*. It conveys a sense of frustration and is often accompanied by strong language (most of which shall, for the sake of brevity, not be discussed in this paper). The following examples showcase the use of this term in Afrikaans English:

(1) *That's the third time that you're late now, I'm gatvol of your nonsense.*
(2) *We're on Stage 6 Loadshedding now, I cannot believe it! I am so gatvol of this kak.*

Example (1) shows how the term 'gatvol' may be used in an everyday sentence in Afrikaans English, whereby the phrase 'I'm gatvol of your nonsense' is perhaps best translated as the English expression 'I've had it up 'till here with your nonsense'. The second example shows a person complaining about the Loadshedding schedule being on the sixth stage. Loadshedding is a South African concept in which the South African electricity company *Eskom* switches off the electricity in residential areas for a specified period so that electricity might be more readily available in industrial areas. The higher the 'stage' of Loadshedding, the longer or more frequent the periods of no electricity. No wonder then that the person complaining is 'gatvol of [Eskom's] kak' - an expression which describes the same sense of annoyance as is conveyed in example (1), but with stronger language, whereby the term 'kak' is a derogatory term referring to faeces. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the study shows that the constellation of the phrase, as given in example (2), is more likely to be used in everyday language than the phrasing given in example (1).

The final lexical item of Afrikaans English discussed in this section is the term 'eish'. While this interjection borrowed from Zulu is used in most South African Englishes (Unuabonah and Mabena 2024), the study shows that speakers of Afrikaans English are most likely to use it in everyday speech, followed by speakers of SAE and the Cape Flats Variety respectively. It expresses surprise or disbelief as demonstrated by the following example taken from the results of the study, where the participant was asked to come up with a response for Person B:

Person A: "*Did you hear about the surprise test tomorrow?*"
Person B: "*Eish, no!*"

'Lekker', 'gatvol' and 'eish' are only a handful of terms used by speakers of the Afrikaans variety in their everyday speech, but arguably the most frequently used. When looking at Afrikaans-based varieties, it is vital to remember that these terms are not merely instances of code-switching (which may still occur on their own accord), but are loanwords which have firmly established themselves in Afrikaans English. While Afrikaans English is a variety of English spoken primarily by L2 speakers of English, most of

them speak the language at an L1 level due to the role of English as a lingua franca in South Africa. Thus, features of Afrikaans English such as the tapped or trilled /r/ must not be regarded as incorrect pronunciation but instead recognised for what they are: Characteristics of a distinct variety of English spoken throughout South Africa.

6 Cape Flats English

6.1 Introduction to Cape Flats English

While SAE and Afrikaans English are spoken throughout South Africa, Cape Flats English is a variety spoken primarily in an area known as the *Cape Flats*. The Cape Flats are flat stretches surrounding Cape Town CBD - once beautiful stretches of land, they are now covered by townships where the crime rate is high and living conditions are dire. They are a remnant of the *Group Areas Act* of the 1950s, in which people of colour were forced from their homes and forcibly resettled in areas specified for 'nie-wits', the *non-whites* (Thompson 1996, pg. 15). The demolition of District Six is perhaps the most well-known example of such a forced resettlement, where people were forced out of their homes, saw their houses destroyed, and were taken to a new place to live, all within the same afternoon.

The inhabitants of the Cape Flats were primarily *coloureds* (a term which shall be discussed in more detail in the next section) and were exposed to Afrikaans and English either through the schools they attended or the work they performed. Apartheid was a system in power set up by white people, for white people. As a coloured, one could study hard, go to university and maybe become a teacher or doctor - but never outrank one's *baas*, one's white boss. This system of repression sparked much resentment amongst the people in the Cape Flats, not only against Apartheid and the people in power but also against Afrikaans as a language of oppression (Malan 1996, pg. 126). In contrast to speakers of Afrikaans English, who viewed Afrikaans as a beacon of their identity, residents of the Cape Flats made no effort to keep their languages 'clean', and code-mixing became characteristic of the English and Afrikaans spoken in the Cape Flats (130).

Today, the Cape Flats are covered by the townships Khayelitsha, Langa, Gugulethu, Nyanga, Mitchells Plain and Athlone. They are inhabited by those who were expelled from the 'white' areas during Apartheid and those who travelled to Cape Town from South Africa and beyond in search of better prospects. The result is a bright mix of culture and a variety of English that has become known throughout the world.

6.2 A Note on the Term 'Coloured'

In South Africa, unlike in other countries, the term 'coloured' is not derogatory; instead, it is a label embraced with pride by those who identify with it. This been verified by researchers such as Petrus and Isaacs-Martin 2012, Tewolde 2024 and Nilsson

2016 and is also used freely by many others. For many, *colourdness* is a large part of their identity. South African artist Gabrielle Golliath, for instance, points towards this part of her identity in her piece "Ek is 'n Kimberly Coloured" (I am a Kimberly Coloured) (Jayawardane 2019).

The study verifies that this attitude has not changed significantly. On a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 was described as *not offensive at all* and 5 was described as *incredibly offensive*, the term 'coloured person' received an average of 1.2 points from all participants, whereby coloured participants gave the term a score of 1.0. In comparison, the phrase 'person of colour' also received an average score of 1.2 from the general test population, and coloured participants rated it with 1.5 points on average. This distinction likely arises because, in South Africa, the term 'person of colour' broadly refers to anyone who is not white, whereas 'coloured person' more accurately describes those who identify as neither black nor white but as a distinct cultural and racial group. As a result, many prefer the term 'coloured' as it better reflects their identity.

6.3 Phonological Features of Cape Flats English

Many of the phonological features of the Cape Flats English are very similar, or idintical, to those characteristic of SAE. The pronunciation of the *Dress* vowel in the Cape Flats Variety does, for instance, not differ strongly from that in SAE, where it is also raised to an /e/ sound. Similarly, the *Trap* vowel is also pronounced as /a/ in Cape flats English (Finn 2004, pg. 970). The following sections will focus on phonemes that differ from SAE and Afrikaans English pronunciation.

6.3.1 Monophthongs and Diphthongs

Kit
Although the realisation of the *Kit* vowel is arguably still somewhat similar to its pronunciation in SAE and Afrikaans English, in how it is is split depending on its position in the word, it may still diverge from this pronunciation in some cases. In instances where it is preceded by a /h/ sound, occurs in a velar environment or before a consonant, it is realised as an /ɪ/ or /i/ sound (pg. 969). For example, the words *kit*, *hit*, *king* and *mint* would be pronounced as /kɪt/, /hɪt/, /kɪŋ/ and /mɪnt/ respectively. If the /ɪ/ sound does not occur in one of the positions described above, the sound is realised as a /ə/ sound(pg. 969). This pattern is present across all social classes and does not depend on the formality of the conversation (pg. 970). Finn 2004 also argues that in the special case that the /ɪ/ sound is followed by a /l/ phoneme, it might even be realised as /ɛ/ (pg. 970) - however, some research might be required to verify whether this is still the case.

Face

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The pronunciation of the *FACE* vowel differs depending on the English proficiency of the speaker. Children who are only just learning English or L2 speakers with a strong Afrikaans background may lose the diphthong in the *FACE* vowel and instead pronounce it with a shorter /i/ sound (Finn 2004, pg. 971). Speakers with near L1 proficiency usually keep the diphthong but may realise the *FACE* vowel as what Finn calls a 'high diphthongal glide', where the second part of the diphthong moves to a higher position in the mouth (pg. 971). With a high diphthongal glide, *face* would be pronounced as /feis/ rather than /feɪs/.

GOOSE

Whereas in SAE, the *GOOSE* vowel is pronounced slightly fronted, as discussed in Chapter 4, speakers of Cape Flats English tend to pronounce the vowel in a more backed and rounded manner. However, Finn notes a trend in centralising the *GOOSE* vowel in contemporary speakers of the Cape Flats Variety.

MOUTH

In his study, Wood 1987 found that the raising of the *MOUTH* vowel was a feature particularly dominant in lower-class speakers of Cape Flats English (pg. 137). Similar to the rising of the offglide in the *FACE* vowel, the diphthong in words such as *mouth* is often pronounced with a high diphthongal glide in this variety and might be pronounced as /mæʊθ/ rather than /maʊθ/ (Finn 2004, pg. 973). While Wood observed that this feature was used primarily by speakers in lower socio-economic classes, Lanham believes that it is a feature which stems from the speaker's L1 and may arise even in higher classes, particularly at the end of words (Lanham 1996).

6.3.2 Consonants

SING and THING

Wood 1987 notes that there is a tendency to confuse /d/ and /ð/ or /s/ and /z/ amongst speakers of Cape Flats English (111). A speaker of this variety might pronounce the word *thing* as *sing* or have difficulty distinguishing between *bus* and *buzz*, whether in their own speech or when listening to others. Some speakers of the Cape Flats Variety may also pronounce /θ/ as a dental stop (Malan 1996, pg. 141).

ENGLISH

As in Afrikaans English, the voiceless postalveolar fricative /ʃ/ is often realised as the phoneme /s/. Indeed, this is more frequent in Cape Flats English than Afrikaans English and is acknowledged as a characteristic feature of the variety (pg. 141). Terms such as *English*, *fish* and *accomplish* may be pronounced as /ˈɪŋglɪs/, /fɪs/ and /əˈkɒmplɪs/ respectively. While a switch from /s/ to /ʃ/ may be observed in Afrikaans English, but it is rare among speakers of the Cape Flats variety.

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Speakers of Cape Flats English are likely to use a tapped, flapped or trilled /r/ in their everyday speech (pg. 141). This phonological feature is not only common but also significantly more pronounced than in Afrikaans English, where such usage is less frequent. Malan 1996 observes that this speech pattern is prevalent amongst most speakers of this variety, with the exception of those who speak 'respectable' Cape Flats English (pg. 141).

6.4 Morphology and Syntax of Cape Flats English

The absence of agreement between object and verb found in Afrikaans English is also a notable characteristic of Cape Flats English. Specifically, speakers of this variety tend to use singular verbs *only* with plural nouns (and vice versa), primarily in verbs that are not forms of *to be* (pg. 136). Auxiliary verbs may be contracted or omitted entirely (McCormick 2004, 994). The following sentences exemplify these speech patterns:

(1) *The girls was supposed to be coming tonight, but they just never showed up.*
(2) *When we learn in school - when Jan van Riebeeck and all this people is come.*
(3) *You forgetting your lines again.*
(4) *We six children, my five sisters and me, before Andiswe and Mishka did go to work.*

Example (4) showed the word *did* used as a marker of past tense. This may occur in the Cape Flats Variety, as the dropping of auxiliary verbs can leave some sentences unmarked for tense (Malan 1996, pg. 137). Anecdotal evidence suggests that the marker *did* is retained in 'respectable' Cape Flats English, where other tense markers are no longer dropped. However, more research is needed to confirm this.

In the Afrikaans language, double negations are used in all sentences that have an object (Lutrin 1999, pg. 28). For instance, if one were to negate the sentence 'Ek ry 'n perd' (I ride a horse), one would place one 'nie' after the verb and the other right at the end of the sentence - 'Ek ry nie 'n perd nie' (I do not ride a horse not). In Cape Flats English, the double negative may occur as a substitute for the indefinite *any*, *anything* or *anyone* as *no*, *nothing* or *nobody* respectively (Malan 1996, pg. 129, McCormick 2004, pg 1000). Given how distinct the form of double negation is from that in Afrikaans, it raises the question of whether this feature originates from the speaker's L1 or some external influence.

English lacks the formal pronoun that languages such as German or Spanish employ when speaking they want to convey respect and politeness. Afrikaans also has a formal pronoun 'u' that serves this purpose (Bosman and Otto 2015), as demon-

strated in the following example:

Casual: *Het **jy** die nuusverslag oor die verkiesings op Carte Blanche die ander dag gesien?*
Formal: *Het **u** die nuusberig oor die verkiesings op Carte Blanche die ander dag gesien?*
English: Did you see the news report about the elections on Carte Blanche the other day?

Being used to using the formal pronoun in their L1, some speakers of Cape Flats English now feel uncomfortable using the generic 'you' in English. Instead, they substitute terms of address for the personal pronoun (McCormick 2004, pg. 1000). The following conversation between the author and a cleaning lady from Khayelitsha named Andiswa shows this phenomenon.

Author: *In which situations do you use English, and in which do you use Afrikaans?*
Andiswa: *I feel that madam - all of them speak English and Afrikaans, and I think that the others are - they cannot communicate much with madam or so.*

It may be possible that this polite mode of address has influenced other varieties of English in South Africa over time. However, more research is needed to confirm this.
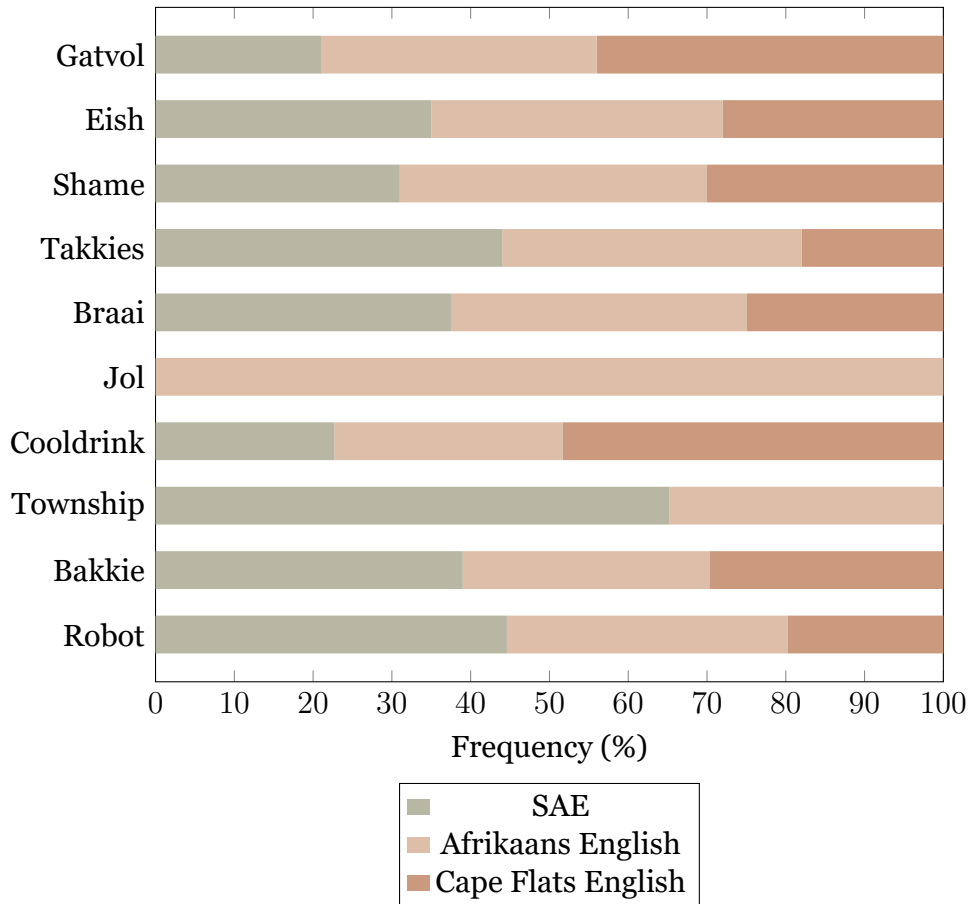
Another feature characteristic of the Cape Flats Variety is the tag question 'ne' /nə/, used at the end of clauses for emphasis or to seek confirmation (pg. 1998). Originating from Afrikaans, it can loosely be translated as 'right' or 'isn't it'. For example, in a sentence such as 'So I was parking by the Kwikspar the other day, **ne**, and the guard just stood there and never helped with the parking', 'ne' is used to seek confirmation that the listener understands what the speaker is saying.

While the above morphosyntactical features of Cape Flats English attempt to give some overview of how the variety of English is spoken in South Africa, it should be noted that (in particular because of the case switching between English and Afrikaans that is characteristic for speakers in this region) the Cape Flats Variety is very dynamic. Features that have been studied twenty years ago may no longer be in use today. In particular, because this is such a fluid variety, and because its speakers are frequently in contact with speakers of other varieties of English in South Africa, Cape Flats English may have a significant influence on other Englishes in the country.

6.5 Lexical Features of Cape Flats English

Like Afrikaans English, the Cape Flats Variety shares many lexical items with SAE. This section seeks to introduce lexical items that are unique to Cape Flats English and

compares the frequency of those items which are not exclusive to Cape Flats English with their occurrences in the other varieties discussed in this paper. The weighted relative frequencies of the terms *robot, bakkie, township, cooldrink, jol, braai, gatvol, takkies, shame* and *eish* for each variety is given in the chart below.

Two further words characteristic of the Cape Flats Variety are 'yebo' and 'voetsek'. The former is Zulu for 'yes' and is generally used in an affirmative sense in Cape Flats English as well. However, no literature specifically addresses the use of 'yebo' in this variety, and more research may be required. In the study, over 65% of participants speaking the Cape Flats Variety stated that they were likely to use the term in everyday speech.

'Voetsek', coming from Afrikaans, can loosely be translated to *go away* or *get lost*. Again, no literature exists discussing this term in-depth, but as the study showed that 100% of speakers of the Cape Flats Variety stated that they were likely to use the term, it should nevertheless be dedicated some attention. In Cape Flats English, the term 'voetsek' is often used derogatorily to tell someone to leave or, perhaps more aptly, to get lost. Its primary use is perhaps in the warding off of South African dogs - most of which are trained to cease any attack if told to 'voetsek'. However, this usage has not yet been discussed in literature and needs further research.

In the meantime, the Cape Flats variety should be regarded for what it is - a

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dynamic variety of English in which code-switching is sometimes used for effect and may leave a lasting impact on the variety in the form of loanwords. It is evidence of a people adapting to a new world into which they were forced through an unjust system of racial segregation and who made that for which they were once discriminated - their 'colouredness' - a beacon of their identity. It is not 'broken English', as it has sometimes been called (McCormick 2004, pg. 993), for indeed, a majority of its speakers are bilingual and have near L1 proficiency in both English and Afrikaans. Far from being 'broken English,' it highlights its speakers' cultural richness and expressive nature.

7 Prestige of South African Englishes

According to Lanham's categorisation of South African English (2), which was taken over in later works (Prinsloo and Lanham 1978), 'respectable' South African English was that variety of English which was closest to RP. Similarly, Malan 1996 describes 'respectable' Cape Flats English as that variety closest to SAE, i.e. which exhibits the least features of the Cape Flats Variety. These categorisations may still be remnants of the Apartheid era, during which SAE was considered to be the most prestigious of South African varieties, and Afrikaans English was seen as a 'kombhuistaal' - a kitchen language (McCormick 2004, pg. 993).

In the study, participants were asked to score the prestige of South African English, Afrikaans English and Cape Flats English on a scale of 0 to 2, where 2 indicated that a variety was very prestigious, and 0 points were given for a variety that was not prestigious at all. SAE gained an average score of 1.51, which was used as a benchmark for comparison. The reason that SAE did not receive the full two points may be because participants may have regarded British English or American English as an even more prestigious variety. Afrikaans English, on average, scored one point less than SAE, with a mean rating of 0.55 points. Interestingly, speakers of Afrikaans English did not view their variety with such low esteem, as they rated Afrikaans English as 0.8 out of the possible 2 points on average. However, that is still half the score they gave SAE. The Cape Flats Variety scored lowest in prestige, with an average rating of only 0.29 points. This average was driven down primarily by SAE and Afrikaans English speakers, who gave Cape Flats English 0.125 and 0.1 points, respectively. Speakers of the Cape Flats variety themselves gave the variety a score of 1.3 points, the same score they awarded Afrikaans English.

These results confirm the order of prestige presented in literature: SAE is the most prestigious variety, followed by Afrikaans English and Cape Flats English. What is interesting to observe is how speakers of these varieties view each other. Speakers of SAE regard their own variety as the most prestigious and make no large distinction (0.18 points) between Afrikaans English and Cape Flats English in terms of prestige (although the latter scores slightly lower). Speakers of the Cape Flats Variety also

rate SAE as the most prestigious variety by 0.33 points, but regard their own variety and Afrikaans English as equally prestigious. It is speakers of Afrikaans English who perhaps give the most interesting ratings. They gave SAE twice the score of their own variety and rated the prestige of Cape Flats English as 0.1, with a mode score of 0. This shows that while speakers of the Cape Flats Variety view both Afrikaans-based varieties to be similar in terms of prestige, speakers of Afrikaans English regard the Cape Flats Variety to be significantly less prestigious than their own English, even though the varieties have several features in common.

8 Conclusion

South Africa - the 'Rainbow Nation' - is a country which thrives through its diversity. Although its history was one of bloodshed and tears, its people now live together in harmony in a society shaped by the culture, heritage and languages of the people who form it. This paper focused on the language aspect of three peoples in particular: The speakers of SAE, who spoke English as their first language and adopted several features of the languages around them without ever fully speaking the languages themselves; the speakers of Afrikaans English, who grew up learning to keep their languages separate and whose L1 and L2 nevertheless interplayed to create an entirely new variety of English; and finally, the speakers of Cape Flats English, who were once forced to speak the language of the oppressor, but took that language and created something uniquely their own.

This paper aimed to describe the characteristic features of these varieties of English based on existing literature, adding information from the author's study to fill gaps and expand on previous knowledge. It looked at how the different varieties developed over time, with SAE being a remnant of the settler's English spoken during the colonial era, competing against Afrikaans for dominance. With English being the language of legislation, speakers of Afrikaans now had to be able to communicate in English as well. Thus, a new variety began to emerge: Afrikaans English. SAE and Afrikaans English developed parallel to each other, and Afrikaans English remained the only Afrikaans-based variety until Apartheid. The Group Areas Act, as one of the most impactful laws of Apartheid, led to the forced resettlement of thousands of Cape Coloureds to the Cape Flats, where the two primary languages they used became English and Afrikaans. Through this, the Cape Flats Variety was born and is still primarily spoken in the townships in and around Cape Town.

While these varieties share several phonological, morphosyntactical and lexical features such as the vowel shift discussed in Chapter 4, or words such as 'eish', 'shame' or 'bakkie', they also have features of their own which make each variety distinctive. Of the three varieties, the pronunciation in SAE is the most similar to RP, with Afrikaans English and the Cape Flats Variety distinguishing themselves in particular due to their tapped or trilled /nə/ sound. 'Busy' as a progressive aspect marker

is used primarily in SAE and Afrikaans English and is present only to a lesser extent in the Cape Flats Variety.

Despite the blatant similarities between these varieties of English, they enjoy different levels of prestige in South Africa. The results of the study confirmed that all speakers regarded SAE as the most prestigious variety, followed by Afrikaans English and the Cape Flats Variety. This shows that the effects of colonialism and the Apartheid era are still very much engrained in the minds of people, and it will take much longer until Englishes in South Africa are regarded as equal in terms of standard and respectability by its people. Ultimately, the recognition and respect of all varieties of English in South Africa will be a step towards social equality and reflect the rich linguistic heritage that continues to shape the country's identity.

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