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**PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES OF SOCIETAL
MULTILINGUALISM IN THE VOC-GOVERNED CAPE
1652-1795**

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Introduction

RATIONALE AND OVERVIEW

As some-one who was born in South Africa of Hungarian parents and is now living in Hungary, the events of 2010 caused some psychological turmoil. Along with hundreds of thousands of others, I watched parts of the 2010 Football World Cup, but unlike most of the others, I reacted less to the exertions of the teams than to the unexpected glimpses of a past that I had thought behind me: the colour of the soil and the sky, the rhythm and movement of people spontaneously breaking into dance, the wide smiles in faces of many shades and hues. Nostalgia and even homesickness caught me unawares and it was fitting that at my desk, it was the inhabitants and languages of that beautiful land that I was studying, albeit from a distance of not only many miles but many years. The date was doubly significant: one hundred years ago this year that land became the Union of South Africa, and in the agreement there was a clause specifying that the Dutch language would be given equal rights with English in the new state. Since then, South Africa has renewed itself and now the equal language rights affect many more languages and many more speakers. In just these few lines it is already clear that this is a country with a turbulent and colourful history, a history has been written only since the Old World of Europe impacted on it in the so-called Age of Discovery. Just what the indigenous peoples of southern Africa discovered about the Europeans is not clear. What is clear is that in the crucible of the newly established society at the Cape from 1652 people of different origins and unlike languages came together and one of the outcomes of those encounters was the language that would become known as Afrikaans. This, for me, common-place fact was not a scientific interest of mine and it required the serendipitous encouragement of the three examiners at my pre-doctoral examinations to bring me to the realisation that this is not a common-place fact at all and that the academic community in Hungary interested in languages and their speakers would be interested in knowing more about Afrikaans, its speakers and its origins. Since

the examination coincided with the unfortunate fact that my original research area, related to the teaching of content subjects within the framework of second language teaching at college level in Hungary, had dissolved together with the department that had provided the teaching, the encouragement to turn my attention to southern Africa and Afrikaans came at an opportune moment.

From the outset, it was clear that my interest was in the sociolinguistic situation in South Africa, in the patterns of bilingualism and the workings of language policy related to Afrikaans. Armed as I was with the confidence of a native South African, I underestimated the extent of my lack of knowledge about the subject. The process of starting to investigate the general topic moved me back in time: as I began to read about the period that coincided with my childhood and young adulthood, I found that my own perceptions at the time were not necessarily the whole picture. To answer the questions that arose, I found myself 'progressing' step-by-step into the past, until I came to the conclusion that understanding the early years, the baseline, was crucial to disentangling the often contradictory and confusing strands of the present, and was an area of research with its own merits. So it was that the outline of this study was born. If sociolinguists could conduct experiments, then the Cape from 1652, when a Dutch company founded a refreshment station there, was akin to such an experiment. "Take a handful of people, coming from different continents and different cultures, at a different stage of societal and economic development, and speaking languages of different language families, allocate various social roles to them and combine under the aegis of a governing company, then observe what happens." Sociolinguists cannot conduct experiments and real life may provide the context but not the scientific circumstances for observation, so much that we would like to know is inaccessible to our view. Nevertheless, studying the sociolinguistic situations of the past has its advantages. The data is certainly bad – but data is always incomplete – however, the outcomes are part of history. Prediction remains the weak point of the social sciences and by not seeking to predict, investigating the past allows us to focus on what was, in order to gain insight into it, and also into what is now and may be in the future. The distance of years can contribute to the neutrality of the investigation.

In what follows, the complex sociolinguistic situation at the Cape between 1652 and 1795 will be presented, focussing on the various groups of speakers of the languages present, in order to gain understanding of the situation as it applied to each of these groups. Much of the data available about these groups is not directly relevant to language and language use, but the aim has been to gain insight into the macro-sociolinguistic situation of each of the groups by placing them in their sociolinguistic context as regards a multilingual society. The nature of the linguistic culture that developed at the Cape will form part of this. The framework within of the society at the Cape was provided by the VOC, the Dutch company that founded it, and the content and effect of its language policy forms the second main focal point of this dissertation. In order for us to understand the processes, linguistic and sociolinguistic, that led to the development of a local language variety that has traditionally been identified as Afrikaans since about the middle of the eighteenth century (Raidt 1983), an in-depth knowledge of the social factors influencing the languages and language use of the speakers forms the essential counterpart to the historical linguistic analysis of the language. All languages are always in a state of change, and languages that so to speak 'arrived' at the Cape had their own histories. The first part of the dissertation therefore looks at the status quo ante as regards the languages from outside the Cape. It places the events of the dissertation within the first phase of globalisation – a theme that will be continued throughout the dissertation. The languages already present there will be dealt with later on, in Chapter 3. After that, a compact sociohistorical account of the period from 1652 to 1795 is provided. The Gricean Maxim of quantity was difficult to apply here, and deciding on the appropriate extent of this background information has been difficult. If I have given too much, I ask the reader to bear with me patiently, and if it is inadequate, I apologise and hope that the references listed will help in the filling in of the gaps. Chapters 4 to 6 paint the triptych, the figurative three-panelled picture of the language situation, where the first panel represents the European aspect, the second, the East, and the third, the local, African aspect. Within each of these panels, attention will be paid to the elements composing the whole: in the case of Europe, the European languages, in the case of the East, the focus cannot be on the native tongues

of the speakers and it is the lingua francas of their areas of origins that are presented, and in the case of Africa, primarily the KhoeSan languages. The languages that would gain in importance at the end of the period under discussion, namely the Bantu languages and English, will be mentioned as needed. By taking 1795 as the nominal cut-off point of the study, it will be possible to go deeper into the details of the situation in which Afrikaans evolved. From about the middle of the eighteenth century contact with the speakers of the Bantu languages affected the setting, and the advent of the British with their own language from 1795 (or 1806, when they returned and remained in control of the colony) introduced a new and forceful pressure, testing the ability of the still emerging language to survive. The next major phase in the history of Afrikaans dawned with the first British occupation of the Cape and it can be argued that it was in opposition and contradistinction to English that Afrikaans was strengthened, but that goes beyond the topic of this dissertation.

Structurally, the dissertation presented its own challenges. Overreaching as it does the artificial limits of academic disciplines, it is informed by the overarching analytic principle of the global language system as conceptualised by De Swaan (2001). The principles of investigation of the study of bilingual situations are applied in the sections on the groups and insights from the study of language policy provide a way of narrowing the focus to manageable proportions. In addition to this, there are the languages, present throughout in their transitory state of change. Given these diverging elements, the usual sub-division into theoretical background followed by the application of the methodology stemming from it seemed inappropriate and an alternate, more economical, structure has been created, in which theoretical insights are added when the particular topic under discussion so requires. The scope of the topic in its broader sense is too ambitious for the constraints of a dissertation and it is admitted that the decisions about what to include and in what arrangement are only as good as the judgment of the writer. As a guide-line, the list of factors suggested by Holm (2003:21)) as being relevant to such a study have been applied and it has been attempted to garner as much information about these factors as possible and to present them in as coherent a form as possible. In a somewhat modified form, these factors are:

- a. The origins of the speakers,
- b. The ratio of speakers to each other.
- c. the degree of intimacy of early social relations between the speakers,
- d. the likelihood of any group's contact with a pidgin or creole spoken elsewhere,
- e. demographic changes
- f. social, economic and political changes and their effect on intergroup relations,
- g. degree of rigidity of any caste system, whether racial or not,
- h. education, accessibility, actual language of instruction,
- i. communications – degree of geographical isolation, and
- j. any changes in the variety's status.

Chapter 1

Beginnings

The written history of South Africa is brief enough to look at in some detail, yet from the point of view of language, not all of it is relevant. Nevertheless, it is impossible to look at the development of the Afrikaans language and the changes in its status without an understanding of the historical setting. Fortunately, the crucial events of South African history coincide with crucial moments in the language situation. Put another way, the crucial events of history all impacted on Afrikaans.

The written history of South Africa has its roots in Europe, and the first chapter in this part will place the birth of South Africa in its historical context in three ways. First the broader political and social setting will be outlined; next the Dutch East India Company¹ that actually established the refreshment station at the Cape of Good Hope by the in 1652, and thirdly the language constellation in which Afrikaans has its roots will be discussed. The following chapters will look at the 150 years in which Dutch was the predominant European language in the Cape and Cape Dutch/Afrikaans developed as a local vernacular, and will conclude with the end of the DEIC era, in 1795 or

1 Abbreviated as *DEIC*. Note: this is the English version of the original Dutch name: *Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie* or *VOC*. Strictly speaking, the translation of *VOC* would be the *United East India Company*, referring to the circumstances of its foundation. It would not require the word *Dutch*, since within the Low Countries there was no need to specify this (compare East India Company, the British competitor established a few years later; and referred to as the English East India Company by Dutch writers, for example, Nierstrasz, J.C., 1978). One of the customary forms of referring to the *VOC* in South Africa (and hereinafter) is as *the Company* (linked to the Dutch personification *Jan Compagnie*), is a further example of this principle. In this dissertation, the Dutch abbreviation, *VOC*, will be used, since it was a world brand:



thereabouts². This period is crucial to an understanding of the history of Afrikaans for various reasons, main amongst there are that:

- this is the period in which the local language change creating Afrikaans took place,
- the circumstances in which this language change took place were related to societal factors later considered as determinant in the formation of the Afrikaner national character (both as seen from within the group and from without). This is the group which would invest the necessary, considerable effort and money needed to make 'kitchen Dutch' into a codified, elaborated standard language, and
- the sociolinguistic pressures that affected the speakers of the various input languages decided the local fate of those languages and formed the new dialect.

To understand just how this language came into being requires an act of imagination, requires one to step beyond the facts related to imagining how it was to be there, taking care not to project our current worldview onto the past. This in turn requires adequate information to be able to recreate in our minds with some verisimilitude a complex situation differing in fundamental respects (economic system, religion, political structure, social relations, technology, and language and literacy, to name the most relevant) from our own, and differing also in its antecedents and progression from that with which we are familiar as people living in our own specific space and time. We begin therefore not with 1652 and the landing of Jan van Riebeeck on the shores of South Africa and the establishment of the victualling station, but with the events and tendencies preceding it. These determine the culture (in the broadest meaning of the term) of the Europeans who settled the Cape, provide the structural framework within which the settlement took place, and have an effect on the entire 150 years of Company rule. In what follows, focus on three central themes which impacted on the language situation at the Cape will provide threads of continuity and

² The VOC was nationalised in 1796 by the new Batavian Republic, but before that the Cape had been taken over by the British during the Napoleonic wars. Although the charter of the VOC was renewed until 31st December 1800, by then it was already defunct. The British had returned the Cape to the Batavian Republic and then returned once again in 1806, to be officially granted the Cape by the Congress of Vienna.

interconnection against the backdrop of the broader power political scene: trade, religion and the languages that would be taken into the configuration at the Cape.

1.1. Status quo ante

Prior to the landing that led to the permanent settlement of the Cape of Good Hope, are the events of the first half of the 17th century, primarily the process of the 'discovery' of the world, at least as seen from a European perspective, and the accompanying process of acquiring power, wealth and colonies. In addition to the voyages of discovery, the immediate background includes the Portuguese Empire in East Africa and the Indies, the institution of slavery as practised by the Europeans, the missionary zeal of Christianity, particularly Catholicism, the religious conflicts within Christianity and between the Christians and the Moslems, and the rise of the chartered companies, in particular the Dutch East India Company and its British counterpart, the East India Company within the broader paradigm of mercantilism (understood here as economic nationalism for the purpose of increasing the wealth and power of a state). As would always prove to be the case in South Africa, the events of Western civilisation would both form a backdrop to events there, and affect those events.

The historical forces leading to the expansion of the Western worldview from one encompassing the Old World to one which included the whole globe are generally known to the readers of this dissertation and will be referred to insofar as they directly or indirectly impinged on the course of events at the southernmost tip of Africa. History can always be viewed from various points of view, the perspective chosen for this discourse is determined by the focus on the language.

1.1.1. The Portuguese : creating the Lusophone network

Although our focus will be directed towards the mid-seventeenth century, the establishment of the Dutch foothold at the Cape was a consequence of the creation of the VOC and the foundations for the trading empire established by it, which in turn built directly on the voyages of discovery of the fifteenth century.

At the Treaty of Tordesillas, the line of demarcation was drawn, giving Spain the lands to the west and Portugal the lands to the east of it, even if little of those lands had

actually even been seen by Europeans. Two crucial events preceded the 1494 Treaty of Tordesillas: in 1488 the Portuguese navigator, Bartolomeu Diaz, entered the Indian Ocean by rounding the Cape of Good Hope, and in 1492 Christopher Columbus discovered America for Spain. The world had changed its dimensions and the fifteenth century version of globalisation commenced. Recognising the importance of the situation for the Catholic Church, Pope Alexander VI supported the division of the newly discovered world between the two Catholic powers of Portugal and Spain (France, the other Catholic power, had not taken part in the discoveries, and was out of favour with Rome).³ Portugal's route to the east, and to the riches of the spice trade, lay along a long-established network of coastal trade established over the centuries by Arabs and others, including Indians and Chinese. Rather than establishing an empire, the Portuguese operated a series of strategically situated trading posts and fortifications and for nearly a century encountered little European competition. In so doing they also created the first truly global "supercentral" European language. If we consider the world as a global language system (De Swaan 2001:4-11), forming an integral part of a greater world system with a political, economic, ecological and communications system, then almost all languages are 'peripheral', that is, all of them together are spoken by less than 10% of humankind. Multilingual speakers of these languages tend to acquire the same second language, one that is 'central' to them. Speakers of these languages tend not to learn the peripheral languages, but rather a language at a higher level in the hierarchy. Central languages are connected through their multilingual speakers to a 'supercentral' language, which serves long-distance and international communication. In today's world, a next higher level exists, the 'hypercentral' language, English, but in the fifteenth century it was the supercentral languages, particularly Latin, Arabic, Malay, Chinese, Sanskrit and Portuguese, that played the main role. These languages created a thin but far-ranging web of connections along the routes created by trade, military activity and religious conversion. For the Portuguese, there was an explicit religious dimension to their commercial undertaking. Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism, each with political backing, were already established along the coasts where Portugal traded, yet the east was to be brought into the Christian fold, particularly as represented by the

³ This treaty had to be complemented at a later date, since new discoveries, particularly of the Moluccas (by Portugal), led to disagreement. The Treaty of Saragossa (1529) specified the modified antemeridian and Spain relinquished its claim. The two lines divided the Earth into two unequal hemispheres.

Jesuits. The Church did not consider it relevant that its activities threatened local political interests, but for the Portuguese, this was costly. Portugal was nevertheless committed to supporting the Church, even if this meant antagonising trading partners and losing profits.

At home, in Europe, Lisbon flourished and was an excellent point of departure (and recruitment) for the ships. On the other hand, it was less suited to trade into Europe. The role of distribution hub (to use a term from twentieth century globalisation) was fulfilled rather by the North Sea harbour of Antwerp, on the River Scheldt.

1.1.2. Power shifts in Europe and the United Provinces

Over time, however, Portugal's position declined and the French, the English, the Dutch and the Spanish moved to improve their own positions. The real threat to Portugal was to come from the Dutch and the reasons for this are complex. In what follows, a compact look at the historical background is provided, highlighting themes that will contribute to an understanding of the situation at the Cape. A dynastic crisis in which the young Portuguese king Sebastian I. died without an heir led to Spain, under Philip II, annexing Portugal in 1580, thereby opening the way for other powers to attack the now ill-defended Portuguese possessions. Spain had been ruled by the Habsburg Holy Roman emperor Charles V (as King Charles I) until in 1556 he left Spain to his son, Philip. As Duke of Burgundy, Charles had succeeded in 1549 in uniting the seventeen northern provinces (covering most of what we today know as the Benelux countries and a small French part) by edict, with the support of the so-called States, or representative assemblies.

The Netherlands was made up of seventeen provinces⁴ that differed amongst themselves in many respects, including laws, languages, customs and politics, and was the home of powerful cities, with great wealth and long-standing privileges and traditions of independence. In 1500, in the Low Countries there were twenty-three cities of more than 10,000 inhabitants. By comparison, in England, which covered a larger

⁴ The *Seventeen Provinces* were a personal union of states in the Low Countries in the 15th century and 16th century, they would later split into the seven *United Provinces* and the *Spanish Netherlands* (which remained under Habsburg rule).

area, there were only four, not including London⁵ (De Vries 1984:94 cited in Howell 2000:137). Spain was committed to the Catholic cause in the wars of religion and was experiencing a financial crisis. Relations between Spain and the Netherlands deteriorated as Philip took action to impose taxes and in 1567 appointed the Duke of Alva, who would prove to be ruthless, as his governor-general in Brussels. The benefits of belonging to a powerful empire carried weight with the influential merchants. Nevertheless economic distress, discontented nobles, religious dissent facilitated by the urban populations' increasing literacy, and anti-Spanish sentiment led to the Provincial Estates proclaiming William of Orange (known as 'the Silent') as their new *Stadhouder*⁶, and declaring their independence from Alva at a revolutionary meeting in Dordrecht in 1572 ('t Hart 2000:15-17). This conflict (known as the 80 Years War) would end in 1648 with the Peace of Westphalia.

In the long years of war, Spain used the southern provinces of Brabant (where Brussels was located) and Flanders (where Antwerp was located) as a base from where to conduct its war on the northern provinces, whose cities were growing in economic development due to the increasing international trade. An alliance of the French-speaking provinces faced the loose federation of the Union of Utrecht (1579), comprised of the Dutch-speaking provinces of Holland, Zeeland, Friesland, Utrecht and Gelderland. Despite the language split, the line of division was not linguistic, but rather religious: the Catholic provinces against the Protestant ones. Despite this, the importance of religious belief varied between towns and "attitudes on both sides of the religious divide were far from homogeneous. Moreover political alignments rarely followed religious differences" ('t Hart 2000:24). The strong position of the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) was a consequence of its leadership's ability, not of its numerical superiority, since they remained in the minority up to the seventeenth century ('t Hart 2000:26;30). At the Cape, the DRC would be established as the only church, and the main provider of education. Gradually Spain lost the North and consolidated its power in the South. This led to a movement of people and capital to the north. Somewhat surprisingly, "the Spanish conquerors ... [allowed] the rebellious inhabitants of the southern cities ... to

⁵ This tendency would continue: in 1650 twenty-three centres with over 2,500 inhabitants would be found in Holland alone, and would account for 61 per cent of the population; while Holland itself would have 40 per cent of the total population of the Republic (Frijhoff 2004:159-160).

⁶ The United Provinces was governed by the States General, each province was governed by the Provincial States and the main executive official was known as the *stadhouder* in Dutch.

emigrate unhindered. Between 1585 and 1620, circa 100,000 Flemings, Brabanders, and Wallonians chose to move to the United Provinces, some for the sake of religious freedom, very many others to escape the economic desolation of the South” (Howell 2000:141). The Calvinist refugees contributed to the increasingly powerful position of the DRC and to the development of a nascent national feeling due to their shared experiences (’t Hart 2000:26). In a country split along religious and linguistic lines, the glue that bound the people together was, however, trade. Trade was to be *raison d’être* of the VOC, and of the settlement at the Cape of Good Hope.

Unlike London in England, and Paris in France, the Dutch linguistic area did not have one major cultural and economic centre. Instead, the urbanization was more widely distributed, with the cities, each with its own dialect, exercising considerable powers. The centre of Dutch culture “passes from Brugge/Bruges in Flanders in the late fourteenth century to Antwerp in Brabant, and then from Antwerp to Amsterdam in the province of Holland in 1585 (Howell 2000:135). The influx of religious refugees contributed to Amsterdam becoming a Protestant city in 1578. The Union of Utrecht soon became the United Provinces after being joined by Groningen and Overijssel to form ‘the Seven’⁷. Antwerp (in Flanders, in the Spanish Netherlands) took arms against Spanish rule, but Spain prevailed (Sack of Antwerp, 1576), leading to the harbour being cut off from its access to the sea because the mouth of the River Scheldt was in Zeeland. The closure of Antwerp had disastrous effects on trade, with the wealthy fleeing to Amsterdam (as mentioned above), taking their capital with them, and on Portugal, who lost much of its access to the markets of northern Europe. The consequences for the Dutch language were major and will be discussed separately below.

As stated above, by this time Portugal had been annexed by Spain, and its port of Lisbon was closed to Dutch shipping. In the East, she could expect competition from the Dutch, who had previously already had a trading interest there (Walker 1968:24).

By 1652, when the Cape victualling station was established by the Dutch VOC, the United Provinces had finally made peace with Spain. After 1648 France, under Louis XIV, would pose a threat, and the English and the Dutch would fight three wars at sea (1652-

⁷ That is, the Republic of the Seven United Provinces or Seven United Netherlands (from the Dutch Republiek der Zeven Verenigde Nederlanden) or United Provinces for short; also referred to as the Dutch Republic; or Foederatae Belgii Provinciae in Latin.

54, 1664-67, and 1672-74). By that time, the two East India Companies, i.e. the Dutch and the British, were often in conflict.

1.1.3. The Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie: company and government

The Cape would in the VOC period develop from being a refreshment station to being a colony with population of burghers and slaves of under 50,000 (split approximately 50-50%) and covering an area of approximately 190,000 square kilometres. It was a colony, but not under the direct power of a state. The VOC was able to establish colonies under the terms of its charter. Looked at from another point of view, the settlement at the Cape was initially something like a branch office and it was the intention of the VOC to keep it that way, with the primary considerations relating to the interests of the commercial enterprise. What was this organisation and how had it come into being? The economic interests of the provinces and the position of Amsterdam as the banking centre of Western Europe (Walker 1968:25), allowed them to undertake joint voyages to India. They first tried to reach the Indies via the north-east, but after the English defeat of the Spanish Armada, it proved possible to challenge the Spanish might and navigate around the Cape. An expedition under Cornelis Houtman successfully sailed round the Cape to Java and back (1595-1597). This first Dutch expedition to the Far East returned from Java with valuable cargo and a trading treaty. This elicited an enthusiastic response, and soon more private vessels followed, financed by private companies located in the harbour towns. The States General of the United Provinces decided that this long-distance, and seemingly very profitable, trading activity needed to be controlled, supported and protected. As a consequence, in 1602 the *Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie* received its charter, granting it extensive privileges and powers, most important of which was the tax-free monopoly of the trade to the East, to be renewed every twenty-one years. Residents of the United Provinces could be share-holders, becoming the first joint stock company of the world. Residents of the United Provinces could be share-holders and With this step the VOC became the first joint stock company in the world and the first multinational corporation. It was empowered to build forts, maintain armed forces, coin money and establish colonies. As such, it could make treaties and engage in war. It had been granted a monopoly, but this would have to be defended against the other maritime powers. Its remarkable powers gave rise to its policy of controlling as much of the lives of its servants as it could, based on its perception of its own commercial self-interest. Communication flows, as the life-

blood as such a far-flung company, were crucial, and the 'zero tolerance' use of Dutch was the corner-stone of VOC language policy.

As a consequence of the remarkable increase in trade that followed its establishment, the VOC would soon dominate the sea route around the Cape. By 1650 it would become "the largest commercial organisation in the world", dominating trade with the East for the 150 years that followed (de Villiers 2006:106), until it went bankrupt. Ross (1991:177-183) summarises the organisational challenges facing the VOC: "Firstly, the Company had to find ways of sending an unprecedented number of ships between Europe and Asia Secondly, the directors of the Company, the Heren XVII, had to develop a structure for making and imposing commercial decisions that was at once sufficiently flexible to cope with the constant change in the commercial environment in which it operated and sufficiently firm to prevent its operations from degenerating into chaos; And thirdly ... the VOC had to find ways of ruling its empire, which it [would acquire] in the course of its search for profit, without the costs in their turn eliminating all hope of commercial prosperity" (Ross 1991:178). The first one led to the decision to establish a refreshment station at the Cape, the second and third impacted on all aspects of life at the Cape, which was itself not a centre of trade and did not generate income and was therefore to be run at as low a cost as possible.

As regards structure, the Company was the United Provinces writ small, with economic motives driving co-operation. Like the United Provinces, the federal structure was retained, with the original companies surviving within the overall framework. Had the political federation foundered, the provinces could have functioned on their own, likewise, had the Company disbanded, the component parts could have functioned on their own (Walker 1968:25-27). Thus there was a close relationship between the Company and the States-General, and also between the Company and the Dutch people, who could hold shares. Amsterdam retained its predominance, having eight seats on the Council of Seventeen which determined policy and to which the rulers of the Cape were accountable. The consequence of this federal complex federal structure was that "decision-making was slow and regularly required compromises between the different interests involved" (Ross 1991:179). In 1613 Jan Pieterzoon Coen was appointed director-general of trade in the East and under his leadership, the harbour town of Jakarta, Java, to be known as *Batavia*, became the centre of both of the government of the VOC and its commercial operations. The Council of India stationed at Batavia would govern and one of its sub-governorships would be the Cape.

1.1.3.1. The Cape: possession and premises of the VOC

Despite the fact that the Cape of Good Hope had been discovered roughly 150 years before (in 1488, by Bartolomeu Dias), there was little to attract a settlement: no gold; it was also known as the 'Cape of Storms' (Walker 1968:29) reflecting the dangerous sailing in its vicinity; and the indigenous Hottentots were considered hostile (Saunders 1988:34). Contact between the ships of various nations, often at war with each other, and the natives was sporadic, and not friendly. Saunders draws attention to the fact that "[t]he men who manned the Dutch, English and Portuguese ships were usually the dregs of European society" whose own circumstances were brutal and who "had little consideration for each other ... [and] had even less feeling for 'heathen blacks' at remote calling places such as Table Bay. Instead of bartering for cattle many sailors found it easier to simply storm ashore and help themselves, killing anyone foolish enough to oppose them" (Saunders 1988:43). Nevertheless, the location of the Cape was strategic, lying halfway between Europe and the Spice Islands of the East and it was only a question of time before an attempt would be made to secure it. The English did in fact lay claim to the Saldanha Bay in 1620 in King James' name, but nothing came of it (Saunders 1988:30). Ships, both Dutch and English, stopped there for fresh water, and left post under 'posting-stones' which can be seen today in South African museums (Saunders 1988:30). In this period there was therefore sporadic language contact of short duration, involving barter or conflict. The need to communicate was bridged by the usual means of using makeshift trade jargons. A few individuals, such as Goree⁸ (kidnapped in 1613, taken to London and subsequently brought back) and Herry⁹ (of the *Strandlopers* or *Goringhaicona*, who had been taken to Java by an Englishman) (Saunders 1988:42-43) were taken back to Europe with the expectation that they would return and act as interpreters to facilitate trade.

As part of its normal operations, the Company was faced with two serious difficulties. The one was the scale of its shipping operations and the length of the journey to the East. The 'Indiamen' were ships purpose-built for transporting merchandise and were consequently not built for speed. The East could be reached only in about 5 months, causing serious health problems for the seamen: "the average

⁸ Also Cor(r)ee or Xhoré

⁹ Autshumato

mortality rate for the 15 VOC ships travelling from the Netherlands to Batavia between 1625 and 1631 was 14.4%, with a range from 2.5% to 30%” (De Villiers 2006:107). The other challenge arose from the large number of ships involved. Ross (1991:179) cites the three volume work *Dutch-Asiatic Shipping*, by Bruijn, Gaastra and Schöfferrin (1987), stating that the VOC “sent out a total of 4,721 ships to Asia between 1602 and 1795” (Ross 1991:179), and these wooden ships required regular overhauls. To both of these problems, the Cape would offer a solution.

It took a bad storm in 1647 and a ship-wrecked crew (of the *Haarlem*), who returned to Europe the following year, to give the account which led to the establishment of what would eventually be a permanent European settlement. Although the crew suffered greatly and were most uncomplimentary about the supplies available and the natives (Walker 1968:30), their report, or *Remonstantie* (Saunders 1988:36) was favourable and the founding of a refreshment station was decided upon and entrusted to Johan (Jan) van Riebeeck. He had been a ship surgeon who spent about three weeks at the Cape when the salvaged cargo of the *Haarlem* and the surviving crew members were picked up, and he supported the idea of establishing a settlement at the Cape as it would improve the health of the men (De Villiers 2006:108). As Commander, his instructions were precise: to build a fort and hospital, to plant a garden, and to remain on friendly terms with the indigenous people and with other foreigners who might also establish posts there (Saunders 1988:36). From this it is clear that there was no intention to lay claim to the land, and that the expense of the station was to be borne in order to provide a depot for provisions (Walker 1968:31). Three ships dropped anchor on 6th April, 1652, to be followed a month later by another two. To illustrate how great the need was: when the *Walvis* and *Olifant* dropped anchor, there were so many sick men on board that a tent hospital had to be built to accommodate them. The first group numbered about 90 people all told, including 8 women, of whom Maria van Riebeeck, wife of the Commander was one. The remainder of the group were very mixed, coming from various classes and nations, but they were all Protestant (Walker, 1968:29). This was a pattern that would be repeated over the years contributing to the multilingual character of the settlement, which permitted the public practice of only one religion.

All Company servants were all subject to strict discipline – including the Commander, who could be out-ranked when a larger fleet came into the harbour. On board, status was recognized by being allowed to mess with the Captain. De Bruijn (2009:65) cites a seventeenth century ship’s surgeon as stating that “those who messed

with the Captain on board were the merchant, the bookkeeper, the clerk, the commander of the soldiers, the minister (*ziekentrooster*), and the chief surgeon. These were mostly Dutch citizens as this was Company policy, based on the need to be sure of their loyalty (De Bruijn 2009:138). Finding crew members for the huge VOC fleet was a taxing task and the maritime regions of the Netherlands could not supply enough men and recruiters soon had to look further afield, which was the main reason for the linguistic diversity of the VOC servants. “The Great Moloch of the VOC thus devoured a high proportion of the young manpower of north-west Europe” (Ross 1991:179). In addition to “word of mouth”, crimps – so-called *volkshouders* - were used to enlist soldiers and sailors and nationality was not a deciding factor (De Bruijn 2009:138-139). The task was not made easier by the lack of enthusiasm of the applicants: “working for the Company ... was considered unsavoury, at least in the seventeenth century.” ... The West Frisian seaman was usually only driven by his penury to take service on one of the Company’s risky voyages” (De Bruijn 2009:137). By signing up to work for the VOC, it was assumed that the onus for accommodating linguistically was on the signee, who, in the cramped conditions of the ships, would be able to broaden his language skills according to need.

1.1.4. Language at home and at sea

1.1.4.1. Languages and problems of communication

The Portuguese voyages of discovery and processes of colonisation which preceded the Dutch presence at the tip of Africa were also associated with language. In the 15th century when the European explorers first navigated and landed on the African coast, they were confronted with the linguistic diversity of the peoples they encountered. On the East coast of Africa, the Portuguese would find themselves on a long-established maritime network of commerce, and would come across Swahili¹⁰ which had become established along the coastline together with the extensive trade which had developed from the first millennium and expanded during the ensuing Islamic period. On the West Coast, disappointingly, there was no similar trade language, instead a great diversity of languages reflected the ethnic diversity of the coast. Inland, trade languages, such as Mandingo and Hausa, had become established. The Africans were exposed to mostly one European language, Portuguese, for almost a century (Dalby 1970:4). It is

¹⁰ The word itself stems from an Arabic word meaning ‘coast’ (Dalby 1970:3).

therefore not surprising that a form of Portuguese became established as the trading language on the western coast of Africa, facilitated by the African interpreters created by the practice of taking individuals back to Europe and subsequently returning with them to Africa. The burden of communication between black and white peoples thus fell on the indigenous Africans, a tendency which would recur under later waves of colonisation and which exists even today (hence the title of Dalby's paper: *Black through White*).

The process whereby the highly inflected and morphologically complex Metropolitan Portuguese became the pidginised trading version is documented elsewhere, for our purposes it is sufficient to record that it did develop and was widely used at the time. Furthermore, since Portugal was a small country, the small local population could not meet the manning requirements of their merchant ships, which solved the problem by recruiting from elsewhere, often from the Netherlands, which had long been a sea-faring nation. Thus Dutch soldiers and sailors learnt Portuguese 'of a sort'¹¹ on board these ships. The whole enterprise of the voyages of discovery required linguistic flexibility and the use of *lingua francas*.

The form of this language as it developed on the West African coast was more than just a simplified version of Portuguese or Latin: as it lost features of this language, it gained grammatical and phonological features from the African languages and soon became the first language of the racially mixed Afro-Portuguese in the trading posts along the coast. Structurally, the indigenous languages showed many similarities and it was postulated that it was not uncommon for Africans to have learnt to deal with differing sets of vocabulary whilst using the underlying rules which they had acquired as their first language (Dalby 1970:6). Dalby speaks of *Black Portuguese* and refers to its

¹¹ Since it is in the nature of contact languages to be transient in varying degrees, and these languages were, at the time of use under discussion here, not written languages, we have only remnants available to work from. Even when these were supposedly direct transcriptions of what a person said, what was actually committed to paper had to go through the filter of the scribe, who had his/her own understanding of what was said, ability to put this down in a way that reflected the actual sounds heard, and opinion with regard to how such utterances should be recorded. The same caveats are true about observations regarding the languages spoken. The observer may have called what was being spoken 'Portuguese', but what this meant exactly could differ according a wide range of variables. For these situations, and others where the exact variety is unclear, reference has been made of Portuguese of a sort as the most inclusive category.

spread around the south point of Africa to the East Indies, China and Japan, as well as its introduction to the New World, too, as a consequence of the slave trade (Dalby 1970:6). Although this monogenetic theory of creole genesis is not generally accepted, the widespread use of Portuguese is. In their annotated list of pidgins and creoles, Arends, Muysken & Smith (1995) classify West African Pidgin Portuguese as a sub-category of Atlantic area Portuguese-lexifier creoles and pidgins. They state that it was “[f]ormerly widely used in Western Africa. In Upper Guinea the Portuguese presence dates from the mid-15th century, in Lower Guinea from the late 15th century. On the Gold and Slave Coast it was the dominant trade language from the 16th to the 18th centuries. ... [It is] assumed to be ancestral to all the lects” in the Portuguese West Africa category (Arends, Muysken & Smith 1995:348). As the Portuguese role waned, from about 1630, its spread and use slowed as well. From this time, the role of the Dutch, French and the English would increase.

It was in this period that the Dutch took over many of the Portuguese bases (although they would later once again cede some of them). As a small nation that was great in its trading activities, the Dutch were themselves accustomed to the co-existence and varied use of different languages and dialects; Black Portuguese was used if needed for effective operation (Dalby 1970:8). Nevertheless, a form of ‘Black Dutch’ also developed, with the majority of its vocabulary derived from Dutch and much of its phonological, grammatical and semantic structures showing similarity with Black Portuguese or African languages. The West Coast of Africa was also to be the birthplace of Black French and later Black English, which would expand to the New World (Dalby 1970).

1.1.4.2. Dutch dialects and their many kin

As we have seen above, the fifteenth to the mid-seventeenth century was a singularly turbulent period of history, especially if one takes into account the world-shaking consequences of the voyages of discovery. It is in this period that the language that would be Afrikaans has its roots, in the Dutch dialects which were taken by their speakers to the Cape of Good Hope. What then was the language situation in the United Provinces and on board the ships of the VOC? Two intertwined processes took place. One was the expansion of Dutch (as regards territory and domains); the other was a process of standardisation of the Dutch dialects, which took place parallel to the rise of the United Provinces and the Eighty Years’ War.

This early modern period has been seen as “one of the ‘emergence’, or the ‘rise’ or ‘triumph’ of the national vernacular dialects at the expense of cosmopolitan Latin on the one hand and local dialects on the other” (Burke 2005:13). The example of Italian, Spanish, Portuguese and French writers was followed by the Dutch, who were, in turn, followed by others, such as the English, the Germans and the Swedes. As part of this process, the Dutch language was praised during the Renaissance by writers such as Stevin and Spieghel, and others. In the Low Countries, this praise took place in a multilingual situation in which Dutch had to jockey for position with its rivals. In the political domain, for example, in 1477 Dutch had already replaced French as the official language of Holland and Zeeland, and in 1582 it became the language of the States-General. Dutch also gained ground *vis-à-vis* Frisian, becoming the language of religion, the urban population and that of the elites.

As the commercial and trading activities of the Dutch expanded, so too did the use of their language (in some form or another) – to England with the Flemings fleeing religious persecution, or to Russia, where the Russian nautical language shows borrowings from Dutch. Burke comments that from the perspective of the early seventeenth century Dutch seems more likely to become a global language than English (Burke 2005:14). However, despite the reach of Dutch ships - and with them of the language – Dutch did not take root and become ‘indigenous’ to the areas in which they traded or lived. The exception, of course, is at the Cape, where ‘Dutch of a sort’ lives on in, Afrikaans.

In the mother country, early codification activities meant that in the second half of the sixteenth century, standardization of writing took place in both the south and the north of the Low Countries (Van der Wal 2007:84). As the then wealthy south gradually lost its prosperity after Antwerp fell in 1585, Holland experienced what we would today call a boom and the Dutch standard language developed rather in the northern part of the Low Countries, accelerating previous processes. A supra-regional written variety of Dutch emerged rapidly in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, that is, just before the initial Cape period. According to Howell (2000:134), there were four major developments, which promoted the use of supra-regional varieties of Dutch:

- “the rise of large, economically powerful and culturally influential cities first in Flanders, then in Brabant, and, finally, in Holland, and the resulting growth of a large and relatively literate urban patriciate and middle class,

- the invention of the printing press,
- the Reformation with its promotion of vernacular translations of the Bible, and
- the desire of scholars and poets to mould Dutch into a literary language comparable to Latin or Greek” (Howell 2000:134-135).

The coming into being of the Dutch Republic facilitated this process. A consequence of the existence of such a supra-regional written language was that it facilitated the activities of the merchants, and companies like the VOC, which used it in its correspondence and records. It formed the norm to which written language had to be held. It also meant that examples of the developing local dialect would not be welcomed and can be found only in traces, reducing the written evidence of spoken norms. As the cultural and economic centre of the Low Countries moved first east then north, the various dialects all exercised an influence. The role of French (used at the Flemish court) and Latin (still the language of official and scientific documents, and of the universities) continued to be important. The upper classes of the Dutch Republic continued to use both spoken and written French in the seventeenth century (Burke 2005:15). Urbanisation and the growth of industry and trade contributed to the increased use of the vernacular in domains where French or Latin had previously been used (Howell 2000:136). This area was characterised by its high degree of urbanisation and largely interdependent nature, which led to an urgent need for a generally accepted written language to meet the many diverse (religious, political, official, commercial and literary) needs of the inhabitants (Howell 2000:137). On the religious front, for example, the spread of the ideas of the Reformation was “facilitated by the high literacy rates of the urban population and their access to sophisticated networks of publishers and bookshops” (‘t Hart 2000:17).

To relativise the high degree of urbanisation Howell (2000:137), cites De Vries (1984), and states that the Low Countries had an urban population of 445,000 in 1500 (compared to 385,000 in all of Germany, and 688,000 in France). Such an urban population was hard to maintain in a period when living conditions were such that the death rate was far higher than the birth rate, and the nature of the countryside led to a shortage of arable land. Given that the birth to death rate in the rural areas was positive, the high mobility of the population, of all social classes, was understandable. From this follows that this mobility would affect the development of both the vernacular dialects and of the emergence of a supra-regional written variety. An “extended period

of polydialectalism or polyglossia in the urban centres” (Howell 2000:138) was the result. Foreign visitors commented on the ability of local people to speak several languages (Burke 2005:21). The implication of this was that the local populace had a positive attitude towards learning and using languages in addition to their native language. Marriage records reflect rapid assimilation of immigrant populations, due to the disproportionately high rate of death for native males (Howell 2000:138). The uptake market for males created by the VOC, which led to a highly unbalanced sex ratio in many Dutch towns and villages (Ross 1991:179), no doubt contributed to this as well. As Howell points out, the marriage of native women and immigrant men “had the effect of loosening norm-enforcing traditional, dense social networks and of opening the urban vernaculars to a process of linguistic accommodation, whereby salient dialectal features ... [were] dropped in favour of variants acceptable to a broader cross-section of the populace” (Howell 2000:138). Concurrent to this process, the increasing inter-city commercial and cultural contact raised awareness both of dialectal differences and the need for a commonly comprehensible written language.

The other three factors played their parts as well. It was in the interest of printers to sell their products to as wide a market as possible, although considerable variation could also be seen. This process was influenced by the decisions of individual printers (Burke 2005:17). The Reformation called for the translation of the Bible into the language of the people and the diversity of dialects spoken was seen as a hindrance. Attempts were made to translate so as to be as widely comprehensible as possible, for example Luther’s translation, and Swedish and Finnish translations of the time (Burke 2005:18). Demand for Bibles in the Dutch vernacular(s) led to several translations, which were then replaced by the *Statenbijbe*¹² commissioned by the southern dominated Synod of Dordrecht in 1618 and published in 1637. This translation, as was the case with the King James Bible, was the work of a committee in which several regions were represented (Burke 2005:18). Its effect on the Dutch language has been much researched and the general estimation is that its effect was considerable (although Howell, 2000 has argued for a somewhat reduced view of its significance). Its influence would reach the Cape as well, where it would serve as a standard of language in the VOC period and often the only book to be found in the homes on the outlying frontiers. The

¹² Also referred to as the *Statenvertaling*, it was the authorised Dutch translation of the Bible, first published in 1637.

Cape did not have its own printers and the printed word was an element of the link to the metropolitan form of Dutch. Nor did the Cape have its own language, at the time it was either considered to be Dutch or a local variety, Cape Dutch. Further modifications in the language, or its use by second language learners tended to be lumped together as 'broken Dutch' or 'kitchen Dutch'. If spoken by the Khoekhoen, it became 'Hottentot Dutch'.

Despite the tendencies encouraging standardisation, it was still to be a long time before a common, standardised language was achieved: there were still calls for a *lingua communis* in the eighteenth century, and whilst plans to reform Dutch orthography reach back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it was only in the Batavian Republic that the introduction of uniform spelling was instituted. Treatises on language published in the first two decades of the Revolt, such as books on rhetoric, compilation of dictionaries and purist works (for examples, see Burke 2005:9-25), may well have been influential, but "the failure of the ideas put forth in these works to catch on in actual practice leads one to believe that their primary effect was to engender and sustain interest in the entire question of language standardization" (Howell 2000:139). Apart from the tendencies of this period, in which the southern dialects seemed to have more influence than the eastern and German dialects, the influence of German overall should not be underestimated. Van der Sijs (2004) stresses that this was a period in which many Germans came to the Low Countries. This is reflected in the presence of Germans in the VOC. Of the translators of the *Statenbijbel* several were German or had lived in German-speaking areas. German standardisation was somewhat ahead of that of the Netherlands and language formers and writers of grammars of the period borrowed from their colleagues to the east. Unlike the traditional view, Van der Sijs claims the influence of the southern dialects was rather short-lived and the northern influence can with hindsight be seen to have dominated (Van der Sijs 2004). The process can therefore not be seen as linear and consistent. Howell (2004:140) concludes that although an expansion of the role of Dutch as a written medium can be discerned, along with an increase in literacy, codification could not be said to have achieved in this period.

Literacy was affected by the Reformation, which propagated personal access to the scriptures. Although there were already schools in the cities, their number increased substantially due to the emphasis on education in what the Dutch Reformed Church considered the true Calvinist faith. The school was seen as a way of reaching a larger

group simultaneously. “By 1650 there were not only many schools in the cities but every village also offered an opportunity for elementary education” (Frijhoff & Spies 2004:238). A century later, there was a school within walking distance for almost every child in the Republic (Frijhoff & Spies 2004:239). The prominence of religious instruction meant the predominance of teachers with some – but by no means necessarily extensive – ecclesiastical training. Pedagogical training or knowledge of didactics knowledge did not seem to be a prerequisite: those who were literate might teach, even if they were former soldiers. Keeping the children quiet and maintaining order was a primary task. The “question of the quality of actual primary education around 1650 therefore remains open” (Frijhoff & Spies 2004:241). This question could be raised for the Cape as well, although there, as we shall see, there was no question of their being many schools, even in Cape Town.

In conclusion, the European ‘mother society’ of the settlement at the Cape proved to subsume a wide diversity of Germanic dialects, a prestige language, French, associated with education and an internal elite and also with an adjacent, frequently enemy, nation, and the supra-national language of science, Catholicism and higher learning in general, Latin. In addition, in the port cities and on board the merchant vessels, a hotchpotch of languages, dialects and jargons were the result of commercial realities of the day. Due to the long preeminent position of Portuguese shipping, some knowledge of Portuguese was an asset to any-one seeking a career or employment on the high seas. As it would be the VOC that took the languages of Europe to the southern tip of Africa, it is relevant that in the first half of the seventeenth century, the proportion of foreigners found amongst the crew members on its ships began to rise, reaching about 50%. After a period when this relation declined, it climbed again until after 1730 the Dutch were actually in the minority (De Bruijn 2009:138-139). The VOC crew would mostly speak a Dutch or related dialect, but would probably also have had exposure to and a smattering of Portuguese, or a French dialect of the Low Countries. Their literacy would range from well-educated (for the captains, officers, administrators and merchants, who would also know French and Latin) to barely literate or functionally illiterate for the soldiers and sailors. Multilingualism would be the order of the day and not unusual, but Dutch would remain the language of command, of writing and of religion.

For the initial period of emergence of Afrikaans, the multidialectism and multilingualism of the period in the United Provinces, the influence of the southern

dialects as ‘founder dialects’ at the Cape, the processes of koineisation underway in the cities and especially the ports, and the multilingualism promoted by nautical life are significant. Significant characteristics of the culture that developed in the Netherlands and were introduced to the Cape are many-layered, but certain prominent elements can be seen. These include the focus on trade, stimulated by the need for financing of the wars against the well-paid Spanish military; the prevalence of war; the prestige of French; the powerful position of the Calvinist form of Christianity, with its emphasis on individual reading of the Scriptures; the relative openness and tolerance of Dutch society to foreigners and people of other religious convictions; the degree of urbanisation and the spread of urban ‘burgher’ culture, including education at all levels and encompassing large portions of the population.

In the next section, a brief, thematic overview of the approximately 150 years of Dutch rule in southern Africa will be presented. This is of necessity a very truncated view, since the intention of understanding the language situation as it developed there is the paramount consideration. A few comments on sources are needed here. The historiography of South African is frequently a ‘committed’ historiography, with historians reflecting their conceptions of the course of history and the role of a particular element of South African society in it. Van Jaarsveld, an Afrikaner academic historian whose study of Afrikaner nationalism, published in 1957, was very influential, became more critical of the Afrikaner’s vision of the past in his later work. His work on South African historiography (1984), categorising it into settler, imperialist, Afrikaner republican and liberal, is adopted here. To this must be added a radical or revisionist school, and a black nationalist school. The settler, or colonial, school is closely linked with the work of the Canadian George McCall Theal. Bundy goes further and calls the writings of Theal (and Cory) “pro-settler (Bundy 1986:6) a most prolific and controversial writer who tried to write a complete history that would survive as a fundamental text acceptable to both English- and Afrikaans speaking South Africans, and adopting a pro-Afrikaner, anti-missionary and anti-black standpoint (Smith 1989:31-36). The imperialist school favoured the expansion of the British Empire, its achievements and benefits and concentrated on events from the first British occupation of the Cape, paying little attention to the 150 years focussed on here (Smith 1989:18-31).

For the Afrikaner nationalist school, two phases can be recognised, a pre-academic phase, written in Afrikaans or Dutch, in which the growth of an Afrikaner nationalism in the second half of the nineteenth century is reflected, and an Afrikaner-centric

academic or professional phase (Visser 2004:3). The latter had its base at the University of Stellenbosch and followed the principles of scientific writing of the German historian Leopold van Ranke, which stressed national history focussing on political and military events, and great men (Visser 2004:4). The rise of Afrikanerdom is a main theme. A more liberal approach entered Afrikaner history writing in the last third of the twentieth century, with writers such as Hermann Giliomee and André du Toit, who sought to show the non-monolithic nature of Afrikaner thinking. Prior to this, from the 1920s, the liberal school (Smith 1989:111-145) sought to shift the focus of history writing to all South Africans. These historians wrote at a time when liberal economics and classical liberalism came to the fore. It was this school that homed in on the idea that the frontier and the trekboer formed intolerant and racist attitudes and practices that would survive into the twentieth century (Bundy 1986:18). Macmillan, De Kiewiet, Marais and Walker are all writers in this liberal tradition, which culminated in the publication of the *Oxford History of South Africa*, which was a milestone in its recognition of the period before South Africa was 'discovered' by the Portuguese.

The revisionist or radical tradition had its roots in growing black resistance to the government, and represented South African history as a class struggle, as a society that had been brought into being by capitalism (Van Jaarsveld 1984:72-74). The true inhabitants of South Africa were considered to be the blacks, and the whites, associated with capitalism, were colonisers and exploiters, who oppressed the blacks (Visser 2004:10). There was also a heightened emphasis on social history, with the revisionists writing history 'from the bottom up', focussing on the lives of ordinary people (Visser 2004:11). Radical revisionist historiography influenced the emergence a black nationalist historiography, in which the emphasis shifts to the black point of view, reflecting their conceptions of South African history: (Visser 2004:14-15). This brings us up to the end of the twentieth century, with the end of apartheid and the beginnings of new directions in South African historiography.

For this dissertation, therefore, wide and varied reading in South African history proved necessary in order to contrast and compare the histories that stemmed from such opposing points of views. The one serious gap is the lack of a black perspective covering the 150 years of VOC rule, and difficulties in finding an appropriate source are the reason for this. Of course, there is agreement on many facts in the various schools, but interpretations do differ markedly. For this reason, the main sources used were chosen from several traditions: Walker (1968) as a liberal, English historian, Van

Jaarsveld (1961 and 1971) as an Afrikaans nationalist writer, Giliomee as a current, liberal writer in English from an Afrikaans background, and Legassick (1982), of the revisionist school, to add this perspective to the history of the Khoekhoen. Informing the dissertation are the other works consulted and used to create as balanced a global perspective as possible.



Figure 1. "Cape Colony cca. 1710 A.D."

(copied from Walker 1968:68)

Chapter 2

150 Years of Company Rule¹³

2.1. Introduction: from landing to bankruptcy

The first settlers of South Africa were the San, followed by the Khoekhoen and the Bantu-speaking tribes. In 1652 the VOC established a refreshment station at the Cape of Good Hope to serve its ships' needs. The VOC presided over the Cape until its bankruptcy at the end of the eighteenth century. In the intervening years, the settlement at the Cape, which had no industry or independent commerce, expanded through agriculture and population pressure, encountered the KhoeSan and the first waves of the Bantu-speaking peoples, and established a unique new society, incorporating as well a slave population of diverse origins. In the process, the European settlers changed and, loosening their ties with the Netherlands, metamorphosed into Afrikaners and speakers of Afrikaans, with genetic and affective ties to Africa (Krüger 1969:4-5). With the second British occupation of the Cape in 1806 would come a new dispensation and the challenge of a new culture and language.

¹³ This is a traditionally used, but somewhat imprecise expression. If we take 1652 at the starting point, exactly 150 years would be 1802. In actual fact, the British occupied the Cape in 1795, the VOC went bankrupt in 1799, the British retroceded the Cape to the Dutch Batavian Republic in 1803, and re-occupied the Cape in 1806, which was formally ceded to them in 1814. South Africa became a Republic independent of Britain in 1961, almost exactly three hundred years after Jan van Riebeeck landed in 1652. A rough division into two periods of about 150 years is useful when precision is not required.

2.1.1. Arrival and dispersal

The first Commander, Jan van Riebeeck, was to rule, conscientiously and ably, the Cape for 10 years. By the time of his departure, several of the factors that would determine South African history were already in place. So much so that Walker can assert, “[a]ll the economic and social problems which exercise South Africa to-day had begun to take shape before Van Riebeeck’s eyes. For, in South Africa at least, there is nothing whereof it may be said ‘See, this is new’. It hath been already of old time, which was before us” (Walker 1968:42, quoting Ecclesiastes 1:10). What then were these factors? The following relevant threads, can be identified:

- The arrival of the Europeans
- Contact with the indigenous peoples
- Slavery
- Settlement and expansion
- Government by a profit-oriented company
- The effect of the world ‘outside’

Thematically these can be described as arrivals (the introduction of new elements from outside), contact (co-operation, conflict and communication), dispersal (the process whereby the Europeans spread out geographically and whereby the indigenous people would be scattered or incorporated), and the broader context (civilisations of the East and the West, the VOC and the global mercantile trading structure, and wars). Later arrivals, namely the British and the Bantu-speaking peoples, would touch upon the same themes. These themes remain evident throughout the period and provide a point of orientation for the understanding of the period.

When Van Riebeeck left for the East in 1662, the machinery of government had been put into place, the first serious quarrel with the Khoekhoen (1659) had taken place, the first steps towards making the settlement dependent on slave labour had been taken, and the first Company servants had been released from Company service to become ‘free burghers ’ (1657). A little village, referred to as De Kaap, had been established, with the fort to the east and the Company Gardens to the south. The Company had its own farm, as did the Commander. According to Giliomee, the number of Europeans at the Cape had merely doubled, to about 150 (2003:2), but already they

constituted two classes of persons: Company servants and free burghers. Added to these, were what were then known as the Hottentots¹⁴ and the Bushmen¹⁵, and the slaves, of multiple origins. The instructions of the VOC had been followed, but already some of its principles and aims (friendly but distant relations with the natives and the establishment of an outpost but not a colony) had already had to be modified. Its overriding and justifying objective of commercial gain was still – as it would remain – the cornerstone and lodestar of its decisions.

Since the events of the first ten years turned out to be crucial to what came later, and since the following 140 years of Dutch rule were characterised more by continuity than fundamental changes, it is the foundations which will be presented in some detail below. The ways in which these early established tendencies continued will be dealt with more concisely, elaborating only on markedly altered or new elements, such as the contact with the Xhosa¹⁶.

2.2. Existing European structures and unforeseen developments

2.2.1. Government of the Cape

The decision-making structure for the Cape, which would remain almost unchanged throughout the VOC period (1652-1795) (Giliomee 2003:2), was as follows. Sovereign

¹⁴ Usually referred to in this dissertation as *Khoekhoe/n* and *Khoekhoe* for the language. There are alternate spellings, for example, Khoikhoi, and alternate conventions. PanSALB (the Pan South African Language Board), for example, uses the form Khoe for the language. Use of *Hottentot* is reserved for situations in which the historically used name is appropriate.

¹⁵ Usually referred to in this dissertation as *San*, although this is a more problematic term than Khoekhoe (above), since the Khoekhoe coined the term *San*, meaning *outsider*, and it can be seen as pejorative. However, Khoesan as a compound is in common use, as is *San* amongst anthropologists. PanSALB uses *San* for the language. Use of *Bushmen* is not considered derogatory in this dissertation and is used for situations in which the historically used name seems appropriate.

¹⁶ Nguni-speaking pastoralists, who also cultivated crops. The Xhosa moved slowly southwards and westwards as the Europeans moved eastwards. The meeting between the two would not occur on a single date, but by the late 1770s uneasy and intensive interaction already existed and would lead to a series of frontier wars, which would continue under British rule.

power was vested in the States-General, which transferred this by charter to the *Heeren Majores*, the seventeen directors, of the VOC¹⁷, who in turn appointed the Governor-General in Batavia. Instructions might come from the Seventeen, from one of the Chambers, or from Batavia. The Commander (later Governor) of the Cape had to keep a journal, which was sent to Holland, to the Chambers, each year, although there is doubt as to whether it was always read (Walker 1968:31). It was to the Governor-General in Batavia and his Council of India that the books of accounting had to be sent, and it was from there that orders came (until 1735, when this changed, Walker 1968:32). Nierstrasz notes that “the Directors in the Republic and the High Government in Batavia, ..., lacked the required accounting skills to assess what was happening financially within the Company” (1978:9), a weakness that would over time contribute to the decline and eventual bankruptcy of the VOC. The geographic isolation of the Cape – three months journey to Batavia – had as a consequence long delays between despatches and answers. Communication between Batavia and Amsterdam took even longer and went through the Cape. This meant that the local government had very extensive powers. This local government was the Commander (later the Governor) plus the Council of Policy, which was essentially a ship’s council to which could be added officers from ships in the Bay. If a superior officer was present, he led the Council, but such commissioners were rare. The first high commissioner to visit the Cape came in 1685 when the refreshment station became a colony (Walker 1968:49). The Council of Policy was executive, legislature and part of the judiciary. Over time all of these bodies accommodated increasing involvement of the settlers, the *free burghers*, allowing nominated members to speak on behalf of their fellows.

Whether one conceives of this governing body as a government or as management is a question of tradition and perspective. This lack of clear definition is reflected in the somewhat anomalous position of the governed. These included the direct servants of the Company, the freed servants of the Company who bore children born on African soil, the slaves and the indigenes, who were nominally free. Despite the concerted efforts of the VOC to keep strict control over the Cape, it was the profit motive that led to the decisions that would lead to events developing in unforeseen ways.

¹⁷ Also referred to in the literature and in this dissertation as the *Here XVII* or the (*Lords*) *Seventeen*.

2.2.2. The governed: the free burghers

From the point of view of the Company, the main rationale for the existence of *De Kaap*, as the settlement was initially known, was the provision of meat, grain, fresh water and wine for their ships, and of facilities for the recuperation of the weakened crew of its ships. The objective of a self-sufficient post based on intensive agriculture had not been achieved initially: official farming had not proved to be an immediate success. Cattle could be obtained by barter, but the Khoekhoen were not agriculturalists. Expensive importation of supplies was to be avoided and the costs of upkeep needed to be reduced. The solution was to release nine married Company servants from Company service in 1657, to set up as farmers (Walker 1968:3). Due to this measure, their salaries would be saved, the onus of producing grain would be shifted, and the defence of the settlement stiffened (thereby once again saving costs, this time on the salaries of soldiers) (Van Jaarsveld 1971:39). From this moment on the permanence of the settlement was established. If one sees this step as a symbolic point creating a new kind of person, one attached primarily to South African soil and soon to bear children who would be born on that soil, then this can be seen as the birth of the Afrikaner nation (Van Jaarsveld 1971:39). This interpretation would gain ground in the late nineteenth and twentieth century when the myth of Afrikanerdom grew and was actively promoted. Even a more limited view of the significance of this act points beyond it to its consequences: the differentiation of the tiny European population in terms of legal status, the introduction of a new perspective grounded in Africa, and the first step towards expansion and occupation of land based on a European conception of occupation and property rights. This condition of permanence would favour the development of a new, extra-territorial Dutch dialect, but the form that that dialect would take would be influenced as well by the other inhabitants of the Cape.

The status of the burghers was ambiguous – on their part, they saw themselves as burghers and citizens and therefore similar in status to the burghers in the Netherlands; on the part of the VOC, they were *servants*, that is employees, of the Company to which they owed the privilege of their freedom, a privilege which could also be revoked (Giliomee, 2003:5ff.). The fact that they were free at all was a result of a change in policy on the part of the VOC. In point of fact, they were ‘Company burghers’, having to swear an oath to both the States-General and the Company, under whose authority they lived and to which they paid taxes. The Company could – and on occasion did – banish them or force them to return to its service (Giliomee 2003:7;54). Being a free burgher was neither

easy nor particularly profitable, and dangerous withal. The only way out of this situation was to stow away on a ship and leave the Cape, or to leave with legal permission. Research by De Wet accounts for 570 of the first 1,613 free burghers in the first 50 years. Of these thirty burghers were banished, thirty-nine taken back into Company service, 103 left with permission, and seventy stowed away (cited in Giliomee 2003:21). This means that nearly half (42,46%) did not persevere. Even if these proportions are not exactly true for all 1,613 people, the drop-out rate is very high. Giliomee quotes a visiting commissioner (that is a Company official) as saying in 1676 that the “Dutch colonists here bear the name of free men but they are so ... restrained in everything that the absence of freedom is rendered only too evident” (Giliomee 2003:10). As late as 1774-78 eighteen burghers were banished by the Fiscal or Chief Prosecutor (Giliomee 2003:54).

Those that stayed and married typically had large families and their numbers increased as a result (Giliomee 2003:28)¹⁸. There were tentative experiments in supported settlement, mostly under the Governors Van der Stel, and a steady trickle of men leaving the service of the Company to become free burghers. Consequently, the settlement expanded.

Until 1679, the settlement consisted of Cape Town itself, the Table valley between Table Mountain and the sea, the banks of the Liesbeek River Hout Bay and the Tygerberg-Koeberg area. In 1679 Simon van der Stel became Commander, with permission to expand the colony. He first made agricultural land available along the Eerste River and then the area about fifty kilometres east of Cape Town which would be named for him: Stellenbosch (Saunders 1988:55). By 1687, 60 freehold grants had been made and 100 families lived in the vicinity of the village (Raidt 1983:11). This was fertile land, suitable for growing grain crops and for vineyards; intensive farming methods could be successfully applied (Saunders 1988:55). The Seventeen supported immigration in the period 1685-1707, offering free passages and the population expanded rapidly, enlarging the community dramatically in percentage if not in absolute numbers.

By far the largest group of immigrants were the Calvinist French Huguenots, fleeing religious persecution in their home country as a consequence of the revocation of the

¹⁸ One of the best-known Afrikaner families today, the Van der Merwes, stemmed from Willem Schalkzoon van der Merwe and his wife Elsie, who had thirteen children. Their fourth son and his wife Anna had seventeen children and 135 grand-children (Giliomee 2003:28).

Edict of Nantes and finding refuge amongst their fellow Calvinists in the United Provinces. The VOC ordered that they were to be treated as if they were free-born Dutchmen (Walker 1968:51). They were never a large group - the original members of parties arriving in 1688-89 numbered less than 200 in total - but their influence on society and the economy was out of proportion to their numbers (Walker 1968:51). Many of them were skilled or relatively well-educated in comparison to the other free burghers. They were settled in the areas of Drakenstein (today Paarl) and Franschoek (Newton-King 1999:12), but not in a closed community, since there was a certain political risk in admitting them, relations between the Dutch and the French nations being strained (Walker 1968:52). The Huguenots were therefore interspersed among German and Dutch settlers.

As a consequence of the pattern of settlement, the 'Dutch' populace in the first fifty years was actually comprised of a mix of European nations, a sociolinguistically pertinent fact. The proportions were the following: 40.4 per cent from the Netherlands, 32.3 per cent from German-speaking territories, 8.5 per cent from France, and 6.9 per cent born at the Cape (Giliomee 2003:11). The Dutch East India Company was hard pressed to find enough men to man its ships: working for the Company was not well-paid and the risk of disease on board and in the east was high (Newton-King 1999:13). Given this situation, recruits from 1630 on were often foreign, the majority coming from German-speaking territories, especially from those areas where very small farms predominated and migrant labour in summer had long been a practice, and in the aftermath of the Thirty Years War, which led to massive emigration to the Netherlands. Unlike the Huguenots, who were mostly married, the majority of German immigrants were single males. Ponelis (1993:18) cites figures given by De Wet according to which 34 per cent (357 persons) of a sample of 1,057 adult free men between 1657 and 1707 were Germans; as were 29 per cent (129 persons) of married men; and 9 per cent (38) of a total of 426 married women. Of these Germans, those speaking Low German outnumbered the High German speakers at the Cape in a ratio of 11 to 9 (Ponelis 1993:17). Many of the soldiers of the garrison were German and the majority of them were illiterates from the working class. However, some of the approximately 10,000 German Company servants who served at the Cape held leading positions. Private tutors and 'public' schoolmasters were often German.

As we have seen, in the brief period in which immigration to the Cape was assisted and promoted by the Company, both French and German immigrants complemented the contingent from the Netherlands. Within a short time, the farms allocated to the new

settlers were overproducing (Van Jaarsveld 1971:40), and the tension between the governing Company officials and the governed who had settled came to a head. With the institution of the free burgher system, the Company has explicitly forbidden its servants to supply the market with food, since this would endanger the livelihood of the food producing burghers. In 1685, an exception was made for Simon van der Stel, who received the farm Constantia. His son and successor Willem Adriaan van der Stel would receive the farm Vergelegen, and several other high officials also received generous grants of land, where they indulged in an opulent lifestyle. A conflict of interests arose due to the governor's efforts to get a monopoly in the sale of wine, meat, fish and wheat for himself and his clique (Giliomee 2003:24). The burghers took action to protect themselves, developing thereby a sense of common cause and distinguishing themselves as settlers from the transient Company servants. Spokesman for the Burghers was Adam Tas, who was – untypically - an educated man stemming from the Dutch middle class. He drafted a petition, signed by many burghers, to the authorities, accusing the VOC officials at the Cape of misconduct. The officials countered by collecting supportive signatures. Adam Tas and the ringleaders were arrested and some burghers deported. Yet the matter did not die and in the end it was the burghers who were victorious: the governor was recalled and tried in Amsterdam and the officials forbidden to own land or to trade on the Cape market (Giliomee 2003:25). The burgher victory was significant for establishing the rights and sense of community of the burghers – and also for ending the experiment with immigration. No more assisted immigrants would settle at the Cape until the English 1820 Settlers. In the years from 1701 to 1795 the rate of growth of the free burgher population was 2.6 per cent per annum. In 1753 the population reached 5,419 and in 1795, 14,929 (Newton-King 1999:12). The occupation of land had kept pace with the growth in population.

2.2.3. The owned: the slaves

The presence of the two elements, slaves and free burghers, was related and they can be seen as solutions proposed by the Company, based on commercial reasoning, to local problems. The settlement was not self-supporting and by freeing men to grow crops (under terms and conditions specified by the Company and obviously serving the interests of the Company) the cost of their salaries could be saved; but these free burghers required labour and the local people had little inclination to provide it, so the free burghers were allowed to buy slaves on credit. With the arrival of the slaves, the mix of peoples became enriched. Up to this point in this chapter, the focus has been on the

civilisation of Europe and the form of its transplantation to the southern tip of Africa. Now the focus shifts to the European practice of slavery and the impact of the East transmitted through the slaves on the nascent society at the Cape. (The influence of the East would also be filtered through the VOC servants, whose experience of trading there would affect their Company culture, their mode of dealing with the slaves, and their own life-style).

2.2.3.1. The institution and justification of slavery by the Dutch

The Portuguese voyages of discovery under Antonio Gonsalvez and Nuno Tristan took back in 1442 not only gold dust, but ten slaves, who were converted to Christianity, thereby reviving in Europe the institution of slavery (Walker 1968:13). In the following ten years, one thousand slaves were landed at Lisbon. The monopoly of the slave trade was given for five years to Fernando Gomez on condition that he discovered 100 leagues of coast each year. (Walker 1968:13) Exploration, profit, and conversion to Catholicism became intertwined. The Protestant Dutch of the VOC likewise felt able, as Christians, to trade in and keep slaves, albeit with the proviso that no Christian be kept as a slave (Walker 1968:71).

Although there were always voices raised against slavery, in the seventeenth century it was generally accepted and there was no moral stumbling block to the importation of slaves to the Cape, even in the Christian worldview. In the United Provinces, biblical references were used “to produce a specific slaving discourse with a Protestant face. The so-called ‘Ham ideology’ based on the curse of Canaan (Genesis 9:25-27) served as the most important biblical justification for the enslavement of Africans and Asians” (Vink 2003:§30). In the seventeenth century debate on the involvement of Christians in the slave trade, supporters argued that the colonial empire in fact presented an opportunity to expand the kingdom of God and insisted that in many cases enslavement was in fact a “life-saving act of Christian charity and compassion” (Groenewald 2008). As we have seen, the United Provinces combined civic responsibility, an allegiance to the ‘true Christian Reformed religion’ and Republican freedom, with a commitment to trade (Groenewald 2008:1). Since the Netherlands profited from its participation in the international slave trade, this proved the strongest of these three factors: the Company was active in the lively eastern slave trade, but did not allow it in the home country, where this form of unfree labour could not be established. As for the religious aspect, the VOC commitment to the salvation of souls at the Cape was more

apparent on paper than in practice¹⁹ and little effort was expended by it on encouraging missionary work (Groenewald 2008:1). Where the Portuguese, who had actively set about converting the heathens they enslaved, had had a measure of success in the Indies, the VOC did take some steps to counter this.

In the Indian Ocean area, slavery had had a long history in the complex social systems of the area, drawing on Hindu, Muslim and Southeast Asian traditions (Vink 2003:§22-29). By the time the Dutch East India Company arrived on the scene, the then current Christian, Western version of slavery had been practised by their forerunners and enemies, the Catholic Portuguese, who would continue to be key-players in the slave trade in the seventeenth century even as they lost ground to the Dutch. Whilst the theoretical debate continued in Europe, in Asia “slavery found virtually universal acceptance on a practical level among self-righteous religious, military, and civil officials of the Dutch East India Company” (Vink 2003:§31). Their arguments for slavery included, in addition to the above-mentioned, “the need to populate settlement colonies ... the right of war and conquest ..., the “uncivilized” nature of the “servile” indigenous peoples, natural, contractual law ..., and financial-budgetary considerations” (Vink 2003:§31). The VOC adapted to the existing customs in the East as regards slave ownership, including the use and treatment of the slaves. This was in line with general practice at the time, its introduction in European colonies being the norm if land was abundant and labour a scarce resource (Giliomee 2003:12). Jan van Riebeeck himself owned slaves (by 1657 a total of 18) and considered solving the problems with the indigenous peoples (the KhoeSan), by sending them away as slaves to the Indies (Giliomee 2003:8). Chattel slavery was therefore an integral element of the seafaring and trade activities of the Company, and its introduction at the Cape not surprising, but neither was it a foregone conclusion. Once introduced, it was an application of the system already in use in the VOC settlements in the East Indies, subject to existing regulations (the Statutes of India, 1642, and their modifications), and applied by VOC officials who had had previous experience of slavery in the East Indies.

The decision to import slaves to the Cape to do menial work was made early: the instructions not to try to enslave the Khoekhoen, the willingness of the Khoekhoen to

¹⁹ The *Remonstrantie* suggesting the establishment of the refreshment station included the hope that many souls would be saved. Walker (1968:31) wryly comments “these things still looked well in a prospectus”.

barter and their reluctance to become workers of the sort to which Europeans were accustomed, the need for labour, and the potential availability of slaves all made the decision to import slaves a logical step. Van Riebeeck had to solve the problems related to his assignment and needed labour to help erect the fort, storage buildings, homes, the hospital; develop general infrastructure such as roads and ditches; establish of brick-works and quarries; lay out the gardens and cultivate grain crops; cut and collect firewood, as well as all the tasks associated with the upkeep of these. Furthermore, these first steps had to be taken quickly. Clearly, the labour resources at his disposal (the men of the garrison, numbering about 100 to 200 in the first decade (Armstrong 1982:81)) were inadequate to the task and needed to be expanded. The rationale for the establishment of the refreshment station meant that labour from passing ships could not provide a real solution, since the physical needs of the travellers for rest and recuperation precluded their use as an effective temporary labour force. Although the decision in the Cape was taken early by van Riebeeck, it was ignored or refused by his superiors until 1656, when a letter arrived urging the freeing of Company employees to become free burghers and allowing the import of slaves (Bauermeester 2002:32).

Once the decision had been taken, the institution of slavery had far-reaching consequences for society, and for the development of the local Dutch-based vernacular. In this respect the society at the Cape was not to follow the model of society in Holland. Status became assigned to those who owned slaves and were thus absolved from manual labour. The use of slaves committed the economy to a structure where the ownership of slaves was a sign of prosperity but also an ongoing cost, and where the execution of labour did not lead to the development of a consumer market. The alien Europeans created a need for labour that had not existed for the hunter-gather or pastoralist indigenous peoples, and used alien slaves to do the work, thereby stamping a stigma on such labour, leading to the attitude that “[t]o be a servant doing manual work in the employ of someone else carried the connotation of slave status” (Giliomee 2003:12).²⁰ The arrival of the slaves meant a complication of the language situation as well. Whereas the original set-up had entailed the intermittent contact of the Khoekhoe and Dutch

²⁰ Although this stigma was at the outset not race-based and the society at the Cape would remain in this regard relatively open, over time the association of manual labour with labourers of colour would define societal relations (see Giliomee 2003 for a discussion of this process). This gap in status was accentuated by the Dutch (and other colonial nations) “innate conviction of white superiority” (Boxer 1977:233). Armstrong (1982:103) refers to Fernando Cardoso’s opinion whereby slavery defines freedom in a slave society – those who own slaves are the free.

languages, the new dispensation potentially added the various languages of the slaves and the established lingua francas of the eastern spice and slave trade routes.

2.2.3.2. Slavery at the Cape

There were only 11 Company slaves, working in the garrison, during the first five years (Raidt 1983:10). In 1658 two shiploads of slaves arrived from West Africa, aboard the *Hasselt* and the *Amersfoort*. The slaves from the latter were mostly children and the sick-comforter was instructed to teach them the basics of Christianity, rewarding them with tobacco and brandy (Walker 1968:40)²¹. The labour needs of the free burghers enjoyed priority. This first importation was not a success: many of these slaves died of disease or fled. The burghers concluded that West African slaves were to be avoided. In the future slaves were brought from East Africa, Mozambique, Madagascar, and south and south-east Asia (Byrnes). For a while, until 1662, the importation of slaves was reduced, a situation that would change only fifteen years later (Raidt 1983:10). A visiting commissioner, Rijckloff van Goens, gave instructions that the slaves were to be well-treated and taught the basics of agriculture and a trade.²²

It was specified that the slaves were not to be addressed in Portuguese, in line with the general language policy of the VOC. Dutch was to be the language used between owner and slave (Liebenberg n.d.: 44). The need for such a rule carried the implication that at least some of the slaves and some of the Company servants spoke Portuguese or the Portuguese-based pidgin in common use in the Indies. The interest of the Company was in the benefit provided by the slaves and in ensuring ease of communication on the part of its own employees, the human cost of depriving the slaves of their language was not a factor. Ensuring that slaves did not have a common language was a common technique to make conspiracy impossible and contributed to the development of creole languages in plantation societies (see in this regard Holm 1988, 1989, and Arends, Muysken & Smith 1995). Language deprivation could contribute to the perception of slaves as brutish.

²¹ The slaves thus acquired were from the area of present-day Angola (Walker, 1968:40). Many of them were children (Ross Torments 1983:11). Since the sick-comforter had been instructed to teach these slaves the rudiments of the Dutch language and Christianity, the experiment can be seen as the beginning of schooling in South Africa.

²² Van Goens also relaxed slightly the strict terms binding the free burghers (Walker 1968:38) and overrode Van Riebeeck's prohibition of private trade with the natives, although Van Riebeeck did succeed in convincing the Seventeen to ban private cattle-barter.

Although at the Cape there was to be no large-scale slave uprising, the slaves continued to try to desert until slavery was abolished at the Cape 180 years after it commenced (Ross 1983:12). On occasion, they even managed to set up temporary settlements of their own (Saunders 1988:49). Slavery was enforced by “the massive use of judicial violence” (Ross 1983:2). The first two proclamations allowed for slaves to be put in chains (to prevent their escaping) and allowed flogging only with the consent of the Commander (Giliomee 2003:12). Later measures taken with regard to the keeping of slaves would be revised by Governor Ryk Tulbagh in 1754, when he codified all the slave laws and penalties (Walker 1968:85, Van Jaarsveld 1971:32). Punishment of recalcitrant slaves was gruesome, but one needs to bear in mind that in the eighteenth century forms of punishment that seem horrific to our minds were meted out, often before execution, not only to slaves. (Giliomee 2003:46). Research into slavery at the Cape has brought to light much information of value, relating also to the lives and conditions of life of the slaves, yet, little is known of the subjective experience of the slaves. Material from which it would be possible to reconstruct the experience of slaves, the dynamics of their everyday lives and of their relationships with each other and their masters is scarce (Ross 1983:6). Much of the information that is available, stems from the records of the criminal courts, including the Council of Justice (Saunders 1988:49). As Ross points out, “These, almost by definition, deal with occasions when something has gone wrong” (1995:36), and cites research indicating that slaves were most often tried for delicts for which anyone, irrespective of their status, would have been punished if found guilty (1995:41). All information gleaned from these sources has to be considered in the light of the above, and taking into account the circumstances of interrogation and transcription.

2.2.3.3. Sources of the slaves

Slaves arrived at the Cape in three ways (Armstrong 1982:82-88):

1. Company expeditions to the slave-markets of Madagascar and elsewhere in or near East Africa. Records exist of these expeditions and show a total of about 4,300²³

²³ The numbers need to be adjusted upwards by about 10% to accommodate the slaves brought for private trade by Company officials without the knowledge or permission of the VOC (Armstrong 1982:84).

slaves (66% from Madagascar) that were brought to the Cape. The Company took previously acquired slaves from Madagascar with them to serve as interpreters.²⁴

2. Return voyages of the VOC ships to Europe. Trade in slaves was a lucrative form of income for travellers from the East. Ships' officers returning from the East would buy a few slaves and sell them at the Cape en route home. The VOC allowed officials to take personal slaves with them to the Cape (but if they took them home with them to the Netherlands, they had to be freed). This rule was increasing liberally interpreted, and it is hard to estimate the number of slaves that were sold privately to the local burghers in this manner, but an average of about 20 per year seems realistic. Since these were generally very valuable slaves with experience as domestic servants or training as artisans, they could expect better conditions and a longer life. Their contribution to the society at the Cape was out of proportion to their numbers.

3. Foreign slave traders en route to the Americas from Madagascar or East Africa. The VOC seldom bought such slaves, and had to give permission for them to be sold to the free burghers (although this was not always adhered to). Before the 1780s the number of these slaves was probably small, but the economic boom in those years led to a marked upswing, estimated at about 200 to 300 slaves imported per year.

In addition to the people the VOC forced to migrate as slaves were the so-called *bandieten*, or prisoners transported to the Cape from Indonesia (Ross 1980b:13). These also included political prisoners, either convicted or banished. The VOC categorised the people it forced to migrate as slaves, convicts and political prisoners. They were then removed to other sites of the VOC against their will within the slave trade, penal transportation and political exile (Ward 2003:5). Robben Island was used as a prison at the Cape. Some people of standing spent time, often with their retinue, in political exile at the Cape. The *bandieten* lived and worked in most cases with the slaves and the documents do not always differentiate between them.

If the sources from which the slaves were obtained were diverse, their places of origin were even more so. Coming as they did from a variety of continents and cultures, the slaves did not have much in common. The slaves from the East in particular formed a

²⁴ It is an intriguing question why the lingua franca of the East Coast of Africa, Swahili, did not trickle down to the Cape, especially in view of the fact that slaving trips were regularly undertaken to the 'Swahili Coast' and slaves acquired from there (Ross 1986).

heterogeneous group, in which no single geographical source dominated (Armstrong 1982:88). They brought their own languages, but often there was no-one with whom to speak it. The same is true of their culture. They learnt some Dutch and a creolized form of Portuguese survived until the end of the Company period (Giliomee 2003:46). Most slave owners had only a few slaves, extensive plantation-type slave compounds were not found: the only large slave-owner was the Company. (Saunders 1988:51). Consequently, the slave population remained fragmented and seldom formed a consolidated group.

2.2.3.4. Population growth

The number of VOC slaves exceeded 300 in the 1670s and grew slowly throughout the eighteenth century, never exceeding 1000. The Company was consistently the largest single slave owner, lodging many of its slaves in the Slave Lodge²⁵ at the foot of the Gardens. Until 1679 (the establishment of Stellenbosch), these slaves (310) outnumbered those of the burghers (191). In 1692 the balance switched and by 1750 there were 10 slaves owned by burgher for each slave owned by the Company. In 1793 the ratio was 30:1. There was only a minimal increase in the VOC slave population in the eighteenth century despite the continuing imports, suggesting that the higher death rate more than compensated for the high birth rate. There is much less documentation about the slaves of the burghers, not even a list of names exists. Although slaves were not taxable assets, the tax records do give the number of slaves owned by each slave-owner – with the exception of the Company officials (Armstrong 1982:91-99). Details about diet, clothing, work conditions and incentives exist for the VOC slaves but not for the much more numerous burgher slaves.

A steady increase in the slave population, attributable to the expansion in agriculture, can be seen in the years of VOC rule, with only a few dips and peaks coinciding with periods of disease or variations in the economy. The growth in the slave population keeps pace with the growth in the burgher population, although these total figures hide certain fundamental differences, which, as we shall, have consequences for patterns of language use. Striking amongst these, are the markedly greater proportion of

²⁵ The building, surrounding an inner courtyard, was 86m by 42m and accommodated men, women and children and even the *bandieten*. There was little privacy and the separation of men and women, adults and children was true more in theory than in practice. The concentration of people in one place facilitated the contraction of diseases. For example, the smallpox epidemic of 1713 killed 200 slaves in 6 months, and about 300 in 1753-54.

males in the slave population (a factor seldom forgotten by their masters who feared concerted slave violence against them); the relatively stable, near one-to-one ratio of slave and burgher women, and the relatively constant, but large discrepancy in the percentage of children²⁶. By the time of the first British occupation of the Cape in 1795, the slaves outnumbered Europeans, having overtaken them in 1748.

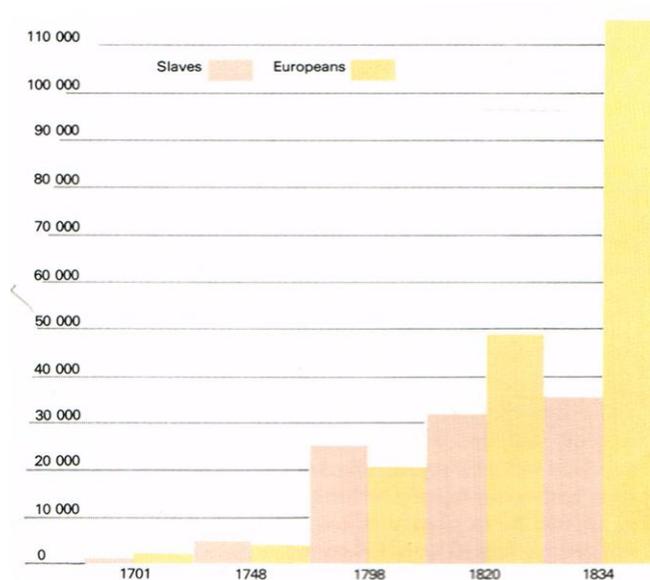


Figure 1. "Number of slaves compared to number of burghers for the period 1701-1834. (Copied from Saunders 1988:53)"

Relations with the slaves could not follow the pattern of the parent country, since slavery was prohibited in Holland, but it could follow the pattern of other, more important and previously established VOC settlements. It would be the influence of Batavia that predominated in social relations with the slaves. This influence came both through the Company officials who had served earlier in the East – as was the case with Jan van Riebeeck – and through the Eastern slaves who formed the culturally dominant portion of the slave population of the Cape. The social roles that would have contributed to this influence were the power enjoyed by the Company officials and the fact that due to a shortage of European women, many European men had relationships with slave women. These relationships could be either outside wedlock, or marriage, in which case the women would have been manumitted slaves. In 1685 marriages between Dutch men

²⁶ Armstrong (1982:101) adds that this discrepancy is somewhat mitigated by the fact that slave children were considered to be adult as a younger age.

and slave women were prohibited (although inter-racial marriages continued since people of mixed heritage were not affected by the ban) (www.anc.org.za). The shortage of women was marked: in 1700 the proportion was two men to one women in the Cape district and 3:1 in the interior (Giliomee 2003:18). (In addition to stable liaisons, there were also casual sexual contacts, particularly between the women of the slave lodge and the sailors and soldiers passing through, and many children were born of such contacts, leaving lasting genetic markers in South African society (Giliomee 2003:18). Records of children of mixed origin born to slave women owned by the free burghers were not kept (Raidt 1983:10).

The cultural impact of women would have been through their contact with the children of their owners, and their activities in the households, which included preparing the meals and buying food for the household, and accompanying their owners when those went out (Giliomee 2003:46). The slave women were also used as wet nurses, contributing to the low birth rate of child of slave others. Giliomee summarises the characteristics of Batavia, which the Cape acquired as follows:

the power that the officials wielded, the strict Company etiquette, the importance of the church as an institution, the defective education, the conspicuous consumption, the dependence on slave labor, the use of Malay and Portuguese as *lingua franca* in the early decades, and the introduction of the office of fiscal to maintain law and order (Giliomee 2003:15).

The situation at the Cape and in Batavia would take different paths in the future, but at the time of the initial settlement of the Cape, Batavia was the powerful other pole of the VOC, and had a formative and continuing influence on the society at the Cape. Batavia had an extensive Company presence and a small free burgher population of only 340 (in 1674) married burghers “operating in the interstices of the economy” as retailers of wine, as publicans or as artisans. They had a less privileged position in society than the Company officials but had somewhat more freedom to engage in smuggling and private trade (Giliomee 2003:15). Proportionally, the free burgher population at the Cape was much higher, and the burghers there were predominantly farmers, although they filled the same roles as their Batavian counter-parts as well. The Company officials were very cognisant of their rank and rights of precedence. As at the Cape, wealth was conspicuously displayed; so much so, that regulations were issued in 1755 to control the display of pomp and reinforce the order of society in which the Company officials were to

have precedence over those who were merely rich (Ross 1999:9). Further, more subtle, factors would also have played a part, such as the indirect influence of the Indonesian civilisation (Giliomee 2003:15). As a VOC outpost, the Cape continuously came under the influence of both Batavia and Holland.

2.2.3.5. The Cape remains a slave-based economy

A crucial decision about the role of the slaves in the Cape was taken in 1717. This period came after the long wars with the French, after the arrival of the French Huguenots, and after the period of colonisation and expansion under the Van der Stel governors which ended with the recall of Willem Adriaan van der Stel. The Cape had a new and energetic governor, de Chavonnes, a society that had been rocked by the high death tolls of the 1713 smallpox epidemic, which had decimated the Khoekhoen population, and a struggling economy which did not produce much that was in demand (attempts at wool-growing and forestry had failed, the quality of the wine and brandy produced was varied). As Walker points out, it was difficult to calculate the cost of the economy, which had to carry costs (such as that of the hospital and storage facilities) which should have formed part of the Company's general expenditure, but did not get debited with items such as the cost of ammunition or the cost of materials from Holland. The practice of bookkeeping suffered from the generally inadequate and intricate systems used by the Company. Nevertheless, revenue always lagged behind revenue, and would continue to do so for the duration of VOC rule (Walker 1968:74). In the interests of remedying this state of affairs, the Directors turned to de Chavonnes and his Council with questions and suggestions.

One of the issues was whether slave labour was an economically rational system in the Cape, or whether free White labour would be cheaper. On the issue of white labour, the councillors were unanimous that white labour was "lazy, incompetent, intractable, liable to drunkenness and, withal, more expensive than slave labour" (Walker 1968:7). There was only one person who represented a different way of thinking and that was the brother of the Governor and captain of the garrison, who argued that money spent on slaves was 'dead money' since the poor reproduction rate of the Cape slaves meant that slaves had to be constantly imported, using much-needed foreign exchange (Giliomee 2003:90). De Chavonnes was outvoted and the Cape economy remained bound to slavery, with a White population increasing averse to manual labour; remained deprived of new immigrants (and the infusion of new skills and ideas they would have brought

with them); and remained tied to a rigidly restricted market, favouring the few (Walker 1968:75-76). Typically, the discussion had hinged on the issue of the proportion of costs to benefits. Slavery (and the subjugation/exploitation of the KhoeSan and later the Bantu) revolved around commercial interests (cost-benefit analyses), with moral issues seemingly ignored, glossed over or avoided. In the event that human suffering or inequity was addressed, the particular systems were justified by some then current philosophy (the heathen/Christian dichotomy; the civilisation/barbarism contrast; Social Darwinism, imperialism/nationalism, etcetera). After the decision taken in 1717, the issue was seriously addressed again only during the First British Occupation of the Cape (from 1795).

2.2.4. Betwixt and between:

2.2.4.1. The status of slaves and free blacks

The legal administration structure, too, was taken over from Batavia. Social groups based on legal status were defined: Company servants, burghers and slaves. From the outset, the Khoekhoen were considered to be outside colonial law. Added to these legal distinctions was the split between heathen and Christian. The position of manumitted slaves was based on Roman law, which allowed for full citizens and freed persons who were, however, not full citizens. It was this latter category which predominated at the Cape. Only slaves who were able to speak and write Dutch could be freed (Giliomee 2003:19), adding a check to the value of educating slaves. Manumission was for a long time only vaguely regulated. Since Christians could not be enslaved, slaves who converted to Christianity and met the literacy requirement had a good claim to freedom if they were black and an even better claim if they were of mixed blood (Walker 1968:2). Despite this, there were repeated initiatives to Christianise the slaves (Walker 1968:71). By 1682, the number of half-breed slave children and freed slaves had grown to such an extent that the Directors considered marking out a reserve for them (Walker 1968:71). Regulations of when slaves could be manumitted varied over time, and included the possibility of buying their own freedom. Some slaves did skilled work, for example, as smiths, and could buy their freedom from their earnings (Van Jaarsveld 1971:32).

Ross (1980b:2) points out that neither precise figures nor a quantitative breakdown of slave occupations is possible, even for Cape Town. In addition to the many Company

slaves employed in the administration, the various stores and the workshops of the Company, there were the privately owned slaves. For these, Ross describes three broad categories of occupation: household servants, those involved in productive work (craftsmen or fishermen, who could be sent out to work for *koelie geld*, that is wages that accrued to their masters), and retailers (mostly of foodstuffs, likewise for the profit of their owners) (1980:6-11). These activities necessitated the use of language, providing extensive language contact, in all combinations, and skilful use of language led to persona advantage.

Of the Company slaves, the most controversial were the *Caffers*, who served as officers of justice under the *Fiscaal* and the landdrosts of the country districts. They formed a sort of elementary police force, keeping order in the streets of Cape Town, and also working as assistants to the executioner and administering floggings (Ross 1980b:4). Ross cites a *Fiscaal* who described them as “very evil and the scum of humanity” (Ross 1980b:4).

Freed slaves were called “free blacks” and their number gradually increased in the course of the eighteenth century, reaching fifteen to twenty per cent of the free population. Since the origin of most of the slaves was Madagascar and Asia, the term *black* in this period meant something different to what it would later mean in South Africa (Berger 2009:34). In this regard, the slave in Cape Town was in a more favourable position than his counterpart in the hinterland. “Robert Shell’s investigation of eighteenth century manumission has shown no clear case of a farm labourer being freed. Almost all the 1 075 cases came from Cape Town, and were freed as a result of the bonds of affection built up between them and their master/mistress, or because of their own efforts.” (cited in Ross 1980b:12). Despite their originally enjoying, at least on paper, the same rights as burghers, these rights were eroded in the course of the eighteenth century (Raidt 1983:11).

Some free blacks became farmers. In a study of free blacks in Stellenbosch in the period 1679 – 1720, Hattingh establishes that there are court cases where free blacks are referred to as free burghers, that free blacks and whites signed formal contracts with each other, that free blacks also employed *knechts*, as is evident from court cases about non-payment of wages, and that there is evidence of whites inviting free blacks to join them on hunting expeditions (Hattingh 2008:5-6). Both groups used slave labour, employed white *knechten*, and worked together on community tasks, such as

maintenance of roads and ditches. Their numbers were always less than those of the white free burghers and, with time, the children, especially the daughters, merged into the white community by marriage. Newton-King's detailed study of a sodomy trial also points to the fluidity and openness of the society at the Cape in the early years, confirming that free blacks could be landowners and concluding that "relationships between free blacks and free burghers (terms which were sometimes – but not often – applied to the same person) ... were relatively harmonious and even egalitarian", at least in the area she describes (Newton-King 2008:13). She cites Heese (1984) and Schoeman (2001) who "pointed to a turn for the worse in the status of free blacks during the first quarter of the eighteenth century" (Newton-King 2008:38-39). This touches on an on-going debate about when the patterns of racial dominance associated with South Africa developed and stabilised, and whether the social stratification was racial from the outset or not. For our discussion, it is relevant that the initial years were ones of flux, and that contact between languages and speakers was less constrained by social distance than in societies with more established customs and structures of differentiation. The position of the slaves is not as clear-cut as a retrospective paradigm would lead us to expect, and expectations generated by knowledge of plantation cultures can be useful to only a limited degree in a situation where only few slave-owners possessed more than a handful of slaves.

2.2.4.2. A further layer of society

Close in many ways to the status of the freed blacks were the so-called *knechts*, who formed about one quarter of the free white adult men living at the Cape in the first fifty years. Saunders defines *knecht* as a "farm foreman or, under the Dutch East India Company, a slave supervisor, usually an unskilled European labourer or soldier of the lowest rank (1988:489). Fights between slaves and knechten were frequent as the task of the knecht was to balance the requirements of the slaves with that of the rate of production demanded (Saunders 1988:53). In time, this category decreased, either through upward mobility, since a European could move up on the world, or through moving down, becoming destitute and often dissolute. Pieter Visagie and Willem Schalk van der Merwe both became independent farmers. Knechten on leave from the Company found work as modestly paid itinerant teachers of low status on farms in the interior (Newton-King 1999:17-18).

The slaves gradually took over the roles of the knecht in society, both in the manual labour pool and also as foremen or overseers of labour. (Berger 2009:34). Knechts, poor burghers, free blacks, and indigent soldiers or sailors, and even slaves frequented each other's company. Between the mostly white, dominant class of Company officials and burghers, whether wheat and wine farmers, or cattle-farming trekboers, who owned land and slaves on the one hand, and the servile class of slaves, free black servants and, increasingly, Khoekhoen, was a less coherent and ill-defined class in the middle, comprised of whites who were poor and blacks who were free (Du Toit & Giliomee 1983:6). These whites laid claim to the rights of burghers and expected due respect as well as some measure of official protection (for example, in the rules governing apparel and behaviour, no slave might jostle a European of any rank). Although possibly landless and poor, manual labour was increasingly seen as suitable only for the unfree or servile class. The role of knecht was on the borderline, followed by the role of *bijwoner*, or tenant farmer. The free blacks, however, slowly saw their status erode, discriminatory practices increase. There was a tendency for children of mixed relationships to be included in the free black category (Du Toit & Giliomee 1983:6).

2.3 From De Kaap into Africa : the expansion of the colony

2.3.1. Conflict and compromise with the Khoekhoen in the vicinity of De Kaap

The expansion of the borders outlined above did not occur in a vacuum. While the Company did not find a civilisation here, nor settlements, the vast expanses were inhabited and sparsely populated by the Khoekhoen herders and San hunter/gatherers. Although the main aim of the Dutch was trade and their intention was to keep on good but distant terms with Khoekhoen, disputes over land, water and livestock were inevitable, due to the conflict of cultures and interests. The incremental expansion of the territory of the Europeans had as a consequence a series of wars with the KhoeSan who repeatedly tried to reassert their rights to the land, to capture for themselves the cattle of the intruders or to reclaim their own cattle taken from them. These wars would foreshadow the wars with the Bantu-speaking peoples of the next century.

As early as 1659 the first armed conflict broke out, and the Company settlement was almost destroyed. The previous experience of the Peninsular Khoekhoen with sporadic looting parties of sailors or the temporary settlement which had preceded the decision to establish the refreshment station, did not prepare them for a permanent presence, with a continuity of command and a relatively consistent policy. Once it became clear that these strangers were here to stay, the opportunity to prosper led some Khoekhoen to settle nearby and also led to tensions between the Peninsular groups (or *Kaapmen*), who tried to monopolise trade with the Dutch, and inland Khoekhoen.

Krotoa, known to the Dutch as *Eva*, was one of those who contributed to communication across the linguistic and cultural divide. Eva was a member of the powerful up-country Cochoquas and, as a young girl, joined Jan van Riebeeck's household where she learned Dutch and creole Portuguese (Ponelis 1993:15) and converted to Christianity.²⁷ She then functioned as an interpreter, along with Doman, a.k.a. Anthonij, who was sent to Batavia to learn Dutch. This follows the pattern of 'Black through White' communication, in which language and culture learning is the task of the 'primitive' trading partner, and which had served the Europeans so well through the years of discovery and colonisation²⁸. While Eva seems to have been committed to improving links between the Khoekhoen and the Dutch, Doman seems to have become disenchanted with the Europeans and became active in advocating Khoekhoen rights.

Doman led what he considered a war of liberation, beginning in May, 1659, aiming less at killing the Dutch than at convincing them to leave by burning their crops and stealing their cattle. Dutch reaction was swift and ruthless, ordering the Khoekhoen to be

²⁷ She later married Pieter van Meerhof, a ship's surgeon, together with whom she sought to further trade between the Khoekhoe and the Company. After Jan van Riebeeck's departure and the death of her husband in 1667, her ambivalent position deteriorated. She was accused of drunkenness and disorderly conduct, as well as abandoning her children, for which she was imprisoned several times on Robben Island. She died in 1674 and was given a Christian burial (Berger 2009).

²⁸ The following excerpt from Jan van Riebeeck's diary, dated 23 September 1658, illustrates these points: "The interpreters Doman, or Antonij and Eva wished to visit their friends and asked for some copper, iron, beads, tobacco, bread, and brandy as a reward for their services as interpreters, and presents for her mother and their friends and all the natives whom they specially Eva, would visit, to induce them to bring a larger number of cattle They promised to do their best ... thanked us politely and gratefully in good Dutch words for the presents ... When Eva reached the matted hut of Doman ... she at once dressed herself in the hides again and sent her clothes home. She intended to put them on again when she returned to the Commander's wife, promising, however, that she would in the meantime not forget the Lord God" (Retrieved from:

<http://chnm.gmu.edu/wwh/modules/lesson7/pdfs/primarysourcepacket.pdf>)

shot on sight (Saunders 1988:46). The Khoekhoen alliances amongst themselves did not endure and the war ended in November 1660, with the defeat of the Kaapmen (Walker 1968:40-41). A border was marked out and planted with bitter almonds, although the cattle trade meant that the hedge would soon be breached from both sides. The war held valuable military lessons: on the one hand the efficacy of what we would call guerrilla tactics (sudden attacks on herds and a swift return to the bush), which would stand the Khoekhoen and other African fighters in good stead in years to come (Berger 2009:26) and which the Boers would use to great effect in the war at the turn of the nineteenth century; and, on the other hand, the establishment of the commando system discussed above (Walker 1968:41).

The next Dutch-Khoekhoen war broke out in 1673, against Gonnema of the Cochoqua, and ended with the Dutch forcing the flight of the enemy and seizing a large number of cattle and sheep. In 1674 a follow-up attack garnered the Dutch even more livestock. In this year commando service was made compulsory for the first time (Walker 1968:47). On the restoration of peace in 1677, white expansion continued, but with the power and wealth of the Khoekhoen greatly reduced. The Khoekhoen and the trekboer continued to compete for land, water, grazing and the cattle themselves. Whereas the original intention had been for the Company to remain a victualling station, the expansion spearheaded by the trekboers thwarted attempts to keep the settlement small. The administrative structure of the Cape did not keep pace with the expansion: it had been designed to exercise control over a port cum 'local council' and was progressively less able to control or protect its subjects. The government's minimal ability to enforce law and order on the frontier undermined its own authority. Order on the border was kept by the burghers themselves, through the commando system, and the interests of the independent Khoekhoen pastoralists, and later the Xhosa, were in conflict with the interests of the burghers (Du Toit & Giliomee 1983:8-9).

The new economic situation was unfavourable for the survival of the Khoekhoen culture. On the one hand, the Company demand for cattle was high, changing the demand side of the equation, and trade meant a loss of the products which had originally made keeping cattle worthwhile (milk, meat, skins for clothing). On the other hand, the progressively larger number of frontier farmers meant competition for scarce resources and the chance of Khoekhoen cattle being seized, since, as Saunders comments, "for many colonists the quickest way to acquire cattle was to take them from the countless herds belonging to the Khoekhoen" (Saunders 1988:55). Added to this were their

traditional conflicts with the Bushmen (or San), as well as internecine strife among the Khoekhoen groups, which the Dutch exploited by exacerbating them and taking sides (Berger 2009:2). The final blow to Khoekhoen society was the smallpox epidemic of 1713²⁹. The disease, brought to the Cape by a visiting Dutch ship, affected the slave population first and then the whites of the settlement started dying. Thereafter the disease spread inland, crippling farming and necessitating emergency supplies being ordered from Batavia. When the first Khoekhoen contracted this foreign illness at the outset of the epidemic it became apparent that they had less resistance than the whites and slaves, and no previous experience of the disease to help them cope. They died in large numbers and those who fled carried the disease further inland. Some survivors reported a survival rate of scarcely one in 10 (Saunders 1988:45).

The result of the above was that increasing numbers of Khoekhoen accepted employment on Boers farms. Already by the 1690s many of the Khoekhoen had been forced by circumstance to become poorly paid labourers, supplementing the work done by slaves (cf. Raidt 1983:9). Berger comments that the Dutch settlers did not consider the smallpox epidemic “as a gift from God, as did the New England Puritans in North America, but as an unfortunate assault on their workforce” (2009:28).

By 1740 the Khoekhoen had either left the western Cape or were working as labourers for the colonists. Their position was less clear than that of the slaves – although treated as servants and excluded from the family, they were able to stay together, keep their cattle and even acquire new cattle if they went on commando (Giliomee 2003:66). Ross (1983) emphasises that the Khoekhoen retained as much independence as they were able to, and that “during the period of slavery they stressed their distinct, free status”. Since the trekboers were not able to physically force the Khoekhoen to work for them, as was the case with the slaves, they had to find ways to convince them to stay in their service (Du Toit & Giliomee 1983:8). The relationship can be seen as one of clientship, whereby the Khoekhoen would seek protection and the opportunity to build his own herds from a burgher in exchange for work and defence (the herders were most

²⁹ The indigenous people were susceptible to European diseases and had little resistance to them. The readiness of the Khoekhoen to take work on the farms increased due to the effects of illness. For example, the fever epidemic of 1687 probably accounted for the relatively high number of Khoekhoen working on the Stellenbosch and Drakenstein farms.

exposed to attacks by the San³⁰, the common enemy of the cattle-owning races (Walker 1968:4)). Their value as fighters was high and the fact that they were given weapons and trusted as comrades-in-arms indicates the complexity of their relations with the Boers and the Company (Giliomee 2003:63). Nevertheless, the Khoekhoen were slowly treated more like slaves than the free men they supposedly were. Competition for labour led to farmers introducing mechanisms to force their workers to remain especially since the stigma attached to manual labour meant that the burghers did not “generate labour which could be employed, only farmers who wanted to employ labour” (Du Toit & Giliomee 1983:2-3). In 1775 a law allowed farmers to indenture the children of Khoekhoen women and male slaves up to the age of twenty-five (Berger 2009:29). District authorities instituted a system of passes issued by master – if a labourer left a farm without a pass, he was liable to being forcibly returned by a commando (Giliomee 2003:61). The system of interdependence, and the emphasis on stock farming did not result in a free labour market based on remuneration. Consequently, the internal market remained small and underdeveloped, dependent on imports for goods sold and bought locally; and on sales to the VOC and the export of local produce.

2.3.2 The push outwards, into Africa: the trekboer on the frontier

Although the original intention was to encourage arable farming, the free burgers from the first were inclined to become *veeboere* (cattle farmers) since stock farming, despite the restrictions that the Company tried to place on cattle trading, was more attractive than working the land (Walker 1968:59). In the eighteenth century their numbers would exceed those of the *akkerboere* (crop cultivators). Although their descendants, the self-consciously determined Afrikaner nation, were many decades away, the *trekboer* (migrant farmer), who was drawn by the seemingly abundant land (available from 1714 in the system of loan farms (Giliomee 2003:30) and the advantages

³⁰ The destruction of San society in many ways paralleled that of the Khoekhoen, except that the enmity between them and the Khoekhoen and the colonists, and their more marked resistance to the new order lead to their extermination in greater measure. The details are therefore not recounted here as the close inter-relationship of the settlers and the Khoekhoen did not occur to the same degree in the case of the foraging San. John Barrow, a British traveller (unsympathetic to the settlers), is quoted in Berger as writing in 1797, “I myself have heard one of the humane colonists boast of having destroyed with his own hands near three hundred of these unfortunate wretches”. The “settlers came to perceive the San as vermin who could be kept under control only by violence” (Berger 2009:30).

of stock-farming (Walker 1968:59) to push ever further into the interior, created a lifestyle of his own - with far-reaching effects on the society in southern Africa. As Giliomee puts it, "They had turned their backs on Europe and were trying to become indigenous without losing their commitment to European culture and civilisation" (2003:31). Yet far from the amenities and civilising influence of the port community and the transient sojourners from the visiting ships, this semi-nomadic life-style in many ways resembled that of the Khoekhoen (Van Jaarsveld 1971:48). Nevertheless, this way of life attracted pioneers who preferred this isolated and often monotonous existence to being a labourer or *knecht* on some-one else's farm. This can be contrasted with the more consolidated life-style of the *akkerboere*, who grew crops, and with the ever-more differentiated occupations of the townsfolk, with their direct access to the market and indirect contact with Europe and the rest of the world.

Despite the pastoralist life on the frontiers, the market served as a point of contact for the various groups, since even the subsistence farmers needed wagons, guns, ammunition, tools, cloth, and basic durable groceries or luxuries like tea, coffee and sugar (Giliomee 2003:31). Later, as affluence slowly spread, items such as mirrors and furniture, porcelain and linen were acquired. The trip to De Kaap later Cape Town, might take place only seldom, perhaps once a year, but the trekboer, too, was integrated into the Cape economy, both as seller and buyer (Saunders 1988:58). This is borne out by the detailed liquidation accounts of intestate and insolvent estates. These show quite clearly that "no matter how simple the lifestyle of the deceased, imported as well as locally purchased commodities comprised a very significant proportion of his or her moveable assets" (Newton-King 1999:19-20).

More intricately integrated into the market were the farmers of the rural Cape, west of the first mountains, who held their farms in freehold and grew wheat and produced wine. Some of these farmers grew wealthy and formed the 'gentry' of the local society. The farms tended to stay in the family and many of the families of this group endured over the years to the present day. They built mansions in the 'Cape Dutch' style and, as they prospered, indulged in an elegant life-style. These burghers were tied to each other by being interrelated (the pool of potential marriage partners being small, alliances were created across class lines) and by lines of credit – the wealthier farmers acting as providers of credit in the absence of banks (Giliomee 2003:29). In the second half of the eighteenth century, the stock farms in the east started to deteriorate due to overstocking and insufficient conservation of the veld (the land). The progressive

impoverishment of many small farmers led to a network of debt. Family ties and economic ties held the various strands of burgher society together and this was reinforced by their belonging to the same religion and attending the same churches, and participating in the same militia exercises (although richer farmers tended to avoid commando duty by sending others in their stead (Giliomee 2003:29).

Throughout the 150 years of Dutch Rule, Cape Town, was the multilingual and multicultural centre of the colony, yet it, too, was cut off from the mainstream of European society, despite the ships calling at the port³¹ and the constantly changing guard of Company officials. To understand just how intellectually isolated this settlement at the southern tip of Africa was, it is enough to consider there was “no high school, no theatre, no public hall of entertainment no bookshop, and no newspaper. Most people did not read” (Giliomee 2003:28).

This expansion of territory spearheaded by the trekboer should not be confused with a deliberate and systematic process of colonisation. The nature of the land meant that much of the farming was on a subsistence level, and the fact that land was not bought and sold for profit meant that farmers were likely to remain on the land, along with their families (often with several generations living together) (Giliomee 2003:31). Towns were slow to emerge, roads remained wagon tracks, both of these tendencies affected negatively the development of intensive agriculture. The final decade of the seventeenth century was favourable for the smaller farmers of the western Cape: abundant unoccupied land, family labour complemented by lowly paid Khoekhoen. By contrast, the larger farmers, who could afford slaves, had higher costs and lower returns (Giliomee 2003:20). By 1700, the borders did not extend far beyond the peninsula, and this represented the permanent part of the community, as opposed to the nomadic trekboers, the temporary Company officials, and the visitors from the ships (Van Jaarsveld 1971:46).

The first twenty years or so of the next century were less favourable for the smaller farmers, who were particularly hard hit by the small pox epidemic (1713) and its effect of wiping out or driving away their Khoekhoen workers. The cost of slave labour meant that they could seldom afford more than one slave. The fact that most of the work was done

³¹ Between 1726 and 1750 an average of seventy-five ships a year stopped in Table Bay.

by slaves earning little or nothing also meant that the market remained small. By 1710 the area of the coastal plain to the first mountains can be considered settled – but even in the more densely settled areas of Stellenbosch and Drakenstein there was only a small free population spread thinly over a large area: 2 free people per 2.6 square kilometres (Giliomee 2003:20). By the 1720s, over-production became the norm. Most of the farmers were very poor, while the wealthier farmers accounted for only about 7 per cent of the free population in 1710. The attraction of cattle farming meant that farmers were demanding grazing licences. The Company ceased trying to limit the borders and instituted the loan farm system, encouraging dispersal, reducing Company control, and shifting the onus for defence to the burghers with the development of the commando system.

Essentially, the commando system meant that every town had its own the government's representative, the *landdrost*, who appointed in every district a *veldkorporaal* (later *veldwagmeester*, then *veldkornet*). He headed a commando (with compulsory participation of every burgher after 1739) which would take action to recover stolen cattle. Distances, poor communication systems, and the need to act swiftly meant considerable freedom to act, using Company ammunition. It also provided opportunity for abuse, to which the Company often turned a blind eye. From its point of view, the commando system had a major advantage - it transferred the onus of protection of the colony from attacks by the indigenous peoples to the exposed burghers, and it cost little (Giliomee 2003:58-59). It also meant that the administration of the Cape would progressively shift towards being in the hands of officers whose loyalties lay with their fellow burghers rather than the VOC (Du Toit & Giliomee 1983:1-2). This led to tension in that the VOC favoured its own economic interests above those of the burghers, who were forced to continue selling their produce at the low official prices set by the Company. It also led to widespread smuggling.

Life on a frontier farm was defined by the people living there together. Despite the disdain expressed by the Europeans, they learnt much about local conditions and strategies for survival from the Khoekhoen. The Khoekhoen on their part acquired a taste for tobacco and alcohol, and the languages necessary for them to survive in world dominated by their employers and their kind. They soon learned some Dutch, and

Portuguese³² from the slaves (Berger 2009:29). From the perspective of visitors, the distinction between the masters and the Khoekhoen often became blurred and concern was expressed about the trekboer degenerating into barbarism and lawlessness. Although these fears were not unfounded, Du Toit and Giliomee compare the colonists, who retained their loyalty to their own culture and extended families, to the *prazeros* of Mozambique who joined the native population through marriage (Du Toit & Giliomee 1983:3).

A pioneer mentality emerged on the frontier, based on characteristics which supported survival: independence, individualism, determination, persistence, hard-headedness, and a high regard for personal freedom and equality. It was also a male-dominated, patriarchal society, in which Calvinism played a not unimportant role. (Van Jaarsveld 1971:49) describes the 'Boer race' in similar terms. During the eighteenth century a self-perception of themselves as part of a distinct group gradually took form and the term *Afrikaner* slowly became more current, pushing out self-reference as burghers or Christians or Dutchmen (Giliomee 2003:50). Rather than their countries of origin in Europe, the free burghers began to think of this land as their fatherland, of themselves as native White Africans, whose future lay here (Van Jaarsveld 1971:42).

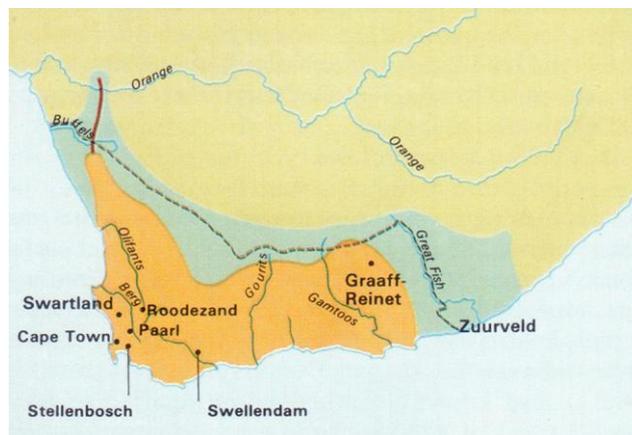


Figure 3. "In 1771" (copied from Saunders, 1988:56)

³² Probably Portuguese-Melayu, or Malayo-Portuguese, whence the umbrella term *Malay* for slaves of various Indonesian, Indian or mixed origins. The later social construct *Cape Malay* incorporates a Muslim religious feature.

By 1779 the trekboers had expanded the borders to approximately 500 kilometres from Cape Town to the north and north-east, and 700 kilometres to the Fish River in the east. The expansion took these three directions: first northwards, between the mountains and the west coast; then from about 1730, due to the drought conditions they encountered, eastwards over the mountains; and, from about 1707, a more southerly eastwards stream (Van Jaarsveld 1971:50-51). These borders stabilised due to climatic conditions in the north (drought), the conflicts with the KhoesSan in the north-east, and the presence of the Xhosa in the east. (Byrnes). By the 1780s this caused a crisis in that the days of abundant land and continuing expansion came to an end, leading to more cattle and people on the land. The need of the frontier farmers for support from Cape Town in order to establish control over the land on the frontier increased but the Company itself was experiencing difficulties and was well on the way to bankruptcy.

The final decades of the century were turbulent (Giliomee 2003:72-79) conflicts broke out between the settlers and the Xhosa, between the settlers and the Bushmen, and between the settlers and the Khoekhoe. The extreme edge of the colony could not be said to be under the control of the VOC. Three frontier wars were fought, over cattle and land and 'retaliation' for previous incursions or stock theft (1779 – 1881, 1790, 1799-1802). Landdrost Maynier is driven out of Graaff-Reinet by rebellious burghers in 1795, and a similar rebellion takes place in Swellendam. The rebels claim to be representing the voice of the people, in line with the revolutionary spirit of the times. The outcome was affected by the British occupation of the Cape, and the rebels capitulated in 1797. Further wars would be fought before the British finally established their control of the area.

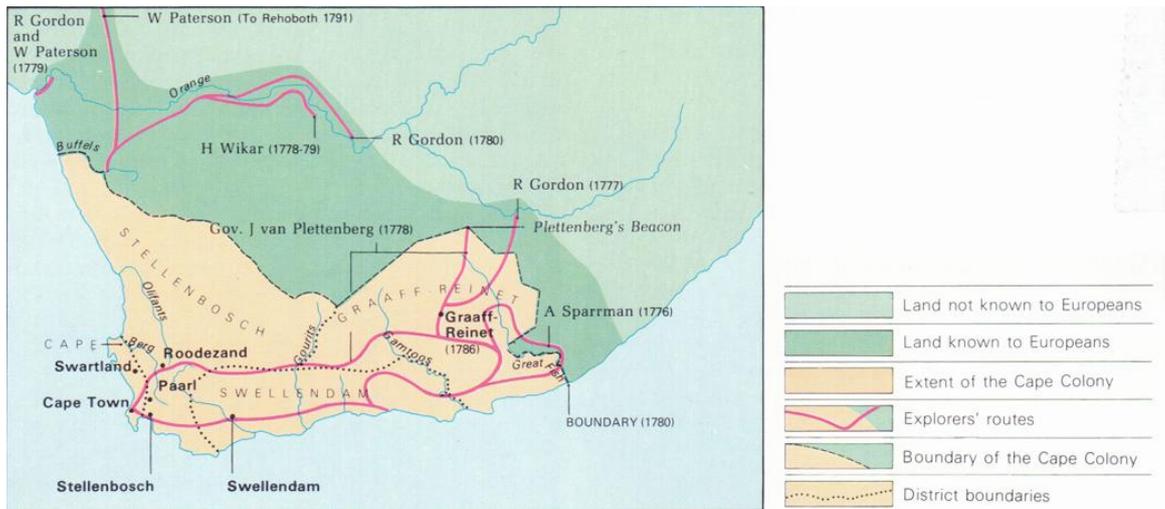


Figure 4. "The Cape Colony in 1795" (copied from Saunders, 1988:68)

Chapter 3

Languages at the Cape

3.1. Introduction

In the previous section, the various groups that formed the early society at the Cape were introduced, with the focus on those characteristics that are relevant for the discussion of language in that society: languages spoken, languages written, languages learnt, languages formed for makeshift communication in various interactions with various intentions, languages in contact, languages forgotten or fallen into disuse. These languages were used - or not used – for various purposes. These included trade, commerce, the law, religion, human contact and social intercourse with superiors, peers

and inferiors, locals and visitors, the military, shipping, health-care and administration. All of these elements are of importance in order to shed light on the processes of change, whether internal or external, that led to the development of a new local dialect of Dutch at the Cape and, eventually, to the language Afrikaans.

In what follows, all these forms will be considered. The groups of speakers and their languages and the social environments in which the use of the languages were embedded will be considered in turn, and examined in the light of the overt or implicit language policy of the governing VOC.

3.2. The Honourable³³ Company and its servants

It cannot be overlooked at any point that the Cape was a settlement of the Dutch East India Company and that the sovereignty it exercised in the Cape had been conferred upon it by the States-General of the United Provinces of the Netherlands. Although the Company was a global commercial enterprise, it owed its existence and allegiance to a political body representing a nation, and that nation's interests. This forms the overall paradigm within which events in the Cape during the 150 years of Company rule have to be viewed. Ponelis succinctly states that, "[t]he sole structure at the Cape was the Company: it monopolised the administration, the church, law and education, and controlled the economy". He continues: "Excepting the VOC, there was a lack of community structure ... Cape society reconstituted itself beyond the purview of the VOC: new, extended families crystallised from what was at first a motley crowd of men with only a few women, and a speech community came into being where Dutch was in competition with other languages" (Ponelis 1993:3).

Consequently our attention turns first of all to a group of speakers who as Company servants had a common identity, and a common language, Dutch. This language was not necessarily the mother tongue of the speakers but constituted the language of everyday communication on board ship and in the settlement, whilst it was also used for written

³³ The traditional translation into English of the turn of phrase used by Company servants to refer to their employer in their reports (Saunders 1988:54).

formal correspondence and reporting. VOC employees were stationed either very temporarily at the Cape, whilst their ship was in port, in the garrison or as part of the commercial enterprise, or they were allowed to leave the service of the VOC, yet still under oath to the Company, to become free burghers. For those in the service of the VOC, the Company was all-powerful and possessed strong links to the Netherlands on the one hand and Batavia on the other. It is contended in this dissertation that the language used by this group was influenced by its orientation towards the mother country and the top echelons of the Company, by its perception of the Cape as a location of temporary sojourn, by the need for proficiency in formal, written Dutch to execute its functions, by the increasing split between it and the permanent element of the population born in Africa, by the formality of the language used in the practice of their religion and by its exposure to the more current versions of standardising European Dutch as brought to the Cape by the ships. Furthermore, that the language use of the group affected the language use of the colony, and Cape Town in particular.

The life of Company servants was intertwined on every level. There was no regular 'nine-to-five' schedule, the Company was there at every point, mostly directly, but at the very least indirectly. Domains related to work of all kinds and levels: health-care, recreation, military action, practice of religion and education were all part of Company life and the influence, overt or covert, of the Company on language use was extensive. Through the Company at the Cape, the influence of the VOC trading empire in the East and the head-quarters in Amsterdam made itself felt. It was only once the free burghers became 'naturalised' Africans that they could disengage themselves from at least some of the numerous ties of the VOC. Those features of the Company and Company life which are relevant to language use are discussed below.

3.2.1. Political and economic structure

The Company's control over people within and beyond its settlements was exercised through the Council of Policy, the Court of Justice and the system of landdrosts, the Caffers, the military chain of command of the garrison, and through the use of the legal system, which permitted it to impose capital and corporal punishment. The slave, who was owned outright, and the Company servant, who had signed away his rights voluntarily for a limited period of time, were both subject to the authority of the VOC. An outward sign of this authority was the public executions ordered by the Cape government (Ross 1999:16). Through the expansion of the settlement and the

development into a colony, the Company lost some measure of control, for example, through devolving most of the responsibility for protecting and enforcing the borders to the commando system in which the officers were sometimes elected by their followers and sometimes appointed by the Governor or landdrost (Walker 1968:70). Control over the economy was likewise more direct and restrictive on paper than in practice. By the second half of the nineteenth century, Company control was tenuous indeed. It was struggling financially and the Cape was costing more than it could afford; it was being challenged on the high seas and commercially by its competitors, especially the British. On the eastern frontier, its appointed military and administrative/judicial officials frequently came from the ranks of their fellow farmers and the overlap in interests and consequent conflict was unavoidable.

Nevertheless, the influence of the Company through the 150-year period was pervasive. One aspect of this was the policy of keeping the Cape a slave-based economy, and its own position as the largest single slave owner. Another was its stringent control of trade, imposing a series of restrictions on the private trading of its officials (and of the free burghers). Considerable effort went into finding ways, illegal or illegal, around these and – on the part of the VOC – of cracking down on these. The high social status of the Company officials was ensured, as was that of the wealthiest burghers. Relations between the layers of society was prescribed (by statute) and enforced (primarily by societal pressure), and this included such details as regulation of clothing and the decoration of carriages or sedan chairs by decree (Ross 1999). Private and government business was not clearly distinguished, and this led to a tight oligarchy of the most prosperous of the mercantile and ruling classes (Giliomee 2003:28). The basis of the economy was its trans-oceanic strategic position on the trade route: agricultural produce stemmed from the rural interior and was sold, predominantly via the government contracts, to ships in port, while the freight from the ships was sold to the community, including the rural farmers (Saunders 1988:60). This division also reflects the social construction: in Cape Town a 'littoral society' influenced by the proximity to the port, the influence of which decreased with distance through the agricultural hinterland until at the other extremity it became a marginal, frontier society. The language situation reflected this change in character, with the influence of the VOC being strongest in the port while the influence of domestic contact among slaves, Khoekhoen and whites was most marked on the far-flung frontier farms.

3.2.2. The VOC rhythm of life at the Cape

The dependence on the trade route to the East meant the seasonality of life at the Cape was determined by the time of the monsoon and the arrival of the ships, which usually berthed in the harbour for about a month in the spring and the autumn (Ward 2003) Furthermore, the number of ships that anchored here fluctuated, depending on events in Europe. The VOC could allow or forbid foreign ships to enter Table Bay; this decision depended on the state of alliances between the Netherlands and other European states (Ward 2003). The number of Dutch ships moving in and out of the harbour, between 45 and 70 ships per year, remained fairly constant (except for a decrease during the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War in the early 1780s), while the number of foreign ships rarely exceeded 20 per year until 1770 when the number escalated and began to exceed that of VOC ships (Van Duin & Ross 1987:13). This meant, for example, that only 64% of the over 1,000 ships that stopped in Cape Town from 1700 to 1714 were Dutch (Ward 2003). The ships that did not stop at the Cape are also significant: Ward (2003), in a footnote, quotes Boucher as follows, “Cadiz, the Brazilian coast and the islands of the Atlantic and Indian Oceans sheltered many ships; St. Helena in particular was used by the British East Indiamen, Portugal, with an anchorage at Mozambique, made little use of Dutch facilities in Southern Africa”. The frequent presence of Portuguese ships would have provided an added impetus to preserving a working knowledge of Portuguese oriented towards the metropole through the opportunity and need to communicate with the Portuguese. Dutch ships meant more Dutch as a language, whilst foreign ships meant more contact with other languages, including lingua francas.

European residence at the Cape constituted a combination of small-scale permanent immigration (for example, the Huguenots) and small-scale settlement by ex-Company personnel, and the larger scale temporary residence of Company servants and seasonal sojourners from the ships (Ward 2003). It was the temporary residents³⁴ who

³⁴ The men, especially the soldiers and sailors, would not all have been Dutch, as discussed above, and the motley nature of the composition of the collective would have contributed to the fact that Dutch was not automatically used in the Company’s settlements in the East, even though it was the language of the VOC (Taylor 1983:5). It is also clear that this was a dominantly male group: with women not being employed as either soldiers or sailors or officers of the VOC, their presence on board ship was not necessary. The women who did travel were an exception and their presence often a consequence of their relationship to a man, usually as a member of the family of an official. The other category of people on board was that of the slaves, who were cargo. Female slaves were also underrepresented.

brought fashions and trends of all kinds (from clothing to philosophy) from Europe and also the East. In order to give an indication of their number, Van Duin & Ross made the following calculation: “between 1720 and 1780, each year saw an average of between 9,700 and 11,600 men leave either Europe or Asia on the ships of the Dutch East India Company alone. Almost all these men, excepting those who had died on the way, would have come into Cape Town to spend several weeks recuperating from the long voyage and preparing for the journey of around three months ahead of them. The potential of this market was thus considerable” (Van Duin & Ross 1987:13). Their impact was, however, not just commercial. In their time at the Cape they would have had contacts of various intensity and extensity with the locals, and the medium of communication would have been mostly language, in view of the fact that these were VOC ships, primarily a form of Dutch, but also the Malay or Portuguese Creole in use in Batavia³⁵, or fleeting trade jargons.

It was through the constantly changing guard³⁶ of Company servants that the Cape, or at least Cape Town, was updated as regards the Dutch language. The number of VOC servants stationed there grew in the course of the eighteenth century, from a little over 500³⁷ in 1701 to nearly 3,400 in 1783, whereafter it dropped by about one thousand due to the cost-cutting campaign of the Company (Van Duin & Ross 1987:9). Despite forming only a fraction of the population, they, in particular the merchant class, dominated colonial life and set the social standards. There were three functionally differentiated hierarchies in the Company: “from soldier to general, from young sailor to sea captain, and from scribe to governor-general” (www.tanap.net). Jan van Riebeeck, as senior merchant, was head of the settlement and was later promoted to commander. The Cape would only later merit a Governor. The highest authority at the Cape was the Council of

³⁵ In Batavia, the Dutch had used Malay from the beginning to communicate with the diverse peoples they encountered. In the seventeenth century, scholar-ministers had studied Malay and promoted it as a lingua franca for the region (Taylor 1983:24). Portuguese, too, was widely used, mainly in the seventeenth century. Governor-General Maetsyker would complain in 1674 that the Dutch in Batavia persisted in using Portuguese with their slaves, even though those slaves were not familiar with it (Taylor 1983:18-19). The church in the Indonesian archipelago had chosen to use these two languages as well, since Malay was the language of commerce and Portuguese the lingua franca between Asians and Europeans at many points along the trade routes (Taylor 1983:23).

³⁶ In a similar fashion, the constant importation of slaves from the East meant that the slave population, in particular in the Slave Lodge, kept in touch with the trading languages of the eastern ports and occasionally with languages of their places of origin, too.

³⁷ Ponelis (1993:3) gives a figure of 550, compared to 418 free men (of 1,265 free persons, including women and children). That is, at the end of the first half a century of Dutch rule, there were more VOC servants than free men.

Policy, and the minutes of its meetings, including reports and decisions taken, were called Resolutions and covered a wide range of subjects.

Since Company servants often renewed their five-year contracts with the VOC and served at various sites of the Company, it was not unexpected for people working at the Cape to have been in the East previously, and their idiolects would have reflected this. Jan van Riebeeck himself had had ten years of experience in the East before he was sent to the Cape (under a cloud since he had been engaging in forbidden private trading) and after he left in 1662 he was promoted to the Council of Justice in Batavia. His official journal included words, including several Malayo/Portuguese words, that would have been unknown in the Netherlands, but which were common in seventeenth century ship's journals and seemingly used in VOC correspondence (Van der Merwe 1968:2).

3.2.3. VOC administration

The Company was responsible for an intricate administration, much of it involving the keeping of records and the writing of reports. For the global VOC to function, efficient communication was vital, its continuing existence was dependent on written material. Direction, control and review were based on contact between centres and outposts, and on accurate record-keeping. This required a literate staff capable of producing the required documents. From the bottom up, the civilian part of the VOC employed copyists and clerks, assistants and bookkeepers were the next level up, followed by junior merchants and the merchants. At the Cape, for example, there were the scribes (*scriebenten* or *borsten van de pen*) who wrote the texts of the Resolutions under the supervision of a secretary. On the basis of signatures and handwriting, up to 9 December 1667 there were nine secretaries and twenty-five scribes (www.tanap.net). It was possible for someone to work their way up this ladder and beyond (to administrator of a Company warehouse or head of a settlement, then governor of a more important settlement, and finally to councillor or even Governor-General in Batavia). A few did in fact succeed in achieving this (Taylor 1983:3). Although health, nationality, and patronage played a role, the implication is that the VOC rewarded good service.

In this way, the written form of Dutch was oriented towards the standards of the metropole, and kept up-to-date with changes in the language and its orthography. The Dutch process of language standardisation was characterised by a long period in which a standard written language met the needs of commerce, religion and politics. This written

language was little affected by the many and diverse Dutch dialects. This was echoed in the mercantile part of the ports, where the needs of commerce supported the use of standard language in writing. (The spoken language of the ports was another matter, Mufwene refers to the plausibility of “then-emergent port-city koinés and nautical varieties influenc[ing] the vernaculars that developed in the colonies” (Mufwene 2001:36). Formal written Dutch, therefore, was the medium of contact between the various points of the VOC, and between the various institutions of the VOC (for example, the Council of Justice worked only from written material (Newton-King). Communication is the life-blood of a commercial enterprise and the VOC was consistent in its use of Dutch in all its records and correspondence.

3.3. The language of the VOC servants

Despite their varied social and linguistic backgrounds, the language use of the VOC servants can be said to display group features. By virtue of their contractual obligations towards the Company, they were oriented towards two poles: the Netherlands headquarters, in which we have seen that the Holland chamber was dominant, on the one hand, and their more immediate superiors in Batavia, to whom they reported in the first instance and from whence hope for advancement and/or advantageous transfer came, on the other hand. The language of the Netherlands was Dutch, the official language of the VOC was Dutch, but the language of operations and daily life included, in addition to Dutch, a multiplicity of languages, ranging from unstable trade jargons, to stabilised pidgins, to the established commercial lingua francas of the East and of the slave trade; forms of Portuguese and Malay (including Indo-Portuguese, Malayo-Portuguese, West African Portuguese, Pazar Melayu, all serving to solve the problem of the many other languages of the East); and the languages of the other European seafaring nations. For the non-Dutch servants of the Company, a reduced form. Furthermore, knowledge of ‘VOC-ese’, the typical language use of the Company, and of the nautical language necessary for a seafaring community, can be presumed.

The realities of day-to-day life included many weeks of forced, closed contact on board ship. When civilians joined the Company, they signed renewable contracts committing them to five years of service. Some returned home, some chose to remain as free townsmen and settle permanently in one of the settlements, whilst others renewed

their contracts over and over again. To some degree at least, the VOC, as a global company, formed the world of its servants, who remained within its confines. These confines could be the confines of Batavia, or the broader confines of the secondary settlements (including the Cape), between which they moved, appointment to appointment (Taylor 1983:5). Promotion therefore meant another posting within the empire of the Company. This was true on all levels: for the merchant class, which stood at the pinnacle of the settlements, for the officers of the army and navy who formed the next level, as well as for the numerically vastly superior rank and file. The language of the VOC can be considered as a 'language for specific purposes' but the conditions of its use makes it more a 'dialect', spoken amongst the employees of the Company, both on land and at sea. This variety could not be the mother tongue of its users, and due to the need to communicate despite dialect, and sometimes, language differences, was reduced in some ways, and subject to mutual accommodation. On the other hand, an expanded vocabulary related to shipping, military duty, and trade had to be acquired.

By living or visiting at the Cape for a foreseeably limited period, the Company officials and their relatives retained a network of contact with their relatives, social circle and business partners elsewhere, all of which again necessitated the exercise of their literacy. Van Duin & Ross (1987:12), in his discussion of the population of Cape Town, comments, "there is no information on the wives, children or slaves of the officials, who must have formed a not inconsiderable proportion of Cape Town's population". From the point of view of the dissemination of language trends and innovations, the role of the wives would have been significant, amongst other factors, due to the widespread custom of *kuyeren* (visiting) (Giliomee 2003:28-29). The closed world aboard ship was repeated in the slightly larger socially closed world of the settlement. To compensate for the uncertainties of delivery, letters often included repetitions of letters already composed. It is in private, personal letters and journals written for private, personal reasons that we can find the clearest indications of the changes in language use in the process of the development of Afrikaans, since it is in these forms of writing that the spoken vernacular is most likely to surface, as opposed to the self-monitored or externally edited language³⁸ used in documents produced for public or professional consumption.

³⁸ For example, in the writings of Pieter van Meerhof (ship's surgeon and husband of Eva/Krotoa) Ponelis (1993:24-25) comments that a short letter written by him "reveals poor spelling and

Children of the burghers who left the VOC and settled permanently at the Cape could join the Company; however, for the higher levels, education in Europe was necessary. Ponelis (1993:9) states that “only a small number of Cape families regularly produced VOC management personnel, especially during the eighteenth century”. The management had to recruit its educated personnel from Holland since the level of education required was not provided at the Cape. It was only in 1858³⁹, well after the departure of the VOC, that the first attempt was made to offer higher education. Before that, receiving an education meant travelling to Europe for this purpose, with its attendant costs and difficulties (Templin 1984:7-8). Those who undertook this journey caught up naturally with the developments of the Dutch language in the home country. Raidt, recounts the experience of the thirteen-year-old Christiaan Hendrik Persoon, who attended school in the Netherlands and wrote to his parents in 1775 that his friends teased him because of his “Caapsch krom spreken” (Raidt 1971:150-151).

The Dutch language, along with religious affiliation, was a sign of political allegiance and one of the markers of identity. Recognising this, Governor-General Maetsuyker wrote about Batavia that, “We have wholeheartedly encouraged the spread of the Dutch tongue ... knowing full well how much the stability of the state lies therein, but apparently in vain to date ... so that we shall have to think up more efficacious means ... and thus be able to assure ourselves more of the trustworthiness of the native subjects.” (cited in Taylor 1983:27). This reinforces the VOC attitude to keeping Dutch as its language, while also pointing to the difficulties.

The attitude of its speakers is alluded to as contributing to the difficulties. Specifically, two attitudes which were claimed to be typically Dutch, occurred. Firstly, that the Dutch in Indonesia (and presumably elsewhere) did not like to hear their language spoken by others (Taylor 1983:47)⁴⁰. Secondly, that the Dutch prided themselves in their ability to speak the languages of others. In support of this assertion, Taylor cites Governor-General Maetsuyker as writing to the Directors in 1674, that “We are constantly encouraging the spread of the Netherlands tongue ... both here and in

phrasing”, whereas his journals are “much more polished and had certainly been heavily edited by the VOC secretariat”.

³⁹ In 1858 the Board of Examiners was organised, following in 1859 by the establishment of the first theological seminary in Stellenbosch in 1859.

⁴⁰ Taylor makes this claim without giving the sources on which he bases his statement. Further conclusions based on it are therefore not drawn.

other places within the Company's possessions, conscious that the security of the state is bound up in it, but apparently in vain so far, as [use of] the Portuguese language is growing and it easily holds the upper hand, mostly through the idiocy of our own Netherlanders, who hold it for a great honor to be able to speak a foreign language, however badly and corrupted" (Taylor 1983:18-19). A third attitude is implied, namely, that foreign languages need not be spoken well to be used, indeed flaunted.

A few notes of caution are, however, in order. Since comments directly about language and language use by the higher officials of the VOC are not common, the few comments that do exist tend to be quoted extensively and interpreted in varying ways⁴¹. Of the components making up the SPEAKING framework for the analysis of discourse put forward by Hymes (1974), only a fraction can be reconstructed. Added to this is uncertainty as to what any individual, especially a layman in the seventeenth or eighteenth century, understands by 'speaking a language', by 'broken language', or even by a particular language, such as 'Dutch' or 'Portuguese'. The same caution would be required when considering similar comments made in our own day by employees of multinational companies. It is, however, clear that a VOC official was expected in the course of his duties to communicate across language barriers of various sorts. The very existence of pidgins is founded on the assumption that language difficulties could not form a barrier to trade. The ability to function in various languages on the basis of uneven degrees of proficiency was a job requirement of the VOC official; such skills held a high value for these men who were establishing their value in the labour market. On the other hand, a knowledge of spoken and written Dutch was indispensable, irrespective of the origins of the officials (Ponelis 1993:25).

3.4. VOC language policy

Due to its monopoly on authority, the VOC was the institution where one could expect to find a language policy. Indeed, evidence of such a policy does exist, as does evidence of efforts, even if often half-hearted, to put this policy into practice. It is to this area that we now turn, focussing on language policy as it affected the European population (the case of the slaves and the indigenous peoples will be treated below).

⁴¹ See the oft-quoted remarks made by High Commissioner Van Rheede.

Language planning and policy became a complex academic discipline in the twentieth century, and the insights of this research field give us a point of departure from which to look at historical events and processes. The terminology of this field is often used inconsistently by researchers (cf. Kaplan 1990:3-13; Kaplan & Baldauf 1997; Ferguson 2004). Ricento (2000:23) uses “*language policy* as the superordinate term which subsumes *language planning*”, whilst Kaplan and Baldauf (1997:xi) prefer to see both language planning and language policy as two aspects of “the systemised language change process”, in which language planning is “an activity most visibly undertaken by government (simply because it involves such massive changes in a society), intended to promote systematic linguistic change in some community of speakers. . . The exercise of language planning leads to, or is directed by, the promulgation of a language policy (by government or other authoritative body or person). This framework can nevertheless be applied to view the language situation. A language policy is a body of ideas, laws, regulations, rules and practices intended to achieve the planned language change in the society, group or system”. Despite the difference in focus, these researchers agree that analysis and research needs to focus on more than just the official or even unofficial acts of governments and institutions, to include ‘unplanned’ policy and planning (Baldauf 1994:82-83) and “the historical and cultural events and processes that have influenced, and continue to influence, societal attitudes and practices with regard to language use, acquisition and status” (Ricento 2000:23). Kaplan and Baldauf (1997:59-83) give an overview of the goals of language planning of which language maintenance and language spread pertain to the topic at hand and allow us to focus on the ways in which the VOC tried to “perpetuate and impose language behaviours in accordance with the[ir] national, political, social and economic agendas” (Shohamy 2006:3).

The focus in scholarly works is often on declared or explicit language policy, however, “attempting to explain developments in language policy by focussing solely on declared, or explicit, laws and policy is like believing that the United Kingdom has no constitution because it isn’t written down, or that there are no rights in common law societies because they lack a Bill which explicitly sets them out” (Lo Bianco 1999:39). Schiffman (1996) draws attention to the subtler realm formed by the linguistic culture which invariably underlies overt policy. By *linguistic culture* he means “the set of behaviours, assumptions, cultural forms, prejudices, folk belief systems, attitudes, stereotypes, ways of thinking about language, and religio-historical circumstances associated with a particular language”. Going further, he claims that these beliefs “are

part of the social conditions that affect the maintenance and transmission” of language (Schiffman 1996:5). Wiley (citing Tollefson 1991) suggests the application of Historical-Structural Analysis, which sees language conflicts as manifestations of sociopolitical conflicts, and contends that historical conflict between groups and dominant ideologies be examined to understand how this happens (Wiley 1999:18). Education policies are a way for authorities to manage access to language rights and social prospects. They are used for purposes of political and cultural governance and to create, sustain or reduce status differences and political conflict amongst ethnolinguistic groups. The language policy (or policies) of the VOC in the Indies and in the Cape in particular reflected and generated the differences between social groups, and expressed the VOC notion of social order. The limited explicit comments on language use and the measures taken to spread and restrict knowledge of Dutch are presented below in an attempt to elucidate VOC language policy and understand why its intention of establishing Dutch as the language of its major settlements in the East failed and why a locally-flavoured variety of Dutch could evolve at the Cape. The subsequent story of how this dialect became an official language along with English in the Union, later the Republic of South Africa is a continuation of this situation that predated it. Without knowing where it came from, and how, the temporary success story of Afrikaans makes little sense. Such knowledge can then contribute to understanding the present status and situation of Afrikaans. The past needs to be factored in to understand the present and to be able to estimate on a realistic basis the possible developments of the future.

3.4.1. Language in education and the church

One of the means whereby language policy is put into practice is education. The crucial point to bear in mind as regards education at the Cape under the VOC, in line with practice in the United Provinces (Malherbe 1925:21-24) is the primacy of religious considerations: education was aimed at teaching children the catechism and enough literacy to enable them to read the Scriptures. This was a prerequisite for Confirmation, a major rite of passage for the burghers. This is not to say that the population was particularly religious⁴², closeness to the church varied, with a major revival in the 1790s.

⁴² Giliomee 2003 gives as an example, the congregation at Stellenbosch where, in 1726, only twenty per cent of burgher couples were both confirmed.

However, being a Christian was a political identity, with the burghers referring to themselves as *Christians* (Giliomee 2003:42).

3.4.1.1. The church at the Cape

The significance of the church and religion for the language used at the Cape was great: the Word was available through Dutch and Calvinists were 'men of the Book'. Being a Christian was a crucial element of status and respectability, and the rites of passages, such as baptism, and the participatory religious rites, such as Communion, were community-forming, since in the outlying areas this is where the farmers convened. All this happened not only in Dutch, but in the compromise High Dutch of the *Statenbijbel*⁴³, the language of the educated elite and the government in the Netherlands.

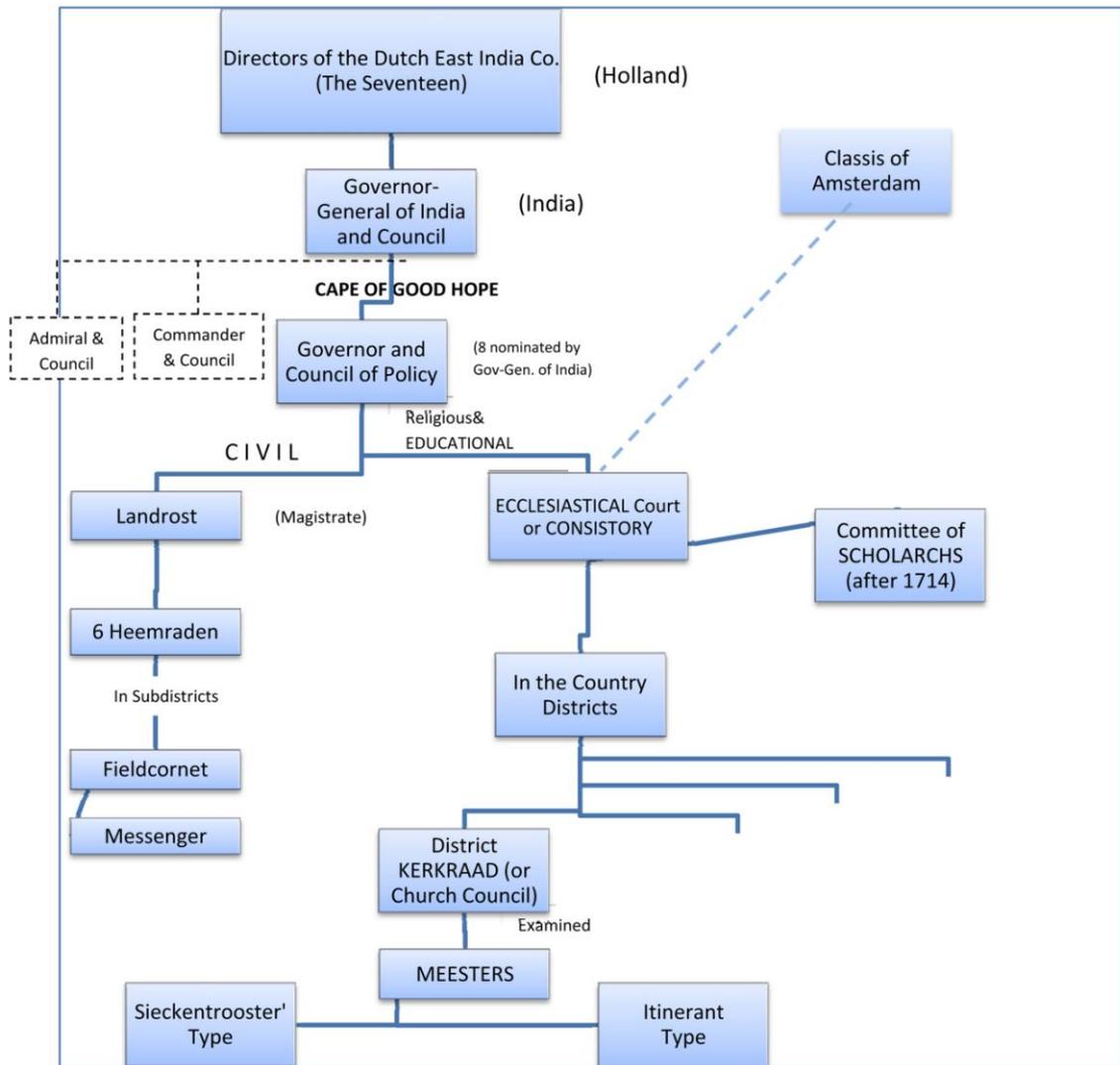
The church at the Cape⁴⁴ was not an independent institution: it was an arm of the VOC, and expected to support its activities, rather than criticise it on moral grounds (Boxer 1977:137). The *Classis* (Consistory) of Amsterdam licensed the ministers and the sick-comforters (Walker 1968:32), though it had considerable difficulty in obtaining suitable persons. At the beginning of the Cape period, the United Provinces was still hard pressed to find enough preachers (*predikanten*) to meet the needs of the home communities. Secondly, the conditions of service were unfavourable and, thirdly, the respect accorded the clergy was left somewhat to be desired (the servants of the VOC were, as discussed, often from the desperate layers of society), despite Company orders in this regard. Fourthly, they were stationed according to the orders of the Company, instead of being called to serve in one place for several years, as was the case in the Netherlands (Boxer 1977:134-135). At the Cape, the first congregation was only established thirteen years after the founding of the settlement, reinforcing that the intention of the VOC was to keep *De Kaap* as a provisioning point only. Ministers from passing ships helped out and the sick-comforter did what he could (or was allowed to do), but when the new minister held the first communion service, of a population of 276 officials and 92 free adults only 24 attended (Ponelis 1993:4). As for the lay-readers, or sick-comforters, their lot was both more difficult and the criticism they received was

⁴³ The Dutch translation of the Bible was completed in 1637.

⁴⁴ Only Calvinism was allowed, the Dutch Reformed Church was *the* Church, until the end of the eighteenth century.

harsher. They were from the working-class, often had only a very basic theological training, and were not allowed to preach as a consequence, only to read aloud from permitted texts (Ponelis 1993:136). Complaints about them were frequent, and their status was much lower than that of the ministers (Boxer 1977:137). Few of them became ordained ministers, since that required a knowledge of Latin. It was these sick-comforters who functioned on shore as catechists and primary-school teachers, usually under the supervision of a minister. Marriages were celebrated by the Council of Policy (Walker 1968:33). The standard of education that could be expected from such school-masters leaves much to be desired.

The church expanded with the settlement and soon there was a church serving the new districts of Stellenbosch and Drakenstein. At each church there was a primary school, and there were also itinerant schoolmasters, or *meesters*, who were usually minor Company officials on leave of absence. As such, they were foreigners (temporarily at the Cape), or immigrants. Their own language acquisition and the schooling they had received had taken place in Europe. Some of them were well-educated men who had slid down in society; others were barely literate themselves. Not all of them were suitable models for their young charges, as a “dissolute life-style prevented many a teacher from adequately performing his task” (Ponelis 1993:5). On the other hand, they were useful to the farmers in other ways as well, serving as handymen and scribes (Pells 1954:15-17). The third alternative was for parents to teach their children themselves (Walker 1968:68). Education was considered a private matter (Pells 1954:15) that “the Government saw fit to *superintend* but not to support” (Malherbe 1925:42). However, the educational competence of the parents would have left much to be desired, since they started their families early, lived difficult lives, and were often illiterate (Ponelis 1993:5). Neither the Company nor the population seemed much disturbed by the lack of clergy, nor by the lack of the associated schooling (Ponelis 1993:4-5).



Schematic representation of the civil, religious and educational authorities during the VOC period (1652-1795) at the Cape. Adapted from: Malherbe 1925:44)

Figure 5.

3.4.1.2. Formal education

Formal education was “synonymous with instruction in the doctrines of the Dutch Reformed Church, in Bible history, psalm singing and reading and writing sufficient for qualification for church membership. The only secular subject was a little simple arithmetic” (Pells 1954:12). The goal of education remained confirmation until well into the nineteenth century (Ponelis 1993:6). By linking education with the church, the language standard was identified with the language of the *Statenbijbel*. The medium of instruction in these schools was, by default, Dutch. In addition to the schools, in the early days, clerks and bookkeepers were trained in the chancellery of the Company. Today we

would categorise this as in-service vocational training, characterised by features of language for specific purposes. This means of acquiring literacy skills was, however, stopped by Commissioner Rijckloff van Goens in 1682 (Ponelis 1993:5). For further education, children had to be sent abroad (Pells 1954:15). A brief attempt was made by an ex-chaplain in 1714 to open a Latin school, but lack of support led to its failure (Walker 1968:68). In this year, the first school ordinance established the Board of Education (called the Scholarchs) and required the licensing of teachers, whose duties were laid down. Van Imhoff, Governor-General of the Indies, came to the Cape in 1743 and his scathing criticism of the state of education in the colony led to the requirement of taking an examination, administered by the *Kerkraad* (Church Council), thereby reaffirming the link between education and the Church. This requirement was loosely enforced (Pells 1954:17-18). This pattern of local decline (of education, morals, restriction of private trade and conduct of trade with the Khoekhoen), followed by criticism and reform initiatives by visiting commissioners but without measures being taken to ensure implementation of policy, resulting in little change in practice is repeated with variations through the Company period.

By 1779, when the total population of the colony was approximately 25,000, there were eight schools in Cape Town with 686 (out of a total population for Cape Town of a little over 4,000) pupils (of whom 82 were slave children), that is about 10% of the total number of children of school-going age (Malherbe 1925:45-46).

Literacy and numeracy at the Cape seems not to have been linked with the study of other subjects, thus contributing to the isolated nature of the society. This was compounded by the fact that no newspaper was published at the Cape. Since the Dutch in Europe were avid readers of newspapers, this lack can be attributed to the influence of the VOC. This is borne out by events in Batavia, where a weekly newspaper was started in 1744, but only with the permission of the Batavian authorities. Once they had informed their superiors in Amsterdam, the licence was immediately revoked. Despite the small local Dutch-speaking population in Batavia, the newspaper had been published in Dutch (Taylor 1983:81-82).

Pells goes so far as to assert that it would be “ludicrous to attempt to give details of any so-called system of education in South Africa until well on into the nineteenth century” (1954:2). Few documents written by free persons have survived, which leaves the ability to sign their name on a legal document as the only available measure of

literacy (Ponelis 1993:6), although being able to read the Scriptures and being able to give a signature are not equally demanding tasks. During the first fifty years, literacy levels based on this single, inadequate criterion can be established for 795 men out of a total of 1613: 471 were literate. The same calculation in the case of women is 124 out of 648, with 58 literate (Data from De Wet 1981, cited in Ponelis 1993:6). A similar analysis by Botha of the French Huguenots indicates that most of them were literate to this degree (1921:125, cited by Bosman 1968:135). These figures would be even lower if the Khoekhoen and the slaves were included, albeit some slaves were literate in their mother tongues.

3.4.1.3. The population mix

Relevant to any understanding of the language situation at the Cape is insight into who the speakers were. Despite the small size of the population in the first half-century, it is difficult to cite precise statistics, since various estimates exist. As far as possible, the various figures used have been related to each other and general trends have been found to be consistent, if not exactly equivalent (different foci, influenced by different worldviews and research interests influence the selection of data). The population figures differ in what they record: the Khoekhoen were excluded, as were the Bantu later, until the British takeover; slaves, if included, did not include the private slaves of VOC officials and included badly reported figures for other privately owned slaves; women and children could be excluded, as could the servants of the Company; the fluctuating temporary population associated with the ships were obviously not included, but are important for the language situation. What is, however, clear from the figures available is that there is general consensus that in the first fifty years the main L1 was Dutch, followed very closely by German, that thereafter little organised immigration took place and natural reproduction was mainly responsible for the growth of the population. The following graph is based on data from Colenbrander (1902) to 1772 and thereafter Colenbrander and De Mist, compiled by Malherbe (1925:41).

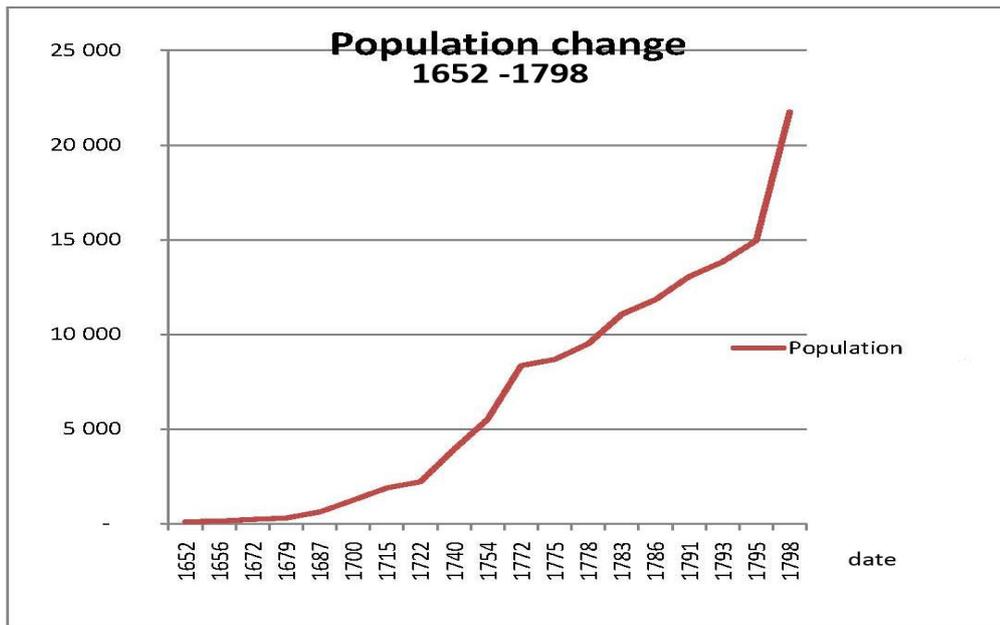


Figure 6. "Growth of Burgher Population 1652 – 1798" (copied from Malherbe, 1925:41)

Combrink gives the total civilian population, half of them children, as 1,641 in 1707 (1978:74), whilst Walker gives a figure of 1,623 (1986:66) (cf. Walker 1986:1 for figures from Theal for the entire VOC period). Between 1657 and 1707 (De Wet cited in Ponelis 1993:9) the number of adult free men of known origin is 1,059 (of whom 60% remained unmarried). For this sample:

473	were Dutch	=	45%
73	were Cape born	=	7%
357	were German	=	34%
90	were French	=	8%

(leaving 66 unaccounted for)

The figures for the women stem from the 426 marriages where the origin of the wife was known (one woman may have married more than once):

175	were Dutch (<i>incl. Belgians and Mauritians</i>)	=	41%
165	were Cape born	=	39%
44	were French	=	10%
38	were German	=	9%

(leaving 3 unaccounted for)

Two features stand out: the number of German men is relatively large and is not matched by the number of German women, and the L1 of the Cape-born women is indeterminable (although Ponelis includes the Cape-born men in the Dutch category). These women could have been the children of married Dutch or German couples, or of European-manumitted slave women, who would have had to be fluent enough in Dutch to be manumitted but whose own L1 is untraceable, although a knowledge of Malayo/Portuguese of some variety is likely. Of the 449 women who immigrated to the Cape between 1652 and 1795, by far the largest group is Dutch (322, with 72 French and 48 German women). As mothers, these women would have transmitted their European Dutch dialect to their children. The point is that we can look at the various and diverse possible influences, but need to bear in mind the wide range of the possibilities.

Chapter 4

The languages and language use of the colonists

4.1. Introduction

4.2. Dutch and the Dutch

Standard Afrikaans (*Algemeen Beskaafde Afrikaans* or *ABA*) is a proximate language of Standard Dutch (*Algemeen Beskaafd Nederlands* or *ABN*), which mainly descended from seventeenth-century Dutch dialects, albeit with a list of caveats. The VOC Dutch-speakers of the Cape have already been discussed in some detail above (see 3.2) Attention has been paid to the role of the VOC and therefore indirectly to the role of the Dutch-speaking inhabitants of the Cape. In what follows, this has been expanded by focussing on the dialects of the Dutch and additional factors influencing their language use. The perspective here includes those Dutch-speakers who were not VOC servants, and whose social loyalty and daily lives were increasingly removed from the VOC. However, as discussed above (see 2.2.2), not all individuals who became free burghers remained at the Cape. Although there are no grounds for extrapolating the initial figures, the possibility of return to Europe, or to Company service, was available for the free burghers. For those keeping this option open, this would have meant some additional pressure to orient themselves towards the dialect of the home country.

To recap:

- the Dutch-speakers spoke a variety of regional dialects;
- many of them would have had experience in using contact languages;

- there was a gap between the ordinary soldiers and sailors on the one hand and the officers and VOC officials on the other as regards levels of education and social class; this was a functional gap in everyday life as well;
- the servants of the VOC came and went throughout the VOC period and their numbers were periodically augmented by even more temporary Dutch-speakers from the main 'target market' of the Cape economy, the ships;
- both seconded and visiting VOC servants, their families and entourage who moved within the sub-culture created by the trading empire, which was influenced by the contact with the cultures of the East; and
- there were immigrants (sometimes with their wives) who, together with the freed servants of the Company, settled at the Cape.

The regular fresh influx of speakers of Dutch from the Netherlands was the language lifeline to the diachronic emerging language standards of the United Provinces. The *Statenbijbel* was the point of reference for the written language, the language of the literate elite which became a standard to aspire to for the upwardly mobile or upper caste Europeans; whilst the language of the ship and garrison, the Dutch currently spoken in the Indies and Batavia, and the emerging local vernacular, were all also in use.

4.2.1. Local and European dialects

Wardhaugh (2006:30) identifies two factors relevant to dialects, namely power and solidarity, that can shed light on what happened to the languages and dialects and their speakers at the Cape in the early years. Wardhaugh comments that "Power requires some kind of asymmetrical relationship between entities: one has more of something that is important, e.g. status, money, influence, etc., than the other or others" (Wardhaugh 2006:30). In this regard, the VOC had the most power, and therefore one would expect the language of the VOC to prevail (*vis-à-vis* the European dialects/languages and the indigenous languages), which indeed it did – if we take the language of the VOC to be Dutch in all its dialects, including the local varieties. If, however, we consider the language of the VOC to be the northern Dutch Holland dialect (with its own language standards and standardized written form), then over the long term the language of the VOC did not triumph; instead, a local vernacular developed, which would in time become Afrikaans.

The second factor Wardhaugh (2006) highlights is solidarity, by which he understands “a feeling of equality that people have with one another. They have a common interest around which they will bond. A feeling of solidarity can lead people to preserve a local dialect or an endangered language to resist power, or to insist on independence” (Wardhaugh 2006:30-31). Our discussion of the death of French as a mother tongue in South Africa within fifty years suggests just such a feeling of solidarity amongst the settlers and also suggested the seeds of a rift between the speakers of the local variety of Dutch and the Dutch of the VOC officials.

The Dutch of the VOC was in itself not uniform and should not be confused with the standard developing in the Netherlands, although in their written forms they would converge. As outlined above, the mobility of the populations of the Low Countries had two important effects: on the one hand, the processes of immigration and assimilation had “the effect of loosening norm-enforcing traditional, dense social networks and of opening the urban vernaculars to a process of linguistic accommodation, whereby salient dialectal features – features characteristic of only one of the many dialects spoken in a given city – are dropped in favour of variants acceptable to a broader cross-section of the populace” (Barbour & Carmichael 2000:138). On the other hand, “the intensifying commercial and cultural interaction between cities heightened awareness of different dialectal variants and underlined the need for a more universally accessible written language” (Barbour & Carmichael 2000:138).

The result was a new dichotomy between a supra-regional written variety and various spoken dialects, with solidarity promoting the retention of the local variety, and power relations supporting the promotion of a common written language. The gap between *spreektaal* and *schrijftaal* was also accepted by the Dutch-speakers at the Cape. The *spreektaal*, or spoken dialect at the Cape would split along the (permanent) settler / VOC (temporary) solidarity line, with the VOC servants bringing dialects with themselves, those who decided to leave the service of the VOC taking dialects with them, and the new communities exhibiting in time their own particularities of dialect. The isolation of the settled speakers from Dutch as it was spoken in Europe favoured local dialect formation, especially after immigration virtually stopped and the growth of the local European population was based on natural reproduction with the addition of newly freed Company servants. Within the VOC, there would be the expected sociolectal difference between the sailors and soldiers and the higher-ranking officers and officials. The origins of the speakers would be reflected in their dialects. Accommodation to the dialects of

others and the creation of makeshift 'common denominator' codes contributed to a new dialect, Cape Dutch.

Within the 'language universe' of the Cape, the variety of the centre also differed from the varieties evolving further away. Contact between speakers would decrease with distance: the remote frontier farms were home to those speakers who came least often to Cape Town, or even to Stellenbosch or Drakenstein. Many of these farms were truly isolated, forming micro-societies of their own leading to the development of what might be termed *plaaslects*, spoken amongst the various people living in close proximity there. On the frontier, solidarity was vital for survival and the conflict of interests with the officials of the VOC intensified the feelings of "us versus them". For the locally born, it is hard to conceive of any motivation to aspire to VOC-ese, their customary domains of language use being far removed from the global world of the VOC. The need for adequate communication on commando, on the *plaas* (encompassing both family and work), and with the 'neighbours' (encompassing both social and commercial intercourse), on the other hand, constituted strong pressures to refine their common system of communication. (Although this section deals with the Dutch-speakers, the likely population of such a *plaas* would include slaves and Khoekhoen).

4.2.2. Dialect retention and convergence

There is no reason to suppose that the processes of dialect retention and dialect convergence that were active in Europe would have discontinued in South Africa, although they would have led to different results in the new circumstances. There seems as yet no way in which sociolinguistics can predict which particular effects will predominate, with what results, but the effects can be traced and recognised. Deumert & Vandebussche (2003:456) speak of "the complex and multifaceted processes of inter-dialectal accommodation and convergence which supported the formation of well-defined and – to use the terminology of Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985) – 'focused' sociolinguistic norms in hetero-glossic speech communities." This was in progress in many parts of the Netherlands and would have been repeated, on a much smaller-scale, at least as regards numbers of speakers, at the Cape. The size of the population is a significant factor, since it increases the potential influence of the individual speaker.

The Dutch-speakers (and the linguistically close) German-speakers came from a variety of places and thus spoke a variety of dialects as their mother-tongue. In the

service of the VOC they would have had ample opportunity and need to develop fluent communication amongst themselves, especially in the cramped ships on the long voyages and in the garrisons on land. The accommodation to each other's dialects would have been compounded by the improbability of many speakers of any one dialect remaining together, especially if they left the service of the VOC to become settlers and dispersed geographically. Two strategies were open to them as regards Dutch: to accommodate to the norm, or to negotiate mutually comprehensible, possibly short-term, forms of language. Both strategies would have been employed, depending on the situation, with various linguistic outcomes. The metaphor of the 'invisible hand' in economics could be applied here, as the strategies individuals employed, based on self-interest, would lead to self-regulation and the emergence of codes that would facilitate communication and fulfil the other functions of language in society in this new social context⁴⁵.

4.2.3. Dialects in contact

Languages alter in various ways. Two processes that have been identified as occurring when dialects from within the same dialect continuum come into contact will be discussed below. As stated in above, the work of linguists of Afrikaans is extensive and frequently contradictory; the influence of world-views and hidden agendas discernible; and the contemporary state-of-the-art as regards linguistic research is reflected, with some strands being revisited and developed or modified, whilst others are not. This dissertation seeks to identify and describe those sociolinguistic and linguistic schools of thought that can be expected to be relevant, mentioning examples of research along such lines.

4.2.3.1. Koine formation

The term *koiné* is based on the word for the common language of the Greeks from the end of the classical period. Siegel (2001:181) distinguishes the process of koineisation from the result of contact between distinct languages, stating that, "it would seem more profitable to restrict its use to the mixing of linguistic sub-systems" (thereby also deliberately side-stepping the potential problems associated with the terms *language* and *dialect* and defining where the one ends and the other begins). He further specifies that these sub-systems should be "mutually intelligible or ... share a superposed,

⁴⁵ The principle of the workings of the invisible hand do not necessarily mean that the outcome will be 'good' or 'desirable', but it does mean that it will be efficient.

genetically related linguistic system". At the Cape, the various Dutch and most of the German dialects meet the requirement of mutual intelligibility given the necessary goodwill and need to communicate on the part of the speakers. The alternate requirement is also met in the standard European Dutch emerging in the seventeenth century as well as the written standard language, also used in most part by the VOC. This may also have acted as a check on the process of koiné formation due to the presence of a Dutch speaking 'ruling class' whose inherent linguistic conservatism would have slowed down the developments (Millar 1997:34). The outcome of a process of koiné formation is a

stabilized contact variety which results from the mixing and subsequent levelling of features of varieties which are similar enough to be mutually intelligible, such as regional or social dialects. This occurs in the context of increased interaction or integration among speakers of these varieties (Siegel 2001:176).

The processes involved are identified by Siegel as *mixing*, *levelling* and *simplification*. The dialects in contact at the Cape provide the "pool of linguistic variants for the developing linguistic community" used initially for communication. Not all the features are incorporated into the new contact variety: attrition or reduction of the variants takes place. Fewer forms and more regular forms characterise the new variety. The speakers in question were, at least initially, from outside the Cape, the society at the Cape was relatively fluid and the number of speakers was small. The 'immigrant' status of the speakers is important in the geographical aspect of dialect retention, whereby "dialect features tend to be more resistant the larger their areal spread" (Hinskens 2001:204). As the society stabilised and a local identity began to form, a new variety could emerge, with less variation and more generally accepted norms reinforced by nativisation, as the children born locally acquired the most common variants, growing up "not so much in a bilingual situation, as, more likely, in one in which this 'bare bones' language is used for day-to-day communication" (Millar 1997:31).

An ongoing debate between the author and Mufwene (1997, cited in Siegel 2001) forms part of the Siegel article. The issue is whether or not the term *koiné* is worth keeping, Mufwene being of the opinion that it "may as well be abandoned" (Mufwene 1997:53, cited in Siegel 2001:183). Without going into this argument in detail, I would suggest that the terms in this field are, as is so often the case in sociolinguistics, based on idealisation or prototypes, or can be conceptualised at points on a continuum. One

reason for retaining the terms, even if they have become less, rather than more, clearly defined over time, is expedience. Calling to mind a prototype, or placing a concept roughly along a continuum, serves to facilitate communication in the absence of terminological rigour. The terminological mine-field repeatedly uncovered by this dissertation suggests that a degree of vagueness is acceptable and that the alternative, repeatedly defining exactly what is being discussed, at some point becomes untenable since the content then becomes predominantly definition. In agreement with Siegel (2001), *koiné* (in contrast to a pidgin or creole) is therefore useful to refer to a contact variety that emerges in a situation in which:

- mutually intelligible codes are available, but none of these is clearly the target dialect;
- there is no necessity to shift from one's own L1, nor is there the need to learn a foreign language, but socially motivated accommodation facilitates communication;
- the substrate/superstrate distinction is replaced by a complex interrelated process of change due to the influence of several dialects, affected by linguistic and social factors;
- close contact between speakers allows for free access to the other dialects;
- close and frequent contact between speakers supports the negotiation of intelligibility;
- the variety that emerges is mostly mutually intelligible with the source languages; and
- the process is continuous (the break associated with creole languages is not present).

Such a *koiné* can be expected to go through various stages, which Hinskens summarises as a "*pre-koiné*" unfixated stage; a "*stabilized koiné*"; an "*expanded koiné*" in which the stabilized *koiné* may be extended to other domains, leading to elaboration, and a "*nativized koiné*" (2001:207). He sees this life-cycle as paralleling the jargon > stabilized pidgin > expanded pidgin > creole progression. Nativisation can, however, take place after any of the first three phases, and form a factor in the subsequent phases. Siegel differentiates between *immigrant* and *regional koinés* (Siegel 2001:175). Hinskens (2001:202) suggests that where the communities consist of migrant dialect speakers, the lack of direct contact with the "ancestral standard languages ... prompts rapid

koineization". Dialects can, of course, co-exist without koiné formation; however, the sudden contact of dialects in an immigrant situation can trigger the process.

The above process is essentially the one proposed by Louw (1948, cited in Van der Merwe 1968:41-43). His dialect-geographic research⁴⁶ and interest in settler dialects (including those of German-speaking settlers in Russia, Hungary and Romania) led to his conclusion that Afrikaans emerged from seventeenth century Dutch in a process of dialect mixture and levelling. In his view, the process could take place relatively quickly, but with local differences. The outcome variety differed from all the original dialects. As the frontiers were pushed back, so the emerging variety, Afrikaans, was taken with the speakers, leading to some forms being retained.

4.2.3.2. Elimination of difference

Compared to Dutch, Afrikaans in all its forms is characterised by a simpler, more regular grammar and the lack of case and gender endings. The question that continues to intrigue linguists is why this is so. O'Neil (1978) suggests that it is useful to distinguish between grammatical change as a result of simplification of a feature of a language and change that results from the neutralisation of points of difference in a language contact situation. Although the process by which the Germanic languages developed from an earlier Proto-German precede the earliest recorded texts of these languages, there was a point in the last centuries of the first millenium at which all the Germanic languages were heavily inflected, exhibiting similar inflection systems: "strong and weak noun declensions and verb conjugations; indefinite and definite adjective declensions several case, person, and gender distinctions; singular and plural (and here and there dual) number, etc." (O'Neil 1978:249).

The divergence of the Germanic languages after A.D. 1000 is evident in their inflectional systems, but their divergence exhibits a specific pattern, reflected in their geographic distribution. At the one extreme, there are the conservative inflectional systems, typified by Icelandic and German, while at the other, there are the simplified inflectional systems, represented by English and Scandinavian. In between these extremes lie Germanic languages that are neither heavily inflected nor only barely

⁴⁶ See also his *Afrikaans Language Atlas*, published for the first time in 1959.

inflected. The explanation for this is sought in language contact, specifically extensive *Germanic* contact or its absence. For example, Iceland was geographically and economically isolated, whilst England was attacked and settled by other Germanic peoples of Scandinavian origin. O'Neil generalises what happens as follows: "If there is significant and more-or-less permanent contact between two closely related languages differing for the most part only in their inflectional systems, these inflectional differences will rapidly neutralize" (O'Neil 1978:283). This is not to be confused with the process of borrowing. Borrowing is a slower process and can involve languages that are totally unrelated (O'Neil 1978:249). Rather, in this case, there is an urgent need for communication between "two groups of people speaking languages which because of their common origin are remarkably similar in their phonology, syntax (deep and surface) and semantics, but which for historical reasons contrast sharply in their inflections" (O'Neil 1978:257). The main barrier to communication therefore lies in the differing inflections, whereas roots and syntax are rather similar. The problem is solved by the rapid elimination of the confusing issues, the noises in the channel, exposing the basic underlying similarities.

O'Neil explains that in England the contact between Continental Scandinavian and Northern Old English, and in Scandinavia, the contact between Danish and Middle Low German favoured the rapid and radical loss of inflections. In the case of Icelandic and Southern High German, there was no extensive intimate Germanic contact and the system of inflections simplified in isolation and thus very slowly (O'Neil 1978:251-257).⁴⁷ As to the Germanic languages 'in the middle', it appears that they were in contact with closely related languages of the two extremes. Faroese, for example, has loanwords from both directions, bearing out the dual influences. In this situation it could neither stay where it was, nor move towards complete neutralisation, and thus came to occupy a middle state inflectionally (O'Neil 1978:280). This scenario is repeated in the cases of Frisian and Dutch.

Dutch was taken to the Cape by the Dutch East India Company, but the Dutch spoken was not homogeneous, to which a variety of German (and even Danish and other

⁴⁷ (See O'Neil 1978:251-57 for a detailed discussion of the case of English and of the parallel processes of neutralisation in the north, and simplification in the south, as well as a testing of the hypothesis on Continental Scandinavian, and the conservative inflectional systems of Icelandic and High German).

Scandinavian) dialects were added. The need for the elimination of ‘noise’ was compounded by the encounter with non-Germanic languages, heightening the need for fluent intra-Germanic communication, whilst the distance from the regions where the dialect/s were spoken diminished the conservative effect of the speech community (solidarity was now a survival issue and increasingly with the newly forming in-group). O’Neil dismisses as unconvincing the notion that Afrikaans came into being through the language spoken by the black wet-nurses in the Dutch households, which was in turn passed on to the children they raised. Instead, he suggests that the mixed German and Dutch dialects created exactly the right conditions for the neutralisation of inflections (O’Neil 1978:268-9). To support this scenario, Combrink (1978: takes a twofold approach: he gives evidence of the amount of ‘noise’ that would need to be deleted, and he cites a situation in which such simplification took place.

➤ On the basis of a 1941⁴⁸ study of Dutch verb inflections, 23 systems of inflection in the present tense, indicative mood, singular, were identified. In North and South Holland and Utrecht, five such systems were found:

	South Holland		North & South Holland, Utrecht	North Holland	
Systems	A	B	C	D	E.
1 Sg	--	-t	--	--	--
2 Sg	--	-t	-t	--	-e
3 Sg	--	-t	-t	-t	-t

(adapted from Combrink 1978:75)

- ❖ South Holland: A and B evenly intermixed, also C
- ❖ North Holland: D and E evenly intermixed, also C
- ❖ Utrecht: C

⁴⁸ Published with interpretation by Van den Berg, B. in 1949.

The three provinces are particularly relevant, as Combrink, using data from Bosman (1923), estimates that 73% of the Dutch immigrants who left the service of the VOC to become free burghers came from these provinces. (This means that 27% did not, instead coming from Overijssel 7%, Guelderland 6%, Zeeland 5%, North Brabant 4%, Groningen 3% and Friesland 2%). Afrikaans, as we know it today, would be the equivalent of system A, which is to say, it has simply dropped the inflections. This is what would follow logically from the noise deletion principle.

➤ In the eastern part of the Netherlands, in Overijssel and the east of Guelderland, the dialects have only one plural ending for all three persons: *-t*. In western Guelderland, there is similarly only one plural ending for all three persons: *-en*. In the area where these two dialects meet, there is an area – the only such area in the Netherlands – where the dialect has no inflectional endings for the plural.

As for the present tense indicative, if we draw a table similar to the one above, then the situation is as follows:

	West	Centre	East (Overijssel)
1 Sg	--	-e	-e
2 Sg	-en	--	-t
3 Sg	-t	--	-(t)

The point made by Combrink is clear: the loss of inflection in a dialect contact situation where there is a restricted number of speakers representing a broad range of dialects is to be expected (Combrink 1978:75-76), and the case of Afrikaans supports this.

A scenario of how this could work in practice is outlined by Lightfoot in a discussion of the loss of inflections in Middle English, internally or under Scandinavian influence, or both: “it is also possible that [this] development was facilitated by the mixture of languages” (Lightfoot 1999:11). In bilingual families, Anglo-Saxon mothers and

Scandinavian fathers provided input for the children. The languages were similar in that both had word-final case endings and verbal inflections, and stressed initial syllables. Exposure to both could have led to bilingualism (with two co-existing but distinct systems), or the children may have “ignored the different endings of words that they perceived as the same in their parents’ speech and converged on a single grammar in this regard, as a kind of creolization” (Lightfoot 1999:12).

Applied to the Cape, the issue of what children (born to white, slave or Khoekhoen mothers) received as input and what their L1 was at what point in time has been the subject of extensive speculation, and theories relating to the origins of Afrikaans hinge on the premise accepted. The application of this scenario assumes that the parents spoke similar but different varieties of Dutch or other Germanic languages, as their L1 or L2. Other combinations will be outlined as they become relevant.

4.2.4. Position of Dutch at the Cape

In summary therefore, Dutch was the language of the coloniser; the representatives of this culture and of the VOC were speakers of some variety of Dutch or of closely related languages. In the new situation created at the Cape, Dutch was the language of power and the language of the ‘core’ (understood locally to be Cape Town and internationally to be the United Provinces). As such, it was the language with the highest prestige amongst the Europeans (amongst the Dutch-speakers there would have been nuances reflecting social differences). For the Khoekhoen, it was initially the means for trade and to acquire desired goods, and later, it was the language of their masters. For the slaves, it was the language of their owners. It was also the language of the VOC, whose policy, grounded in commercial interest, was that Dutch be used in all its records and correspondence, in church, education and society, as well as in communication with the slaves. The central role of Dutch at the Cape bears out the general contention that “Languages are learned ‘upwards’: from the small to the large, from the little to the great tradition, from the poor to the rich language group, from the subjugated to the dominant nation” (De Swaan 2001:25).

4.3. German and the Germans

There were Germans at the Cape from the very beginning: at least one of the men (Jacob Cloete) accompanying Jan van Riebeeck was German (Hoge 1946). Of the nine original free burghers of February, 1657, three were German (Raidt 1983:9). It is estimated that by the end of the seventeenth century, nearly one sixth of the European population was of German origin. In the brief period when the VOC was supporting immigration to the Cape, it was only the Dutch, the Germans and the French Huguenots who were assisted (Walker 1968:53). As a consequence of the end of the Thirty Year War (1618-1648), many of the German states were economically depressed and the wealth of the Netherlands attracted many Germans, mainly from the Protestant northern countries (Zöller 1998). The Germans who came were mostly single men, whose assimilation into the Cape Dutch population was facilitated by intermarriage (Raidt 1983:11-12). In the eighteenth century German immigration increased until after 1750 when Germans actually outnumbered the Dutch immigrants (Ponelis 1993:18).

4.3.1. Germanic dialects

The still existent Dutch-German language continuum (Wardhaugh 2006:31) reflects a historical continuum, rendering the drawing of a line between German and Dutch an unfruitful exercise. This bore consequences for research regarding the situation at the Cape: whether someone was taken to be Dutch or German in borderline cases, depended on the researcher. For example, Colenbrander identified people from the German-Swiss cantons and from along the Dutch border as German, whereas Theal notes that these may have been descendants of Dutch refugees of the sixteenth century and counts members of the Dutch Reformed Church as Dutch (Walker 1968:81). Hoge (1946:2) classified Germans who came from Switzerland separately. He notes that “during the 17th and 18th centuries ... the domain of the Dutch language and culture extended far into German territory, especially in East Friesland and on the lower Rhine, so that ... colonists from places like Wesel, Emmerich, Emden and Lingen can to all intents and purposes be regarded as Hollanders” (Hoge 1946:2). Speakers of Low German outnumbered the High German speakers 11 to 9 (Siegling 1957, cited in Ponelis 1993:17). The differences between German and Dutch dialects were therefore one of degree and similar processes would have led to dialect levelling.

Linguistic assimilation and acculturation⁴⁹ appears to have taken place rapidly. No documents indicate any effort to counter this process or to object to it on the part of the Germans. No overt policy on the part of the VOC seems to have been necessary – other policy decisions and the structure of society at the Cape would serve to steer the Germans towards assimilation. Blending with the other Europeans was facilitated by a common European background and culture, the similarity of their native languages and their similar appearance (they did not form a visible minority). Both as sailors and as soldiers, they were subjected (intentionally and due to circumstance) to discipline, hardship and danger that fostered comradeship and a sense of belonging. Both domains entailed the use of what is today termed language for specific purposes – understanding commands and instructions was essential not only for the smooth functioning of the units, but also for survival in perilous situations. The feelings of community that were engendered would be carried over into civilian life.

On the whole, formal texts written by literate Germans in Dutch are mostly regular, although some deviations due to interference from Low or High German varieties or from the local Cape dialect can be found. There is documentary evidence of Germans using Dutch with other Germans in letters and in their private documents, such as account books. (Ponelis 1993:19) The factors supporting the linguistic integration, based on the fundamental human need to communicate, of the German immigrants include:

- the diversity of their dialects, which lowered the likelihood of groups forming where one particular variety was spoken and reduced the effect of solidarity;
- the underlying similarity of the Germanic dialects which facilitated dialect levelling;
- the experience of the Germans with Dutch before going to the Cape, on the journey there, and in the garrison;
- the fact that they did not arrive in large groups but rather as an uneven stream of male individuals, with the greatest numbers arriving after the Afrikaans-like character of the local dialect (in the latter half of the eighteenth century) had been established (Ponelis 1993:18-19);
- the refugee situation with its associated lack of return, in the case of those who had fled their land of birth;

⁴⁹ For examples of name changes see 5.2.5.1.1.

- peer-pressure from the Dutch soldiers and sailors;
- the externally prescribed need to use Dutch in official correspondence;
- the less prescribed but nevertheless pressing need to use Dutch in order to flourish in the new society dominated by the VOC and the Dutch;
- official support for Dutch coupled with the lack of institutional support for German;
- the language of the only permitted church was Dutch; and
- the shortage of German women, which meant little opportunity for German families to be established and a reduced likelihood of normal intergenerational transmission of language.

4.3.2. The transient Germans

Hoge also researched those Germans who only appeared in the *Monsterrole* as they did not leave the service of the Company, nor did they marry or settle in the Cape.⁵⁰ These numbered about 10,000, due to the fact that over many years, particularly in the second half of the eighteenth century, “nearly all the members of the garrison and the majority of the artisans, wagon-drivers and stable-boys of the Company were Germans” (Hoge 1946:2). Although there were Germans at all levels in the Company, the conscripts were mostly very poor, and drawn into service, signing on for a minimum of five years, because they were desperate (Penn 2007:3).

Several accounts of life aboard a ship of the Dutch East India Company were written by Germans. Only two of these stem from educated men and one of them, Peter Kolbe, was to write about life at the Cape, in *Caput Bonae Spei Hodiernum*, published in Nürnberg, in German, in 1719. Kolbe was not enamoured by shipboard life, despite his relatively privileged position as a paying passenger. He would later become well-known for his sympathetic, albeit not always dependable description, of Khoekhoen society. Unlike others who doubted whether the Khoekhoen were even truly human⁵¹, Kolbe described in some detail their appearance, clothing, music and dances, religious beliefs

⁵⁰ As far as could be ascertained, this was not published.

⁵¹ As an indication of the views on the Khoekhoen, it is interesting to note that *Hottentot* was listed as one of the pejorative terms used by soldiers to refer to sailors in Penn 2007:80, the others being: a *smeerbroeken*, *pikbroeken*, *Jan aan de mast*, and *duiwel*. Germans, in general, were known as *Moffs* or *Moffen*. A slightly modified version of this term (*moffie*) is still used in South Africa to refer to homosexuals.

and crafts, and their social and political organisation. Overall, his evaluation of the Khoekhoen was positive. (Penn 2007:87). It is to Kolbe that we owe records of some of the fragments of the language used by the Khoekhoen in communicating with the Europeans. As to his opinion of the men of the VOC, this was less than flattering. The following quotation is also interesting with regards to the comment suggesting the pressure on the men to learn Dutch:

I did not know how to get on with such coarse, unruly and almost savage people. My melancholy was also increased because I could talk but little with them being ignorant of the Dutch language, and even if I said something that they well and clearly understood, I was (if not actually made fun of) at least asked several times, and put off with the usual *wat segt je*, or in good German “what did you say?” (Kolbe quoted in Penn 2007:76).

4.3.2.1. Soldiers of the Cape garrison

After their journey of, on average, 141 days to the Cape from Europe, German soldiers (and sailors) could count on a four-to-five week stay in the port – or they might be stationed there. The Cape garrison was allowed to select men from the ships and the posting was considered favourable because of the climate, which was healthier than that of Batavia and the East, and the better prospects for advancement. Since the economy of the Cape was based on slave labour, supplemented by the Khoekhoen, there was a need for supervisors and overseers (the *knechts*), who were then often drawn from the garrison. Then there was the possibility of working as a tutor, or for the Company as a scribe or accountant, for those literate in Dutch. Those soldiers who knew a trade were exempted from service in order to be able to practice it.

This constantly changing influx of Germans to the garrison seems not to have led to the maintenance of the German language amongst the more permanent population. Members of the garrison were subjected to some of the same pressures to learn Dutch as the general population. Ability to function as a soldier would have set a minimum requirement for knowledge of Dutch, and provided a ‘survival motivation’. Opportunity to acquire the language from native speaker models was available and, since the minimum period of enlistment was five years, possible and worth the effort. For the lucrative possibilities open to the soldiers, proficiency in Dutch meant an advantage or was a prerequisite, providing instrumental motivation.

After the completion of the period of enlistment, a soldier could choose to stay on as a free man and settle at the Cape (Penn 2007:82-88). Those Germans who did settle, remained there. Hoge (1946:2) estimates that of the approximately 4,000 Germans listed in his book, only about a hundred left again. Considering their numbers, the impact of the Germans is all but invisible, they were absorbed into the general pot of Europeans/the Dutch, but their presence contributed to dialect convergence. Germans would re-appear in the Cape from near the end of the VOC period, with the wave of missionaries that started to come then. Genadendal (Baviaanskloof), a short-lived (1737-1744) Moravian mission station established by Georg Schmidt would be re-established in 1792, with some success amongst the Khoekhoen. The German language was maintained to some degree by these new-comers. When the VOC had granted permission for public Lutheran worship in 1779, only the singing could be in German. This would change in the nineteenth century as some 40,000 Germans settled and some established German-speaking Lutheran congregations (Scriba & Lislud 1997:14).

4.4. French and the Huguenots

Simon van der Stel arrived at the Cape in 1679 as commander, and immediately set about expanding the colony in accordance with his instructions and his Dutch patriotic inclinations⁵². In his first year, he founded the settlement that took his name, Stellenbosch, in the fertile Eerste River valley and immediately recognised that he needed immigrants to meet the demand for produce and defence, who were not easily available. In 1685 High Commissioner Van Rhee, as part of his overarching task of setting the VOC in order, arrived at the Cape to adapt the machinery of government to the needs of the growing colony. One of his steps was to appoint a *landdrost* (the district magistrate) at Stellenbosch, to look after the Company farms and to perform administrative and judicial duties. His structural reforms were to survive the Company in the Cape by many years (Walker 1968:50).

⁵² The tolerant racial attitudes of the times can be seen in his descent: his father was for a time Governor of Mauritius (where Simon van der Stel was born) whereas his grandmother was Indian.

4.4.1. The Huguenots

The difficulty of finding immigrants was solved by recognising an opportunity for solving another problem: the United Provinces had seen an influx of French-speaking Walloons fleeing the Spanish in the sixteenth century (the First Refuge⁵³); their numbers had increased in the wake of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV, as Huguenots fled from religious persecution (the Second Refuge). They had lived as a numerically small religious minority in France, resisting assimilation into the dominant Roman Catholic majority. Under the Edict of Nantes, issued by Henri IV, they had enjoyed freedom of worship, and further protection laid down in the religious, civil, judicial and military clauses, but Calvinism was relegated to the margins of French society by the reinstatement of Catholicism to its position as the official religion of France (Van Ruymbeke & Sparks 2003:2-3). Upon the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, in terms of which Protestantism was declared to be illegal, large numbers (about 200,000) of Huguenots left France for the surrounding Protestant countries, including the United Provinces (which took in about 50,000 to 60,000), while from there many of them went on to settle in the Americas and some went to the Cape. The persecution of Protestants continued in France under Louis XV, but ceased in 1787, with the Edict of Toleration, issued by Louis XVI. During the French Revolution they were granted full citizenship and the law explicitly stated that they, and their descendants, had the right to return to France.

4.4.2. French refugees in the Netherlands

In the Netherlands, various and almost simultaneous actions were taken to aid the refugees of the Second Refuge. These measures were “roughly of two kinds: the first was of an inclusive nature, the second of an exceptional kind. Free citizenship and free entrance into the guilds were granted on the one hand, while exemption from taxes and free exercise of commerce and craftsmanship outside the guilds were granted on the other” (Frijhoff 2003:144). The influx included many highly skilled craftsmen and “the question must be asked if all the skilled refugees were really Huguenots, since it is quite evident by now that quite a lot of refugees of the First Refuge came to Holland for

⁵³ Term used by Frijhoff 2003.

economic reasons and were not Protestants at all. The same might hold for the Protestant towns of France” (Frijhoff 2003:147).

For the French in the Dutch Republic, their integration was complicated by their language. Although foreign, this was a language signifying prestige in the Netherlands, so that by 1680 it had become the status language of the Dutch upper classes, slowly replacing Latin as the language of international learned communication. Their hosts, the Dutch, had become the “cultural brokers of Europe translating, printing, teaching, and communicating whatever lived anywhere in somebody’s mind. The Second Refuge reinforced this cultural infrastructure” (Frijhoff 2003:153). French had furthermore been taught in Netherlands since the sixteenth century, as a commercial language and later as the language of the court. At the time of the Second Refuge, French had been established as the major foreign language and so-called French schools existed, in which elementary subjects and French were taught. The role of French as the language of conversation in the Dutch Republic of Letters was considerable (Frijhoff 2003:154-159). Nevertheless, for the refugees, their language was now that of a minority. They were exposed to and had to find a way to deal with the dominant local language.

Despite the Protestant solidarity expressed by the Dutch, “their numbers became an embarrassment, and the Seventeen bethought them that here lay a reservoir from which they could draw settlers for their African colony” (Walker 1968:51). These people were in particular attractive because of their experience as wine farmers (Liebenberg n.d.:41).

4.4.3. Huguenots at the Cape

The first organised group of Huguenots left Holland in December 1687, with twenty-two Huguenots on board, who were followed by others until about 1700 (all together about 180); after which the numbers declined (Botha 1921:7). At the turn of the century, they constituted about one-sixth of the free burgher population at the Cape (Walker 1968:51). According to Van Ruymbeke, this was a form of forced assimilation since the Lords Seventeen discontinued the emigration in order to enforce integration of the French (2003:8). The Huguenots were under contract to the Company, taking the oath of allegiance and undertaking to stay for at least five years (Walker 1968:51). In return they were to receive free passage; as well as land, implements on loan, and the necessities of life until they were settled, and were to be given “the same treatment as is laid down by us for freemen of our own nation at the Cape” (Extract from letter dated 16 November

1687, from the Seventeen to the Cape, in Botha 1921:134; cf. Resolution of the Assembly of the Seventeen, 3 October 1685, Botha 1921:126).

The Huguenots were mostly peasant farmers, artisans or labourers, but their number included some men who had been more successful or had been better educated in their homeland than was the case with the Dutch or German colonists. Most of them were young and married, and were to have large families⁵⁴ (and their names are borne still today by many South Africans).

As ‘people of the Book’ they were literate, and 58 (i.e. roughly one third) of them came from the historic region of Flanders and had been accorded the opportunity to learn Flemish. Their bilingualism helped to them to mediate linguistically between the French-speaking Huguenots and the Dutch-speaking settlers (Liebenberg n.d.:41). The need for such mediation was accentuated by the express policy of Simon van der Stel, not to allow the French Huguenots to create a French-speaking enclave for themselves. He specified that they were to live intermingled with the Dutch and German nations (Liebenberg n.d.:40). As the following extract shows, the Company clearly intended for its new settlers to become Dutch: “we shall further see to it that by the use of Dutch in the church and school there, the French tongue will fall into disuse amongst the inhabitants of that community, and afterwards, in course of time, die out; this will take place more easily because there are no French schools ...” (Letter to the Chamber of Amsterdam, 20. 3.1702:427-428, in Botha 1921:159). This policy was of particular importance at a time of enmity between the Dutch Republic and Catholic France, since it was possible that the Huguenots would exhibit split loyalties.

4.4.3.1. Language issues

The emigrants did not perceive matters in quite the same way: they expected their status to be comparable to what they had enjoyed in the Netherlands. Possibly, they were unaware of the absence of French from the dislocated Dutch society at the Cape. Included amongst the group who sailed on 1 April 1688 were the Reverend Simond and his wife and two children (Botha 1921:9). The Huguenots thus had a pastor from the outset and it was he who obtained, through negotiation, the right to use French in the church services, although he was not to achieve the redistribution of land so that the

⁵⁴ See passenger lists, with information about children at <http://222.sa-passenger-list.za.net/huguenotsettlers.hp#z0008>

French were not separated from each other. Walker (1968:53) reports that he was a French monolingual. He was a qualified theologian and also ran a large farm – successfully it seems, since he was amongst the wealthiest of the fourteen Huguenot slave-owners (Vigne 1988 cited in Denis 2003:293). After his departure (in 1701), the right to hold French services was retracted (Van Ruymbeke 2003:10). His departure meant that the Huguenots had lost their strongest spokesman.

His successor, the Reverend Beck, was, however, bilingual. Originally he was not to preach in French but to be of assistance to the members of the congregation who had not learnt Dutch (1968:53). In the correspondence on this issue, mention is made of the reason given by the Huguenots for the situation, namely that “it was impossible for them to learn the Dutch language on account of the fact that they lived, one, to, three or more hours from each other” (Letter to the Chamber of Middelburg, 28 March 1705). Looked at in this light, geography exerted a major influence, since it determined the kind of agriculture possible and the economically feasible size of farms, and consequently meant that the French were not close enough to each other to remain a linguistic unit, nor close enough to easily acquire the locally spoken Dutch, whilst the contacts that did exist made the use of both languages advantageous. On the level of individual decisions, remaining monolingual in French would have entailed distancing themselves from some of their neighbours in a frontier situation where neighbourliness was essential for survival. Normal human social contact promoted the acquisition of Dutch and this was accelerated by intermarriage. In 1707 they lost the right to use French in official communication with the Dutch authorities. All correspondence had to be translated into Dutch before the Councillors would consider the matters raised by the church consistory (Liebenberg n.d.:42).

4.4.3.2. Schooling

In addition to the pastor, the Huguenots soon requested that they be allowed a schoolmaster and Paul Roux was taken on as *voorleser* (parish clerk) and schoolmaster at Drakenstein. When he died in 1723, he had filled the post for thirty-five years (Botha 1921:24). At this time there were still some members of the congregation (twenty-five or twenty-six) from the original arrivals who had not learnt Dutch (Botha 1921:24), but the Council of Policy decided that the post would not be filled, adding, however, that the Directors would be consulted, in the secure knowledge of their conviction that services at the church in Drakenstein should be conducted in Dutch (Botha 1921:25). The reply of

the Amsterdam Chamber is quoted at length as it gives evidence of the general language policy of the VOC, and of its pragmatic application.

... and although we are not much inclined to encourage the observance of the French language in India⁵⁵, and it would be better that the French colonists should make every effort to accustom themselves to the Dutch tongue, yet this time, however, it shall be allowed once more that a French parish clerk be appointed at Drakenstein in the place of the late one, but this is not to be considered a precedent for the future, since the very small number of those who do not understand Dutch (twenty-six persons in all) barely merits the expense of supporting a French parish clerk” (Letter, 23.6.1724, from Chamber of Amsterdam. C539:30, quoted in Botha 1921:25).

After Beck’s transferral to Stellenbosch in 1707 there was difficulty in finding a bilingual minister: however, there is evidence that services in French were held in 1715 and 1718 (where the French service would follow the Dutch one and would be held even if for only one or two people (Botha 1921:37). In 1719 a school teaching Dutch and French was allowed and in 1730 Paul Roux’s son, Jeremias Roux, was permitted to open a school teaching French.

4.4.3.3. Outcome: language shift

Despite the degree of flexibility shown towards the use of French, the policy of a strongly encouraged cultural assimilation had by the 1750s resulted in no-one under the age of forty being able to speak French (Giliomee 2003:11). The intergenerational transmission of the language had been broken, giving evidence of the community’s language shift, that is, “the replacement of one language by another as the primary means of communication and socialisation within a community” (Mesthrie & Leap 2000:253). The phases of this language shift are hard to reconstruct, but the second generation were certainly bilingual, having been obliged to learn Dutch to use in communication, both orally and in writing, with the dominant social group, whilst still retaining their knowledge of French, as their mother tongue in the sense of the language in which they had acquired Language, amongst themselves and their relatives. Inter-marriage would have played a role, as would a sense of fellowship amongst people

⁵⁵ Referring to the Indies.

from distant Europe trying to find a new home in an alien, and sometimes dangerous, environment.

The reasons for the Huguenots wanting to retain a close, if not closed, community are obvious in the circumstances: the challenges of the new situation as well as the harrowing events of the past would all predispose them to wishing to remain tightly interconnected so as to access the advantages of such cohesion. Their experience of living as a minority, in both their native France and in their host country of the Netherlands, would have made them aware of the advantages of remaining a close-knit group. As we have seen, they were accustomed to their language being viewed as desirable, in a society where Dutch and French dialects co-existed. Literacy was an important part of their religious convictions, which were strongly held. Certainly, the two languages, Dutch and French, were of similar social status and a situation of what Batibo (2005:92) terms “coordinate language contact” could have led to unmarked bilingualism. That it did not is due to the pressure from the language and social group that was more powerful and more prestigious in the local situation. This influence might have been caused by demographic, socio-economic, political, cultural or sociolinguistic factors (Batibo 2005:92). Such pressure is summarised in the table below:

Factors	Situation at the Cape
Demographic	<p>The Dutch were numerically limited in absolute numbers but proportionally superior, politically predominant, and socially and economically entrenched.</p> <p>The number of Huguenots was determined by VOC policy and no continued influx of significant numbers was allowed.</p> <p>Both groups had large families.</p>
Socio-economic	<p>Isolated frontier farms</p> <p>Similar initial conditions</p> <p>Slave economy</p> <p>One economic centre (limited economy)</p>
Political	<p>Explicitly identical rights to existing free burghers</p> <p>Refugees who chose to emigrate (albeit with possibility of returning to Europe after end of five year-contract).</p>
Cultural or sociolinguistic factors	<p>Until the departure of their pastor, French was used in the church, but the religion and many elements of the life-style associated with this brand of Protestantism were the same.</p> <p>As a group, the free burghers were open to newcomers, although some friction was to be expected.</p> <p>Established community of Europeans spoke Dutch.</p> <p>Public language use for all official matters was Dutch.</p>

The language policy of the VOC was clear, unequivocally expressed, and based on practical considerations, both economic and political. Possibly because of the Company's pragmatic attitude, it was flexibly applied on the ground, and the demands of the new

immigrants were tactfully handled – making full use of the time factor involved in correspondence within the Cape and with the directors in the Netherlands. Although some tension existed between the French and the other settlers, the main factor leading to a language shift would have been the increasing common sense of identity, or, stated another way, the decrease in the perception of difference.

All the settlers necessarily faced similar difficulties related to farming in an environment only one step away from a wilderness. Neighbours were not physically close, but neighbourliness is an essential survival strategy in frontier societies. In addition to the ‘enemy’ of nature (with terrain and climate new even to the experienced farmers amongst the Huguenots), there was the possibility of attack by hostile indigenous inhabitants, who differed from the settlers as regards crucial social features: language; agrarian settled life-style and the associated economy (as opposed to a non-agrarian⁵⁶ nomadic life-style); European culture; religion and religious rituals; family structure; and relations with the VOC. These features were held in common by the French and the Dutch, as well as the Germans. Action against the Khoekhoen or San took place within the framework of the commando system, which fostered a sense of comradeship. To this can be added the refugee factor: the Huguenots did not have a homeland to which they could return. Although some did not remain at the Cape, those who did were committed to building a future there for themselves and their descendants. In this situation, a knowledge of French may have been an element of their identity, but it was not necessary in order for them to prosper. The refugee situation also implies weakening ties with friends and relatives in distant France, growing progressively less over time and with each new generation. By suffering rejection from their own country on the grounds of religious belief, their attachment to France would have been ambiguous at the least. Furthermore, their previous experience of fleeing their homeland and living on sufferance as a minority may have palled. A desire to belong can be expected and the opportunity was given, not only to belong but to be upwardly mobile. If not quite the American dream of ‘rags to riches’, the steps from refugee to supported immigrant to established burgher class were attractive. (The enduring achievements of the Huguenots can still be seen in the wine regions of the region).⁵⁷ For those whose religious

⁵⁶ The only crop known to have been cultivated by the Khoekhoen was *dagga*, the South African variety of cannabis (Du Toit 1976, cited in Ross 1983).

⁵⁷ See Dooling (2007) for a long-term overview of the position of the wealthy wine farmers.

motivation was less strong, the decision was easier, since their principle was economic expedience.

In the case of Dutch and French and their speakers at the Cape, insights from present-day investigations of second language acquisition can be applied, as the languages were both 'developed' metropolitan European languages of geographically adjacent nations, and the Huguenots, as religious refugees from a branch of Christianity that emphasised personal reading of the Bible, literate. Research into motivation in language learning has been based on social psychological theory since the seminal work of Gardner & Lambert (1959). Two basic kinds of orientations can be identified: integrative and instrumental⁵⁸, both of which provide reasons for learning a language. Motivation stemming from either or both of these orientations can be effective in supporting successful language learning. An integrative orientation suggests the wish to interact and identify with the language and culture of the group of target language speakers and possibly assimilate (to some degree) to the target community⁵⁹, whilst an instrumental orientation refers to utilitarian reasons for learning the target language, such as social recognition or economic advantage. In the case of the French Huguenots an instrumental motivation to learn Dutch was provided by the need to communicate with the officials, to function in the economy and to be accepted into the local society. An integrative orientation was less a matter of disposition than a survival imperative. The common religion and the overlap in history and culture as adjacent European nations provided common ground for integration.

The creation of a common sense of identity was facilitated by local developments. The unhealthy economic climate at the Cape under the Van der Stels led to joint action by the French, German and Dutch farmers of the Berg valley, based on common interests and a common adversary: the increasingly greedy and corrupt Company officials who progressively dodged the Company's stated policy of non-engagement in private trading

⁵⁸ Research focussing on this topic has detailed aspects of these categories expanding the dichotomy to a more multi-faceted approach, and led to the terminology being refined; it has suggested that these categories are not mutually exclusive and may together form a single factor, (Dörnyei 2001). For our purposes, however, the two perspectives are useful for shedding light on possible reasons for societal language choice outcomes.

⁵⁹ Applying this approach 'negatively' can clarify why a language is not acquired. A lack of interest in acquiring a foreign (or second) language can therefore be seen as a lack of desire to interact or identify with the group of target language speakers and their culture, and the absence of practical reasons (or rewards) for learning the target language.

and agriculture, and reorganised the Cape economy for their own economic benefit (see Giliomee (2003) and Walker (1968) for a description of the consolidation of economic power in the hands of the VOC elite and the subsequent power struggle with the burghers). The profiteering of the officials occurred at the cost of the benefit of others, in this case the farmers, in particular the wealthier corn and wine farmers⁶⁰. In the conflict, a new sense of community was born, the concept of 'patriotism' as related to the Cape emerged, and the outcome was the victory of the burghers, the 'fixed' members of this society⁶¹. Similar conflicts between the locals and the VOC officials would bedevil the development of the colony in the future as well, but this was the first case when a coalition of burghers won. Their victory was due to the petition drawn up by Adam Tas, an educated Stellenbosch burgher, and smuggled out to Batavia. Sixty-three burghers signed it: half of the signatories were French (Walker 1968:64). The inquiry and the consequent recall and trial of Willem Adriaan van der Stel and some of the other officials were followed by concrete measures to break up the large farms and put a stop to the monopolies and other abuses. A further decision, to discontinue assisted immigration, would have far-reaching consequences for the settlement at the Cape. There would be no replenishment of French speakers at the Cape to keep the language fresh in the

⁶⁰ Not all the Huguenots decided to farm or to settle close to their compatriot farmers. The fate of those who settled in Cape Town seems to have received little attention, possibly because of even faster assimilation of individuals.

⁶¹ It was in connection with this event that the first recorded self-identification as 'Afrikaner' occurred. The seventeen-year old Hendrik Biebouw (or Bibault) and his friends were rebuked by Landdrost Starrenburg for drunken behaviour, shouting, "I shall not leave, I am an Afrikaander, even if the landdrost beats me to death or puts me in jail, I shall not, nor will be silent" [...*ik wil niet loopen, ik ben een Afrikaander, al sla die landdrost mijn dood, of all setten hij mijn in den trunk, ik sal, nog wil niet swygen*]. What exactly he meant is open to interpretation. One popular version, promoted in the nationalistic ideology of the twentieth century, sees this as the beginning of Afrikaner identity, in which the locally born boy differentiates himself from the officials who were only temporarily seconded to the Cape. In his discussion of the case, Giliomee (2003:22-25) adds biographical details, namely that the young man was the son of a poor, barely literate German father and a Dutch orphan mother, and had a half-sister whose mother was a slave born in Madagascar. The incident led to repercussions: Landdrost Starrenburg had him thrashed and fined, and wanted him banned from the colony in terms of a resolution passed the previous year. It is not entirely clear what happened, but Biebouw's name was deleted from the census lists, with the comment 'gone'. Starrenburg himself was recalled for his part in the corruption scandal. This rounded out picture goes beyond the nationalistic 'slogan' and provides a more accurate and nuanced image of what being an Afrikaner meant. The use of the term was also recorded in 1708 when Rev. Beck warned of "the Africaanders falling to the level of Hottentotdom", and again in 1712, in an official document in which it was used to distinguish among Europeans on the basis of where they were born. (All quotations are from Giliomee 2003).

mouths of the settlers, and to bring news of the outside world. Weiss, writing in 1854, stated that the French Protestants “[b]eing entirely isolated from the rest of the world, and rarely even frequenting Capetown, ... are ignorant even of the great revolutions, which have overthrown modern society. In 1828 they did not yet know that religious liberty existed in France” (Weiss 1854:138). The settler society at the Cape would grow in size by natural increase and would become distant from the events and ideas of Europe. In this process, it would become native to the land, linked to the greater linguistic cultural and political systems of the world by the node of Cape Town and the activities of the VOC with its transient staff.

Since language is “so closely tied to our sense of self: personality, ways of thinking, group identity, religious beliefs, and cultural rituals, formal and informal” it is very difficult to give up our language, even if we have consented to assimilation (Crawford 2007:47). However, if our sense of identity changes, our language can alter with it. In this case, demographic and geographic factors, economic and social identifiers were all compatible with a modified identity in a new land. In the act of abandoning their language, the French Huguenot settlers simultaneously entered into the process of creating a new language. The degree to which the language policy of the VOC was decisive cannot be ascertained with certainty, although the speed with which French was abandoned by the Huguenots suggests that it led to ‘language suffocation’ (Batibo 2005:96).

Chapter 5

The languages and language use of the dispossessed: slaves

5.1. Introduction

The structure of the VOC allows us to view the Cape as an extension of the mother society in the Netherlands, as an outpost of the VOC Head-quarters in Batavia, or, progressively, as a society in the making, with its own unique combinations of features of its parent societies, adapted to Africa and its peoples. In the section that follows, the situation as regards slavery, the slaves and the slaves' language at the Cape will be put into perspective against the backdrop of the Dutch East Indies.

5.2. Languages and language policies of the VOC in the East

From the perspective of the twenty-first century, where former colonial languages tend to re/appear in the general and/or official use of the now independent states, the disappearance of Dutch from most of its former colonies requires explanation. The position of the Cape as the halfway house of the journey between the main VOC poles of Holland and Batavia calls for a consideration of its position with regard to language as it was used in the United Provinces and vis-à-vis the languages in use in the other VOC colonies and especially in Batavia. A multitude of languages was spoken in the islands of Indonesia and India. In the archipelago, roughly one-tenth of all the languages of the world are spoken, including not only the dominant Austronesian family (De Swaan

2001:84). The communication problems that ensued meant that in the period prior to the VOC, trade and contact in the area led to the development of contact languages. As outlined above, two languages came to predominate, namely Malay and Portuguese, both with numerous variations, differing from that spoken by their main L1 group of speakers. Dutch was present throughout the area in the VOC period but, as we shall see, never managed to become established as the main language of the settlements. The language policy of VOC, which tried to achieve just that, was a failure. The experience of the VOC in the East Indies led Hesseling to conclude that

niet in de eerste plaats door officiële ‘taalrechten’, door drang van hoger hand of wettelijke voorschriften een taal zich kan handhaven: wat in de huiskamer gesproken wordt geeft in de taalstrijd de doorslag.

[it is not in the first place the official ‘language rights’, nor superior power or legal regulations that allow a language to hold its own: the language that is spoken in the home is the decisive factor in a conflict of languages.]

(Hesseling 1910:312 quoted in Groeneboer 1993:96)

The intriguing question is why Dutch was not the language of the home in the Dutch East Indies and particularly in Batavia, the headquarters of the VOC in the East. Part of the answer has to do with the languages discussed above, as these formed the main ‘competition’ for Dutch in the East Indies. Valentijn observed that at the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century in Batavia (that is, approximately in the middle of the VOC period) there were three languages in use, namely Portuguese, Malay and Dutch, and that languages such as Javanese or Chinese were used by their native speakers, but only amongst themselves (1726, IV-1:366-7, quoted in Groeneboer 1993:16). He added that they, the Dutch, would have done better to have spread their own language wherever they went, as had the Portuguese.

Although the situation as regards actual use of Malay and Portuguese in the East, as we have seen above, must have been extremely complex, the main features can be summarised as follows. Malay as a lingua franca was widespread in the extensive eastern area of the East Indies, including the Indonesian archipelago and the eastern part of Asia. It was the language that carried the message of Islam and, later, the language the Portuguese priests and the Dutch ministers used to spread the message of Christianity. It was also the language of everyday contact between the various peoples needing to communicate over language barriers: between indigenous peoples with different

mother tongues, and between Europeans and both the peoples of the Indonesian archipelago and peoples of the East not of Indonesian origin. Portuguese as a lingua franca was likewise widespread, especially in the western part of the East Indies. Due to the Catholic missionary activities of the Portuguese, it was often associated with Christianity. It was likewise used as a language of everyday communication, between Europeans, Indo-Europeans, non-Indonesian Asians, and among non-Indonesian Asians, mainly in the westerly regions. The two languages overlapped with and complemented each other in various ways. Both served to solve problems of communication between people of differing native languages, and had been spread along trade routes and used as a channel for religious conversion and the practice of those religions. Various creole variants, known by various names, of these two languages developed, for example Ambonese Malay and the Portuguese of Ceylon and Batavia (Groeneboer 1993:20-28).

Political power, in the main, was exercised through the local native languages. A further seeming anomaly is why Javanese was not a serious contender for the main language in Batavia, or why a Javanese-Dutch contact language did not emerge. After all, the Javanese culture had a centuries-old courtly, literary and religious tradition linked to its political and economic system. One part of the answer is to be found partly in the fact that the early rulers of the region did not impose cultural homogeneity, preferring to rule via the smaller-scale leaders of the communities. In much the same way, the VOC used the authority of the local leaders to underpin its own, and to organise the production of the crops that were the VOC's reason for being in the area in the first place. For the VOC, its civilising mission was far subordinate to its commercial *raison d'être*. Administrative and territorial control was only a means to an end. In addition to this, the way in which contacts between the Dutch and the Javanese were structured, the nature of Batavia as a walled fortress, and the convenience of using a lingua franca already known to people on both sides all worked against the need for a marked change in policy or practice.

The next issue is related to why Dutch did not spread in the community, as had the other colonial languages of English, French, Spanish and Portuguese, at least to some measure. Dutch was, after all, spoken, if only superficially, all over a vast area. In De Swaan's terminology, as an imposed, colonial language that served the purposes of long-distance and international communication, it was supercentral at the time. Thin lines radiated out from the Netherlands and were connected its niche outposts and its maritime trading empire, where it served as the language of "rule, trade and

conversion” (De Swaan 2001:9). For our purposes, this question is restricted to why it did not spread more extensively during the nearly two centuries of the VOC’s existence (Batavia was established in 1619). Although the question remains for the period after the demise of the VOC at the end of the eighteenth century, the histories take divergent paths. Until 1795, what happened in Batavia and the other VOC settlements was of great import for the Cape, even if it did not simply follow the lead of Batavia (or Holland, for that matter). As we shall see below, competition with other supercentral languages, namely Malay and Portuguese, and the range of “rule, trade and conversion” in practice affected the outcome. As it turned out, trade was facilitated by Malay (and Portuguese to a lesser extent). Conversion, it was decided, would be more effective if conducted according to the needs of the targeted people in Malay and Portuguese, and stimulated by preceding missionary activity in Portuguese. Rule was extended over only a relatively small territory and the contingent of Dutch L1 speakers did not reach the required critical mass. In order to investigate this process in more detail, we need to investigate the language policy of the VOC in the East Indies.

Throughout the VOC period, there were repeated efforts to enforce the use of Dutch in all its settlements in various domains and to encourage its establishment as the domestic vernacular of not only the Europeans but also of those of mixed European and local origin, the Mardykens, the slaves and even the native peoples who had converted to Christianity. Allowing knowledge of Dutch amongst the pagans or Muslims was seen as dangerous (Groeneboer 1994:9). Measures taken with this objective in mind mostly focussed on the language of church services and the language taught in schools, although some more general measures were also adopted. The inability to ensure the use of Dutch was seen as a sign of political weakness; speaking Dutch was seen as a token of allegiance to the Dutch state and culture and to the one, true Protestant faith (Taylor 1983:27). The political desirability of inculcating a sense of loyalty to the Netherlands through promoting the language was offset by the decisions as regards religion.

Portuguese was not only the language of the previous coloniser: the Portuguese policy of exploiting colonisation for the propagation of Catholicism had also helped to establish Portuguese as a language of many in the region (as mother tongue, or the language in which communication with Europeans took place, or the language of religious practice). The ‘enemy’ was not only Portugal but also Catholicism. Although the commitment of the VOC to spreading Christianity cannot be said to have been

consistent or intense, nor successful⁶², the series of decisions as regards the language of conversion⁶³ undermined the other policy statements about the use of Dutch. The position of Dutch can be illustrated by the fact that during 1673, in the new stone church for the natives in Batavia, preaching was in Dutch once a week, but twice in Portuguese and twice in Malay (*NIP* II: 652, cited in Groeneboer 1993:47). In this context, steps taken against the use of Portuguese, such as the *placaats* (proclamations) issued by Van Diemen⁶⁴ for Batavia in 1641, by Van Goens in 1658 for the Cape of Good Hope and one year later in 1659, Ceylon, failed (Groeneboer 1993:51). Van Diemen (1636-45), who was active and successful in the war against the Portuguese, acted out of concern that Portuguese would gain the upper hand over Dutch. He specified four regulations⁶⁵: making knowledge of Dutch by slaves visible by allowing them to wear hats only if they could clearly understand and speak Dutch (quoted in Groeneboer 1993:29), allowing manumission of slaves only if they could prove their proficiency in Dutch, permitting local women to marry Dutch men only if they could speak Dutch, and requiring knowledge of Dutch in order to be appointed as an officer. Under Governor-General Van Goens⁶⁶ Dutch was again emphasised, but this degree of determination would be matched again only in the 1780s by Governor-General De Klerk⁶⁷.

The fact that several policy statements were made at various times supporting the use of Dutch and discouraging the use of Portuguese suggests that it was not possible for Dutch to be passed on in the usual way, by parents to their children, and that Dutch had not naturally become the default language of the inhabitants of the settlements.

⁶² Boxer (1977:153) does not mince words: "From the foregoing it should be clear to the reader that Calvinism made little or no impression on the inhabitants of the tropical lands where it was preached in the 17th and 18th centuries. Wherever there was an active religious faith, such as Islam in Indonesia, Hinduism in India, Buddhism in Ceylon or Roman Catholicism in the places settled by the Portuguese, Calvinism could make no lasting impression once the state support for this creed was withdrawn".

⁶³ See Groeneboer 1993 for details, broken down according to major VOC settlements, of the decisions that led to the growing tolerance of Malay or Dutch in the teaching of religion and in schools generally (which were directly linked to religion, as at the Cape and in the home country).

⁶⁴ Antonie van Diemen was Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies 1636-1645.

⁶⁵ These would form part of the 1642 Statutes of Batavia. The issuing of school regulations comprised a further step taken under Van Diemen.

⁶⁶ Rijklof van Goens was Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies 1678-1681 and had been Governor of Ceylon for three periods.

⁶⁷ Reinier de Klerk was Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies 1777-1796.

5.2.1. Population groups in the VOC head-quarters of Batavia

A number of distinguishable, though in many ways overlapping, population groups constituted the societies of the VOC in the East Indies and were represented to a greater or lesser degree at the Cape as well, although the terms used to describe them differed somewhat between the two and within the two, and scholars use various groupings, making comparison of data difficult. Taylor (1983) includes in the category *Europeans* the Dutch and other people from Europe⁶⁸, children born of such parents (sometimes called *Creoles*), women married to European men, legitimate children of European fathers and those children born out of wedlock where the father was known to be European (those of such mixed origins were called *Indo-Europeans*, *Mestizos* or *Eurasians*)⁶⁹. Other groups described were the Asians of non-Indonesian origin (mostly slaves from Coromandel, Malabar, Bengal and Ceylon or Mardykens⁷⁰), the Chinese and the various peoples of the archipelago (mainly slaves; the people native to Java were originally kept out of Batavia for security reasons) (Taylor 1983:18). The point to remember is that the Dutch did not enter into an existing, ordered society. Batavia was an artificially created enclosed city with a very multi-cultural and multilingual character: “The culture that evolved with the growth of Batavia and other Asian settlements fused manners from a great many parts, assumed by individuals all displaced from their points

⁶⁸ Groeneboer cites figures from Boxer (1988:89-90) for Batavia: in January 1622 the garrison of 143 consisted of 60 Germans, Swiss, Scots, Irish and Danes, 17 Flemish and Walloons, and 9 of other nationalities; in 1710 there were Germans, Swiss and Poles, in addition to the 10 Dutch. Taylor (1983:6) adds that this was a cause of conflict.

⁶⁹ This conceptualisation differs from the way in which *European* was understood in South Africa officially in the age of definition of population groups (i.e. during the policy of Separate Development), in that it is more inclusive. At the VOC Cape, the term would soon be contrasted with those of European descent but local birth. Initially at least, the element of racial purity was likewise not central (as borne out by the presence of mixed parentage in the genealogies of many ‘Europeans’ born in South Africa). The term *Afrikaner* initially made this distinction, and can be glossed as ‘one born in Africa’, although its meaning changed over time. There is no satisfactory solution to the problems associated with referring to population groups in southern Africa. The terms *white* and *European* as used in this dissertation have to be understood in context and refer in some way to the people who came from outside Africa, and their descendants, including mixed descendants.

⁷⁰ Mardykens formed a significant social group in Batavia, unlike at the Seaborne Cape. They were freed slaves of Asian (or more seldom, African) descent or their descendants, mostly of mixed Asian origins. They were usually Christian, although some were Muslim, and spoke a variety of Portuguese as their native tongue. Confusingly, they were also called *blacks* to distinguish them from the *mestizos*, or later, in the last decades of the eighteenth century by which time they were mostly genetically Asian, *Portuguese* (Taylor 1983).

of origin whether by choice, social and economic rejection (the case for many Europeans) capture, or sale” (Taylor 1983:18). The implications of this are that the ‘European’ culture transmitted in unofficial direct contact with the locals in the East cannot be said to be particularly Dutch, just as the servants, the labourers and the child-minders did not represent a unified culture. This is true of the Cape as well, where all the categories listed by Taylor were present in some measure, even the Chinese (although their number and lasting significance in Batavia was much greater than at the Cape).

Groeneboer (1993) investigated the languages used by these population groups and VOC language policy in the main VOC centres of Batavia, Ambon, Formosa and Ceylon. The section below is based on his study, in which he describes why the three languages mentioned by Valentijn are important in the order in which he mentioned them: Portuguese, Malay, Dutch – at least for a time. The main centres were not identical in their use of the languages and the focus will fall on Batavia as the headquarters of the VOC and one of two poles to which the Cape oriented itself. Attention will also be paid to the other three centres, since they resembled or differed from Batavia and were in some ways closer to the situation at the Cape.

5.2.2. Education policy as made and practised in Batavia:

The VOC in Batavia did consider education to be part of its task: the original instructions included the admonition to “issue all appropriate orders for the planting of the Christian religion, establishment of good schools” (quoted in Taylor 1983:23). Education was one way in which the VOC attempted to impose control over all aspects of life, as illustrated by the following expectations for schools issued in 1643:

The duty of the schoolmasters is primarily to sharpen in the young a fear of the Lord, to teach them to pray, sing, attend church and to catechize them; next, to teach them obedience to their parents, the authorities and their masters; thirdly, to teach them to read, write and do arithmetic; fourthly, to teach them good morals and manners, and finally to see to it that no tongue other than Dutch is used in the schools.

(Taylor 1983:24)

The emphasis was clearly on creating loyal, pious and obedient subjects rather than educated citizens. Developing intellectual abilities or providing a broadly-based general education did not feature as objectives in this pre-Enlightenment way of thinking. Even the acquisition of skills is only mentioned near the end of the VOC period. Yet despite this political aspect, the principle of preaching and spreading God's Word in the language of the listener was given precedence and even in the schools, religious teaching was soon conducted in Malay or Portuguese (Groeneboer 1993:31). A potential conflict of principles is evident and would become clear in practice.

In 1612 the rather misleadingly named *Spiegel van de Maleysche tale*⁷¹, by A.C. Ruyll, had been published by the VOC. It remained until the early twentieth century the only schoolbook aimed specifically at teaching Dutch as a foreign language in the Dutch East Indies. Other books used were alphabet-books, psalm books, prayer books, catechism books and Bibles, uniting religious instruction with the teaching of the Dutch language (Groeneboer 1993:41). Learning Dutch meant learning prayers, articles of faith, psalms and other religious texts off by heart. This kind of knowledge did not necessarily mean that the pupils actually spoke or understood Dutch (Groeneboer 1993:55). Boxer cites Governor Nicholas Verburgh as deploring in 1654 the parrot-like reproduction of their lessons by the children, who showed no real understanding of what it was that they were reciting (1977:145). Not that this was an unusual approach in those days: the same rote-learning method was used at the Cape, and also for Dutch children learning the catechism. As in the Cape settlement, the schools were theoretically for the Dutch, the 'blacks' and those of mixed origin, but Dutch children were, practically, not present, being taught at home or, if the parents could afford it, sent to the Netherlands. This meant that the schoolchildren did not have Dutch as their

⁷¹ The full title points to its Christianising function: *Spiegel vande Maleysche tale, inde welcke sich die Indiaensche ieugtChristlijck ende vermaeckelijck kunnen oeffenen; Voleerlijcke t'samenspraecken ende onderwijsinghen in de ware Godt-saligheyt tot voorstandt vande Christelijcke religie; Met een vocabularium van de Duytsche ende Maleysche tale dienstich voor alle lief-hebbers der selver* [Mirror of the Malay language, which the Indian youth can practice in a Christian and joyful manner; Sincere dialogues and teachings in the true salvation of God in order to strengthen the Christian religion; With a vocabulary of the Dutch and Malay language for anyone who likes to make use of it (Translation by Groeneboer 1994:2). The first part has Dutch texts (the question booklet of St. Aldegonde of 1599) on the left with the Malay version on the right. This is followed by an 80-page adaptation of the Dutch-Malay word-list compiled by Frederick de Houtman in 1603 during his two-year captivity in Aceh, which had originally been used in Ambon to teach Dutch (Groeneboer 1994:2-3).

home language and that the teachers, who may themselves not have been native speakers of Dutch, therefore used the languages the children did understand, i.e. Malay or Portuguese. For example, the 10 itinerant schoolmasters in 1638 taught in Portuguese, in one case also in Malay, and spoke little Dutch. They are credited with doing good work in expanding the Portuguese parish (Groeneboer 1993:44-45) – and presumably spreading knowledge of Portuguese. In the conflict of principles, religious considerations prevailed, and when peace was made in 1663 the political resistance to the Portuguese language waned (Groeneboer 1993:47). The use of Dutch as the language of religion declined with the appearance of Bible translations in Portuguese and Malay.⁷²

The influence of the Netherlands was dominant: schools in the areas controlled by the two big Dutch chartered trading companies, the VOC and the West India Company, followed the pattern set in the Netherlands, and were under a mixture of lay and clerical control. Sick-comforters or lay-readers were often the schoolmasters if better qualified teachers were not available. In addition to the schools of the VOC, anyone could open a school (Boxer 1977:159). The content of what they taught, as stated above, was oriented towards elementary religious instruction plus the 3Rs. For example, Governor-General Camphuys turned his attention to educational matters and issued regulations in 1684. Teachers were expected to be able to read “without stumbling, write in a good hand, sing the Psalms of David well, and be able to do arithmetic passably” and to teach the children to behave well, avoiding blasphemy and “all improprieties” between boys and girls (quoted in Taylor 1983:26).

Secondary schools were rather few and far between. One such Latin school aiming to provide a more advanced education was opened in Batavia in 1642 (Boxer 1977:160). The school initially had twelve pupils, all orphans of Dutch or Eurasian heritage, and they were expected to converse in Latin or, as beginners, in Dutch – but no other language was permitted. The experiment was short-lived: the school was closed in 1656 and the eleven pupils given jobs within the VOC (Taylor 1983:25). In 1666 it was re-opened but shut down again, this time for good, in 1671 (Taylor 1983:26). The failure was attributed

⁷² The first Portuguese Bible translation appeared in 1681 but was not very good: in 1745 an improved version of the New Testament was printed and in 1753 the Old Testament (commissioned by the VOC); in 1733, the High-Malay translation by Leydecker and not the Low-Malay translation by Valentijn appeared (Groeneboer 1993:54).

to the pupils' disinclination to study, due to the detrimental influence of their contact with slaves, and their lack of a good upbringing, such as children in the Netherlands received. The school was for orphans since parents preferred to send their sons to school in the Netherlands. For girls born in the Indies, marriage was the expected career, but for boys born to Dutch immigrants, there was little opportunity of a career in the Company. For positions of trust, men were sent out from the Netherlands, to ensure suitable loyalty. This, suggests Taylor, was why the schools throughout the VOC period were doomed to be of short duration, low standard and little cultural influence (1983:25-26).

The thinking of the Enlightenment slowly led to a redefinition of education, in which it was no longer so tightly bound to religious instruction. The role of religion in attempts to propagate Dutch did not decrease, but in the second half of the eighteenth century the idea of the 'improvement' of the people themselves through knowledge made its appearance. Teaching was becoming regarded (at least in some circles in Europe) no longer only in terms of religious instruction. Consequently, the link to language tuition loosened, too. Some such echo of Enlightenment ideals can be found in the thinking of Governor-General Van Imhoff⁷³, who became Governor-General soon after the massacre of the Chinese in Batavia (Groeneboer 1993:62-65). The idea of Dutch-speaking natives being useful to the Company gained ground and led to the establishment of institutions teaching skills. This aim formed part of Van Imhoff's overall plans for enhancing the Dutch character of Batavia through encouraging settlement and by cultivating the culture of the Netherlands amongst the immigrants and the locally born men with European status. The means to this end was the establishment of special schools for sons of selected families (Taylor 1983:79). The innovative Marine Academy, founded in 1743, was to provide training in navigation and technical knowledge related to seamanship, as well as social skills. The arrangements aimed to exclude the influence of local *mestizo* culture by specifying that the students were to be from good families (no Asians were to be admitted, but legitimate Eurasians

⁷³ Gustaff Willem van Imhoff was Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies 1743-1750. He contested the brutal policy that led to the massacre of 5,000 Chinese in Batavia, was arrested and deported to the Netherlands where he was named Governor-General and sent back. On the way, he stopped in Cape Town and, recognising the expansion of the colony by the trekboers who were losing contact with the VOC, instituted improvements in education and the work of the Church.

could), and that they were to live as boarders. The staff serving them would be Europeans, “no natives or slaves shall be admitted into the Academy’s house (Article 17 of its constitution). Furthermore, “there shall be no native tongues spoken in the house” (Article 18, quotations from Taylor 1983:81), although the students would have to study Malay, Malabar and Persian to equip them for command. In 1745 the theological seminary was opened to support the Christian faith and to train young men (admission was for boys aged eight to twelve) for the ministry, regardless of race or nation. This was not a school preparing its students to become members of the top echelon⁷⁴; rather they were to be “a locally bred and trained intelligentsia, Dutch in tongue, culture and loyalties, and were to foster the VOC’s interests, without hope of attaining a controlling voice in its Asian government” (Taylor 1983 80).

The Dutch language was conceptualised as a means of obtaining the knowledge and skills of the West, and not only as a path to religion and a way to ensure state security (Groeneboer 1993:88). Van Imhoff’s progressive ideas, intended to bring the central VOC settlement in the East Indies closer to Dutch urban culture, did not meet with general approval and he was able to make no lasting change. The schools were closed by executive order five years after Van Imhoff’s death. His successor saw them as “useless” and “too costly” (quoted in Taylor 1983:82). This was also the period of the short-lived attempt to establish a local newspaper in Dutch aimed at strengthening the cultural bonds between the Dutch-speaking, male residents and also between Batavia and Holland, since news from Europe was also printed (Taylor 1983:81-82).

Similar considerations prompted Governor-General De Klerk (1777-80) to attempt once again to impose the use of Dutch in the schools, going so far as to insist that children at play should speak Dutch or be punished (*NIP* X:427, quoted in Groeneboer 1993:54). The situation he was trying to change included a few Dutch schools with an inadequate educational system and inept teachers, who themselves spoke little Dutch (Groeneboer 1993:55-56). This last fact speaks for itself in terms of the achievements of the previous attempts. His intended improvements and attempts to encourage the use of Dutch in the educational system were short-lived: his successor Governor-General Alting revoked them in 1786, allowing the use of Malay and Portuguese once again.

⁷⁴ Van Imhoff preferred to send his own part-Indonesian illegitimate son to the Netherlands as a infant.

5.2.3. The failure of VOC pro-Dutch language policy

An indication of the degree to which Dutch was not the language of Batavia can be gained from an analysis of the rather patchy population data⁷⁵ for 1674, 1699 and 1739, as given in Groeneboer 1993:

	1673	1699	1739
Total pop	27,068		
Europeans	2,024	1,783	1,276
Indo-Euro	726	670 Mestizos	421 Mestizos
Chinese	2,747	3,679	4,199
Mardykens	5,362	2,407	1,038
Moors (Muslims from the Coromandel coast) and Javanese	1,339	(see Other)	(see Other)
Malays	611	(see Other)	(see Other)
Balinese	981	(see Other)	(see Other)
Slaves	13,278	~50% of pop	12,000
Other		867	299

(Based on Groeneboer 1993:49;66)

Groeneboer takes into account the fact that not all the Europeans were Dutch and that children of Europeans may not have grown up speaking Dutch, and assumes that the Mardykens, slaves and Moors spoke Portuguese, possibly in addition to their mother tongues, and adds that the data are difficult to compare for various reasons. Nevertheless, he cautiously estimates for 1673 that at least two-thirds of the population spoke Portuguese and only about 4% were likely to be Dutch-speaking. In 1699, 66% were Portuguese-speaking, 10% Malay-speaking, 19% Chinese-speaking and less than 4% were Dutch-speaking. By 1739 the speakers of Dutch made up only about 2% of the population, whilst 70% spoke either Portuguese or Malay and 21% Chinese (Groeneboer 1993:49;66).

Even if these estimates are only very approximate, the proportion of Dutch-speakers is extremely low. Despite Dutch being the language of the colonisers and the VOC officials, it is likely that the Dutch would have been obliged to be able to

⁷⁵ Unfortunately, it is not possible to draw up a similar table for the Cape, since the population statistics there were more than just patchy. Due to their status as a 'free' people, the Khoekhoen were not included in population censuses. Nevertheless, they formed an essential component of the language situation.

communicate in Portuguese and/or Malay in order to function. The figures for the Europeans remain relatively constant for the given three years, even if they represent somewhat different proportions of the total population. Their number is very small. Although exact numbers are unavailable, the proportion of burghers relative to VOC employees was always very small, and the actual numbers were small due to high mortality, and the 'drop-out factor' of burghers who chose not to remain (Taylor 1983: 10-11). This was intentional on the part of the VOC, who kept the population down⁷⁶ by limiting the number of women from the Netherlands and by forbidding private enterprise (notably in 1676) and restricting the number of free burghers (Groeneboer 1993:95, citing Huylebrouck 1989:153). For the non-permanent European population, this was a 'foreign posting'. It is suggested here that these factors, too, contributed to the down-playing of Dutch.

De Swaan's focus on individual language learners sheds light on the choices individual's make, the sum of which creates the various language situations. His perspective states that learners "will choose the language which appears to be the most useful, the one which offers the greatest possibilities of communication, either directly, or *indirectly*⁷⁷, through the mediation of interpreters or translators. A language is more likely to be selected the more prevalent⁷⁸ or the more central⁷⁹ it is in the relevant language constellation" (De Swaan 2001:33). Despite being the language of power, Dutch was neither prevalent nor central. In order for the language policy of the VOC to have been successful, a huge investment of time, money and personnel would have been required. For the individual Dutch-speaker in Batavia, the easily-learnt contact languages of the area would have been attractive and they tended to acquire them. An attempt to explain this phenomenon was made by the Calvinist ministers of the Classis of Middelburg in Zeeland in 1650, who expressed their concerns over the increasing number of people who, on their return from the East, spoke better Portuguese than

⁷⁶ Only at the Cape did the VOC depart from its main profile of trade to establish gardens and farms, and to allow a constant stream of VOC employees to leave the service of the Company to join the growing ranks of free burghers, whose interests did not necessarily coincide with those of the Company.

⁷⁷ Italics in original.

⁷⁸ "The prevalence of a language is an indicator of the opportunities it has to offer for direct communication with the other persons in the constellation" (De Swaan 2001:33).

⁷⁹ "The centrality of that language provides an indication of its connectedness to other languages and, as the case may be, of the chances for indirect communication it provides" (De Swaan 2001:33).

Dutch. These clergymen blamed the situation on the humility, politeness and modesty of the Dutch, which they contrasted with the pride of Portuguese (Van Goor 2004:62). Van Goor adds that they overlooked the most likely reason, which was that the Portuguese had been the first to arrive in Asia, and had already filled many of the niches for European knowledge and skills. By so doing especially, their language spread, making it even more attractive to the individual Dutchman making a language learning decision, since their use was not restricted to Batavia but allowed access to the whole of the East Indies. Similarly, for the slaves and other inhabitants of Batavia, if their L1 was not already Portuguese or Malay of a sort, then learning these languages would have allowed them to communicate with more people than learning Dutch would have done. In view of this, it is hardly surprising that Dutch did not become established as a language of general communication.

The predominance of Portuguese slowly gave way during the eighteenth century to Malay. In addition to the political and religious factors, its initial dominance had been reinforced by the fact that many slaves were purchased from India, from the Coromandel and Malabar coasts, where Portuguese was widespread. A sort of competition developed between the supporters of Portuguese in the church and those who preferred Malay. The latter argued that two-thirds of those who listened and understood Portuguese in the church were from the islands and would understand the Bible better in Malay. Their opponents conceded this was true for one quarter and claimed that Portuguese was spoken far more widely than just in the Indian subcontinent. However, they said, if preaching was not to be in Portuguese, then Dutch was a better choice than Malay. The reasons were (1) Dutch was the language of power, (2) the church-goers were from Dutch households, (3) the children had learned their prayers in school in Dutch, (4) the church-goers also spoke to Dutch-speakers and some even read in Dutch, and (5) that through the schools there was an expectation that in a few years a majority of the 'Inlanders' Christians would speak Dutch. In this way, the defence of Portuguese became an argument for Dutch (Groeneboer 1993:53-54). However, this shift to Dutch did not come to pass. Instead, after an initial period of growth in the seventeenth century, but stagnation from around the middle of the eighteenth century, Portuguese made way for Malay in Batavia towards the end of the eighteenth century, and then disappeared relatively suddenly at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The reasons for this, according to Groeneboer (1993:91-92) were three-fold:

- the cessation of slave imports from Portuguese-speaking territories from 1796,
- the absorption of the Portuguese-speaking Mardykens by the Malay-speaking community (as a result of a decrease in their numbers due to disease, progressive impoverishment, and the discontinuation of the restrictions on their place of residence), and
- the increasing importance of other Europeans after 1795, first the French and then, from 1811, the English, who were more likely to speak Malay.

The death of Portuguese was therefore not a result of VOC policy and it was Malay that took over: Dutch did not gain much ground. It remained the language of a very small group within a Portuguese-, subsequently Malay- speaking society, being spoken in the homes where both partners were of Dutch origin, in the VOC offices, and taught in the schools. The appearance of Bible translations in Portuguese and Malay contributed to the decline of Dutch relative to the other two. According to Groeneboer's tentative estimate, at the end of the eighteenth century, Dutch was the language of less than one per cent of the population of Batavia (Groeneboer 1993:49,66).

5.2.4. Other major VOC settlements and VOC language policy there

In this section a look is taken at how the language policy of the VOC varied, since actual practice was an outcome of the interaction of central direction and local decision-making and execution of policy. Despite the guiding 'spirit of commerce' of the VOC, which emphasised trade, not colonisation, some settlements did grow beyond the immediate needs of the factories and the populations of their territories were, to varying degrees, brought into the sphere of influence of the VOC. The language policies and, in particular, the ways in which these were implemented in educational practice, likewise varied, albeit always within the general framework of VOC interests, which was guided by the wish to spread Dutch culture, to bind the local population to the Dutch, to use Dutch to counter the influence of the Portuguese and Islam, to spread Reformed Christianity, and to keep costs down.

The history of the Dutch language in the East Indies preceded the founding of Batavia, beginning on Ambon in 1605⁸⁰ with the conquest of the island and the victory over the Portuguese⁸¹. The Portuguese garrison and, soon after, about 250 Portuguese inhabitants were allowed to leave. About 46 families of Portuguese (mostly mixed) origin decided to stay and take an oath of allegiance to the VOC (Bosma & Raben 2008:28-29). The initial intention of the Company was to establish a real colony there, with Dutch as the official language. The first school was founded only two years later, with the goal of teaching Dutch and the Reformed faith, and countering the use of the local Ambonese dialects, Portuguese and Malay. The first 14-page booklet to be used in the schools was compiled in 1611 by Ruyll, a VOC merchant⁸². As the English translation of its title reveals, it too had a dual aim, namely to teach basic Christian prayers in and through the Dutch language: *Book to teach the alphabet to the boys, as it is taught to all Christians, with some Christian prayers*⁸³.

The lack of success and the fact that the VOC used Malay when it had to communicate with the local people led to a change of policy by the first clergyman, Wiltens (1615-19): henceforth Malay would be used in the propagation of the faith (1617, in which year it was reported that the school had already been discontinued). Malay was at this time already the language in which the Islamic faith was spread, which was also perceived as a threat. On the part of the VOC, outgoing governor Martensz (1614–17) had been much impressed with the success of the teaching of Dutch at a school in Batavia and proposed this be ‘imported’ to Ambon; he also recommended that thirty to fifty Dutch boys per year be brought from Holland to achieve the use of Dutch as the general means of communication in Ambon and thus to create a real Dutch colony and establish a Christian society. Such a critical mass of Dutch native-speaking pupils may well have had an effect. There was also a proposal focussing on the native side of the equation, namely to buy a number of ten-year-olds, segregate them from the surrounding area in the fortress to prevent them from using the indigenous Ambonese dialects, Malay or Portuguese, and educate them in Dutch. Although neither plan seems

⁸⁰ Ambon had been colonised by the Portuguese in 1526. It was the main port of the VOC in the early years and remained important even after Batavia had been founded in 1619.

⁸¹ The summary of the situation in Ambon is based on Groeneboer (1994:1-10), unless otherwise indicated.

⁸² The book the *Spiegel vande Maleysche tale* was the sequel to this little booklet.

⁸³ Translation by Groeneboer. The original title was *Sourat. ABC. Akan meng ayd'jer anack boudack/seperti deayd'jern'ja capada segala manusia Nassarany: daenberbagy sombahayang Christaan* (Groeneboer 1994:2).

to have been carried out, they do illustrate the way of the thinking of the VOC merchants and show an awareness of some of the parameters that would need to be established in order for a language policy to work.

Wiltens' successor, Dankkaerts (1618-22) did not share his opinion, and the decision to use Malay was reversed; a measure of success was subsequently achieved in making Dutch the language of school and church. The new governor, who had no high opinion of the Malay language as spoken in Ambon, considering it unsuitable for the task of preaching the gospel, expressed his satisfaction. His goal was to bind the Ambonese to the Dutch, but for the Church it was not the language that was to be the real binder: Dutch was the instrument, while the real binding force was to be religion. However, lack of significant lasting success led to Dutch language education disappearing in Ambon and on the other islands in Maluku from 1634. In 1665 the VOC officially decided no longer to encourage the use of Dutch since it was regarded as too difficult a language, and promoting it as too expensive. Use of Malay was based on pragmatic considerations. Portuguese disappeared along with Catholicism, and Ambonese Malay – which did retain many Portuguese words – evolved. Dutch remained the official language of the VOC and was used in written correspondence, as well as spoken by those Europeans who could speak it and a few indigenous Christians associated with the VOC (Groeneboer 1994:1-10).

In Ceylon⁸⁴, the initial intention when the Dutch took over in Colombo in 1656 was, as elsewhere, stated to be the promotion and establishment of Dutch and the elimination of Portuguese, especially in view of the many Portuguese-speaking Catholics (Groeneboer 1993:73). However, despite the founding of educational institutions for the training of teachers and the relatively large numbers of pupils in school (compared to other settlements), the Dutchification of Ceylon was also unsuccessful. At the time that Colombo was taken, the experiment in spreading Dutch in Ambon had failed. Rather differently from the other settlements, indigenous languages 'Malabars' (Tamil) and Sinhalese were allowed a role in teaching religion. After Ceylon was transferred to the British in 1796, Dutch disappeared very fast. Portuguese, on the other hand, remained a vernacular used until well into the nineteenth century (Groeneboer 1993:73-87;94-95).

⁸⁴ The V.O.C. established its first stronghold on Ceylon in 1636 but it took until 1658 for the Portuguese to be ousted completely and for the VOC to control the coastal regions of the island.

Formosa, where the VOC rule was of relatively short duration⁸⁵, was the only major settlement where there was the potential for Dutch or a creolised form of Dutch to have become established. Before this could happen, however, the Chinese took Formosa away from the Dutch (1662) (Groeneboer 1993:90). As in the other three places discussed here, the intention to further the Dutch language was evident on the part of the VOC. What was different here was that there was no pre-existing lingua franca when the Dutch arrived in 1624: neither Portuguese nor Malay was well-known. There was also no general vernacular, with several local languages, of the Malayo-Polynesian language group, of the Austronesian language family. These 'village dialects' were used as the language of conversion insofar as any of the Europeans was able to communicate in them. Clearly, in this language situation it seemed logical to spread Dutch. This meant that Dutch had the potential to become the everyday language of the government, church and school – and perhaps even in the home.

Another difference in Dutch policy in Formosa was that more attention was paid to carrying it out. Governor-General Van Diemen issued instructions in 1644 to make Dutch a language of the Formosans. The aim was to reduce the number of local languages used in school to two or three and slowly shift to Dutch. It was felt that the local people were open to learning Dutch and that there were signs of a positive attitude, such as taking on Dutch names or wearing clothing like the Dutch did. Despite difficulties, it appears that in 1648 the teaching of Dutch had begun in at least nine places, and that a great number of books (mostly religious in nature) were requested by the church council and received. There is also mention of books for religious instruction in Formasan (in Ginsel, cited by Groeneboer 1993:41). Several bilingual booklets were written and some even published.⁸⁶ A school established in Sinkan in 1638 used the Roman alphabet and this romanised vernacular became known as the Sinkan language, which was used for correspondence and contracts with the Taiwanese. In 1661 a parallel Sinkan-Dutch edition of the gospels of St. John and St. Matthew was published in Holland with funding from the VOC (Tsai 2009:33-34). To improve the quality of the teaching, a seminary was

⁸⁵ Fort Zeelandia was established in 1624 and the VOC was ousted in 1662, in the same year as Jan van Riebeeck left the Cape after ten years as Commander.

⁸⁶ For example, in 1650 the *Heren Zeventien* gave permission for a bilingual edition of the *Formulier des Christendoms*, but this was published only in 1662. For the teaching of Dutch, simple 'samenspraken' or dialogues in Dutch and Sinhalese based on the *Deure of Portaal der Taalen* by Comenius were compiled.

established as early as 1659⁸⁷ to train Formosans to impart the principles of Christianity. The regulations included reporting on students who did not use Dutch.

The results with the teaching of Dutch were so encouraging that it was suggested in 1656 that the Dutch teaching of adults be undertaken. This idea met opposition and the Council of India voted against it. In school education, however, Dutch continued to be taught. The Formosan languages, such as Sinkan, Siraya and Favorlang-Babuza, were also used as languages of instruction, the missionaries having endeavoured to learn the local languages (Tsai 2009:33). Before these educational efforts could bear much fruit, the VOC period on Formosa came to an end (Groeneboer 1993:67-73). There is no way of knowing, therefore, what the outcome of VOC language policy in Formosa would have been, had it been continued.

The cumulative effect of sporadic attempts in various locations, associated with the work of various temporarily placed individuals, to encourage the use of Dutch amongst the population and in religion, coupled with the lack of concerted effort or opportunity to implement these, made any subsequent attempt more daunting. The experiences preceding and paralleling the educational initiatives at the Cape did not create a positive synergy, rather the opposite.

5.2.5. Dutch as it was spoken in the East

Unlike the ex-colonies in Africa and America, in Asia the language of the coloniser was not generally chosen as a national standard in the post-colonial period. The reason for this can be found in the pre-existence of highly developed indigenous eastern cultures, connected to major religions, centuries-old cultures and literary traditions (Groeneboer 1998:21). Many aspects of the economies of the East Indies of the VOC were not under its control and indirect influence was preferred, making direct contact with large parts of the population superfluous (Groeneboer 1998:22). The federal structure of the United Provinces did not predispose the Netherlands to considering a centralised language and culture policy as a way of furthering its might, as did the other colonial powers of Spain, Portugal, England and France (Groeneboer 1998:23).

⁸⁷ The theological seminary in Batavia was only established in 1745.

Since the speech community using Dutch in the Dutch East Indies was so limited, most of the Dutch that was spoken was uttered by the VOC servants. The unfortunate effect of this was identified by Heeroma (1957, quoted in Groeneboer 1998:9) as leading to Dutch being the language associated with a limited social group rather than the language of general communication. It was used accordingly and not as if it were a potential world language. One of the factors limiting the circles in which Dutch was used was identified by Prick van Wely: that the government encouraged the view of Dutch as a 'heiratic' language, i.e. highly restrained and formal, exhibiting an association with the sacred (1906:177). Furthermore, fear of widespread creolisation (of language and culture) reinforced the application of the norms of the Netherlands. Groeneboer adds that this principle was not brought into question (Groeneboer 1998:7). The standardisation of Dutch was well underway in seventeenth century Netherlands, with the Holland dialects of the north forming the basis of language standards and the publication of grammars, dictionaries and treatises on language furthering the codification of the emerging unifying variety. As Dutch began to be used increasingly not only in informal situations, the elaboration of the language continued (Smakman 1999:15-22). The remote outposts of the VOC were, however, not in the forefront of these developments and the majority of the personnel of the Company were not in the main from the social classes that led and enforced such standards. Developments trickled down and spread out after a time lag.

Language use within the VOC need not, however, have been consistent, especially when one takes into account the many VOC servants who were not involved in the merchant and administrative side of the business. The gender imbalance in the VOC reduced the role of family life, which was replaced for long months at a time with life with other men on board ship and in the garrison. It was only for a select few that there were office hours alternated with time off; for many the VOC was their round-the-clock environment. The influence of army and marine language, as used by the Europeans in the employ of the VOC amongst themselves may have been significant, as Kalff (1915 cited in Groeneboer 1993:92) suggested, but further research is necessary to substantiate this.

In their dealings with other peoples, the Dutch tended not to speak Dutch. They rather made use of Creole-Portuguese, Javanese or other indigenous languages, and,

most commonly, simplified low Malay ('t Hart 1998:489). Consequently, there was contact between the speakers of the Nusataran⁸⁸ languages and the VOC servants which led to mutual influences on their languages. In the case of the Dutch, the influence remained on the surface, with borrowed words; whilst in the case of the locals, the influence was not only phonological and lexical, but features of the Malay language tended to “break through” (Prick van Wely 1906:1). Piepers describes various forms of lexical borrowing from numerous languages which contributed to the impression of visitors to the Indies that the language spoken there was not the same Dutch as that spoken in the Netherlands, and that this was true not only of the Europeans born there, but also of those born in the Netherlands and living in the Indies (1875:428-469). He discusses the use of borrowed words incorporated into Dutch and Dutch words that had taken on a new meaning in the new context, or that lived on in the Indies whilst having fallen into disuse in Europe. This process took place in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and affected the language usage even in the VOC offices. Such words can be found in the Dutch used today in the Netherlands ('t Hart 1998:489)⁸⁹.

In a categorisation of the forms of Indo-Dutch by Van den Berg (1990, cited in Groeneboer 1993), these two forms (Dutch using borrowed words and Dutch containing words changed in meaning) are supplemented by two more, namely, one in which grammar, pronunciation and word choice in Dutch was imbued with Malay, and a ‘mongrel’, or broken, Dutch in which grammar and lexical items were misused. Groeneboer draws attention to the confusing use of various terms, such as Malay-Portuguese, Portalese, and Malugees, and so on. The terms might not refer to different varieties; on the other hand, the kinds of Petjo spoken (see below) cannot be counted. As to the fourth category established by Van den Berg, in which mixed Dutch, Malay and Portuguese elements were to be found in sentence structure, word choice and pronunciation, Groeneboer considers it unlikely that it was widespread in the area (Groeneboer 1993:27)⁹⁰.

⁸⁸ The expression *Nusataran*, based on the Malay word for archipelago, is being increasingly used as an umbrella term to refer to the languages of the Indonesian archipelago.

⁸⁹ This has fed controversies in the historical linguistic analyses of Afrikaans about whether certain words of Nusataran origin reached Afrikaans via Dutch or directly.

⁹⁰ For the Cape, Groeneboer points out that both Raidt and Valkhoff (seeing the issue from different perspectives) were of the opinion that separate varieties of Portuguese and Malay were present. Raidt, however, continues to speak of Malayo-Portuguese.

The variety known as *petjo*, referring to a kind of “mixed language” or creole incorporating Malay, Portuguese and Dutch elements of syntax, lexis and phonology was, however, in use. It probably varied over time, with the Portuguese influence waning and Malay becoming more important towards the end of the eighteenth century (Groeneboer 1993:91). Van den Berg (1990, cited in Groeneboer 1993:90-91) explains that the first speakers of Petjo were the children of VOC servants and local women, whose servants spoke Portuguese and later Malay to them. Such children had an Indonesian ‘mother tongue’, a Dutch ‘father tongue’ and were exposed in their language acquisition years to a, then current, lingua franca. Petjo can be considered the consequence of the life-style of Batavia. This line of reasoning is in line with mainstream creole genesis theory, which attributes the creation of a creole to children in just such a social situation. It presupposes further a sub-culture in which such language use was accepted and reinforced. Given more time, a more stable creolised Dutch could possibly have developed on Formosa, where the conditions for such a language were favourable. In the rest of the East Indies, the presence of Portuguese and Malay meant that knowledge of Dutch was simply not necessary and use of this language was restricted to a small minority of speakers.

Although we cannot therefore speak of a creolised Dutch that spread from Batavia and the East to the Cape, nor of a Malayo-Portuguese mixed language (a *mengeltaal*, as conceived by Hesseling 1899), the kaleidoscope of languages in use side-by-side, and even simultaneously in makeshift languages, it is argued here that this must have had an effect on the speakers. In a society where lingua francas of differing stability were in use: where the use of pidgins or trade jargons was a fact of commercial life, and where even the mother-tongue speakers of Dutch worked and lived, sometimes in multi-ethnic families, for many years, such language ‘mangling’, using language to ‘get by’ or for short-term profit, was unremarkable, was simply a feature of the way things were done. This attitude was not temporary, but a basic feature of VOC life. Learning to use lingua francas, pidgins and creoles, and to be flexible in the use of one’s own native language was a skill essential for all levels of employment in the VOC.

At the beginning of the European voyages of discovery, the way to language knowledge led mainly through natural acquisition. Consequently, the level of such knowledge was dependent on exposure, which varied considerably. This leads us to the question of whether the way to this knowledge was supported by formal learning for the literate. In 1527 a Dutch-French phrase book by Noel Berlaimont was published in

Antwerp. At this time Antwerp was still a crucial centre, linking maritime and overland trade. French was a language of the court and of prestige; so-called French schools were already functioning for the education of Dutch children. This language book, however, targeted merchants, the military and travellers needing to learn French. It contained a short grammar, a word-list and practical dialogues reflecting the customs of the day and the needs of its target market. Other books on this basis followed. In 1552 Latin and Spanish phrasebooks appeared, while German and English followed in 1576, Italian in 1586. The final in the eight-language series, Portuguese-Dutch, came out in 1598⁹¹, coinciding with the great push by the Dutch to take over Portuguese trading outposts in the East. By this time, the content had been modified and expanded: the number of dialogues was greater, the word-list had been improved, sample letters had been included and concise grammatical information added⁹². The eight-language book's success is indicated by the fact that over 150 versions were published, with various adjustments to the order of the languages, but keeping their focus on Dutch. Its lexical approach, based on rote learning of real-life situations, can still be seen today in travel guides and phrasebooks. Groeneboer reports Van der Sijs' conclusion that Dutch functioned as a sort of international lingua franca of West-European merchants through the influence of this book on the learning of foreign languages in the Netherlands and elsewhere (Groeneboer 2002:44-46).

The eight languages were all European ones, facilitating communication amongst the various European participants in the voyages of discovery and thereafter. Knowledge of Portuguese was invaluable in the new outposts, but trade in the East would be greatly facilitated by knowledge of the lingua franca of the region, Malay. This need was soon met by Frederick Houtman⁹³, whose two years as a prisoner in Aceh allowed him to learn Malay. His Dutch-Malay word-list together with an account of his travels and captivity in Aceh was issued in 1603 in Amsterdam. He must have had a copy of the language guide with him, since he kept some of Berlaimont's dialogues, modified

⁹¹ This eight-language edition was the one translated into modern Dutch and re-published by Van der Sijs. Her book also contains parts of Houtman's 1603 Malay-Dutch book and his account of his travels and captivity.

⁹² See <http://www.taal-en-cultuur.nl/sijscv.html> for an extract from Van der Sijs, N. (2000) *Wie komt daar aan op die olifant? Een zestiende-eeuws taalgidsje voor Nederland en Indië, inclusief het verhaal van de avontuurlijke gevangenschap van Frederik de Houtman in Indië*. Amsterdam/Antwerpen: L.J. Veen.

⁹³ Brother of Cornelius Houtman, who had headed the first journey to the East round the Cape.

others, added dialogues specifically for the Indies and supplemented all this with a list of words and their equivalents. This booklet was in use for nearly a century by those travelling to the Indies and even in the schools before the *Spiegel* became available (Groeneboer 2002:44-46). One of the first visitors to Madagascar, Houtman also devoted attention to the Malagasy language, recognising its similarity to Malay and speculating about its origins⁹⁴. It is an open question as to whether the Malagasy varieties of the time were similar enough to Malay to facilitate its learning for the many Madagascan slaves who were taken to the Cape.

Language is not, and by its nature never can be, a case of ‘anything goes’. Nevertheless, in contact situations, communication is the overriding consideration and considerable licence, albeit within constraints, is taken with language. This would have been an accepted principle of everyday life in the East Indies settlements and on the ships. An attitude like this served its purpose. Prescriptive and codified standards of language may have affected the written correspondence of the Company, and the example of the religious texts and especially the *Statenbijbel* were there for those of the chancellery, but adherence to these norms could not be a feature of spoken Company language, nor of everyday life. This attitude on the part of the VOC would be carried over to the Cape, with its own particular communication problems.

To summarise, in all of the VOC empire and in particular in Batavia, the company head-quarters where the lines of power came together, the main threads of VOC language policy in the East Indies and particularly in Batavia can be discerned, even if the specific conditions and elements depending on time and place differed. Having seen that in many ways the VOC language policy was a failure, it is as well to state the obvious: the VOC succeeded in keeping Dutch, in a form close to, and aspiring to, the metropole’s standards as the language of its own internal communication. In addition, it succeeded in retaining Dutch as the dominant language of commercial contracts, legal proceedings and local administration. The concept of ‘core value’, as used by Smolicz (1981) to refer to the basic characteristics essential for the transmission and maintenance of a culture, may help to illuminate this situation. Language often is such a

⁹⁴ As is clear from the title, the book does not restrict itself just the Malay lingua franca, and also points to the Dutch component: *Spraeck ende woord-boek; Inde Maleysche ende Madagaskarsche talen met vele Arabische ende Turcsche woorden: Inhoudende twaalf tsamensprekinghen inde Maleysche ende drie inde Madagaskarsche spraken met alderhand woorden ende namen ghestelt naer ordre vanden A.B.C. alles in Nederduytsch verduytsst.*

core value, but need not be. As Smolicz explains, “The basic division in this respect is between language-centred cultures – cults for which the native tongue constitutes a core value – and other cultures which are based upon family, religion or some other ideals – political, historical or structural” (Smolicz 1981:23). For the VOC, trade was the core value. Seen in this light, language was an instrument used to facilitate trade, and the influence of the Portuguese, who were trading competitors, had to be countered in whatever form it appeared. This is not to say that other values did not play a role, but the identification of core values helps to create focus in an otherwise overly complex situation. Seen in this light, the initial use of Dutch in education and the spread of Calvinist Christianity, and its subsequent decline and replacement by Portuguese or Malay, was a pragmatic solution to promoting the core value at the expense of secondary values. For the Dutch burghers of the East, the cultural values of the VOC faded in importance as they left its service. The degree to which the Dutch language was a core value of this group is less clear. Dutch remained the link to the governing VOC and the ‘motherland’ and its retention was important. It also defined their position as ‘Europeans’ and expressed their role as ‘Christians’ (as opposed to ‘heathens’). The Dutch settlers helped create the hybrid mestizo culture of Batavia but did not assimilate into the local cultures of the archipelago. Batavia and the other settlements remained Dutch outposts. In South Africa, as the Dutch language metamorphosed into Afrikaans and an awareness of ‘Africanness’ rose, the language became a more central value. With the addition of English to the language situation, as the language of the new governors, the Afrikaans language would become very clearly a core value of the Afrikaners.

The dual objectives of VOC language policy as regards society beyond the limits of the company can be identified as keeping Dutch the language of the settlements (*vernederlandsing*) and spreading Dutch amongst the local population, at least the Christian part of it. In the early stages, and at repeated intervals thereafter, efforts were made to achieve these ideals, with varying degrees of failure. Although the general objectives did not change, there was little consistency in the attempts to achieve them, limited financial and organisational commitment, and an overriding attitude of ad hoc pragmatism. Dutch was deployed in education, which was also religious education, as part of the assault on Portuguese influence. It lasted only as long as necessary: once it became possible to spread Reformed Christianity through Portuguese and Malay, that was preferred as being more effective. Likewise, as the struggle with the Portuguese waned in importance after a peace treaty was signed in 1663, so the effort of countering

Portuguese influence decreased. Ideas of a 'greater Netherlands'⁹⁵ did surface in political discourse, and political, social and economic considerations continued to suggest the importance of Dutch for the survival of the VOC settlements and indeed the entire VOC enterprise. Dutch was regarded as a way of binding the local populations to the home country, through religion and economic self-interest, but also through language and culture. Caution was also exercised in the sense that knowledge of Dutch was to be reserved for indigenous Christians (that is, those who had already shown their pro-Dutch disposition), since knowledge of Dutch by the 'heathens' or 'Mohammedans' held potential dangers. In the course of the eighteenth century an awareness of the potential usefulness of Dutch-speaking indigenous people for the activities of the VOC grew, leading to investment in educational facilities. The core value of trade can be seen at work once again. Dutch was now perceived as more than a way of spreading the one true faith and ensuring a measure of political security: it was identified as a means of furthering the commercial interests of the Company. From the point of view of the population, it was a way of acquiring Western know-how and skills, and a path to self-advancement.

Finally there was also the fear that the 'Dutch' cultural element in society would disappear, that the mestizo culture would supplant and supersede that of the Netherlands. The lifestyle of the Europeans in Batavia had been affected by the majority of Asians, Eurasians and people of variously mixed heritage. This was what fed Van Imhoff's plan to strengthen the culture of the homeland vis-à-vis that of Batavia, aiming to create a "sense of loyalty and kinship to the Netherlands based on shared belief, tongue, knowledge (in the sense of shared curricula in the schools), and daily habits" (Taylor 1983:85). If we consider the dates (1740s) when these measures were taken, they seem to be "too little, too late", indicating the failure of previous steps and suggesting that these too would fail. As Prick van Wely puts it, all things considered, for the Dutch, as regards the fate of their language in the East Indies it was a case of *vae victoribus* – woe to the conquerors rather than to the conquered (1906:176).

Thus few of the objectives were achieved, and the ideals were not fulfilled. This led Groeneboer to conclude that the language policy of the VOC was a complete failure and

⁹⁵ Under the leadership, for example, of Matelieff de Jonge in the Moluccas in the early seventeenth century and Van Goens in Ceylon during the middle of the century.

that all that could be said in its favour was that Dutch remained the official language (1993:90). Furthermore, that by the end of the VOC period the Dutch language in the East was on its deathbed (Groeneboer 1993:466). On the other hand, remaining the official language was no minor achievement in itself. Moreover, there had been intermittent successes and some promising developments, in particular on Formosa, cannot be said to have failed, rather that they were prematurely terminated by events.

5.2. Slaves

5.2.1. The places of origin

Information about the origins of slaves is available as slaves were given names in which their origin was stated, although the reliability of this information has been questioned (Ward 2003). Additional information can be gleaned from the descriptions of the cargo of the ships. Relevant to the situation in South Africa are the source areas of the Dutch slave trade, which came mainly from “three interlocking and overlapping circuits of subregions: the westernmost, African circuit of East Africa, Madagascar, and the Mascarene Islands (Mauritius and Réunion); the middle, South Asian circuit of the Indian subcontinent (Malabar, Coromandel, and the Bengal/Arakan coast); and the easternmost, Southeast Asian circuit of Malaysia, Indonesia, New Guinea (Irian Jaya) and the southern Philippines” (Vink 2003:§12). This diversity of origins and mother tongues contributed to the complexity of the sociolinguistic milieu in which the slaves found themselves at the Cape: not only did they lack knowledge of Dutch and Khoekhoe, they were also unable to converse amongst themselves in their own languages; in addition, not all of them would have spoken a creole Portuguese.

The first large influx of slaves to the Cape came from yet another slave circuit, West Africa. The 174 slaves that arrived in 1658 on the *Amersfoort* originated from Angola, while the 228 slaves from the *Hasselt* stemmed from the Guinea coast (Liebenberg n.d.:43). Slaves from Angola and Guinea did arrive at the Cape throughout the period of slavery, but their later numbers were low. By the end of the seventeenth century, the number of slaves from the East had become the majority. The first group of Indian slaves landed in 1677 and formed 67% of the slave population in the seventeenth century. At the start of the next century, many more were brought, especially from

Bengal and Malabar, but then their numbers dropped. Another group from the East originated in the Indonesian archipelago and arrived mostly after 1673. In 1767 the importation of Asian slaves into the Cape on Company ships was prohibited contributing to the shift to slaves from Africa (Ross 1989:212). After 1770, there was a marked increase of slaves from Mozambique, especially in the time of the Batavian Republic. Slaves from Malagasy arrived throughout the period (Bauermeester 2002:4-46).

Texts from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries often referred to the eastern slaves as 'Malays' but this was used as a generic term. It may also have stemmed from a reference to their language, since 'Bazaar' Malay was the *lingua franca* of their areas of origin and may have been a general language of inter-slave communication at the Cape as well. The term had racial, religious and caste overtones as well. To confuse matters even more, free blacks were also frequently referred to as Malays, which they may not have been, just as they may not have been black. After 1700, Muslim Buginese slaves from the island of Celebes, who had been craftsmen, seafarers or traders in their country of origin, became more common. Despite their skills they were treated with caution as they were considered dangerous (Bauermeester 2002:47-53). Such characterisations of perceived groups of slaves were common at the time, affecting their value and the kind of work they were to do. According to Vink, "Indian and Southeast Asian slaves in general were deemed to be cleaner, more intelligent, and less suited to hard physical labor than African slaves [they] therefore frequently worked as artisans or domestic servants, while African slaves commonly served as field labourers" (Vink 2003:§51). Ross reports the view that the Malay was the "king of slaves" and adds that "the Moçambicans (and indeed the Malagasies) were seen as stupid and only fit for manual labour, while the Malay slaves were seen as skilled but dangerous" (Ross 1999:36).⁹⁶ These opinions can be regarded as stereotyping of social groups, or as buyers/sellers' attitudes to products ('branding').

⁹⁶ See Bauermeester 2002 for further examples.

5.2.2. Locally born slaves

“Van de Caap/Kaap” referred to slaves born at the Cape, where at least one of their parents was a slave⁹⁷. Slave marriages were not recognised at the Cape, but liaisons in all combinations led to offspring⁹⁸.

This includes births as a result of the Slave Lodge being used as a brothel at times. Prostitution was one of only a few ways of acquiring wealth (Ross 1980b:5). Dutch law held that the children of slave women were slaves, according to the principle of “the fruit follows the womb” (Vink 2003:§35); however, if only the father was a slave, the child was born free. The likelihood of this was small in the case of a European mother – if slaves could not marry, this would mean the birth outside of wedlock of the child of a European mother, a situation most unlikely in a society where white women were so in demand as marriage partners. In the case of European-Khoekhoe relationships, the child would indeed not be born into slavery. If privately owned, Cape-born female slaves with European blood occupied a privileged position in the households and in their work. They could become confidantes of their mistresses, although the confiding and the expectation of empathy was probably unidirectional. It was considered appropriate to keep the slaves born to a household there. Consequently, these slaves were seldom sold on the slave markets. They could expect to live longer, received more education and were less often involved in crime. Their mother tongue would be that of their masters (Bauermeester 2002:53), although in a multilingual society, they may have spoken the contact languages as well. They were reported as being “better mannered and better educated than imported slaves” (Mentzel quoted in Ross 1999:36). Their status appears to have been higher than that of children of Khoekhoe-slave parentage (Bauermeester 2002:55). Some of them would be accepted into the European community (Giliomee 2003:18). Due to the relative scarcity of European women, marriages with European men were not uncommon. Whether these slave children and later mothers would have learnt a form of Dutch close to that of the metropole, or whether their mother tongue

⁹⁷ Some caution is necessary, since not everyone called “de Caab” was of slave origin.

⁹⁸ The settlers were aware of this mixing. Adam Tas and the Stellenbosch farmers in their complaint against Willem Adriaan van der Stel referred to “Kaffirs, Mulattoes, Mestiços all that black brood living among us, who have been bred from marriages and other forms of mingling with Europeans and African Christians.... For there is no trusting the blood of Ham, especially as the black people are constantly being favoured and pushed forward” (quoted in Giliomee 2003:1).

would have been influenced by the original slave mother's language/s continues to be the subject of much discussion: lack of direct evidence allows us only to conclude that all variations were possible and were dependent on the concrete context of language transmission in a particular household. The influence of the non-Dutch languages of the slaves is discussed below.

5.2.3. Later generations

Networks for migration and settlement led to the creation of a new society at the Cape. The generation that followed complicated the composition of this society by adding the element of permanence. One aspect of this permanence was the blurring of the lines separating the originally disparate groups: the assimilation of the Huguenots and the Germans, the increasing number of domesticated Khoekhoen, and the consequence of contact between the groups in the form of offspring who crossed the defining lines. Inter-marriage amongst the Europeans did not cause administrative or social disruption. On the other hand, the children born of legalised or unofficial liaisons between Europeans, Khoekhoen and slaves created a new category. They did not, however, form a coherent new group, but moved up, or more frequently, down within the levels of Cape society – or they left. The most advantageous shift for an individual would have been to move up, and the likelihood of this was highest for 'half-breed' women or for Free Blacks who became land-owners or were otherwise integrated commercially into the dominant society. Free Blacks were an anomalous group whose numbers remained small.

Some member of the white community were downwardly-mobile. In a paper on population growth in the European stratum of society in the eighteenth century, Ross (1975) investigates the mechanics of this process. He concludes on the basis of the sample he analyses that a smaller proportion of men married than women, and that this proportion was about ten per cent. One reason for this was that most immigrants were men. This did not mean that these men did not enter into relationships, with slave or Khoekhoe women, but it did mean that "at least the male offspring [were] cast out of pukka Christian society" and that in the "continual process of re-casting and re-defining the lines of social stratification within the greater society ... [g]eneration by generation ... the poorer and less well-connected male members of the Christian community were pared off into the mass of 'non-white' underlings" (Ross 1975:230).

The later history of various categories of people of mixed origin, some of whom formed communities on the periphery of the colonies or Boer republics, or migrated further inland, is complex. The terminology referring to them is many-layered and reflects the various ways in which these marginalised people were accommodated in society. The descendants of these groups can still be found today and are of particular interest for research into non-standard varieties of Afrikaans. The term *Basters* (or *Bastaards*) reflects their mixed origin: *Baster-Hottentotte* were the offspring of Khoekhoen and slaves; where the mother was Khoekhoen and therefore free by default, the child was also born free, although the system of *inboekeling* that was introduced in 1775 meant that these children were obliged to work to the age of twenty-five before they could claim their freedom (Bauermeester 2002:55). Hence the line between free and unfree became harder to see in practice.

The terms *Oorlams* and *Griquas* are more opaque. At various times regulations prescribed the relations between the layers of society at the Cape, affecting the terms used. Such regulations specified, for example, labour relations and the manumission of slaves. Existing research into these groups is being revisited, yielding valuable results capable of clarifying elements of the language situation at various times and the evolution of Afrikaans over time. Nevertheless these groups are touched upon only insofar as they are relevant to the particular issues focussed upon.

5.2.4. The Languages of the slaves

The diverse origin of the slaves meant a diversity of native tongues. This, however, did not result in all their languages being present at the Cape. Slave-traders and slave owners followed a policy of separation of slaves from any given community, family or clan, in order to prevent their conspiring to regain their freedom or revenge themselves on their captors or owners. The languages of individuals wrenched from their speech community may not 'die', continuing to exist as unused competence, but they may as well be dead from the point of view of their use as a means of communication. From a psycholinguistic point of view, it would be interesting to know whether such languages lived on in internal speech. There is no reason to suppose that the interference effect from L1 in language learning would be affected. The 'lost languages' of the slaves may have affected the way in which they acquired the languages they were compelled to learn, but it is only in this indirect, and practically unresearchable, way that they contributed to the language salmagundi at the Cape.

In order for the slave trade and slavery to function, it was necessary for the owners to communicate with their human property, making the establishment of a common code essential. Such common codes, often transient, were the basis for the development of pidgins and creoles. Some of the slaves who were brought to the Cape brought with them lingua francas current in the slave trade, especially in the East. Their prior knowledge of these means of communication is difficult to estimate, however, due to the lack of reliable evidence. For some of them, these languages may have been their L1, having been creolised. It is these languages that we shall consider first of all in this section, since evidence from court cases and from travelogues where the writer recognised the languages used indicates that the use of the trade languages and trade jargons of the East persisted in South Africa until the end of slavery in the nineteenth century. The use of these languages within the VOC empire affected language use at the Cape. For this reason, the next sub-section deals with the language policy of the VOC, concentrating primarily on Batavia. Finally, the outcome of these two factors, that is the resulting language use of the slaves at the Cape, will be described.

5.2.4.1. Portuguese of a sort

It is possible that the first slaves brought to the Cape were Mardycckers, non-Indonesian Asians, who had shifted to Portuguese as their first language. Portuguese continued to be spoken by some VOC servants and slaves for most of the VOC period. The reason for this was a consequence of the way the colonisation of the Indies occurred. The Portuguese language had spread with the Portuguese colonial empire, to the East Indies of India, Ceylon, the Indonesian islands and the Philippines; to Africa, especially Moçambique, Angola and Guinea; and to Brazil. Knowledge of an approximation of Portuguese was considered so widespread on the west coast of Africa that it formed the basis of a theory of pidgin genesis, which claimed that all pidgins could be traced back to it. According to this theory, the Portuguese pidgin derived from Sabir, the lingua franca of the Mediterranean in the middle ages, which was then relexified by Portuguese (Jenkins 2003:12). As already stated, the Portuguese language had spread as a result of the diversity of languages on the west coast of Africa. Henry the Navigator had at first sent Arab interpreters with the ships, but when they were no longer able to communicate with the people they encountered, the strategy was to bring back natives to learn Portuguese and return with them as interpreters, who were, however, only able to interpret for their own people. Consequently pidgin Portuguese spread as a contact language along the coast from the second half of the fifteenth

century (Holm 1989:26). This was also the case in Upper and Lower Guinea, whence many slaves were taken (Holm 1989:270).

The case in the East, as we have seen, was different in that Malay as a contact language preceded Portuguese, and was used by the Portuguese in their evangelistic and commercial activities. In this way, it was not necessary to find interpreters for each language, nor was there such an impetus to establish Portuguese as a language of mutual communication. Nevertheless, Portuguese spread in the East as well.

5.2.4.2. Portuguese as a language of the East

In the east, the Portuguese controlled parts of coastal India and Ceylon from the early sixteenth century to about the middle of the seventeenth century. They took with them their institutions of government, their Catholic religion and language. For the missionaries, the decisive principle was effectiveness, so pidgin Portuguese was used. For example, St. Francis Xavier ordered the Jesuit fathers in India in 1541 to follow his lead and make use of pidgin Portuguese to instruct children and slaves (Holm 1989:286). The Indian and Asian varieties of creole Portuguese therefore came into being in multilingual societies and co-existed with the substrate languages (Holm 1989:284). The Portuguese language of the trade routes was not the language of the Portuguese upper classes in Europe, nor their written, literary language: rather, it was a simplified form, spoken in many variations depending on area, people and native language, over a large area. In the one-and-a-half centuries during which the Portuguese established their colonies in Asia, the expansion of the language was huge, being used not only between the Europeans and the locals, but also between Europeans of different mother tongues and even similarly between various local peoples (Groeneboer 1993:25-26). In some cases, the creolised Portuguese was influenced by the Malay language, borrowing mostly lexical items referring to Asian items previously unknown to the Europeans, such as words for fruits, plants, animals and apparel (Groeneboer 1993:26).

Although Portugal lost most of its possessions in the Indies during the seventeenth century, Portuguese continued to be used by a small part of the population in Goa where the standard language came to replace the creole by the end of the nineteenth century. Goan Portuguese exhibits morphological features frequently found in creole varieties (Batalha 1982, cited in Holm 1989:286).

Portuguese continued to be spoken in the area as a trading jargon, while in India it survived as a family or church language (Holm 1989:286). In Ceylon (Sri Lanka), the Portuguese had taken control in 1505, the Dutch followed from 1640, and the British took over in 1796. Under the Portuguese, mixed marriages had been successfully encouraged, leading to Portuguese-speaking Catholic families. The VOC, in its turn, tried to settle Dutch Burgher communities, but with limited success. In the first thirty years, this community did not exceed 500 and was composed mainly of sailors, clerks, tavern-keepers and discharged soldiers (Ramerini 1998), a mixture not unlike that of the free burghers at the Cape. Marriages between Burghers and Christian native women were permitted, with the proviso that daughters of such unions marry Dutch men. Dutch Burghers continued to live on the island and maintained their language until they shifted to English under British rule. Once again, there are parallels with the Cape. Scattered use of creole Portuguese, however, still existed in the late twentieth century (Holm 1989:289).

The Portuguese empire left a greater legacy of creole languages than the Dutch empire that took over much of it. This could have been a consequence of the Dutch arriving between the occupations by the Portuguese and the British and often staying a briefer time. The fact that in the nineteenth century the Dutch did not like to hear their own language spoken by what they considered to be lower-caste people may also have contributed (Taylor 1983:47). Added to this was their own aptitude for communicating in foreign languages – unlike the English and Portuguese, who, according to Groeneboer (1993:26), were not keen to learn foreign languages. The Dutch, according to Governor-General Maetsuyker (1674), regarded it as a great honour to be able to speak a foreign language, however badly and corrupted (Taylor 1983:19). Holm concludes, “Dutch took hold as vernacular language only in those areas where the Dutch were the first European settlers (New York, Guinea, South Africa) and predominated numerically over other Europeans (the Virgin Islands)” (Holm 2000:81). The chronological order of the languages may also be pertinent, and perhaps the underlying similarity of the Dutch and English Germanic languages may have contributed to the shift.

5.2.4.3. Malay and Malayo-Portuguese

Malay⁹⁹ had become established as the language of the multiethnic insular traders long before the Portuguese came to the East Indies (in the western part of the islands before A.D. 700, but by the fifteenth century voyages of discovery also in the eastern parts). It was also the language used by the natives of the islands with differing mother tongues to communicate with each other. Furthermore, Malay was the language in which Islam spread, being used for explanatory texts and translations from Arabic, including Muslim legal texts. It therefore preceded the arrival of pidgin Portuguese in Malacca and then spread alongside it (Holm 1989), since the Portuguese considered this to be the lingua franca of the region and essential to their commercial activities. They used it in their missionary work in Malacca (Groeneboer 1993:21).

This then was the widespread language, with its many varieties, that the Dutch found when they came to the East Indies and which they, like the Portuguese before them, used to facilitate their commercial, religious and educational endeavours.

Malayo-Portuguese developed in the Malay peninsula and the islands we know today as Indonesia in the same period. One of the features of Malayo-Portuguese, the creolised Portuguese influenced by Low Malay, is the reduplication of nouns to signal plurality, for example *gatu-gatu* 'cats' (Malacca), *señor-señor* 'gentlemen' (Java). This, together with its retention of final Portuguese vowels, distinguishes it from Indo-Portuguese (Holm 1989:291). A 33-sentence conversation in Malayo-Portuguese published in 1672 is the earliest known Portuguese creole text. Holm comments that people who did not know the creoles they recorded were less likely to be influenced by the orthography of the lexical source language, although features of their own dialect could be identified (Holm 2000:17).

The terminology used to describe various varieties of Malay, or Portuguese, is confusing. For example, Malay-Portuguese, Portalese, and Malugees; Teensma (1986)

⁹⁹ More precisely, a 'Low' or 'Bazaar' contact language version of Malay (*mělayu pasar*), in contrast to 'High' Malay, which was seldom the language of everyday use. Groeneboer (1993:23) cites Swellengrebel (1974:8-9) who speaks of four kinds of Malay: 1. the Malay spoken as in the area around the Straits of Malacca, 2. the somewhat more widespread use of Malay as written language, 3. local Malay in all its varieties, used in areas where Malay was the lingua franca, and 4. *Pasar Malay*, the simplest and most corrupted form of the above, used only in the more superficial contact situations. It is types 3 and 4 that are mainly relevant to this dissertation, although type 2 appears in the use of Malay in school and church.

uses Portuguese-Malay, (cited in Groeneboer 1993:27). The general opinion in Europe and elsewhere, even in learned circles, was denigratory: such languages were not considered full-fledged languages, being perceived as mixtures of languages, as local dialects, as languages adapted and corrupted by interference from the L1 of the speaker according to individual wishes and not according to the nature of the language itself, and subject to constant change along with the people that used it (Groeneboer 1993:23,25). There was also the view, held by Hesseling and others (for example, by Van Ginneken & Endepols (1917), cited in Groeneboer 1993:27), that what Hesseling (1899) referred to as Malayo-Portuguese was a true mixed language, or *mengeltaal*. It is more correct to speak of Malay more or less influenced by Portuguese, and conversely, of Portuguese more or less influenced by Malay, bearing in mind that the two languages in question were already 'low' forms, i.e. spoken contact languages ranging from trade jargons to established creoles.

The influence of Batavia on the Cape has been mentioned. In principle at least, many of the arrangements made or regulations issued in Batavia were considered to be valid for the Cape. On the other hand, the increasingly unique nature of the colony at the Cape meant that even if the applicability of instructions was recognised, these were not necessarily applied in the same way. As we have seen, despite the VOC intention to exert extensive control, circumstances on the ground led to various outcomes. Nevertheless, the VOC did continue to be a whole greater than the sum of its parts, and overall VOC tendencies and policies can be identified, which were all relevant for events at the Cape, even if only because they deviated in practice. The steps taken by the individual high officials of the VOC left their mark on all the settlements and formed a unifying net of measures. Since they travelled through the Cape on their way to and from the East, the Cape formed an integral part of this net, being sometimes the first site, and sometimes the last where the officials intervened in local affairs.

5.2.4.4. Languages of the slaves at the Cape

In the section above it became clear that varieties of Portuguese and Malay as contact languages were spoken widely in the East Indies, and that Dutch was not. Given that the language policy and the circumstances did not favour the use of Dutch, it is easy to assume that what held, to a greater or lesser degree, for the major settlements of the Dutch East Indies, would hold for the Cape, especially in the view of the relationship between the Cape and Batavia and the relative unimportance of the Cape due to its

nature as a refreshment station rather than a trading post or factory. This returns us to the question to which this dissertation seeks to find an answer, namely why, after all, Dutch or a creolised variety of Dutch did indeed become established at the Cape. Following on from the previous section, the next section deals with the role of the languages brought from the East by the slaves and by the VOC, and their interaction with the Dutch in use at the Cape. The final piece of the language puzzle for the first half century, the language/s of the Khoesan, will only be mentioned in passing, since these will be discussed in depth in the section devoted to them.

Therefore, leaving aside for the moment the issue of the Khoesan languages, the question can be re-formulated in terms of the opposite perspective: in a small colony, under the rule of a Dutch chartered company and settled by Europeans who shifted in their language to Dutch, why should a language other than Dutch of some sort have become established? The recurring theme of a very multilingual society in the writings of visitors and Company officials, sustained by the visitors to the Cape and the constantly renewed influx of slaves and the attendant changes in language distribution, is of little help as regards details.

As we have seen, in Batavia, during the seventeenth century, Portuguese-of-a-sort became commonly spoken. At the Cape, this contact language would combine elements of Low/Creole Portuguese and Malay (Raidt 1983:20). It was spoken by the slaves, for “initially, even a smattering of Portuguese was better than no Dutch at all” (Ponelis 1993:15). Even after Portugal had lost her primacy in the East, the Portuguese retained their position as the premier slave merchants (Ponelis 1993:15). Slaves could have picked up some Portuguese in the Indies, from the Portuguese slave traders, or at the Cape. Some of them would have been proficient in the language before being enslaved. Specifying the extent to which ‘Malayo-Portuguese’ was spoken as the Cape is difficult. On the face of it, it seems strange that slaves, who had diverse mother tongues and therefore for whom any language of their owners was a foreign language, would have learnt a language that was spoken as a foreign language by their Dutch-speaking owners. Plausible reasons can be fabricated, but the puzzle has missing pieces.

5.2.4.4.1 Evidence of slave language use

Court cases provide some evidence regarding the languages used by the slaves and the language use of the slaves: in 1774 the slave David from Madagascar cursed in Portuguese (Den Besten); Caesar of Madagascar – after having spent 13 years at the

Cape – was recorded as speaking and understanding Portuguese (Ponelis 1993:15). On the other hand, at a court case in 1690, the free Hendrik Bouwman did not understand Portuguese – a free black, however, could translate for him. Further such instances occurred. Perhaps the most intriguing case is that of the parish clerk, Wietse Botes, who knew no Portuguese, but whose sons had learnt it at the Cape (Franken 1953, cited in Ponelis 1993:15). Further evidence comes from the Portuguese names of slaves (see Ponelis 1993:16 for a list), although this seems evidence of the language of the name-giver rather than of the person named. The name-giver need not have been the parent. The majority of the evidence is from the eighteenth century, where knowledge of Portuguese is attested in numerous court cases. Ponelis refers to a court case in 1726 in which, of the nineteen slaves involved, three were speakers of Portuguese, four of Malay while twelve spoke Dutch, but spoke Portuguese amongst themselves (Ponelis 1993:16). There is less evidence with regard to the free population.

The difficulty of using court cases as evidence for language is that they are not direct records, but indirect records of what was actually uttered. It was not intended that they served as examples of language in use and the researcher has to take into account factors such as the situation, the reasons for noting what was said, the ability of the scribe, the overt or covert intentions of the scribe, the fluency and lack thereof of the speaker, the psychological condition of the speaker, and so on. This cannot be done satisfactorily. There are difficulties even with statements made originally in Dutch. As Ross comments, “the conventions of eighteenth-century officialdom translated the statements that were made into excruciatingly complicated linguistic formulations. A sentence of three hundred words is by no means unusual. This cannot be a precise reflection of reality since no one ever spoke like that” (Ross 1983:10).

According to Raidt, who cites as her sources Franken (1953) and Hulshof (1941), most of the slaves at the Cape spoke Creole Portuguese or Malay or both, using these languages amongst themselves, but also Dutch, while the children spoke Dutch fluently (Raidt 1983:20). It should be borne in mind that all of these languages may have been non-native languages for the people concerned, except, possibly, in the case of slaves born into slavery. The proportion of slaves from the East increased in the eighteenth century, and their use of Malay was recorded by visitors, including Kolbe (1705-1713). The use of Malay in the East also increased in this period. In a court case in 1713, twelve Indonesian slaves testified: of these all spoke Malay and one could also speak Portuguese (Ponelis 1993:17). According to Ponelis (1993:17), “Malay was preserved

longer than Portuguese, by the closely knit Muslim community whose leadership was Malay speaking. It became extinct as a spoken language in Cape Town at the end of the nineteenth century.” Raidt cites Franken (1953) as a source for stating that the Company officials were, however, not able to communicate in Malay. The court used a highly trusted slave to serve as interpreter. When the interrogation was in Portuguese, an interpreter was usually not necessary, but was required in the case of those who spoke Malay, for example in the case of Chinese criminals exiled to the Cape by the Court of Justice in Batavia (Ross 1983:14).

5.2.5. The language scenario at the Cape

The language scenario at the Cape in 1652 was already complex in that the language of the VOC was not a single Dutch dialect, and through the contact with the utterly strange language of the Khoekhoen. To this was added, after five years, the admixture of slaves of very diverse origins and mother tongues, and the complication of the custom in the Dutch East Indies of using the lingua francas¹⁰⁰ of that area to trade, to spread Reformed Christianity and to communicate with the slaves. In the contact with the Khoekhoen, as we shall see in the next section, the lack of a common language necessitated the use of some improvised form of language, a trade jargon which would develop into a pidgin used for the bartering of goods for cattle. Each party continued to use its own first language in a natural way, using the pidgin only in the new, artificially created situation. In communicating with the slaves, however, the situation differed in that the first languages of the slaves did not necessarily feature directly in the interaction, and in that these languages were diverse.

The slaves arrived having already acquired language. This is true even in the case of the first two groups (from West Africa), many of whom were children¹⁰¹. These new imports can therefore be considered a set of language learners, albeit under circumstances far removed from the classroom situation in which we are used to considering language learning. The dominant motivation for learning – above and beyond

¹⁰⁰ These languages were themselves diverse and existed in many different forms in the area in which the VOC traded and from whence the slaves were brought. When specificity is not necessary or not possible, *Malay/Portuguese* is used, covering any of the various varieties in common use, down to the simplest *Bazaar Malay*, but not including the metropolitan forms.

¹⁰¹ According to the customs of the time, slaves were considered children until about the age of 12/13 – for European children the limit was a few years older.

the fact of their human condition - was survival and the avoidance of the possible negative consequences of misunderstanding. Beyond this minimum, motivation depended on individual reaction to the condition of slavery, and the opportunities available for language acquisition. In speaking of 'the slaves', we run the danger of not recognising the wide range of individual responses, based on their individual differences and particular circumstances, available to them.

In the context of the European system of slavery, it was not uncommon for a slave population to have originated in various areas and to speak various languages.

According to Armstrong (1982:120-121), Madagascar was the main regional source of Cape slaves during the VOC period, whereas India (chiefly Bengal, followed by Malabar and Coromandel) and the archipelago (chiefly Macassar and Batavia) contributed much smaller numbers. More recent research of VOC records has led to a revision of these proportions. Shell (1994:41, cited in Stell 2007:91) arrived at the following proportions of slave imports to the Cape: 26.4% continental Africans, 25.1% Malagasies, 25.9% Indians, and 22.7% Nusantarans. These figures suggest an even balance between the African and Asian components.

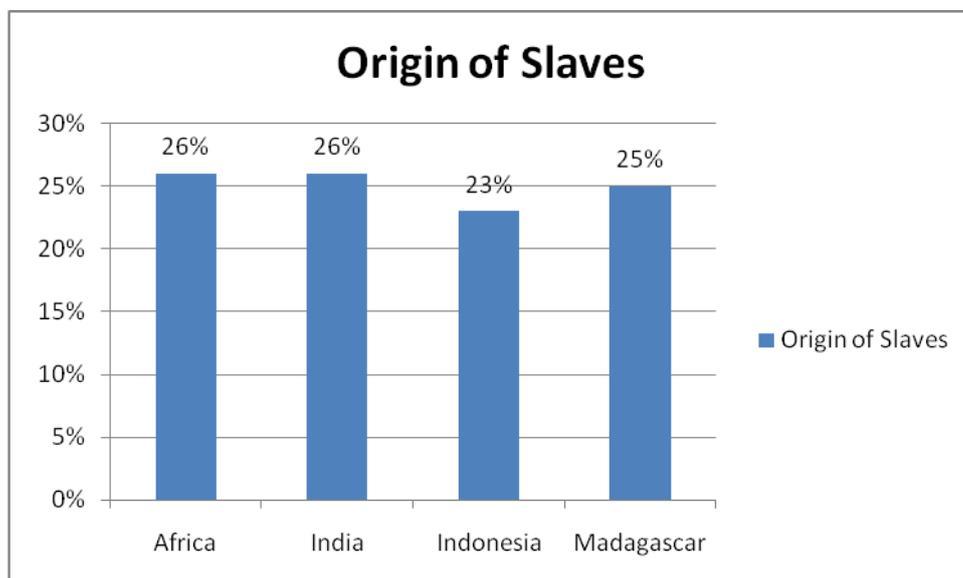


Figure 7. "Origins of slaves imported to the Cape 1652-1808" (adapted from Deumert 2004:25)

The early period in which slaves from the Cape were often 'van Bengal', or other parts of India suggests that included an Indo-European-speaking group and a Dravidian-speaking group (Bradlow 1978: 103 cited in Stell 2007:121).

Their knowledge of Creole, which Ponelis (1993:15-17) does not consider to have become nativised at the Cape, would have shown a great deal of syntactic variation. It may have been a language of linking slaves from various areas where it had spread, especially where Malay had not. The purest forms of Malay were probably of the SVO type but forms used by second language speakers from Ceylon and India may have known the SOV type (Den Besten 1989:228).

It was in some such situations, where at least one European language and several other languages were present at the same time that creoles developed. Whether this did or did not happen in the case of Afrikaans has been the topic of a lively, and sometimes acrimonious, debate since the Dutch linguist Hesseling formulated the idea in 1899 in his book *Het Afrikaans*. Creolization is one, radical, way in which languages change or are born. All languages are, however, always in the process of changing. The Dutch of its speakers at the Cape was subject to the usual internal processes of change, perhaps accelerated by the challenges facing its speakers. A new kind of contact situation had arisen for these speakers, with speakers of languages of Africa and Asia. The effects of living and working together, often within the home, with these speakers of other languages affected the people concerned in a myriad of ways, leading to new socio-economic structures. A new, local culture developed, and the Dutch spoken was affected in various ways. *Acculturation* refers to the ways in which cultures adapt to each other. One way of approaching the evolution of Afrikaans is to see it within a broader perspective of acculturation, with the language seen as a product of acculturation (Davids 1994:113) or as reflecting elements of acculturation, in the form of borrowing.

Acculturation and the sociolinguistic concomitants of creolization and are discussed below, since both provide insight into the language situation at the Cape and into the evolution of Afrikaans.

5.2.5.1. Acculturation

The concept of acculturation has been used to explain what happens when people from differing cultural backgrounds come into ongoing contact. The challenge of dealing with alien cultures is as old as humanity and the roots of thinking about it can be traced back to antiquity. Our own western civilisation is a history of acculturation. *Enculturation* refers to the internalisation of a culture by an individual, to the ways and styles of life of that culture, to how 'to mean' and how to communicate in that culture.

In this way the individual becomes culturally competent. If the individual has to become encultured in another culture, including the language of that culture, then we speak of *acculturation*. It involves changes in behaviours due to the contact of cultures. Of particular importance for the process of acculturation of slaves was the aspect of learning to behave in culturally relevant ways and adopting roles and attitudes as defined in that culture. For the adult, acculturation occurs after the primary process of enculturation, making the process of cultural adjustment more complex. Acculturation can occur at the expense of the primary culture. Such a process of deculturation is accompanied by psychological distress and leads to assimilation (with loss of the L1) or anomie, which involves feeling isolated and alienated from society (Hamers & Blanc 2000: 367, 204-205).

Twentieth century theories of acculturation have moved from a unidirectional, rather monolithic school of thought with an assumption of assimilation to a bidimensional and intercultural perspective (Ngo 2008). Modern enculturation theories have recently been criticised for “varied and inconsistent terminology, poor citation of earlier research, conflicting and poorly tested predictions of acculturative stress, and lack of logic” (Rudmin 2003:3). Nevertheless, the bidimensional, fourfold paradigm, usually attributed to Berry and his associates, or some version of it, has been used extensively and proved useful. These four generic types of acculturation will be used to discuss the multi-directional processes of acculturation at the Cape. Central to this model are four options that arise from two independent dimensions underlying the process of acculturation, namely (1) the desirability of maintaining one’s heritage culture and identity and (2) the desirability or possibility of involvement with or identification with one’s society of settlement. Berry elaborated and refined his model and modified his definitions, but the four generic types of acculturation remained and their labels are now commonly used (a) assimilation, (b) separation, (c) integration and (d) marginalization, and these four types can be used to overview and organise previous research (Rudmin 2009). Assimilation occurs when there is little interest in maintaining identity with their own culture, separation (also termed segregation if it is forced) occurs when there is interest in cultural maintenance and involvement with the other culture is avoided, integration occurs when both cultural maintenance and involvement are sought, and marginalisation occurs when there is neither cultural maintenance nor involvement. From the point of view of distinctive features, these can be expressed as $-M+D$, $+M-D$, $+M+D$, $-M-D$, where M is the

minority or first culture and D is the dominant culture¹⁰². As Rudmin, (2003:25) points out, “Perhaps the most common and the most serious failing of the acculturation theorists ... is that none of them noticed that defining acculturation types by two cultures, two attitudes, two identities, or two languages does not result in 4 possible types but 16”. There would be only four possible outcomes only if there are only two cultures and they do not have anything in common. The picture is therefore always more complex than the label may suggest, but the labels, treated as loose categories, do allow us to discuss issues of acculturation with greater ease. Berry (1974 and 2001, reported in Rudmin 2009) adds the question of whether the minority culture has a choice, an aspect that seems particularly relevant to a discussion of the acculturation of slaves. For example, in the event of a preference for loss of heritage culture and for minimal relationships with other groups, this would be categorised as marginalization if it was a matter of choice, but exclusion if it was not.

For the slaves at the Cape, the issue of maintenance of their own culture and their mother tongue was essentially not an option due to their geographical distribution and lack of contact with each other generally, and with slaves of a similar origin specifically. For the slaves, who were isolated from their primary culture, the most likely two outcomes were assimilation or marginalisation/exclusion/anomie. The dominant culture at the Cape, following the model of Batavia, created the societal role of slave and allowed the slaves to fill that role. In this sense, the slaves could assimilate. Not all of them could or would accept the constraints of their allocated role. One way of expressing their refusal to accept this imposed role could be a refusal to learn more than the absolute minimum of the language imposed. If the new micro-level speech community proved to be not welcoming, the result may have been what Preston terms *social fossilization*, “that is alienated speakers who gain usually only enough proficiency to carry out basic instrumental needs” (Preston 1989:55).

The importance of acculturation from the point of view of the owners can be seen in the higher prices that Cape-born slaves reached at the slave markets. The prices were determined partially by stereotyping on the basis of origin (Bauermeister 2002:286-288). The slaves born in the Cape were sold at the highest prices, since they were already acclimatised to the physical conditions, including the weather, at the Cape, had

¹⁰² *Dominant* need not necessarily mean an oppressive relationship exists between the cultures; other terms used are *host*, *receiving* and *contact* culture.

been socialised within the particularities of Cape society, and the language of their masters was not foreign to them (Bauermeester 2002:73). The new arrivals went for the lowest prices, whilst those who had become accustomed to the Cape were worth more (Armstrong1982:107). Malagasy and Moçambiquan (*Masbiekers*) slaves were commonly held to be suitable for rough work requiring physical strength, such as labouring in the fields, whilst the more often skilled, physically less powerfully-built Malays (as a collective term for southeast Asian and Indian, with the Buginese given a separate mention amongst the Eastern slaves due to their reputation for violence) were considered to be cleaner and more intelligent and paid more for work as artisans or domestic servants (Vink 2003:§51).

Rudmin (2003) criticises much research on acculturation by pointing out that there is an excessive focus on the minority groups, with few studies of acculturation examining ways in which the dominant majority adopts aspects of the minority's culture, despite the obvious two-way aspect of processes of cultural change. In the interactive model, as exemplified by Bourhis and his associates (1997), an attempt is made to expand the perspective to incorporate the dominant culture's acculturation orientation (Ngo 2008). It is unrealistic to expect even assimilation to occur completely one-sidedly and remnants of the minority culture can be found in the dominant culture that has survived. Since the culture/s of the slaves did not survive the contact with dominant culture at the Cape, it is only in these remnants that they live on.

5.2.5.1.1. Acculturation at the Cape

Although the actual process of acculturation of the slaves at the Cape cannot be reconstructed, the outcomes of the process are visible, not least of all in the Afrikaans language, which developed in part from the contact between the slaves and the dominant Dutch culture. The acculturation of the French and the Germans is even less visible since in the case of both of these groups the outcome was complete assimilation, facilitated by somatic and cultural similarities of the groups with the culture to which they assimilated and in which they found equivalent roles. For the French, an initial brief period of integration preceded their disappearance as a minority. As we have seen above, their first culture was highly valued by themselves and by the dominant Dutch culture (particularly at home in the Netherlands) and attempts were initially made to maintain it. Their language survives only in the numerous place names and surnames common amongst the Afrikaners, such as De Villiers, Du Toit, Joubert, Marais, Retief (Raidt 1983:21). Some surnames have changed to the extent that their French origin is

hard to recognise. The names of the farms have often remained, or sometimes with only minor changes, although accommodation to the phonological system of Afrikaans can be seen. Examples of the latter are the shift of stress from the end, or a denasalisation at the end, or the pronunciation of the digraph 'oi' as a diphthong. This is reflected in the surname Du Toit as well, where it is pronounced [o:i] (Coetzee 1994:7-21). In the case of the Germans, their impact on the Dutch culture is likewise invisible. Their names, too, have come down to the present day. Unlike in the case of the French names, these were frequently Dutchified: Brodtrück became Broodryk, Fuchs - Vos, Nöthling – Neethling, Kirchoff – Kerkhof, Schmidt – Smit, Rauchfuss – Rykvoet [*sic*], to give a few examples (Raidt 1983:21). Given names in German and Dutch were often similar and the frequency of such names increased, accompanied some Dutchification. For example, a prominent leader of the Great Trek, *Andries Potgieter* was named after his maternal grandfather *Andries Krügel* (christened 1749), who had been named for his father's brother *Andreas Krügel*, from Tannelohe (Combrink 1994:22).

Overall, however, the outcome of the collision and co-existence of their Germanic dialects with the dialects of the Dutch contributed to their simplification and the influence of the Germans can perhaps best be understood in the absence in Afrikaans of linguistic features that distinguished the dialects from one another. In a similar fashion, according to Raidt (1983:21-22), the second language learner errors of the French immigrants contributed in an indirect fashion, through incorrect use of case differentiation, inflection and conjugation, to the deflection typical of the Afrikaans language.

The acculturation of the slaves was set within a particular context. As we have seen, groups of people from diverse parts of the world, representing a variety of regions of Europe, Africa and Asia, speaking diverse languages and representing diverse cultures came together at the Cape in limited numbers and under conditions determined by the geographic location and characteristics of the Cape, and by the overarching influence of the commercial, profit-oriented Dutch company, the VOC, and its servants. Right from the outset, the intentions with regard to how the settlement would function had to be modified in response to developments and circumstances that did not meet the Company's preconceptions, allowing Templin to state that the settlement was "almost an accident and ... thought unwise until long after it was an established fact (Templin 1984:15). These early years were turbulent and the various, often conflicting impulses,

led to a society in which many elements were fluid and all the participants were called upon to be flexible. The society that the British were to find at the end of the eighteenth century showed the ways in which early impulses had been strengthened or weakened: innovative or conservative factors had led to accommodation in multiple directions. It was within this changing kaleidoscope of factors that the acculturation of the slaves took place, as part of the general and striking exchange of cultural elements amongst the groups, which led to a syncretic cultural pattern (Elphick & Shell 1984:168).

5.2.5.1.2. Acculturation of the slaves at the Cape

At the Cape, the slaves encountered two cultures, one the 'alien' European culture of the slave-owning society, and the other, the indigenous and increasingly domesticated culture of the Khoekhoen. Consequently, for the slaves, acculturation had two dimensions: the horizontal, that is their relationships to each other, and later to the Khoekhoen, and the vertical, that is the relationships between the dominant culture of their owners and their own, both those that they brought with them and which they established here (Ross 1983:15). To be exact, the intruding European culture was, in part, already the product of recent acculturation. Officials who had already spent many years in the service of the Company had been exposed to the culture of the East before being stationed at the Cape. That is, the East affected the Cape through the Eastern slaves but also through the Europeans who had formed part of the Eurasian culture there (Elphick & Shell 1984:167). In the case of both horizontal and vertical acculturation there was an element of language learning involved. In most cases this meant the slaves learning the language of their masters. However, the Company's use of M/P for its trade purposes and in its settlements in the East also entailed learning a language, albeit the more easily learnt Low forms of Malay and Portuguese. In the East, contact with the locals and with the slaves was in these languages and this aspect of life in the East was repeated in part at the Cape.

The heterogeneity of the slave slaves as regards their ethnic, cultural and linguistic background provided, on the one hand, the need for finding common ground, whilst, on the other hand, it created the difficulty in finding such common ground, particularly amongst people who had been traumatised, suffered cultural and physical dislocation, and were cut off from others of their own kind. On the horizontal level, personal and intimate contact between the slaves existed, based on their common fate and their need for peer group social contact, comfort and information exchange. Despite this, a local slave culture did not come into being: for one to have existed, it would first have

had to be created, but in South Africa this did not take place¹⁰³. According to Ross (1983:16) “there are no signs that there were any institutions, norms or values that were specific to the slaves (other than the very fact of bondage, of course)”. Unlike the situation in the plantation slave societies, the number and distribution of slaves at the Cape was not favourable for the development of a slave sub-culture, making the genesis of a creole less likely. The fact that there was no serious slave revolt in all the VOC years supports this. Many slaves had access to what could be used as weapons, such as all manner of knives and axes in the case of those engaged in collecting firewood under little supervision, such as the 59 VOC slaves listed in the inventory (Ross 1980b:3). On the frontier, the number of slaves reflected the frequent poverty of the farmers. Even in the established, labour-intensive agricultural areas, where the most slaves worked together, several factors limited the formation of a specifically slave-based community: slave mortality was high, reproduction low, and the origins of the slaves diverse (Armstrong 1982). In Cape Town itself, the conditions necessary for the development of a horizontal slave culture were somewhat better, but evidently not enough.

The patterns of interaction between the groups would determine the communication needs and therefore the kinds of languages spoken. For the slaves, these patterns were based on their physical, social and work-related interaction with their masters and the local European community in general, and each other. To this can be added contact with the Khoekhoen and the free blacks, and with the crew and passengers of the visiting ships. In what follows, these patterns will be outlined and their implications for language use and evolution discussed. Of particular significance are the issues of intermarriage and miscegenation, relationships related to work, the intimacy of the Cape households, and the relations with the neighbours, be they colonists, free blacks or neighbours in a broader sense, Khoekhoen (Davids 1994:110-116).

As we have seen, the society at the Cape varied geographically and socially. Ponielis conceptualises this with a ripple effect: whilst the geographically compact area consisting of Cape Town, its environs, Stellenbosch and Drakenstein of 1710 became more densely settled, the interior was progressively opened up by stock-traders and big-game hunters, who were followed by the stock farmers prepared to live a semi- or even fully nomadic life-style and thus to nominally push out the borders of the Cape

¹⁰³ At least not until the last years of slavery, when a community of sorts can be discerned in Cape Town, partly due to the rise of Islam among the slaves.

settlement - and of the speech community. Gradually (but fairly rapidly), residence on the loan farms became permanent, but the population density remained so thin as to make contact with the core southwest area difficult (1993:37-38). This expansion was as a consequence of the natural increase, showing cumulative, continuous and rapid growth, of the fertile, healthy European population, supplemented by a steady stream of mostly male immigrants. The gross growth rate of the burgher population has been calculated to be about 2.6% per year (Ross 1975:222-223).

It makes sense, therefore, to consider the situation in the three spheres of the Cape: the urban settlement itself, with its interface with the wider world, the wine and wheat farming areas as they became progressively more stable communities, and the frontier farms of the trekboers, bordering on the wide 'beyond'. These three spheres will then be discussed from the point of view of language contact and regional differences.

5.2.5.2. Language Setting: Cosmopolitan, multilingual, multifunctional Cape Town

The European culture and that of the VOC was dominant in Cape Town, and kept alive by the sojourners, who also brought aspects of the East with them on the return journeys to Europe. The outside world and the worldwide spice trade touched the settlement through the harbour in Cape Town. In addition to being the commercial and administrative centre, it was also the depot for the slave trade and the distribution point for newly imported slaves. The expression of 'Tavern of the Seas' (Saunders 1988) used for Cape Town refers to two crucial features: the dual nature of the town as port settlement and as shelter or resting-place for those *en route* between Europe and the East Indies. This accounted for the cosmopolitan nature of Cape Town, in which Eastern and European culture interacted dynamically with Africa. The occupations of the people in Cape Town were oriented to these two enduring outside points, and tied to the seasonal tides of visitors. The residents were traders and in the hospitality business, or supported these activities, either administratively or by the supply of services and trades. The economic well-being of the colony was dependent to no small degree on these visitors. The numbers were large: between 1720 and 1780, an average of 9,700 and 11,600 men departed from either Europe or Asia on the VOC ships (Van Duin & Ross 1987:13). Some died, the rest spent time in Cape Town recuperating from the long voyage, some of them in the hospital which could house up to 600 patients (Ross 1980b:1). To this must be added the foreign ships (mostly English and, after 1750,

French) that also called in: between 1700 -1714 over one thousand ships anchored in Table Bay, of which 64% belonged to the Company (Ward 2003:4). In the seasons when Cape Town functioned as a place of 'rest, recovery and recreation', it is not surprising that these visitors commented on the cosmopolitan, multilingual nature of the town – qualities elicited to no small degree by the visitors themselves. In this cacophony, the Dutch of the VOC and the lingua francas of the sea-route, Malay/Portuguese, would have dominated.

On the other hand, at the other times of the year, Cape Town was relatively empty (Ross 1980b:2). During these times, the population was reduced to the VOC contingent, the burghers, the slaves, and a small number of Khoekhoen. Commercial activity, of course, was oriented both outward and inward: with the ships and with the hinterland. The other group of 'transients' in Cape Town were the burghers and trekboers from the interior. Cape Town was not only the port but also the major market for local agricultural products, whether sold to the VOC, to the ships or to the locals (Van Duin & Ross 1987:2). For these inland transients, Cape Town was a place to sell their produce and also to acquire all the goods (from sugar and soap through farm implements to slaves) and services (such as saddlers, coopers or wainwrights) they needed. It was the place to have their children baptised, property transactions recorded and for contact with the outside world. The rich farmers of the wine and wheat belt had houses in town and even the stock-farmers further inland had to make the trip to town occasionally (Ross 1980b:7). Cape Town was where the dialects, both European and the developing local dialects, of the Dutch speakers met. It was also the place where slaves met, since the farmers would bring at least some of their slaves with them on the often arduous trip to town. Although there was a regulation, stemming from the slave-owners' fear of slave rebellion, forbidding two slaves belonging to different owners to meet, in practice this was often disregarded (Saunders 1988:51). For some slaves at least this must have meant an opportunity, albeit of short duration, to find some-one with whom to speak their own mother tongue. Not all the slaves were illiterate, for example, the Buginese, who had a reputation for being violent and unruly, even corresponded.

The number of *Kaapenaars*, (the residents of Cape Town) is much harder to estimate as the tax lists did not distinguish between the farming and non-farming community in the Cape district. Ross (1985:108) has estimated that the total urban population (excluding the Khoekhoen and the households of the VOC officials) constituted approximately one third of the total population of the colony. This meant

about 1,000 burghers, free blacks, and their slaves around 1710, above 1,450 in the mid-1720s, 2,500 in about 1750, 4,500 in 1775, to between 10,000 and 11,000 at the end of the century. These figures illustrate the relative importance of Cape Town within the colony. They also show just how small the total group of speakers was in the first fifty, even one-hundred-and-fifty, years of this very polyglot town, indeed in the entire colony. The number of visitors relative to the inhabitants shows that in a normal year, the temporary residents outnumbered the permanent ones. This discrepancy was marked in the first half of the Company period.

As for the slaves, in the seventeenth century the number of privately-owned slaves belonging to burghers in Cape Town was low, starting to exceed the number of VOC slaves from the beginning of the eighteenth century, and by mid-century only about one third belonged to the Company. The average number of slaves per household in mid-century has been estimated (by the historian Nigel Worden) at about four; by around 1770 few households had more than five, whilst 25% of the households had only one slave. Towards the end of the century, there are accounts of substantial increases (ten and upwards) in the case of prosperous Cape Townians. (Bauermeister 2002:92). As for the Company slaves, their numbers fluctuated greatly from year to year. According to the statistics given by Armstrong (1982:92), after exceeding 300 in the 1670s, the total generally increased to a maximum of 949 (including bandieten) in 1789, whereafter it dropped again to 582 in 1793. In most years they numbered between 450 to 625 (including children but excluding bandieten). In the seventeenth century, the women outnumbered the men. In the year the agricultural district Stellenbosch was established (1679), there were 310 Company slaves compared to 191 privately-owned slaves. By 1692, the number of privately-owned slaves exceeded the Company slaves and this ratio rose to 10:1 in 1750 and 30:1 in 1793.

In general therefore, the port was central to the town's economy and commerce was its lifeblood. In addition, the colony had to function, requiring the development and maintenance of infrastructure. The slaves had a major role in doing the physical labour required. The administrative machinery supporting this was in the hands of the VOC and the slaves had only a limited role there. Finally, the human aspect of the town as a social entity included the slave population as well – partly segregated in the Lodge, partly integrated with other people of lower status in the various venues for socialising and partly, semi-invisibly, in church.

Language varies according to the context and purpose of its use and in a multilingual environment, the range of variation is broadened by the choice of language, and the communicative opportunities provided by code-switching. Fishman (1972) developed a system of analysis of language choice in a bilingual community based on domains, which are seen as congruent combinations of people (both speaker and addressee), place and topic. To quote the title of an earlier article by Fishman: “Who speaks what language to whom and when?” We can use the domains in which slaves used language, to describe the languages used, and the kinds of language input received and the kind of output produced. To Fishman’s questions we need to add the question of “Why?”, or “What for?” Using this framework, the language situation of the slaves in Cape Town can be mapped. Furthermore, the issue of comprehensible language input can be addressed. Who could the slaves learn Dutch from and under what conditions? Did they have access to such input? Under what circumstances would Dutch be nativised?

It is clear that work was one of the main domains in which the slaves used language and that this was an area in which the use of several languages were possible, depending on individual ability and need. Although *family* is considered a typical domain in 20th century research (Fasold 1984:183), this needs to be reformulated for the slaves. Mostly, their *family* was the family of their owners and their position in it ambiguous at best. Ross has argued that there were no quasi-kinship ties involved in this relationship (Ross 1995), even if the slaves were part of what the Romans called the *familia*, perhaps best described as the expanded family. Some slaves did have families of their own, However, all the slaves had a *home* of a sort and home, broadly defined to include elements such as neighbourhood and friends, will be considered as a second main domain below. The third domain to receive attention will be education.

5.2.5.2.1. The public domain of work in Cape Town

The slaves in Cape Town in their daily work were identifiable by their appearance and their activity, and their lower status created by law and by custom. Slaves were used to perform the menial tasks, but some of them were craftsmen or skilled artisans, or hawkers, and in these occupations they overlapped with the free blacks and some Europeans. The group of common labourers was large and included most of the working women (1980b:4). Slave women of the Lodge were not exempt from hard labour: the Company made no distinction based on gender (Shell 2002:255). In executing tasks like woodcutting, removing household rubbish, digging ditches, loading and unloading the

ships in the docks, or agricultural work (market-gardening) the slaves were likely to be at the receiving end of commands or reprimands/warnings and extensive conversation, especially one-on-one, was superfluous. If this one-sided speech event took place in Dutch, it is likely the language used was reduced to so-called foreigner talk, “a bilingual communication strategy in which the speaker simplifies his mother tongue to make himself understood by another speaker who has limited competence in it” (Hamers & Blanc 2000:371); if it took place in M/P, this was likely to be an L2 of the speaker and some of the addressees. In so far as these activities were carried out in groups of slaves, negotiation and use of a common code amongst the slaves was horizontal, and accommodation and convergence would have played a role.

Of great importance to the language issue is that the retail trade in foodstuffs was largely in the hands of the slaves, although the profits accrued to their owners. (Van Duin & Ross 1987:8-9). Buying and selling could be conducted via a pidgin (as in the case of the bartering for cattle with the Khoekhoen), but this was not very efficient. Soon more nuanced communication could develop, through contact and accommodation. The greater the L2 proficiency of the seller, the less the buyer would need to resort to strategies to facilitate difficult communication and the more likely the seller was to be exposed to varied target language input. The majority of the customers would be Dutch-speakers and it was in the interests of all parties for the slaves to become good Dutch language learners – but also for them to have a smattering of M/P for dealing with the transient buyers. For the slaves, increased proficiency held advantages and the opportunity to perhaps earn some money. According to Ross (1985:110), the slave owners sent out their slaves to earn so-called *koelie geld*, which provided their own income. This street hawking fulfilled the function of a market. Despite the chances of a beating if too little income has been produced, the system did allow the slaves opportunities: to skim off some of the money, or to dispose of stolen goods (Ross 1980b:10-11). Slaves were often housed in the warehouses and household slaves had the run of the house. Middlemen, often Chinese convicts, existed and goods could leave the country without trace on the ships. The money thus earned was spent, often in the taverns, rather than on buying freedom, since accounting for the money needed for this would have been difficult. (Ross 1985:112-113). A high level of language proficiency, possibly in several languages, was of considerable instrumental value in this retail trade, which itself provided the opportunity to access the language input necessary for acquiring that proficiency.

The other group of occupations in which languages skills were necessary due to the more complex interchanges necessary were the various crafts. Slaves worked for craftsmen but also as craftsmen. In the 1795 inventory undertaken by the British of the 534 slaves (and bandieten) in the possession of the Company, there were 27 such slaves, working in the forge, bakery and pottery, with the coopers, carpenters, millers, the candle-maker, cutler, the pump maker and the bookbinder (Ross 1980b:3). The patterns of occupation amongst the burgher slaves would have been similar. Slaves were used in the construction business as well, and the system of hiring out slaves was current here as well, to the benefit of the slaves who would also receive money from the hirer (Ross 1985:110)¹⁰⁴. Skilled slaves from the East were very expensive but seem to have been worth the investment since they did not merely free the owner to do other things, they generated income.

A similar pattern can be seen as regards fishing. This was a small man's business in the first century of the settlement, with the boat owners manning their boats with their own and other men's slaves (Ross 1980b:10). Since the crew were often all slaves, the need for language was horizontal. Other interstices of the economy were also filled by the slaves, at the least as regards manual labour. The butcher shops and the hospitality industry (including the part-time lodging houses) all relied on slave labour¹⁰⁵

The VOC, as the Dutch-speaking core of the colony, was the centre of the administration. Of the 1795 inventory of 534 Company slaves, "17 slaves worked 'in 't Gouvernement (presumably the administrative offices)" (Ross 1980b:3). Administrative work required a least some degree of literacy, but this affected only a small percentage of the slaves. Even if slaves did arrive literate, that literacy was likely to be in languages other than Dutch and not written in Roman letters. Some modicum of literacy could be acquired in the Lodge slaves school. The VOC office environment, even in the other VOC settlements where Dutch was not used generally, was Dutch and those slaves who were

¹⁰⁴ The beautiful Cape Dutch houses still to be seen in the Cape bear testimony to the skill of the slaves.

¹⁰⁵ As did the force known as the 'Caffers', who functioned as officers of justice under the direct supervision of the Fiscaal (and of the Landdrosts in the outlying areas). They worked as assistants to the executioner, preparing for capital punishment, and carrying out much of the actual flogging ordered by the Court of Justice or demanded by slave-owners against their slaves. They were also supposed to maintain order in the streets of town or villages, supplementing the efforts of the burgher watch, and were allowed to arrest criminals.

employed in this area were exposed to Dutch even when they themselves were not involved in using the language. The same can be said for the slaves working in the hospital (27 in the inventory).

5.2.5.2.2. The private domain of 'home'

In Cape Town, two patterns of slave 'home' life are present. Since the living conditions and sociolinguistic environment of the small slave-owner family living in close proximity to its slaves will be discussed in below, the section that follows will deal with the ways in which Cape Town was different. It was very different in one way: the Company was the biggest slave-owner and the implications of this are manifold. First of all, the VOC as a business enterprise was a psychologically and socially distant owner – the relationship between the slaves and their owner was a formal one, laid down in legal contracts and statutes, and the activities related to the care, discipline and direction of the slaves formed parts of a work assignment for certain designated Company servants, who were replaced when the Company so decided. The VOC position of *oppermandoor* (*oppermeester*, *opsigter*), who lived in a different building, had little prestige and was lowly paid (Armstrong 1982:95). Secondly, the slaves were housed in a single building and subject to strict rules curtailing their freedom of movement (including being locked in at night). This place was the Slave Lodge (see next page). It was built in 1679 after its predecessor had burnt down due to the negligence of a slave (Elphick & Shell 1982:121). The new Lodge (which still exists in a renovated form today) was 86m by 42m and constructed around an inner courtyard. It housed the slaves belonging to the VOC, the *bandieten*¹⁰⁶, and took the overflow from the hospital, if needed (Armstrong 1982:95).

¹⁰⁶ In total over 700 *bandieten*, or criminals were transported from Batavia to the Cape (Ross 1985:108).

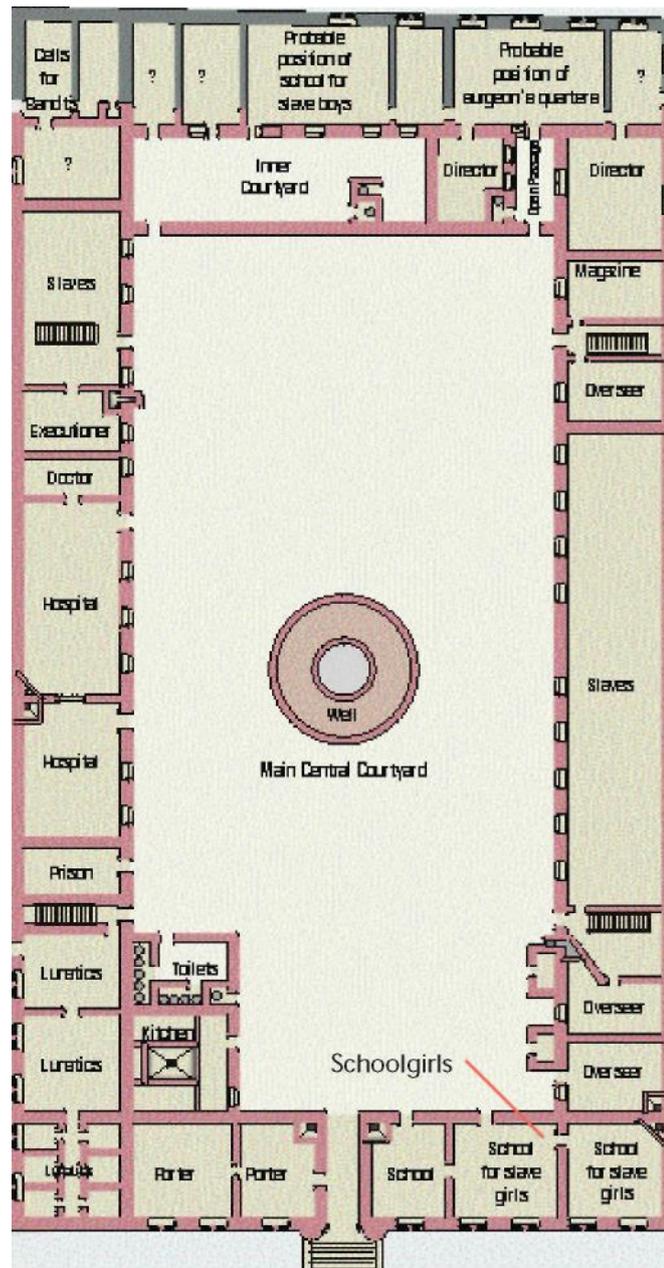


Figure 8. "Slave lodge"

(copied from Shell, *The Lodge Women of Cape Town*, p 250.

Source given: South African Cultural Museum, Peter Laponder, Floor plan p. 253)

The number of VOC slaves fluctuated over the years between about 500 and about 750, with 1789 being an exceptional year as they numbered 946 (Van Duin & Ross 1987:9). Conditions in the Lodge were squalid (Ross 1985:108) and crowded. Clearly, diseases would spread fast and the mortality rate was high. For example, in the year of

the smallpox epidemic, 200 Company slaves died in 6 months. Other extreme examples are from 1677/78, when 125 slaves equalling 39% of the slave population; or a series of bad years 1753/54 (146 slaves equalling 25%); 1754/55 (176 slaves equalling 40%) and 1755/56 (another 58 slaves), died (Armstrong 1982:94). Consequently, the slave force had to be constantly replenished. All in all, the Company imported about 3,000 slaves for its own use in the eighteenth century. (Van Duin & Ross 1987:9), or 5,400 for the whole VOC period (Shell 1994 cited in Vink). In the last quarter of the eighteenth century imports increased and continued under the First British Occupation and thereafter (Ross 1988:216). The language learning challenge was considerable for each of these slaves. Those who arrived with at least a smattering of Portuguese, or spoke a variety of Malay were lucky, but all of them had to find their way in a very multilingual society in which Cape Dutch was dominant. Just as the varieties and mix of languages spoken were constantly reshuffled by the newcomers, so too the number of Dutch language learners was constantly replenished.

The slaves that did survive longer provided a measure of continuity. Mechanisms for helping new arrivals to acclimatise, both in the physical and social sense, must have existed.

Men, women and children all lived in the Lodge. The number of women more or less equalled the number of men (Shell 2002:250), although this was more true in the seventeenth century than later. This was quite unlike the situation outside the Lodge, where the slave men significantly outnumbered the slave women. The men lived according to strict army regulations. For the women, who were often also mothers, “elements of the family mode of slave management were fused into the control of the Lodge slave women” (Shell 2002:254). This was achieved through the offices of ‘external mothers’ (European women, usually the wives of Company officials charged with seeing that the girls were well-brought up) and ‘internal mothers’ (slaves charged with caring for children and other mothers within the Lodge). The supervision of the women was ‘internal’: at the top of the hierarchy was the *matres*, literally a schoolmistress, or matron, followed by two under-matrons. Women in these supervisory positions had privileges and opportunities to obtain cash. Some of them were manumitted, and even in time managed to manumit their children (Shell 2002:252-254). This position tended to be held by half-caste women, who were “generally at least second generation South Africans, in contradistinction to most of the Company slaves” (Ross 1980b:5).

From around 1671, slaves could also be ‘married’. Even before that there are mentions of informal unions and slaves may have arrived as couples: in 1658 Van Riebeeck refers to the Angolan slaves as “so wel gepaerde als ongepaerde” (quoted in Bauermeester 2002:206). Such ‘marriages’ were recommended in 1671 by Commissioner Goske. In 1685, on finding conditions in the Lodge to be conducive to immorality and dissolution, High Commissioner Van Rheeде set down that “man and wife were to be left together” and to be “married in their manner” (quoted in Shell 2002:250). Accordingly, they were married without the sanction of the church and therefore not officially registered. This separate status was reflected in the language use of the Dutch authorities who did not use the customary word for wives, *vrouwen*, but *wijven* instead – a term usually reserved for female animals¹⁰⁷ (Shell 2002:250-251;260). In this way, couples were established, and this was reflected in their new accommodation. The young unmarried men were in the east wing, young unmarried women in the west wing, and married couples had their own quarters. After 1717 the entire second floor was allocated to the couples (Shell 2002:251). Near the end of the VOC period, in 1790-91, a list gives a total of 849 VOC slaves with 215 living as ‘families’. These 215 persons constituted 65 families, of which 39 had a man as the head of the family, i.e. 26 were single-mother families (Bauermeester 2002:207). In these families, at least, some sort of normal transmission of language from generation to generation took place. What exactly the language was, cannot be reconstructed, but that it was not the heritage language of the slaves, nor metropolitan Dutch can be accepted, as can the need for the children to function in Dutch of a sort and possibly M/P.

As for the birth rate, on average it appears that for every 10 slave women there was one birth per year. The overall average of 0.64¹⁰⁸ children per slave woman is somewhat lower than the statistics for privately-owned slave women, and significantly lower than the rate for burgher women. Despite the existence of couples, the fathers of the children cannot be automatically assumed to be from amongst the slaves as the Lodge took its part in the “rest and recreation” function of Cape Town – it served as the

¹⁰⁷ In standard Afrikaans, *wyf* is a derogatory term for a woman (the English dictionary equivalent being given as *vixen*, *termagant*, *shrew* and the expression ‘*n ou wyf*’ used for a man is an idiomatic expression similar to the English *an old woman*). The term *wyfie* has kept the meaning of the female animal, bird or insect (Bosman et al 1972, Terreblanche & Odendaal 1966).

¹⁰⁸ This should be interpreted as a rough estimate, since the calculation makes no allowance for new imports of men or children, nor of desertions and manumissions.

brothel. For many of the slaves, the only way of getting to money was through theft, successful gambling or prostitution (Ross 1980b:5). This last line of business was well-known but seemingly not particularly well-organised. The willingness of the men to pimp their wives, of the women to offer their bodies for money, and of the authorities to shut their eyes to the activities is mentioned in various travel accounts¹⁰⁹ (Shell 2002 257-259). Mentzel, whose account of life at the Cape in the second half of the eighteenth century is the source of much of our knowledge of the minutiae of daily life and gives us examples of the language use of the time, mentions the men using coercion, but also that not all women were prostitutes, adding that those that were insisted on prior payment (cited in Shell 2002:257). The basic principle echoes down the centuries: “kammene kas, kammene kunte” (quoted in Shell 2002: 262) - to put it as bluntly as the original, “no cash, no cunt”. Another relevant quote from Mentzel refers to a woman refusing an offer, “Jous swart canailje, wie will met jou te samen gaan” (Ross 1980a:430). Ross notes that he has been able to find no evidence of commercially-run brothels nor of masters pimping their slave women (Ross 1980b:11).

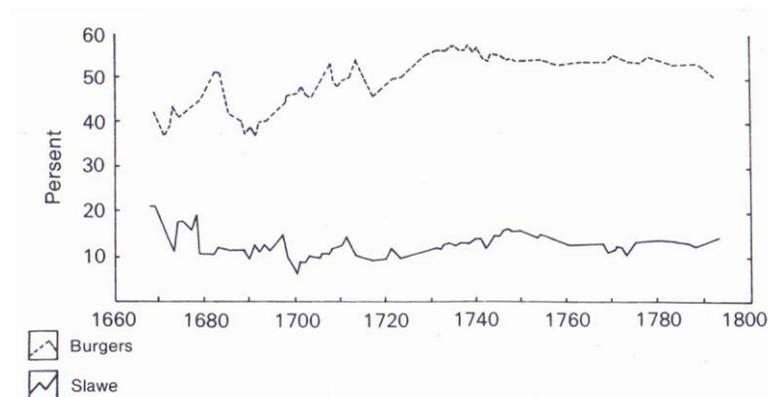


Figure 9. "Slave and free burgher birth rate 1668-1793"

(Copied from Armstrong 1982:101)

The ‘lords of six weeks’ left their genetic mark on the population of Cape Town, as did the local male population, which suffered from a shortage of women (Shell 2002:253;257). In practice, the strict Company injunctions against miscegenation were

¹⁰⁹ The latent racism implicit in the assumption of the superiority of Europeans is expressed by one of these visitors, who commented that the women “are so fond of white children, that they would willingly have no other, whence the breed is highly improved, many of them being as white as Europeans” (Shell 2002:259)

often disregarded (Ross 1980b:6). In fact, burghers not only fathered children but sometimes manumitted them - an indication that not all the women were whores, since the fathers were presumably reasonably certain of the paternity of the children thus freed (Ross 1980b:5). The chances of a woman of mixed European heritage getting married were good. Once again, the instruction comes from Van Rhee, who was of the opinion that the manumission and marriage of half-breed women with European blood to European, and especially Dutch, men was to be promoted (Bauermeister 2002:207). Indirectly this served the Company's objective of spreading the Dutch language, since this is a situation in which exposure to L1 Dutch is given, and the chances of the woman assimilating into the dominant society optimal. Given the background of having left slave status, it is hard to imagine the woman as a mother not appreciating the advantages for her children of growing up Dutch. Even the lowest caste Dutch man was of higher status than any slave. The Company, true to its bookkeeperish self, put a price on the procedure, but not on the price of a full-breed woman, whose chances of being manumitted on this basis seem to have been smaller¹¹⁰. Such arrangements were recorded prosaically in contracts specifying the terms (Shell 2002:252). There were distinct advantages to being a half-breed, especially of light colour, and born at the Cape. Shell interprets the slave women's attitude to prostitution as a complex mixture of defying the incipient racial order, showing their power over their customers, putting their pimping slave spouses in their places, and maximising the chances of their offspring (Shell 2002:259). In language shift situations, mothers and women are often in the forefront in finding the route to advancement through calculated attachment to the language of power. For the very powerless and disadvantaged slave women of the Cape, the only real way out of their situation was to be redefined in society as a wife. This option was not open to the slave men. In order for the freed slave women or children to be accepted in society, the less visible their difference was, the better. Skin colour was largely a matter of biology, but language skills could be acquired and the Slave Lodge actually provided better opportunities for

¹¹⁰ Women from Bengal seem to have been an exception, especially in the early years. Of the early mixed marriages, three were with women from Bengal (1656, 1658 and 1669). Genealogical research by Heese, based on the data collected by Hoge, identified 191 German men between 1660 and 1705, who married or lived with women who were not of 'pure' European origin. Of their partners, 114 were Cape-born, only 5 were from Africa or Madagascar and 29 were Bengalese, with the remaining 43 from elsewhere in the East (cited in Elphick & Shell 1982:139).

learning Dutch than the society outside the Lodge, both through formal education of a sort and through exposure - at least for some slaves, some of the time - to Dutch as used by its native speakers to speak to them, and also amongst themselves.

Conditions in the lodge were quite unique. Although the 'home' of the slaves cannot be compared to that of a normal family, the lodge did provide them with what was certainly a 'world of their own'. The lack of a specific slave culture and the fact that the pattern of slavery differed from the plantation model have been held to be a factor mitigating against the development of a creole at the Cape. It suggested here that the issue of life in the Slave Lodge needs to be revisited with this aspect in mind. Much more data is available for the Company slaves than is the case for the privately owned slaves. Whilst the subjective experience of life in the Lodge cannot be reconstructed, it should be possible to evaluate the role of the Lodge as a location for the 'initiation' of the constant, if not steady, stream of new slaves and as a setting for language acquisition. Attitudes can be inferred from behaviour, reconstructed from the records available, and deduced from European commentaries, even if these are themselves subjective and originate from outside the Lodge. Additional insight into the creolisation or language learning processes and pressures of the slaves and the society in which they were embedded could be achieved by analysing the opposing trends of likely language use by the VOC with the slaves (the tendency to use Malayo/Portuguese¹¹¹ as in the East and the stated official policy and convenience of using Dutch), the likely contacts of the Company slaves outside their work situations, and a careful analysis of the origins/births of the VOC slaves plotted on a time-line. If anywhere, then the Lodge may have provided the necessary conditions for creolisation.

5.2.5.2.3. The domain of socialising

Cape Town may have been a welcome sight for the men on the arriving ships, who could look forward to land leave, fresh food and other luxuries, but for the slaves the situation was not as rosy. Their everyday lives were rather closer to life on board, being restricted in their freedom of movement (there was a nightly curfew and the penalties for being abroad without express permission were dire), regimented in their activities during the day, and vulnerable to the whims of those above them in status.

¹¹¹ The variety of lingua francas used at the Cape makes their identification in general very difficult. For this reason, Malayo/Portuguese has been used when specifying the exact variety is not necessary.

Nevertheless, the hospitality trade was not only aimed at the transient target market, there was a need for year-round custom and this was provided by the free blacks, the knechts, and the slaves who had some cash to spend. As discussed above, the taverns were locations of contact for slaves, knechts, transients and burghers, providing the common attractions of alcohol, tobacco and gambling.

5.2.5.3. Language setting: “op die plaas” on the wine and wheat or cattle farms

The settlement that would become Cape Town started to expand with the first free burghers. The details of this process show many setbacks and variations, but certain tendencies can be discerned. For our purposes, the two farming areas have been combined into one section, since the similarities make a more economical discussion possible. The substantial differences can best be seen in contrast. The first step in the process of moving from being a refreshment station to becoming a colony was the settlement along the Liesbeek River. This frontier moved rapidly outwards. Economic pressures propelled this expansion, influenced by the family structure of the settler families. Large families led to each generation looking for its own opportunities, its own land. The use of slave labour had devalued the manual work done by them, leading to farmers’ sons avoiding having to accept employment on the farms of others. The availability of loan farms made this possible.

An impression of the spread of the population can be gained by looking at the dates of the establishment of churches:

Cape Town	1656	All within 100km of Cape Town
Stellenbosch	1686	
Drakenstein (later Paarl)	1691	
Roodezand (later Tulbagh)	1743	
Zwartland (later Malmesbury)	1745	
Graaf Reinet	1792	Graaf-Reinet is about 800km north-east of Cape Town
Swellendam	1798	

(Based on Ross 1975:210)

Within the micro-community of the farm, the handful of individual members were in much closer contact with each other despite the vastness of the space in which they found themselves. The greater the distances between the farms in the outer circle of the ripple effect, the more the micro-community became the whole world of the people inside it. Giliomee sees the “burgher family on a farm as [the] basic unit out of which the Afrikaner people developed” (2003:37). Concomitant with the movement outwards, the inner circle became stabilised, communities came into being, with economically and socially necessitated contact between the units. At the Cape, this was influenced by the physical characteristics of the land, which allowed intensive farming in the wine and wheat belt, but made cattle farming the progressively more attractive option. The nature of life on these farms encouraged the development of a micro-variety of Cape Dutch. Each farm, or *plaas*, had its own particular mix of people. The example of the aptly named *Babijlonsche Toorn* in the Drakenstein district (Bauermeester 2002:37, based on Shell 1994) serves as illustration. In the 1690s, the owner, Pieter van der Bijl, had bought individual slaves from Macassar, Bengal, Malabar, Ternate and Malacca. In addition, he made use of Khoekhoen as seasonal labourers. For a short period, French was a prevalent language in this area. Leaving the possible further unspoken first languages of the slaves out of the picture, the languages in use included varieties of French, Dutch, Hindi, Khoekhoe, Malay and Portuguese, spoken in various degrees of proficiency.

It is submitted here that the process of the evolution of Dutch to forms of Cape Dutch to Afrikaans saw a pattern of accommodation according to daily need on the *plaas*, which was then accommodated to the other micro-dialects when the speakers came into contact with speakers from other farms, leading to regional convergence that needed to be accommodated to the dialect of Cape Town when trips were undertaken there (or even to the Dutch of the Netherlands, when children were sent to school there). This ‘plaaslect’ may have shown social stratification as well, in that the language used by the owners and those serving them would have differed, to reflect and reinforce the social order. As in society at large, in such a micro-community, the principles underlying choice of language are governed by the communication potential of each language. De Swaan (2001), in his application of economic theory to language systems, stresses that as ‘hypercollective’ goods, languages are unusual goods in that they are not used up by being used. On the contrary, like standards or supply networks, their increased use leads to increased utility for all the others using it. By making a choice,

speakers acquire a stake in the language they have chosen and therefore they will opt for the alternative that is most likely to survive in a competitive environment” (De Swaan 2001:29). Brand reputation, in this case “language prestige” plays a role in the choice. Of particular relevance to networks that serve the function of connecting users with each other is that in “these cases every new extension increases the number of potential connections for all existing users. For this reason, too, every user stands to profit from the participation of all other users” (De Swaan 2001:30). Added to this is the quality that languages have of being free and non-excludable. The only way to stop someone learning a language is to ensure lack of exposure. Collaboration by many speakers is needed to maintain it, but the defection of a speaker does not jeopardise a language, although a mass defection does. In this case, the process works in reverse: with each new desertion, the total number of users decreases and at some point it no longer seems worth the effort to teach a language to one’s children. The costs of expanding one’s language repertoire work towards inertia, the effort being weighed up against the expected benefits.

For each individual who is motivated to learn a language, the choice of language will depend on which one “offers the greatest possibilities of communication, either directly, or *indirectly*, through the mediation of interpreters or translators. A language is more likely to be selected the more prevalent or the more central it is in the relevant language constellation” (De Swaan 33). Prospective language learners could make their decision based on reliable data, but it is more likely that they make an intuitive estimate of the proportion of speakers of the language under consideration (that is, its prevalence, an indication of the opportunities for direct communication), coupled with an estimate of the number of multilingual speakers competent in that language (that is, its centrality, an indication of the opportunities for indirect communication)¹¹². This ‘Q-value’ gives a rough-and-ready measure of the communicative value of a specific

¹¹²Expressed as a formula, the communicative potential of a language λ_1 in a constellation (S), is its ‘Q-value’, indicates the potential of λ_1 to link the speaker with other speakers in S_1 , directly or indirectly. Prevalence (p_1) of λ_1 is the number of speakers (P_1) competent in λ_1 , divided by the number of speakers in the constellation (N^S). Centrality (c_1) is the number (C_1) of *multilingual* speakers who are also competent in λ_1 , divided by all the multilingual speakers (M^S) in constellation S . The Q-value “equals the product of the prevalence (p_1) and the centrality (c_1) of language λ_1 in constellation S ” (De Swaan 2001:34): $Q_1^S = p_1 \cdot c_1$

language in a specific constellation and purports to reconstruct the value speakers attribute to a language. Many other factors play a role in the choice of foreign language to learn, some rational benefit-orientated, some based on ideology or emotion, and some on power relations, but the overall working of the system on the macro-level seem to bear out the principle¹¹³. If 'the individual writ large' forms the basis for the Q-value, then it must be applicable to hypothetical individuals in specific situations.

For an individual slave who arrived on the farm from, say, inland Bengal or one of the Indonesian islands, or Madagascar, language learning was essential for survival. The home language of the slave was lost together with the loss of home. If the external network effects described above had already had an impact, then it is likely that earlier decisions will have led to everyone else using one language, namely a variety of Dutch. This is clear from hindsight, since it is Dutch's descendant Afrikaans that won in the 'first round of the language competition'. (It held its own in the second round, becoming after more than a century of competition one of the two official languages of the Union of South Africa. As to the third round, the communicative potential of English seems to be growing to the detriment of the position of Afrikaans). In the early days, however, this would not have been so clear, since the nature of external effects is cumulative and exponential. The languages in this micro-constellation were almost as many as the number of members: a handful of Dutch speakers, possibly not native speakers, some of them children; a handful of Khoekhoen, possibly temporarily there; and a handful of slaves, possibly Malay-speakers or speaking some Portuguese.

The Khoekhoen spoke Khoekhoe amongst themselves and may have relied on one of their number to act as an interpreter to mediate between them and the owner. The first target would have been Dutch. The enlargement of the repertoire may then have included Malay/Portuguese, but only if there was a need to communicate with the slaves and they did not speak Dutch. A progressively larger number of Khoekhoen would have learnt Dutch. For the slave, learning Khoekhoe would scarcely have been considered. The language could not be used with other slaves, nor could it be used with the owners, except indirectly through the few Khoekhoen fluent in Dutch. The only plausible reason to learn Khoekhoe would have been a wish to join that community, an unlikely wish since the Khoekhoen were known to return escaped slaves, and their life

¹¹³ See De Swaan (2001) for macro-level (national and supra-national) applications.

beyond the boundaries of the farms were such as to motivate them to seek work on the farms. It seems that the pattern of European colonisation was that colonisers were prepared to learn the pidgin necessary to speak to the colonised, but only the rare exceptional individual was prepared to learn the indigenous language. The *Q*-value of Khoekhoe was low: even if it was prevalent (in the case of a large group of Khoekhoen taking employment), it was not central. The position of the lingua francas of the slaves was more ambivalent and depended on the polylectuality of the owners. If the owners spoke/had learnt some Malay/Portuguese, they might use one of these with their slaves – but not amongst themselves. For them, the language of the home was Dutch and their use of it in their home would give the non-Dutch speakers extensive exposure to the whole language. Out in the countryside, the inertia factor favoured Dutch, since the owners had no other reason for learning Malay/Portuguese than for communicating with their own property. For the slaves, horizontal communication would be vital and for this reason if Malay/Portuguese had become established in the micro-constellation, then it would be an option. It could be the first choice only if the owners used it, too. Otherwise, the centrality of Dutch would prevail. Given that the growth of the constellation was through the children, who would acquire language within the constellation, and less often through the acquisition of another slave, the working of the basic principle would lead to Dutch gradually or suddenly winning the micro-level language competition.

A key element of language acquisition, whether as an adult or as child, is exposure. The language of the owner's home was some variant of Dutch, and all the non-Dutch speakers would be exposed to it. In plantation societies, it was this condition that was not met – exposure to the owner's language was limited and possibly mediated through an overseer, who may not have been a native speaker, either. Most communication was therefore with fellow-slaves. Such a situation could lead to the genesis of a creole language, along with the birth of creole people. In the rural Cape and on the frontier, some situations where a pidgin would meet the communicative needs of slaves and masters did exist, but in most cases there was a need for more elaborate communication and the conditions for natural language acquisition were given.

5.2.5.3.1. The wine and wheat belt

The pattern of development meant that slaves were required in order to develop the agricultural potential of the fertile and less fertile land. By the eighteenth century, the majority of the slaves lived in the wine and wheat area, where the form of

agriculture was labour intensive. By 1773, they numbered 4,298, whilst the slaves of the cattle-farmers of the interior numbered only 1,850. Fully two-thirds of the slaves in the colony were on the farms, but they were widely dispersed on the whole. There were exceptions to this, farmers who had benefited from the system of monopolies governing deliveries to the Company. Consequently, there were estates with large households and large slave-holdings. It was possible to arrive at the Cape with little means and become wealthy, in the best 'rags to riches' tradition. Bauermeister (2002:95) cites several examples, focussing on the estates, such as, Constantia (originally owned by Simon van der Stel), Vergelegen (originally owned by Willem Adriaan van der Stel), Elsenburg and Meerlust. The excesses of especially Willem Adriaan van der Stel were reflected in his use of Company slaves and the garrison, in addition to his own two hundred slaves, to create an extravagant estate of great value. The splendour was short-lived - on his departure in 1708, Vergelegen was sub-divided and sold as four separate farms (Bauermeister 2002:100). In the same period, the meat-trader Henning Hüsing, started small and managed to acquire several farms and houses, and a large amount of capital. In 1701 he owned 72 slaves. One of the leaders of the movement against Willem Adriaan van der Stel, Adam Tas, likewise farmed in the area. His diary is the source of much information on the daily life of the farmers and the community. In 1705 he notes the possession of 14 male slaves, one woman and two boys. Despite these few exceptions, the slaves were generally thinly spread on the ground: few farms in this area had more than five slaves in 1750 (Elphick & Shell 1982:168) and many slaves lived in isolation from each other. Compared to Cape Town, the difference was marked: whereas the urban slaves had a limited measure of independence, the slaves in what can be seen as the epicentre of the colony were more dependent on their masters and also more exposed to the masters' culture and language.

Once the dust had settled after the departure of Willem Adriaan van der Stel, and the Huguenots had been integrated, these farms in the south-western Cape became an increasingly stable, even rigid, community, with the European values of the farmers dominating. "At the Cape the burgher family on a farm was the basic unit out of which the Afrikaner people developed" (Giliomee 2003:37).

It was this area that developed a specific way of thinking, that aspired to education (sending their children to the Netherlands if they could afford it) and that supplied the VOC with Cape-born officials and the VOC with the provisions it needed. It was here that ideas about political and social privileges were incubated and taken by the

burghers as they settled the deeper interior; for free and not free 'blacks' this was an inflexible society allowing them few opportunities (Giliomee 2003:56-57). They were far enough from Cape Town to be relatively isolated from new ideas and from the comings and goings of the sojourners, but were integrated economically. In the early days of Stellenbosch, free blacks did own land there: in 1688 there were six such families, which were listed as owning livestock or having harvested crops. By 1714, however, there were only six free blacks in Stellenbosch and none of them owned livestock or worked the land (Elphick & Shell 1982:161-162)¹¹⁴. After this promising start, a new pattern had set, with most free blacks living in the Cape Town, as were men married to recognisably 'black' women (Elphick & Shell 1982:139). The reasons for the lack of success may have been the lack of capital or the lack of family ties, and exacerbated by their low rate of growth as a group (Elphick & Shell 1982:166-167). In any case, they did not become a significant group in this area.

Some slaves did manage to obtain their freedom and as free blacks they could own property and establish their own households. As such, they were the neighbours of the free burghers, whose legal status they shared. Some of the farms with Cape-Dutch houses belonged for a time to free blacks (Davids 1994:111). According to Davids, the contact between free burgher and free black neighbours, and the transactions amongst them had far-reaching effects on the Cape language community in the first hundred years, providing the slave languages with another point through which their influence could be made felt.

The wine and wheat area had a relatively even male-female proportion, and developed through intermarriage into a dominantly European community, based on slave-holding. The burghers, whether wealthy or not, attended the same churches, intermarried, rode out on commando together and were economically linked to each other by complex ties of credit (Giliomee 2003:30). They tended to pass their wealth down from parents to children (Giliomee 2003:29). So on the one hand, the local version of European culture had become 'homogenised', with the assimilation of the Germans, French and Dutch to each other, whilst on the other hand, the heterogeneity of the slaves made contact amongst themselves difficult, since no area was settled by a group

¹¹⁴ This does not necessarily indicate poverty, since other forms of wealth, such as cash or slaves would not appear in the tax records.

with similar origins. Maintenance of their heritage culture and language was not possible. On the less prosperous farms, the slaves were multi-functional, whereas on the wealthier farms, there was some division of labour, reflecting the categories already discussed. For example, the Malagasy slaves would have been the ones doing the hardest physical labour, whilst the skilled artisans would have been in the workshops. Acculturation for the slaves 'at home' was perforce mainly vertical. Shell (1989:23-27) has argued that the dominant paradigm for the colonial slave-holders at the Cape was the concept of *familia*, and that this was, at least on the surface, accepted by the slaves themselves. This ideology of paternalism was supposed to reconcile the slaves to their fate, which was seen as a sort of 'social contract' whereby the 'fathers' took care of their children, fed and clothed them, and nursed them when ill, disciplined them and controlled them with punishment and reward, just as they did their biological children, whilst the slaves were expected to show respect and be faithful to their 'family' (Giliomee 2003:49). Travel narratives record such seeming familial bonds (Bauermeister 2002). The laws regulating slave punishment support the prevalence of this belief system: beyond the gruesome ways of putting slaves to death for serious crimes there was a division of offences into those which were considered serious and which required the administration of severe punishment by the judicial authorities, and those which fell into the category of domestic misdemeanours, for which punishment could be administered by the owners and should be of a domestic nature, that is it "should not exceed what the head of a household would mete out to his children" (Giliomee 2003:47). The 'reward' side of the bargain was surprisingly meagre: distinctions of rank among the slaves was uncommon and manumission was rare. From 1715 to 1791 the records of requests to the Council of Policy for manumission have been well-preserved and indicate that such requests were granted. There were only¹¹⁵ 1,075 requests in this period, of which a mere 81 concerned Company slaves. Few slaves from the rural areas were freed, and then not by farmers. In particular, there is no record of a single one of the cheaper Malagasy and African slaves used for agricultural work being freed. Of those who were freed, 75% were Cape-born (Elphick & Shell 1982:155), leading one to suspect

¹¹⁵ The overall rate was 0.165 per cent, which was low in comparison to Spanish and Portuguese America (Elphick & Shell 1982:146).

a *sub rosa* genetic connection to the owner in at least some cases¹¹⁶. Even the comfort of religion was not offered to the slaves.

The plantation slave, as one of many, living amongst other fieldhands in the separate slave quarters, had a measure of distance from his owners. Indeed, this was crucial to the development of creoles, since faulty transmission of the superstrate language was part of the creolisation process. Separate slave quarters on the estates of the gentry¹¹⁷ are reported, but these are a feature of the later period, at the end of the eighteenth, beginning of the nineteenth century. Such distance was denied the rural slaves at the Cape, especially in the case of the household slaves, or households with few slaves. Closeness was a consequence of architecture. Shell gives a description of the typical *Kapstijlhuis*, Cape-style house, of the period based on research conducted by James Walton (Shell 1989:26-27). These tent-like thatched houses had small, low walls and steep roofs, with the eaves relatively close to the ground. The entrance was at one end and faced two small unglazed windows at the far end, built so as to catch the wind. Inside, the house was partitioned. Cooking was done behind a screen or in a separate house at right angles to the main house. The average floor space was about 5 by 7 metres, which, if one considers the low walls, meant that standing was possible only in the centre. The living area was not spacious and it was common to sleep in the attic. Evidence from court cases shows that such homes were indeed common and the joint sleeping arrangements were likewise common. Under conditions such as these it is clear that the slave was not only at the disposal of the owner and family around the clock, but was in close proximity to them. Even if we assume that the owner used Malay/Portuguese with the slaves – and that is hard to justify in the rural areas – even then the slaves were exposed to Dutch simply by being in the presence of Dutch speakers. Given normal human curiosity, it is hard to conceive of the slaves not learning Dutch. Secondly, the use of different kinds of language to express social relations may have led to the slaves using Dutch ‘as the slaves did’ and of the masters using this language to them. The child who played with slave playmates would learn to use

¹¹⁶ Shell (1989) gives examples where it seems the Council of Policy was of a similar opinion. He offers the suggestion that this would also explain why Cape-born slaves were seldom sold.

¹¹⁷ If farmers who owned more than sixteen acres are considered as constituting the gentry, then in 1731 they represented only seven per cent of the rural burgher community – or even lower if lower-ranking VOC officials are added to their number.

language in a socially appropriate way, depending on the particulars of the concrete situation.

The horizontal element beyond the household was seasonal, in that slaves were moved around, sometimes from neighbour to neighbour, according to need in the harvest periods, and hired poor colonists and Khoekhoen were brought in to help (Bauermeester 2000: 382-383;388). After the harvest, there was a feast day, with all who had been involved celebrating with wine, music and dancing (Bauermeester 2000:388). A key role was played by the wagon-drivers, who had to be trusted slaves since it was their task to transport the crops (including barrels of wine) to market. Many of them had grown up in the homes of their masters and were of mixed origin (Bauermeester 2000:387;394). Their task was complex and the wagons themselves evolved from the original light type of wagon brought out by the Dutch to the typical trek-wagon, drawn by several pairs of oxen. The wagon-drivers had to negotiate their way over the mountains (Pells 1954:19). They served as coach-drivers and messengers for their masters and also as conduit of information for the slaves.

Due to the distances, and the inconvenience of travel, each farm formed its own micro-community and aimed at self-sufficiency. On the larger farms, skilled craftsmen with their apprentices were responsible for maintenance, repair and production to meet as many of the needs (for example, for clothing, implements or furniture) of their community as possible (Bauermeester 2000:402). Skills could be sold and these slaves were also mobile, being moved from farm to farm (Bauermeester 2000:404). Construction workers and musicians were amongst these (Armstrong 1982:97).

House slaves were physically integrated into the running of the houses. Particularly in the case of the smaller farms, they fulfilled multiple duties and were involved in the care of the children. Burgher families were large.

Much has been made of the characteristics of the frontier farmers, especially for political reasons in the twentieth century, leading to a cult of the *trekboers* who were “individualistic and conservative ..., patriarchal, restless, mobile wanderers”. ... with an exaggerated feeling of personal freedom, independence, resourcefulness, equality, self-willed, stubborn” (own translation, Van Jaarsveld 1971:49) . From the point of view of the slaves, the external conditions presented them with the same challenges.

A side-effect of acting as wet-nurses was a reduction in the fertility of slave women (who freed their mistresses to fall pregnant again by taking over the task of feeding the babies¹¹⁸). If we add to this the high mortality rates, it is not surprising that the slave community was not able to reproduce itself. This resulted in an incremental arrival of new slaves (as replacements or additions). As Ross puts it, there were “too few sons and daughters and too many slave immigrants” (1983:16).

Stable slave families, especially on the farms, were rare: slave ‘marriages’, whether legalised or not, are recorded but were not encouraged and were liable to be broken up if the masters so decided. Conditions of life, such as the lack of common quarters, were unfavourable. The chances of establishing slave ‘marriages’ was affected by the distorted sex ratio amongst the slaves, which was due largely to the preponderance of males in the imports. After the smallpox epidemic of 1713, the ratio was extreme: 600 slaves males per hundred females. This decreased in the course of the century to reach 252 men per 100 slave women in 1793 (Ross 1975:230).

5.2.5.3.2. The domain of work and home on the farms and within the households

The entire point of slavery was to have some-one do the work instead of the owner, so it is not surprising that the much of the contact between master and slave revolved around work, both within the home or without. Often the domains of work and home overlapped. On the farms, both great and small, the duties of the slaves can be split into two broad categories: house-slaves and workers on the land. In the case of the former, contact with their masters was more intensive and the home was the site of vertical acculturation, in both directions¹¹⁹. Wet-nurses, nurses, maids and cooks were all intimately integrated into the daily life in the home. Often, they lived, worked and slept under the same roof as their masters. Perhaps the most intimate contact was between slave women and the children of their owners. Particularly in the case of the slaves who were involved in the care of the children, emotional ties would have

¹¹⁸ For the sample of White women analysed by Ross, the mean interval between births was 26 months, although in the case of women having nine or more children – a not uncommon occurrence – the interval would have been considerably shorter. Another fact suggesting underestimation of the interval is that children who died in early infancy would not have been baptised and would therefore not have been recorded in the genealogies (the *Geslags-registeer*).

¹¹⁹ Much of what follows is true for urban households as well, but the process of vertical acculturation can be more clearly perceived and was probably clearest in the average farm household, with only a handful of slaves.

developed between them and their charges (Elphick & Shell 1982:168). The importance of the role these women played in caring for children of all ages should not be underestimated. Due to the nature of this work, the slave wet-nurses and child-minders were physically in the midst of the family and by entrusting them with their children, the masters were expressing a measure of trust. The speech events would have been more complex than the minimal exchanges that could suffice in some of the work-related situations, and the slave woman would have had an influence on the language acquisition of the children she cared for. Much has been written on this topic, all of it based on assumptions about the languages the slave women spoke to the children. In households where the communication between master and slave was through Malay or Portuguese, it is not impossible that the slave would use this language, or a pidgin with Malay or Portuguese substratum to the children. One scenario sees the creolisation of Dutch into Afrikaans as taking place in just this manner, as the children formed the pidgin into a creole and the following generation would learn the creole via normal transmission. Another, just as plausible view, is that the slave women were addressed in Dutch and exposed to more Dutch input, both directly and indirectly, and were therefore able to achieve a high level of proficiency. For some of them at least, the situation held the possibility of finding a way out of slavery – for themselves or their children. The role of wet-nurse presupposes lactation on the part of the nurse and, on the smaller holdings, it is unlikely that the slave children could have been kept apart from the master's children. In this way, the language acquisition of all the children would have been influenced by both the parents and the other care-givers. Two points need to be made here. First of all, there is no reason to believe that the children would not, as they grew older, be able to or want to use the language variety of the powerful. Secondly, as enculturation involves the socialisation into the role assigned to a person in a society, the slave children may have been socialised to use language typical of their position and to use this sociolect as adults (i.e. from about the age of 13-14). The children of the masters would retain the ability to shift styles and varieties depending on the situation and may have been socialised to use the creolised slave variety in speaking to the slaves.

The lexicon of ABA bears the marks of their influence in the everyday life of the households. For example, the Afrikaans word *aia*, meaning *nursemaid* in Portuguese was widely used in the East and is usually spelt *ayah* in the Anglo-Indian English word. The Dutch of the VOC officials included words like this, which would have continued to be

used by the slave women (Raidt 1971:164). Not only were the slave women child-minders, they were also the cooks. What is considered typically South African cooking today is often very Eastern in its flavours and customs of serving. The disparaging expression for Afrikaans, *kombuistaal* or *kitchen language*, is fitting in the sense that the Afrikaans of today includes many words of Malay or Portuguese origin from the work environment of the slave cook, such as *atjar* (preserved vegetable and vinegar condiment for meat, < prob. 16th c N <M < P¹²⁰), *blatjang* (chutney, <M) *bobotie* (a sort of meatloaf made with curry and eggs, <M), *borrie* (turmeric, <M), *bredie* (a kind of stew, <P <M), *koejawel* (guava, prob. <N <P), *mielie* (sweetcorn, <P), *pienangvleis* (a meat curry, *pienang* is a kind of plant, <M) *piering* (saucer, <M), *piesang* (banana, <M), *sambal* (side-dish of finely chopped cucumbers, onions, etc in vinegar, <M), *sosatie* (marinated kebabs <M or Jav.). As Ross comments (1980b:8), such foods “took their name and no doubt their form from the slave who cooked them”. Seen from another perspective, these words in Afrikaans provide circumstantial evidence for the kinds of work the slaves were used for.

On the horizontal level, there were activities in which the slaves dominated and for which they developed terminology amongst themselves. These activities were concentrated in Cape Town and its environs. For some of these activities, the business model was one in which a slave-owner hired out his slaves, who then earned so-called *koeliegeld* (Ross 1980b:10). Examples of such activities are market gardening, street vending, fishing, the practice of crafts and skill in driving wagons (Elphick & Shell 1982:164-167). The Eastern slaves were held to be good craftsmen and the men were taught to be “carpenters, cabinet makers, masons, shoemakers, tailors, cooks, coachmen, valets or handicraftsmen, while the females fill the station of mantua-maker, cook, nurse or of various other domestic servants (Burchell 1953, cited in Ross 1980b:9). Words from Malay and Portuguese passed into Afrikaans from three major fields of activity (Ross 1980b:7-8). In addition to the words related to the kitchen, the slaves contributed to the specialised vocabulary associated with Islam, an exclusively slave religion. The third area in which this was true, was vocabulary related to fishing, including ways of referring to sea- and land-marks.

¹²⁰M = Malay, P = Portuguese, N = Dutch, Jav. = Javanese; origin of words as given in: Terblanche, H.J. & Odendal, J.J. (1966) *Afrikaanse Woordeboek – Verklarend met woordafleidings*. Afrikaans Pers-Boekhandel: Johannesburg.

Some loanwords taken from the Malays reflect specific elements of their culture. One such word, that has also made its way into English, is *amok* (<M *amuk*). Other examples include *baklei* (to fight <N <M), *doepa* and *paljas* (both referring to some kind of magic potion, <M). The very common Afrikaans word *baie* (much, many, very, <M, prob. via Buginese) is also of Eastern origin and is used by the Cape Muslims in the form *baijang*. (Raidt 1971:112). A cursory look at an Afrikaans dictionary will reveal more such loan-words, bearing witness to the role that the slaves played life at the Cape. They illustrate the manifold contacts - physical, social and work-related – between slaves and the other people who were their contemporaries. Some of these ‘foreign’ lexical items came directly from the slaves and some via the Dutch of the VOC, which had already incorporated them in the East. They are relicts of the processes of acculturation that took place in the years of slavery.

5.2.5.4. Language Policy: Education

The expressed policy of the VOC was to enforce the use of the Dutch language with the slaves. Education, such as it was and to the degree that it was available, was provided to teach the slaves Dutch. Any hope of freedom was linked explicitly to competence in Dutch, with the ironic effect that a conflict of interests came into being on the part of the owners: the increased fluency of their chattels facilitated communication, but held the germ of future disassociation. The second requirement for manumission was baptism in the Reformed Church. This compounded the close link between religion and literacy in Dutch. The settlers, however, were motivated by economic reasons, not religious ones and the missionary zeal of the colonists and officials was limited and subordinated to economic interests.

If education is the reflection or expression of a nation, then the Cape is a bad example, since it expressed the culture of the Dutch or the VOC but never stepped beyond to express the other elements of society. Malherbe (1925:5-6) comments “a Nation's system of Education is the most vital part of its whole social structure. ... more than merely 'one of those subsidiary services which are in themselves without value except in so far as they secure the success of their object More adequately than any other phase of National life does the educational system express the innermost beliefs, ideals and aspirations of a people. ...” An approximation of the system in the Netherlands was superimposed onto the new society.

5.2.5.4.1. The VOC instructions

Along with the long-awaited permission to make use of slave labour, Jan van Riebeeck was instructed to take steps to ensure that Portuguese should not be introduced at the Cape and to use only the Dutch language with the slaves. Specifically, the instructions from the Seventeen were:

Met de compste van de slaven sal UW. seer sorghvuldigh sijn geen Portugeese tael hier in te voeren, maer 't selve met alle middelen voorcomen, vooral met d' officieren geen goet voorganger sijnde, alsoo hieraen veel gelegen leyd, ende sal UED. geen tael als ons moedertael tegens de slaven gebruyken, en niet gedogen dat ze anders spreecken dat by verloop van jaren gerustheydt sal connen geven.

The first question that arises is why the VOC felt it necessary to make this statement of policy. One of the fuzzy areas as regards data about slave-keeping has to do with the exclusion of the personal slaves of VOC officials and their families stationed at the Cape. For this reason, it is not surprising that there were indeed a few such slaves at the Cape even before the first group of slaves arrived¹²¹. Some of them arrived in the same year. The details have been collected by Bauermeester (2002:57-61) and have been taken from there. What the practice had been with this handful, but of multilingual origin, slaves is not mentioned.

The circumstances of the few male slaves are harder to ascertain and we know too little about them to be able to discuss the languages that they used or had opportunity to learn. For the women slaves, the situation is marginally better, since the data we do have about them allows us to draw tentative conclusions about their knowledge or use of language. In this very small community with only a toehold on the land, the slaves were outnumbered, spread out, yet in close contact with their owners.

Most of the female slaves were to be found in the Van Riebeeck household, as was Krotoa (Eva), the Khoekhoen woman. Since Krotoa did learn Dutch in the Van Riebeeck household, it is plausible that the other slave women or children could likewise do so. Five-year old Eva from Madagascar and the two Arabian girls (Lysbeth, 10 and Cornelia 12 years old) had the advantage of youth and it is unlikely that they would have had prior experience of Portuguese. The opposite is true for the slaves 'van Bengal', since

¹²¹ Raidt (1983) also refers to some in the garrison.

the Portuguese influence there was strong. It was the freed slaves there who became *Mardijkers* and shifted to Portuguese. Whether slaves from Bengal spoke Portuguese or not would depend on a number of factors, such as where they had been enslaved, how long they had spent in the Portuguese-speaking zone, what opportunities they had had for learning Portuguese, and so on. In any case, some knowledge of Portuguese of a sort is not unlikely. The exceptional individual, *Ansiela van Bengal*, arrived in 1655 with her husband, *Domingo* and three children. She was freed in 1666, applied for and was granted a plot of land, got married in 1669 and was a practising member of the Church. All these indicate that she did become fluent in Dutch. *Maria van Bengal* may have spoken Portuguese, although the fact that she probably stayed with the family and left the Cape with them indicates that she was a valued, long-term member of the household, making it hard to think of a reason why she should not have learnt Dutch. There was a third 'Batavian slave' in the household, of whom details are not known.

The other *Maria of Bengal*, belonging to the sick-comforter's wife, was given permission to marry in 1658 and her proficiency in Dutch (and knowledge of Christianity) attested by *Jan van Riebeeck*, who specified that she not only understood Dutch but also spoke it clearly. This *Maria* appears to have been friends with *Krotoa*. Also from India, *Catharina Anthonis van Zelagon*, Bengal spent only two years at the Cape (1656-58). She was freed to marry the soldier, *Jan Woutersz*, who failed in his duties and the couple were sent away in disgrace to Batavia. Thus the group consisted of children, or women who met the requirements for manumission and marriage. They were all in a setting where they could receive comprehensive input in Dutch spoken by native speakers.

Despite the scanty evidence, there does not seem to be a case to be made for Portuguese having become established as the language of communication with the slaves before the arrival of the *Amersfoort*. On balance, there is more evidence supporting the use of Dutch. Certainly, this insignificant group could not have been the cause for the instructions from Holland. The cause has to be sought elsewhere, in the experience of the VOC with slavery and its far-flung settlements. As we have seen, Portuguese spread with the Portuguese traders. A word of caution needs to be expressed here, since even if we assume that Portuguese of a sort was widely spoken in the coastal cities conquered by the Portuguese, where the conversion activities of the Catholic Church were most widespread, and even if we consider that Portuguese was used as the language of communication between rulers in the East and other European

powers, and even if we take into account the Portuguese men who took local wives and the freed slaves who converted to Christianity and all their children, even then Portuguese was not the first language of most of the people of the East. It may not even have been the second language, since the prior trading empires had used Malay as a lingua franca before the Portuguese arrived. The fact that some-one could say a few words in Portuguese did not mean that that person was a native speaker of Portuguese, or of a Portuguese creole. The person making the categorisation, and his knowledge of Portuguese and general attitude to language, was as important. Nevertheless, the experience of the VOC in the East and the custom of the VOC servants of using not Dutch, but a lingua franca in communicating with the locals and with slaves, seem to provide the answer to our question of why the instructions were necessary. They knew what they wanted to avoid.

Furthermore, as we stated early on in this dissertation, the 'world outside' always had an influence on events at the Cape. In the mid-seventeenth century, the Portuguese had been vanquished in much of the East: by 1619 when Batavia was established, the wars had led to the VOC taking Bantam, the Moluccas, Java, Amboyna and part of Timor. The VOC found its way to Siam and Japan, they built factories at Pulicat on the Coromandel coast in at Surat, they occupied Formosa and Mauritius, and even seized Malacca. Some of this they had to give up or allow others, including the British East India Company, in. In the process they waged war with the Portuguese and the powers of the East, and took part in the wars of Europe. By about 1660, the Governor-General and Council of India in Batavia "controlled seven sub-governorships: Amboyna, Banda, the Cape, Ceylon¹²², Macassar, Malacca and the Moluccas. Of these, the youngest and, from an official point of view the least desirable was the Cape" (Walker 1968:29). The golden age of the United Provinces was drawing to an end. The conversion of the Cape from a simple refreshment station into a colony was beginning. There was much that had been learnt and it was this 'voice of experience' that was issuing from the VOC in its comments on language use with the slaves at the Cape. The overall failure of the language policy of the VOC in the East is dealt with in a separate section, suffice it here to say that the process that repeatedly failed until it would finally end in failure had many phases, and the intention here was to try once more to ensure that Dutch be the language of a VOC settlement. The Portuguese were still the enemy, their language still

¹²² Soon to be lost, in 1662.

the language of Catholicism in the East. These were important factors behind the instructions: Portuguese was undesirable on both counts. In southern Africa, where there was no prior Portuguese presence, nor an evangelical Catholic Church, the opportunity presented itself to disallow both the one and the other. Let it be noted that neither was persecuted.

The instructions are interesting for what they omit as well, namely any mention of Malay. The intra-Asia trade had existed long before the Europeans came, and the Malay language had spread throughout the region. The Dutch had recognised its importance early and used it throughout the VOC period¹²³, influencing it in turn by their use and contributing thereby to its standardisation (Sneddon 2003:83). When the brother of Cornelius Houtman (who had led the first expedition to the East via the Cape of Good Hope) was imprisoned in Aceh in 1599 for two years, he compiled a Malay-Dutch word-list based on the spoken language he encountered there, together with dialogues in Malay and their Dutch translations. This he published in Holland in 1603. Other publications on the Malay language followed and in 1611 a primer, the precursor of the *Spieghel*, was published by Ruyl as an attempt to meet the need for Malay religious texts of the Christian community on the Moluccas. The debate on the language to use in 're-converting' the Catholic Christians to the Calvinist faith soon led to the use of both Portuguese and Malay, and, in time, to the choice of a literary variety of Malay over the more widely-used, spoken varieties of Malay. The Bible, when it was translated in 1731, had the advantage that it functioned as a standard in the areas where it was used by the Company for religious and general education, but had the disadvantage that it was understood less easily in areas where Malay was the lingua franca or other varieties of Malay were spoken – or where no Malay at all was spoken since it was harder to learn (Sneddon 2003:84-85). In the middle of the seventeenth century, the debate had already been resolved on, for example, Ambon, and Malay was being used not only for commercial purposes, but also for countering Catholicism¹²⁴. As yet, the slave trade was focussed on Portuguese-influenced India, especially on the areas around Bengal and the Coromandel coast, since in times of war slaves became readily available. Conditions

¹²³ and even after, but that does not concern us here.

¹²⁴ After having driven out the Portuguese from Ceylon, the VOC tried to establish itself on Malabar, which it would succeed in doing under the leadership of Rijcklof van Goens in 1663. In contrast to what had happened elsewhere, the Catholics here, who had been converted by the Portuguese, were tolerated, but no foreign Catholic priests were allowed.

were such that people would even sell themselves into slavery (VOC-Kenniscentrum). The similarity is with the Germans fleeing hunger and signing up for VOC service, often under pressure. In practice, both groups had few rights, the VOC many and could exercise harsh discipline. On the other hand, it did take over responsibility for food and lodging. Soon the importation of slaves from India would be discontinued and Malay would start to predominate over Portuguese, especially in Batavia.

Malay, it seems, was viewed instrumentally, as a means to an end. It presented no danger, not being the language of the enemy. Nor was it a language of Europe. The social psychology of the language use of the Dutch in the Indies is as yet inadequately researched. In the exploration of the development of racial attitudes in Batavia, the Cape and elsewhere in the East Indies it would perhaps be of interest to investigate if this view of Malay can be linked to a feeling about the intrinsic superiority of European civilisation: Malay as the language of the Other.

Be that as it may, the fact of the Dutch experience in the East was that the Dutch were motivated in the first place by the wish to make money, and only in the second place by the wish to spread Christianity. By focussing on trade, the Dutch spread Malay rather than their own mother tongue.

Finally, the instructions fail to mention the language use of the VOC servants amongst themselves. It appears that the VOC did not feel it necessary to impose a rule about discouraging the use of Portuguese amongst its own personnel and enforcing the use of Dutch. From a certain perspective, Cape Dutch filled the role of a lingua franca at the Cape. The adaptations and changes the Dutch language underwent in the mouths of its servants became diffused in the colony. This process would not have begun at the Cape – the months of enforced proximity on board ship or in the garrison, the years of service in similar locations, doing similar tasks, the lack of a private life, the lack of a family, the social abyss between the men and the officers – all these would contribute to the creation of the artificial society of the VOC. To some extent these deprivations could be mitigated on land, but to some extent the patterns of communication would be carried over.

5.2.5.4.2. Teaching the slave children

The small group of slaves who had been acquired incrementally was suddenly increased: first a dozen slaves from Java and Madagascar arrived (Walker 1968:39) and their usefulness led to ships being sent in secret to the Slave Coast in the West India Company's area. In the meantime, about 170 slaves arrived unexpectedly on the *Amersfoort*, having been captured from a Portuguese ship (Walker 1968:40). These were the survivors of the 250 taken and their number was soon reduced to 75 due to deaths and desertions (Raidt 1983:10)¹²⁵. The group was made up mainly of children of around 7-8 years of age (Bauermeester 2002). Then the expected delivery came in, bringing a further 185 slaves. The healthiest and best of the slaves were sent on to Batavia, the rest remained, challenging the new society to absorb them, and further deliveries, as best they could. On the legal level, their position was governed by the Statutes of India issued in 1642 by Governor-General Van Diemen. As to how the instructions were to be enforced, this was dependent on actual practice. Van Riebeeck began by issuing regulations for the protection of the slaves and making arrangements for them to receive instruction in the basics tenets of Christianity, taught in Dutch (Walker 1968:40). The first school for slaves began on 17 April 1658¹²⁶ and the Commander in person undertook to spend time there in the first few days. The enthusiasm of the pupils seems to have been rather less: they ran away¹²⁷. On one occasion they went missing for five days, until found hiding in a case near Hout Bay. To encourage them, Van Riebeeck made provision for rewarding the adult pupils with brandy and tobacco (Malherbe 1925:28). The school was attended in the mornings by slave children and adults, Khoekhoen and European children alike and a daily attendance register was kept (Bauermeester 2002:168). Despite the good intentions, the school closed down due to the pupils running away (Malherbe 1925:30).

¹²⁵ Exact figures are difficult to establish for the period before 1700, due to the inadequate recordkeeping of births and deaths by Van Riebeeck and his successor Zacharias Wagenaer, the loss of documents from that time, and the lack of data about children of mixed blood born to slave women belonging to free burghers (Raidt 1983:10).

¹²⁶ Malherbe mentions authors on the history of education at the Cape who have averred that the first school at the Cape dated back to 1656, probably based on the *English Board of Education Special Report on the System of Education in the Cape Colony*, Vol. V (1901:3), but has been able to find no evidence for such a school (1925:26), nor has evidence (or even reference) been found in newer works on education in South Africa.

¹²⁷ It is possible that they did not away from school but were trying to run away, i.e. desert.

In the Commander's *Daghboek* (Journal) for 1661 mention is made of Pieter van der Stael, the sick-comforter (and brother-in-law of Van Riebeeck), teaching the slave and Khoekhoen children the Dutch language and Christian dogma as he was good at reading correct Dutch (*Hollants Nederduyts*) and had a thorough knowledge of theology (Bauermeester 2002:168). The joint emphasis on the Dutch language and religious instruction is thus reinforced and reflects the custom at the time in the Netherlands and generally in Europe. This underlying attitude would continue to be significant in South African education long after the Company had left¹²⁸, accompanying the Voortrekkers to their new lands and receiving new life in the system of Christian National Education. Van der Stael left in 1663 (a year after Van Riebeeck). He was succeeded as teacher and sick-comforter by Ernestus Back¹²⁹, whilst Van Riebeeck's successor Wagenaer, reiterated the task, by now restricted to children, "om dese Caepse schoolkinderen, soo Duytse als swarte, alle dagen neerstigh te leeren leesen en cathegiseren" and recorded that the Council of Policy wished all baptised children of Company slave women, especially those with European fathers to be taught here (quoted in Bauermeester 2002:168). The school, in 1663, had "altogether 17 children: 12 white, one hottentot and four slaves" (Malherbe 1925:28). School fees had to be paid to the schoolmaster, except by slave and Khoekhoen children, who were entitled to free tuition. Daniel Engelgraaff was next and the school grew, to 29 pupils in 1664 (Ponelis 1993:5). Engelgraaff died in service in 1666, to be followed in 1671 by Alexander Carpius. In 1679 the school had 48 pupils, of which 32 were Europeans, 11 of mixed heritage and 5 VOC slaves. In 1676 a large group of Malagasy slaves had arrived and the decision had been taken to appoint a schoolmaster for slave children only. From the financial arrangements can be seen that the 'curriculum' was to learn the alphabet, to learn to read and write, and to learn arithmetic (this last the most expensive). Thus in these years some sort of regular primary schooling was provided, consistently stressing the 3 Rs and the foundations of

¹²⁸ Although it no longer reflected the facts, in my youth I still heard the expression *boere matriek* (that is "Afrikaner/farmer matriculation", *matric* is the South African English word for the secondary school university entrance school-leaving certificate) for acceptance into Church membership.

¹²⁹ Back was one of the less than suitable holders of this position. As an incurable drunkard, he was finally banished to Batavia in 1665 (Ponelis 1993:5). The final decision was taken after a comet was seen in the night sky and this was taken as a sign from Heaven ("een goddelyck straf teycken verschenen namentlyck een *Yzeliken Steertsterre* aen den hemel") (quoted from the Proclamation, 1665, in Malherbe 1925:30).

Christianity, usually including memorising the basic prayers, the singing of psalms and learning the catechism.

The arrival of High Commissioner Van Rhee de in 1685 brought significant innovations in this area of slave-keeping, too. As an aristocrat and High-Commissioner, he was answerable only to the Seventeen and had a free hand to put things in order in the VOC trading empire. He certainly left an indelible mark on the Cape.

As part of his re-organisation of the Slave Lodge, Van Rhee de made arrangements, in some detail for the schooling of the slave children. These have been collected by Bauermeester (2002:169) and are summarised below. A separate part of the Lodge was to be set aside explicitly as a schoolroom for children under the age of twelve. Boys and girls were to be kept apart. The first teacher appointed was the mulatto, Jan Pasqual, whilst the free black woman, Magriet van de Kaap, was the first *matres* for the girls. School hours were to be from 8 o'clock in the morning to 4p.m. and the curriculum had to include Christian prayers, psalms, Catechism, the foundations of the Christian faith, as well as instruction in good Christian morals and manners, all of these in Dutch. Twice a week, on Wednesdays and Saturdays, they would be tested, whilst on Sunday they were to attend Church twice, under the supervision of the schoolmaster and be required to give the answers from the catechism afterwards. A set of school rules was compiled by Van Rhee de and handed over to the schoolmaster. The minister, Dominee Overnij was instructed to inspect the school twice a week.

Children over the age of twelve were to accompany their parents to work, but could attend school two afternoons a week. Only Company slave children could attend this school, whilst the house of Dominee Overnij would serve as a school for the children of free burghers and other European children. A resolution of the Council of Policy from 22 December 1687 reinforces that the slave children of free burghers were not to attend the Lodge school, but in the eighteenth century the free burghers were once again allowed to send their slave children there. The physical arrangements for schoolrooms were continued and a place was made for them whenever the Lodge was moved, or repaired or enlarged, indicating the continuation of the schooling.

Van Rhee de had visited the Slave Lodge and noted in his personal diary that he had found "many small children, white as well as black, speaking the Dutch language without

any exception”¹³⁰. Ponelis comments that by the time of this entry, Van Rhee­de had been at the Cape two months and was therefore already aware of how things were (1993:27). This is a rare comment that has reached us on the language use in the Lodge and it indicates that Dutch must have been widely used in the Lodge, since if it had only been used for rote learning, the children would not have been using it. Moreover, since Van Rhee­de felt the need to comment on language use, it is to be expected that he would mention Malay or Portuguese, had he heard these spoken. The language used by the children in all likelihood reflects the language used by the adults. Court cases from this period show the restricted use of Malay and Portuguese (Ponelis 1993:2). Since it was only in the Lodge that a relatively large number of slaves were kept together in the seventeenth century, and Company slaves would not have been in the possession of the free burghers prior to coming here, this is the one place where the practice of the East according to which the slaves would have used some version of Malay/Portuguese with each other could have remained. From Van Rhee­de’s comment, it seems that it had not. Outside the Lodge, the slaves were at this time very thinly scattered, living in closer ‘pioneer’ proximity to their free burgher owners, whose own homes and livelihoods were still in the process of being realised, than to other slaves. Under such circumstances, the slaves were more, not less, likely to have learnt Dutch and to be using it with the children of the household – and with their own children. In conclusion, it appears that Van Rhee­de’s reforms were designed to reinforce already existent tendencies showing in the direction desired by the Company.

Despite this positive note, the schooling of the slaves was subject to the usual human problems. The first schoolmaster was dismissed, arrested and finally sent as a *bandiet* to Mauritius for his indecent behaviour (“vuiljle onkuijsheden en vleeslijke lusten gepleegd ... hebben”) with the little slave girls (Bauermeester 2002:170). Marij Sambo (14-15 years of age), Catharina (10-11), Canara (10-11) and Lijsbeth (10-11), Cape-born pupils of Pasqual, all testified against him in Dutch (Franken, cited in Ponelis 1993:26). Ironically, by doing so, they testified as well to the value of his teaching, and to the conditions as regards language use in the Lodge. His successor was also a half-caste Company slave, Claas Cornelisz, who had the required skills and personality, and received compensation for his efforts. Typically, the teachers of the slaves were “qualified” in that they had been baptised, educated in the principles and practices of

¹³⁰“veel klyne kinderen, soo wit als swart, sprekende de Nederduytsche tale sonder eenigh onderscheydt”.

the Reformed Church and had been taught Dutch (Bauermeester 2002). In 1706, Minister Le Boucq's complaint about the schoolmaster, who was a *bandiet*, led to his dismissal. On a more positive note, several schoolmasters and schoolmistresses applied for manumission and were freed, sometimes with the proviso that they continue teaching thereafter (Bauermeester 2002:170, citing Du Toit).

The school in the Lodge continued its work and the exclusion of the children of the slaves of burghers and officials was allowed to lapse. A report by the school inspector to Governor Van Plettenberg shows that in 1779 it was attended by 44 Company slave children and 40 children owned privately. Van Rhee de also excluded the children of privately-owned slaves from the school/s for the children of burghers and officials. Attendance figures from 1778-9 indicate that this regulation, too, had fallen into disuse: 84 privately-owned slave children made up about 11.8%, of the pupils at the eight such schools. (Bauermeester 2002:172). Outside Cape Town the disinclination of slave owners to educate their slave children was general, although it is hard to know if the private tutors employed to teach the owner's children also taught the slave children or not. A contract signed with Gerrit Daveman in the Drakenstein district specifies that he is to teach the entire "family up to and including the slaves" (Shell 1989:23).

From the point of view of preparation for admittance into the Church and, for the boys, to be able to take on the Bible reading and prayer-leading role of the traditional *pater familias*, this was important for the 'young masters'. The unclear, not strictly-enforced, yet nevertheless normative belief that baptised slaves were entitled to be free or, at the least, could not be sold, would have served as an economically-based disincentive for the owners, who would have 'invested in losing their investment' by educating their slaves. The tutors, who were valued also for their ability to write letters and help with the accounts, likewise had no interest in educating children who would then make their own work redundant. It is not surprising, therefore, that only a few contracts have been found where the tutor was explicitly required to teach the slave children as well. In the case of the well-to-do burgher Melck, his estate included a number of items indicating a large, well-equipped schoolroom, allowing the conclusion to be drawn that there at least a school of sorts had functioned.

Bearing in mind that in this period literacy was not wide-spread even in Europe and that formal schooling was only progressively becoming a normal part of a child's upbringing there, a glance needs to be taken at other ways of becoming equipped for

the challenges of adult life. Out on the frontier, there were limited applications of school learning, but the children needed to learn survival and farming skills, which they did in the traditional manner of working alongside their parents or other adults. This was true for the children of slaves and masters alike. Somewhat more formally, in the slave lodge there was an arrangement for the those who showed the most aptitude and readiness to learn to be apprenticed to learn trades. As early as 1676 a decision was taken for two or more boys to be allocated to a smith, a carpenter, a mason or otherwise qualified man in order to learn the trade. Van Rhee made a similar proposal to Simon van der Stel, whereby wagon-drivers, masons, joiners and other such artisans should pass on their skills to slaves (Bauermeister 2002:171). The intention was to reduce the workload of those in the Castle. In 1708, Commissioner Simons once again supported such an arrangement (Bauermeister 2002:172). The handiwork of the slaves can still be admired today in the Cape Dutch houses of the Cape district. Some of the work was undoubtedly done by the skilled craftsmen slaves (brought and sold for very high prices) from the East, but their skills, too, passed on to the younger slave boys.

Finally, there is the educational impact of the Islam religion. Near the end of the eighteenth century, the previously not-persecuted but just barely tolerated Muslim faith was slowly acknowledged. This may have been encouraged by the amendment of the Statues of India, which stipulated that slaves were to be instructed in the Christian religion and that once they had been baptised, there were to be given the right to purchase their freedom. Cynically, one could conclude that allowing Mohammedanism allowed owners to avoid denying their slaves religion, the pressure to free their slaves if they became Christians and even to evade the awkward societal issue of how exactly to relate to the freed blacks. In the nineteenth century Islam would grow dramatically, but it had just begun its public role in the last decades of the eighteenth century.

5.2.5.5. Religion

The lack of clarity as to whether baptised slaves had to be freed allowed practice to be rather ambiguous. According to Elphick & Shell (1982:128 -130), information from the seventeenth century is insufficient to confirm the opinions of historians such as MacCrone and Theal, who claimed that baptism entailed the right to manumission (Elphick & Shell 1982:125 -127). However, they claim that data from the eighteenth century indicate that most baptisms were of children, that the VOC was the most consistent in this and that despite a general correlation between the number of

baptisms and the number of manumitted slaves, the individuals concerned were not the same (Elphick & Shell 1982:128-130). It is clear that the amendment to the Statutes of India in 1770 clarified the situation by placing the onus on the masters to teach their slaves about Christianity, to baptise the converted and to forbid the sale of such slaves (Walker 1968:84). By this time, the evangelical urge seems to have decreased, and this amendment made the disadvantages inherent in spreading Christianity to the slaves very clear (Stell 2007:93). The close link between Christianising and educating was also not necessarily seen in a positive light. Walker suggests that around mid-century, the settlers felt that the Company slaves were “bad workers, and their shortcomings were put down to the official schooling which they still received” (1986:84).

The original religious beliefs, including Islam, of the slaves were tolerated¹³¹, but their public expression not encouraged. There was a long initial period of discrete practice, but as time passed, so Islam was accommodated. Political exiles played a role in the survival of Islam at the Cape, as did convicts, especially those who stayed on after they had served their sentences (Mahida 1970:3-6). Sometimes Muslims were exiled to the Cape from the East (and placed at a distance from the centre so as to discourage them from establishing a role for themselves). Most notably, Shaykh Jusuf and his retinue arrived in 1694. He was there because of his resistance to the Dutch, and his piety and reputation as a healer or miracle worker lives on in the popular imagination. He is held to have helped to keep the Mohammedan faith alive at the Cape. His tomb, venerated as a place of pilgrimage, can still be seen.

By the end of the Dutch period, an upswing in the number of Muslims can be seen, which would eventually lead to the development of a sub-culture known as the Cape Malays. The impact of the revised Statutes of India can be seen in this second period, in which increased open practice of Islamic worship was tolerated. The travelogue by Carl Peter Thunberg, *Travels at the Cape of Good Hope 1772-1775*, described various Muslim practices, thereby documenting their existence and also the non-repressive attitudes of the authorities and society. By allowing the slaves to choose Islam, rather than Christianising them, the slave owners could avoid the issue of manumission. Moreover, there was a belief by the owners that Muslims were “of sober habits” and therefore made better slaves (Mahida 1970:6). This was also a period in which there was an

¹³¹ Some of the freed slaves were Muslims (Elphick & Shell 1982:130).

upswing in Christian belief (Giliomee 2003:42). A social atmosphere valuing the role of religion can be seen. The slave owner's attitude was succinctly put by one commentator, "Some religion they must have and they are not allowed to become Christians" (quoted in Walker 1968:84). Within the process of mutual cultural adjustment, the reluctance on the part of many Christians to share their beliefs and its practice with the slaves led to a lack of assimilation in this regard, and, for many, a spiritual vacuum that the proselytising Mohammedan could fill (Stell 2007:93).

Cumulative activities led to the opening of the first Muslim school, or *madrassah*, in 1793 and the subsequently permitted mosque, or *masajid* (Mahida 1970:12-13). Tuan Guru, one of the exiles and a learned Islamic scholar, was a key figure in this process. This Capetonian community would grow dramatically in the years to come. Conversion to Islam for the slaves meant the possibility of finding a community and a place for themselves in society, albeit not in mainstream society. Islam accepted slavery (some Muslims at the Cape owned slaves) but taught that the souls of the slaves were free.

The establishment of the school added another element to the language situation at the Cape. Initially, the language of instruction was Malay. Stell stresses the pluriglossic nature of the community at the end of the eighteenth century, highlighting the prestige of Malay in the Cape Muslim community, and its ability "to subsume all locally represented Austronesian varieties from the Malay Archipelago" (2007:92). In the middle of the 19th century the medium of instruction was changed to Cape Dutch. Although Cape Muslims could not speak Arabic, they could read the Arabic script, having had to learn it for liturgical purposes, as did the children. The solution was for teachers to translate Arabic texts into Cape Dutch, which the pupils spoke. At first, the Arabic alphabet was used to write this variety phonetically in Arabic script,¹³² a challenging task (Dangor 2008). As knowledge of the Roman alphabet spread, teachers translated the Arabic texts and transcribed these. A local Muslim literature appeared, in a variety of Cape Dutch, known as *Moslemafrikaans* or *Kitaab-Hollandsch* Stell (2007:89).

¹³² The term *Arabic-Afrikaans* has become accepted by scholars as a way of referring to texts in Cape Dutch using the Arabic scripts and used in the Muslim religious schools in Cape Town since the 1830s. In the Muslim world, such texts are called *ajami*, and refer to 'foreign' texts, i.e. texts written in Arabic script but in a language other than Arabic. Haron (2001) reports on the 74 extant Arabic-Afrikaans texts, which were written between 1856 and 1957, and the scholars studying them.

At the time the British took over at the Cape, this Islamic community in Cape Town had already begun to stabilise and would attract many new, non-Asian members as slavery was abolished and the slaves re-settled in Cape Town (Stell 2007:93)¹³³.

5.2.5.6. The issue of whether Afrikaans is a creole considered

The field of creolistics is complicated by terminological difficulties. As Muysken and Smith point out, “[c]reolists agree neither about the precise definition of the terms pidgin and creole, nor about the status of a number of languages that have been claimed to be pidgins and creoles” (1995: 3). The term *pidgin* can refer to the most transitory and rudimentary contact languages but also to stabilised, lexically and structurally more expanded forms used over longer periods of time and for a wider range of functions (Crowley 2008:75). Definitions tends to agree on some features, exemplified by the definition developed by Bakker (1995:25), namely that they derive lexically from other languages, are structurally simplified, are not prototypically the L1 of the speakers, are used by people, often two or more groups of people, who need to communicate but have no common language, are subject to structural norms and are the subject of language learning (especially in their expanded form they are not immediately intelligible to the speakers of the lexifier language). In his definition of a pidgin, Holm stresses that pidgins meet the needs of the communicative situation, “[a] pidgin is a reduced language that results from extended contact between groups of people with no language in common; it evolves when they need some means of verbal communication, perhaps for trade, but no group learns the native language of any other group for social reasons that may include lack of trust or of close contact” (1988:4-5). The final part of the definition takes us into alternate solutions for the problem of communication. In cases where contact becomes more frequent, more necessary, more layered, then learning the language of the other is an obvious next step. At the Cape the trade contact between the Khoekhoen and the crew of the various European ships which landed in their vicinity lead to trade jargons and, if Den Besten is correct in his analysis, to Cape Dutch Pidgin. Once the settlement became permanent and especially

¹³³ The ‘Malay’ community of Cape Town continues to exist, defined by its religious affiliation, which has supported both social cohesion and cultural isolation. Consequently, it has proved to be a favourable environment for the preservation of dated forms of Afrikaans unreformed by the processes of standardisation, and has allowed processes of language change to operate relatively unhindered. Its study today “could provide valuable evidence of what contemporary Afrikaans could have looked like, had it not been for continued ties with Dutch and the effects of standardisation” (Kotzé 1989:252).

after it started to expand from 1657, the increased need for communication led increasing numbers of the Khoekhoen to learn Dutch. From the initial very few interpreters, the numbers increased as Khoekhoen became detribalised and incorporated into the new society, until eventually the Khoekhoe-speakers shifted to what was by then Afrikaans as a primary language. That this process was not linear, and that creolisation played its role, leads us to the issue of creole languages, and to the difficulties of defining them.

There is disagreement on whether one can distinguish a separate category of creole languages linguistically. The ongoing debate as to whether there are or are not creole languages focusses on issues such as whether the languages labelled as creoles have features in common, or if it is possible on the basis of features of a language to establish whether or not it is a creole. It is not an aim of this dissertation to try to establish characteristic features of a creole and to decide whether the language, Afrikaans, that emerged from the complex language contact situation at the Cape, is or is not a creole. Markey (1982 summarised and discussed in Romaine 1988, p47ff) did undertake such an analysis and found that Afrikaans had only two of the features of a true creole (specifically, lack of inflectional gender marking in all nouns and lack of nominal case inflection), out of 12 typical features identified as being typical of a true creole; and two more features in which it was creole-like. He therefore concludes that Afrikaans cannot be said to fit into the class of true creoles (Romaine 1988:59). In this he is in line with the general opinion of those researchers who looked to the Dutch dialects, especially those of the 17th century, as the source of linguistic features of modern, standardised ABA¹³⁴. The theoretical debate on whether such a list of creole characteristics can indeed be identified at all or not is exemplified by McWhorter, who identifies three features that “render creoles synchronically distinguishable from other languages” (McWhorter 1998:788) and Graaff, who critiques exceptionalist trends in Creole studies (2003,2004). Nor is it the aim to argue that since Afrikaans has been classified as a creole language, or as a creoloid language (a term suggesting the a pidgin stage is not essential, coined in Todd 1975), or as a semi-creole language, that the

¹³⁴ ABA was based on the dialect usually referred to as *Eastern Frontier Afrikaans*. It was the variety spoken by the so-called *Voortrekkers*, the burghers who left the British Cape Colony from about 1836 and settled in the northern parts of the country from 1830 onwards. Due to political, social and economic factors which led to a shift in power to the north, this variety became accepted as the standard and became codified and elaborated (Van Rensburg 1983).

features on the basis of which this classification was made are indeed present and/or demonstrate where they originated from. If there are difficulties in defining creoles and their characteristics, these are compounded in the case of semi-creoles and creoloids. The conclusion reached in Thomason & Kaufman (1988:253) that in the case of Afrikaans, transmission was “bent but not broken” is helpful in that it implies a continuum between normal and broken transmission without attempting a rigorous definition of points on the continuum.

However, since there are sociolinguistic patterns associated with the genesis of prototypical creoles, the features of the sociolinguistic situations on which creole theories are based are relevant in terms of this dissertation, and these are briefly sketched below. The degree of applicability in the case of the Cape prior to 1795 considered. Since it is clear that a wide-ranging and extensive, often contradictory and even antagonistic, literature exists on creole theories, the point of departure of this discussion is the summary and classification of creole genesis theories in Muysken (1988). Those theories that are based on innate human nature or the linguistic nature of creoles¹³⁵ are considered to be beyond the scope of this discussion¹³⁶.

The *Portuguese monogenesis model*¹³⁷ has various forms and has been put forward at various times, by Schuchardt, Whinnom, and Dalby (1970) amongst others. In its strongest form, it claims that the lingua franca of the Mediterranean, *Sabir*, was used by Portuguese mariners with Portuguese words. The Portuguese seafarers took this lingua franca with them in the fifteenth century as they travelled the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, for example down the West Coast of Africa and to India and parts of South East Asia. As the influence of the Portuguese declined in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the pidgins which had become established would have been relexified by the languages of the new colonial powers, such as English or French. The similarities are due to the basic, very simple Portuguese jargon, the differences due to the structures added from the various colonial languages. Todd outlines the attractions and problems of the

¹³⁵ Muysken discusses the *semantic transparency theory*, based on the claim that semantic structures are universal, and *common social context theory*, based on the claim that similar communicative requirements lead to similar makeshift languages.

¹³⁶ As is, consequently, the reply by Bickerton to Muysken’s comments (Bickerton & Muysken 1988).

¹³⁷ The *Afro-genesis model* and the *Atlantic mono-source hypothesis* are not considered, since they are of greater relevance for the Atlantic creoles.

theory and concludes that the verdict is one of “not proven” (2004:23). Looking at its potential application to the Cape, it can be reasoned that slaves taken in West Africa or India could learn this language in the sites of their early captivity and would then take it with them when they were sold. The first slaves at the Cape came from the West Coast of the Africa and many of the slaves of the first half century were of Indian origin, where they could have learnt a Portuguese creole. Use of a variable Portuguese creole in the activities of the VOC was wide-spread and knowledge of some form of Portuguese at the Cape is attested, even if its extent and continuity are less clear. Un-Dutch features of ABA, (such as the use of *vir* as an object marker) may reach back to this.¹³⁸ Points of contact with the Portuguese language were provided by the experiment with a VOC slave station, at Delagoa Bay in the eighteenth century (1721-1731), and the increased importation of slaves from Mozambique from the 1730s. The Portuguese had been present on Mozambique Island since 1507 and in the sixteenth century it became the capital of Portuguese East Africa. Potentially, there could have been more contact between the Dutch and the Portuguese, but after the final Dutch attempt to capture Mozambique Island, in 1668, the two powers keep their distance. Contact was restricted to the Portuguese slavers who sold their wares at the Cape (Ross 1991b:29). Occasional contact to sell skins and ivory may have existed between the Khoekhoen and the Portuguese, especially as the expansion of the colony pushed the Khoekhoen further east.

The *imperfect second language learning theory* and the *baby talk theory* are similar in that they postulate that creoles are “frozen stages in the second language learning sequence” (Muysken 1988:286). They differ in that in the former case it is the language learning process that is decisive, and creoles are simple because the language learning process involves simplification (Andersen 1983), whereas in the latter case, it is the native speaker who provides a simplified version of the language in the interests of furthering communication (or because of an assumption of lack of comprehension or intelligence on the part of the interlocutor). In both these cases, learners do not have sufficient access to the model of the language being learnt. As the author of this

¹³⁸ Den Besten lists Schuchardt, Hesseling and Raidt as other who see this link, and considers the confusion in the use of the term Malayo-Portuguese, going on to try and disentangle the highly variable varieties of Creole Portuguese in use at the Cape. He concludes that in South Africa both Indo-Portuguese and Malayo-Portuguese were present besides non-standard Malay, and that it is difficult to distinguish between them since their syntactic properties are mainly the same, but that the early slaves may have spoken a variety of Indo-Portuguese.

dissertation understands it, it is this principle that underlies the identification of plantation societies as leading to the development of abrupt creoles, due to the relatively large numbers of slaves, the presence of intermediaries who are themselves not fully competent in the target language, and the insufficient exposure to the model as spoken by first languages speakers in meaningful contexts. The *bioprogram theory* goes a step beyond the above. It was put forward by Bickerton in 1981 and he formulates his Language Bioprogram Hypothesis as follows (1984:173):

The LBH claims that the innovative aspects of Creole grammar are inventions on the part of the first generation of children who have a pidgin as their linguistic input, rather than features transmitted from preexisting languages. The LBH claims, further, that such inventions show a degree of similarity, across wide variations in linguistic background, that is too great to be attributed to chance. Finally, the LBH claims that the most cogent explanation of this similarity is that it derives from the structure of a species-specific program for language, genetically coded and expressed, in ways still largely mysterious, in the structures and modes of operation of the human brain”.

It places the origin of creoles in the reactions of children growing up on newly formed plantations where they only had access to pidgins and used their innate linguistic capabilities to transform the pidgin into a complete language. In abrupt creolisation of this kind there need not have been as stable pidgin stage. The role of adult language learners is not considered to be decisive, as the creole is based on the spontaneous emergence of unmarked features in the language of the children. In abrupt creolisation of this kind there need not have been a stable pidgin stage. The role of adult language learners is not considered to be decisive, as the creole is based on the spontaneous emergence of unmarked features in the language of the children¹³⁹.

As stated in the discussion of the Slave Lodge above, it is suggested here that the conditions for the development of such a creole were present in the one particular situation at the Cape. Further plantation size slave populations did exist on a very few

¹³⁹ See Thomason & Kaufman Chapter 6 for a discussion and critique emphasising that the role of parents cannot be excluded.

wine and wheat belt farms. The estate of the German immigrant Melck is one possibility, although the presence in the estate documentation of school equipment points in the direction of conscious effort to compensate for a possible lack of an adequate model. In the vast majority of cases, slave owners had only a few slaves and the possibility of having adequate access to Dutch spoken as a primary language did exist. The closeness of contact also reduced the likelihood of the learners hearing only a simplified model, since even if they were addressed in such a mode, and such input has universal properties, learners would at least be present during normal communication interactions. Far more numerous, the smaller-scale farms, too, provided locations for language contact. The *plaaslects* were spoken by much smaller communities than were typical of plantations, but the processes were similar. Due to the increased opportunity for standard Dutch or acrolectal Cape Dutch influence, the *plaaslects* provided better opportunities for natural second language acquisition.

Another environment, of a completely different type, existed in which creolisation could take place. After the smallpox epidemic of 1713, many Khoekhoen withdrew from the settled areas, taking with them their already acquired interlanguage of Dutch, their knowledge of Cape Dutch Pidgin, and their own Khoekhoen primary languages. This formed the basis of the variety of Afrikaans known as Orange River Afrikaans and it was to this variety that the language shift of these Khoekhoen and the later groups, such as the Basters and Oorlams occurred. In this area the use of Khoekhoen dialects and the use of creolised Dutch with its substrate elements of Khoekhoe could persist, since there was a dearth of input from Dutch L1 speakers, albeit a stream of speakers of various interlanguage stages of Dutch acquisition. Thus the conditions were conducive for the crystallisation of some stage of the developmental sequence. In other regions of the Cape, corrective influence from contact Dutch L1 speakers promoted the acquisition of varieties closer to the acrolect. This was particularly true in Cape Town, with the ongoing links to the metropole varieties of Dutch, but also of the economically more closely integrated and geographically more accessible wine and wheat region. For the scattered settlers of the vast eastern districts and beyond, whether of European, slave or Khoekhoen origin, the distances involved acted as a conserving force, supporting the koineised form of Cape Dutch that the farmers took with them. To this must be added the Dutch spoken by the Khoekhoen with whom they lived in close proximity and their Khoekhoe L1 dialects, plus the possible influence of the languages spoken by the particular slaves on a particular farm. The *plaaslects*, that is the micro-dialects of the

isolated farms with their small, but mixed, communities of speakers, levelled and merged to produce Eastern Frontier Afrikaans.

Ideologies have influenced the lenses through which creole languages have been viewed. One strand of research has concentrated on the ways in which creoles have subsequently been decreolised, losing many of their distinctive creole features. The other possibility, namely that some languages did not undergo full creolisation in the first place has received attention in the work of Holm (2003), building on the contention of Thomason & Kaufman (1988) that the term *semi-creole* should be reserved for those varieties that do not appear to have been fully creolised. He looks at a group of language varieties that have some of the attributes of creole languages but seem not to have gone the whole distance. Afrikaans is one of the languages included in this comparative study¹⁴⁰ of partially restructured vernaculars. Holm cites the restructuring index put forward by Parkvall (2000), which quantifies the typological distance of some Atlantic creoles and vernaculars and their European lexifiers. On the basis of this index, which looks at linguistic features and at social factors, Parkvall is cited (Holm 2003:26) as concluding that there is indeed a correlation – whether causal or not – between the “degree of restructuring and the demographic ratios in the formative period”. The key events are: Event 0, the first documented slave imports; the year the slave population exceeded 20%, the interval in years; the year the slave population exceeded 50%; the interval between this and Event 0; the year the slave population exceeded 80% (the point at which the bioprogram would be triggered according to Bickerton); and the interval between this and Event 0. (Holm 2003:25). In the case of the VOC Cape, Event 0 was 1657, and at the end of the VOC period, using the figures compiled in 1798 (four years after the first British occupation of the Cape), the number of slaves slightly exceeded that of the burgher population. The tendency is in fact stable, with the slave population following that of the civilian population quite closely. A jump in the number of slaves after 1713 can be explained by the reduction in the number of Khoekhoen employed after the smallpox epidemic (Armstrong 1982:99). By 1750 the usual slight numeric advantage of the slaves had been restored. The overall number of people remained small: in 1770, according to the graph, both burghers and slaves numbered only about 8,000 each.

¹⁴⁰ The others are African American English, Brazilian Vernacular Portuguese, Nonstandard Caribbean Spanish and the Vernacular Lects of Réunionnais.

Its findings are relevant for this dissertation: in trying to “correlate the synchronic structure of these languages to the sociolinguistic history of their speakers” (Holm 2003:3) attention is paid to elements of the sociolinguistic situation at the Cape that determined what happened to the speakers of the languages present there.

Chapter 6

The languages and language use of the dispossessed: the KhoeSan

6.1. The ‘First Languages’ of the Cape and their speakers: the KhoeSan

When the ships from Europe first reached the Cape, they found there the peoples we now refer to as the KhoeSan, comprising both the hunter-gatherer Bushmen and the cattle-keeping Khoekhoen. They had already spoke KhoeSan languages for centuries: no evidence has been found that there were other languages spoken earlier (Ammon et al 2006:1981). In what follows the focus will mainly be on the Khoekhoen, since it is they who entered into interaction with the Europeans and were eventually absorbed into the new society at the Cape. This is not to denigrate the Bushmen/San in any way, nor even to claim that the two groups can be kept apart. Contemporary accounts did not differentiate clearly between them, and Walker states that “[t]o the early Commanders, the natives were just natives, ‘dull, stupid, lazy and stinking,’ according to Van Riebeeck, ‘zwarte stinkende Honden’ in the eyes and nostrils of the colonists’ (1968:33). In time, the distinction was made, but even in reality, the lines dividing the two were indistinct at best. From the point of view of the language situation, it is those indigenous people who did interact with the Europeans that had the greatest impact. The hunters were the group that remained outside the new society at the Cape, whereas those who became

integrated were rather herders, whether or not they were in actual fact Khoekhoen, and whether or not their mother tongue was Khoekhoe or one of the San languages¹⁴¹.

The sociolinguistic language history of the KhoeSan languages is mainly one of language death. To begin at the end: by the final years of the twentieth century, the KhoeSan languages, which had been extensively surveyed in the last quarter century, were represented only by speakers of a Nama dialect in the Richtersveld (in the area bordering Namibia) and along the Orange River and a few speakers of /'Auni and †Khomani (closely related Southern Bushmen languages on the verge of extinction) in the northern Cape (Traill 2002: 27-28).

The term “KhoeSan languages” is actually a misnomer in that these are not members of a single family of languages, being used to refer to three genetically unrelated groups of languages (Northern, Central and Southern). The dissimilarity in linguistic structure is either due to their having no common origin, or to their having developed apart over many thousands of years (Ammon et al 2006:1981). The Central group includes the Cape Khoekhoe varieties and Nama, whilst /Xam belongs to the Southern group (Traill 2002:45). This group is also known as the Southern Bush languages (Den Besten 1989:217).

6.1.2. The Bushmen

All the San languages of the geographic area that is the modern state of South Africa belonged to the !Kwi group of Southern Bushmen languages and it is “reasonable to assume that the !Kwi languages or dialects¹⁴² had been spoken over most of this area for some 8,000 years” (Traill 2002:36). There is no genetic unity of the so-called ‘San’ languages (Northern or Southern group) and some San speak one of the three (Traill 2002:45). /Xam was the most extensively spoken of the !Kwi group of the Southern family and W.H.I. Bleek found that the Bushmen dialects spoken in the territory

¹⁴¹ The terms have to be used loosely, since they have been inconsistently applied, meaning different things to different people, and the confusion is compounded by the fact that the San did not form a culturally coherent group (Elphick 1982:5). As Herbert puts it, “Further terminological problems arise from the use of all these terms to refer to cultural groups, physical types and language units, the distribution of these three variables not necessarily coinciding” (Herbert 2002:310-311). In what follows the terms used will reflect observable economic and life-style differences.

¹⁴² For a list of the varieties of !Kwi, see Winter, J.C. (1981) *Die Khoisan familie*. In: Heine, B., Schadeberg, T.C. and Wolff, E. (Eds.) *Die Sprache Afrikas*. Helmut Buske Verlag: Hamburg:

studied¹⁴³ differed little from each other (Traill 2002:36). /Xam, however, was not mutually intelligible with Khoekhoe (Den Besten 1989:217). Given the hundreds of years of contact between these groups, and the permeable nature of their social groupings, it is to be expected that some kind of Khoekhoe-Bushman contact language existed, going beyond a trade jargon since their contacts went beyond trade. More than this cannot be said. In trying to reconstruct this history, the lack of written records makes it impossible to ascertain the causes of language death, or even the status of the Bushman languages, such as /Xam, at various times. By the end of the eighteenth century, the obliteration of many of the speakers was in progress, as the Bushmen showed fierce resistance to the encroachment of their hunting grounds, and to the way in which the game was being killed, often for sport, by the burghers (Giliomee 2003:62). Between 1770 and 1810 a series of bloody battles between burghers and Bushmen, eventually involving support from the authorities, led to the death, dispersal or forcible indenture of many of the Bushmen. After 1857 W.H.I. Bleek studied /Xam speakers and Traill reports that there is limited evidence of some degree of bilingualism, but little influence from Khoekhoe in the /Xam recorded. The /Xam¹⁴⁴ Bushmen languages could still be studied in use in the years after 1875. Missionaries who had worked in the area before that had used interpreters, since they proved unable to learn /Xam. Biographical sketches (collected by Dorothy Bleek) from the early twentieth century indicate that only some of the community investigated still spoke /Xam, and few knew any folklore (Traill 2002:39). By 1911 only the last speakers could be found.

According to Traill, the fate of the other !Kwi varieties is broadly similar, following the classic course of bilingualism, followed by language attrition and shrinkage, and eventually shift – to Afrikaans or Nama (2002:39-44).

6.1.3. The Khoekhoen and San

In the case of the Cape Khoekhoe varieties, the situation is somewhat better than that of the Bushmen languages, since the conditions accompanying their death can be reconstructed with more accuracy. Even so, Dalby's second understanding of his own

¹⁴³ “the whole of the former Cape Province south of the Orange river from the Colesburg and Burgersdorp area in the north-east to the Katkop hills north of Calvinia in the north-west and from the Achterveld in the Fraserburg district in the south-west through Oudtshoorn to the Graaf-Reinet area in the south-east” (Traill 2002:36).

¹⁴⁴ The situation with the other Bushmen languages is even less well documented.

expression 'Black through White', namely that "the Black world has hitherto been largely described and interpreted through the eyes of White observers", continues to be true.

In the thousands of years that the 'San'¹⁴⁵ had lived in the region, their economy varied over time, but as it was always some combination of fishing, hunting and gathering, they were compelled to move around within certain areas. In contrast to these hunter-gatherers, the Khoekhoen had become pastoralists, allowing Keppel-Jones to comment that, "they were the conquerors of the land they lived in, and the bearers of the highest civilisation that it had yet seen" (1945:11).

The many clans of Khoekhoen were surprisingly homogenous, speaking closely-related dialects of their language and having similar customs, despite their being thinly dispersed over a large area. In the early seventeenth century, when the odd European ship called in, the Khoekhoen spoke about eleven closely related Cape Khoekhoe dialects. By the middle of the next century, what Nienaber (1963 cited in Traill 2002:29) has called 'Koe-Dutch' (hereinafter 'Khoekhoe-Dutch) had begun to replace the western Cape Khoekhoe dialect. In the south, therefore, the Khoekhoen were confronted with an alien culture speaking alien languages, of which one was dominant.

It seems that the Khoekhoen were aware of themselves as a group and referred to themselves as 'men of men' that is Khoekhoen, to differentiate themselves from the Bantu-speakers on the one hand and the hunter-gatherers on the other (Elphick 1982:5). The period in which they became pastoralists was also long past by 1652, but one outcome of that revolution in their life-style was their migration south in two main streams (one south and west, the other, west and then either north to present-day Namibia or south) which met up in the area about 100 to 200 km north of the Cape of Good Hope. The group that reached the plentiful rainfall and fertile soil of the south-western Cape kept domestic animals but did not grow crops (other than *dagga*, a variety of cannabis). The land of the south-western Cape was eminently suitable for crop-growing as well as grazing, but prior to the free burghers, the land had not been used for crops. Instead it was used for cattle and sheep, at times very many of them. Their

¹⁴⁵ The term is used loosely since it has been inconsistently applied, meaning different things to different people, and also because these people did not form a culturally coherent group (Elphick 1982:5). Bushmen is not more negative than San and both terms are used, with a reference to the life-style to distinguish the Bushmen from the Khoekhoen.

economy was therefore based not on land, but on cattle, the outward and visible sign of wealth and ability. Small clans formed the basic unit and the political power of the leaders was limited, being based on individual achievement rather than on inheritance. Due to the nature of cattle and sheep, which were susceptible to disease and drought, and could fall prey to thieves and predators, even the most prosperous could become impoverished almost overnight. Consequently, the centuries-old cycle of Khoekhoen life included sub-division and territorial expansion in times of plenty, and a return to a hunter-gather subsistence mode in bad times. If others were currently well-off, they could also accept work as herders and hope to be paid in cattle. The other option was to acquire a new herd by theft, leading to constant, if not particularly bloody, warfare (Elphick 1982:6-7).

As we shall see, this cycle began to work less well as land became less freely available, and as a new option presented itself: accepting work on the European farms. The way back to independence was harder and the desire for European goods, such as tobacco, alcohol and copper, made it harder still.

6.1.4. The Khoekhoen and the speakers of Bantu languages

In the interior, however, another contact situation had developed between the Khoekhoen and the front-runners of the southwards migration of the Bantu-speaking tribes¹⁴⁶, whilst the Xhosa incorporation (in the area between the Kei and Keiskamma rivers) of Khoekhoen chiefdoms had led to the decline of Eastern Khoekhoe. In this process, the languages involved in the assimilation of Xhosa into Khoekhoen chiefdoms and vice versa led to language change on both sides. The inclusion of click sounds in Xhosa is one of the outcomes. The phonology and lexicon of Xhosa was affected, unlike the morphology or syntax (Herbert 2002).

6.1.5. Khoekhoe-European contact

As regards Khoekhoe-European contact, once again the situation prior to 1652 forms an integral part of the language situation after 1652. From about 1590, ships put into Table Bay ever more frequently (Elphick 1982:8). The Portuguese were the first to make contact with the Khoekhoen, in 1488. They occupied posts along the east coast of

¹⁴⁶In what follows, the word *Bantu* is used to refer to the Bantu languages and the Bantu languages-speaking peoples.

Africa, and had St. Helena on the one side of Africa and Mozambique on the other. The encounters of the Portuguese at the Cape with the Khoekhoen usually involved some kind of skirmish and even led to the death of several Portuguese of high rank, including the homeward-bound retiring Viceroy of the Indies. Consequently, the Portuguese “tended to steer clear of the dangerous neighbourhood” (Keppel-Jones 1945:13). The English and the Dutch did halt at the Cape on their way to and from the East Indies, leaving letters under the ‘post-offices stones’. Some contact, albeit intermittent, was established with the Khoekhoen and in the pre-colonial period trade jargons developed: Khoekhoe-Dutch¹⁴⁷ and Khoekhoe-English (Den Besten 2009:1). The common practice of taking individuals with them to train as interpreters was applied. The one pre-1652 surviving sentence in ‘English’ is recorded as being uttered by an abductee in 1613: “Coeree home go, Souldania¹⁴⁸ go, home go!” (quoted in Den Besten 1989:218). Indirect evidence for Khoekhoen having knowledge of English and Dutch words before and at the start of the pre-colonial period is available. Den Besten (1989:218) lists these. The word *bras* (copper) is attested in 1623, 1652 and 1661, whilst *tecke*, from the English ‘take’ and meaning ‘to steal’ forms part of *Taback-Teckemans*, the translation of the Dutch *Tabackdieven*, which is how the Gorachouquas were called by the Dutch after Ten Rhyne visited the Cape in 1673 and in his essay of 1686 mentions that Khoekhoen at the Cape used some English words when speaking to the Dutch, but gives only the example of *Doggues* (‘dog’). In the list of Khoekhoe words compiled by de Flacourt (1655¹⁴⁹), *bras* is “cuiure” or ‘copper’, *sips* (“navire”, ‘ship’) and possibly *bere-b* could be ‘bread’ (with the *-b* of the masculine singular). The list contains several Dutch loans, including *baquery* (‘mug, beaker’ from the Dutch *beker* and *mouscap* (from the Dutch *schaap*, or even *moerschaap*, meaning ‘ewe’). Other words from this period are *várucka/brokwa/bruqua* which seems to mean ‘bread’ or ‘ship’s biscuit’, and the onomatopoeic *Bou* or *boo(s)*, using the English plural *-s*, probably expanded into *boeba* (‘cow, ox’).

¹⁴⁷ In further elements of the disagreement, Poneis points out *kammene* could be Creole Portuguese with *-me-* as “a nominativised first person singular form of ‘I’ (based on either Creole Portuguese *mi* or Dutch *me/mij*)” (1993:34), whilst Den Besten interprets it as a form borrowed by the slaves from Khoekhoe-Dutch use of *-um* as a verbal ending (1989:223).

¹⁴⁸ Table Bay

¹⁴⁹ De Flacourt’s contact with the Khoekhoen was with a group living outside the small early Dutch settlement, De Kaap, and therefore the loans may pre-date 1652.

The wreck of the *Haarlem* and the year of bare survival there meant the first extensive contact between the Dutch and the Khoekhoen. The journal and *Remonstrantie* to the VOC reports that the Khoekhoen often came to the Dutch camp and could speak and understand some Dutch. One was described as “goed duydes spraecq” (quoted from the *Journael* June 1 and September 4, 1647 by Den Besten 1989:219). It was the experience of this stay and the reports that led to the decision in Amsterdam to create a permanent refreshment station at the Cape in 1652 (Walker 1986 29-31). It is clear that by this time, the Khoekhoen knew of the English and Dutch, had been exposed to some contact with them in situations when they came and went. They knew some of their words and the pattern had become established in terms of ‘Black through White’ communication in which Black people had “to communicate with Whites, and often with each other, through the medium of ‘White’ languages or through their own adaptations of these languages” (Dalby 1970:1-2). This constituted the basis of the language policy of the VOC towards the Khoekhoen from the pre-colonial period onwards, and was applied consistently. The Khoekhoen were to be encouraged to learn Dutch but not much assisted in their endeavours. The Dutch did use the trade jargon as long as it was necessary, but from 1663 the onus was on the Khoekhoen to carry the burden of language learning (Traill 2002:32). In the course of extending their trading empire, the VOC had previously accepted learning lingua francas as necessary and continued to speak those that had proved most useful, namely Malay and Portuguese. Khoekhoen, however, was of use only at the Cape and only for the very limited commercial enterprise of bartering for cattle and sheep. No further lucrative trade was possible in the absence of commodities or products, and no diplomatic activity with an advanced civilisation was necessary or possible in view of the fragmented, semi-nomadic nature of Khoekhoen society. This meant, too, that after the first few years the Khoekhoen did not represent a military threat. To these pragmatic considerations were added two further problems. The first one was the impression that Khoekhoe made on the European: it was considered “utterly bizarre, unpleasant, inarticulate and not human” (Nienaber, cited in Traill 2002:32). This attitude underlies the second problem, namely that the language was unlearnable. The KhoeSan languages are characterised by their unique ‘click’ consonants¹⁵⁰, which are difficult to pronounce for adult learners of the language. Later linguistic and cultural evolutionary theorists, such as Van Ginneken

¹⁵⁰ These sounds are produced by a velaric ingressive mechanism (Ammon et al 2006:1982).

(1911) and Stopa (1937) would focus on these sounds and view them as source phonetic material for human languages (Herbert 2002:29).

Van Riebeeck first encountered the 'Peninsulars', a term coined by Elphick (1982:7) for various clans, including the Goringhaikua, the Gorachoukua, the Goringhaikonas (Herry's Strandlopers), under one leader. Then there were the Cochokua north of the bay, and the Chainoukua and Hessekua to the east. These groups spoke closely-related Khoekhoe varieties that contracted rapidly.

According to Den Besten (1989), Khoekhoe-Dutch became what he terms *Cape Dutch Pidgin*. He claims that this CDP had "a mainly Dutch lexicon, with admixtures from English and Khoekhoe and with a few words from the languages of the slaves", and that "CPD must have played a role in the creation of West Cape Afrikaans" despite it being "difficult to find any un-Dutch feature that is shared by CDP and Cape Afrikaans" (2009:1). This is not uncontroversial. The previously held view, as represented, for example, by Raidt (1983), was that a pidgin did not stabilise. Poneis (1993) accepts a possibility of a partially stabilised Khoekhoe-Dutch pidgin, but does not accept Den Besten's view that creolisation in Afrikaans was caused by CDP (1993:33)¹⁵¹.

By 1750 the shift to Khoekhoe-Dutch was well underway. Travellers of the late eighteenth century reported being able to hear Khoekhoe only in the outlying districts (Traill 2002:31, citing Nienaber 1963 as source). By the time of the small-pox epidemic of 1713, which decimated the Khoekhoen in the areas close to Cape Town, the processes disintegrating the social, political and economic structures of the Khoekhoen in the western Cape had already had much effect – the epidemic provided an extra

¹⁵¹ As so often in discussions of Afrikaans historical linguistics, the problem is that the same phenomenon can be explained in various ways. For example, Den Besten states that if the Khoekhoe had as adult second language learners acquired Dutch as is usual in such natural learning situations, then they would either have used a SVO structure due to misunderstanding V2, or a S-V_F-O(V) structure without V2 (Den Besten 1989:223). (There is no substantiation in the article of this statement and it is unclear to this reader whether there is a 'standard' way of learning Dutch as an L2.) Since Khoekhoe-Dutch had SOV, this must have come from Khoekhoe. Poneis, however, points out that this could just as convincingly be attributed to Dutch, going on to add that "all principles of (X,V) linearisation in Afrikaans, i.e. VX (V1, V2) and XV, may be linked directly and unequivocally to Dutch (1993:34).

impetus¹⁵². Smallpox was a known disease in Europe, but not amongst the Khoekhoen. They attributed the disease to the witchcraft of the Dutch and died where they were¹⁵³. Others fled inland, taking the disease with them. In 1714 survivors asked for new captains to be appointed as in four kraals they had died. These survivors claimed that scarcely a tenth had survived (although this is not a statistic, but a way of speaking). According to Saunders, after this the clan names fell into disuse and the general term “Hottentot” began to be used for the Khoekhoen collectively (1988:45). Elphick stresses the catastrophic extent of the death rate, pointing to the practical disappearance of the Khoekhoen in the following years. Moreover, the disease continued to spread, affecting the populations of the north-western interior, the Tswana (a Bantu-speaking nation north of the Orange River and then turning south again to reach the Nama living south of the mouth of the Orange (1982:24). Whatever the exact effect of the epidemic was, after 1713 the Khoekhoen were much reduced in the south-western Cape and the demographic balance overall had to be re-established, since many Europeans and especially slaves had died. Smallpox would strike again, in 1775, reaching even further. The main interface of the Khoekhoen and the settlers moved north and east, to areas with lower rainfall, where the less prosperous and numerous Khoekhoen clans were even less able to counter the encroachment onto the land that had been theirs for generations. The role of the Europeans also changed in that the new points of contact would hereafter be with individual burghers and their extended family communities, engaged for the most part in farming, rather than the Company’s representatives, as had been the case at the start (Elphick 1982:24). In fact, the two groups, who were engaged in a similar occupation, in a similar environment, and lived in family-based small communities, facing the same natural dangers and the same attacks of hunters

¹⁵² The impact of the smallpox epidemic on Khoekhoe society has been seen as devastating, destroying the Khoekhoe social structure as a consequence of the many deaths. For example, Krüger states that the “Hottentots who were not wiped out by two great epidemics of smallpox, which broke up their tribal system and their economic independence, entered the white man’s service as farm labourers (1969:5). Ross counters the arguments of those who see the smallpox epidemic as causing the end of Khoekhoe social organisation, claiming that the causal chain is assumed and not proven or even listed. Furthermore, he asserts that beyond stating that many Khoekhoen died, no numerical value can be given since the Khoekhoe population of the time is not known. He suggests that the Khoekhoen suffered a death rate at least that of the Europeans and slaves, offering a figure of 30 per cent, and that the dispersal of the Khoekhoen in the countryside may have saved at least some of them from being infected (Ross 1977).

¹⁵³ The psychological impact of this belief, if it was wide-spread, should not be underestimated. The Khoekhoen were known as herbalists and practitioners of magic. If disease were due to bewitchment, such an epidemic would be seen as a demonstration of great magic power.

and plunderers, showed convergence in their life-style¹⁵⁴, most markedly on the frontier as it moved inland. It is this process and its sociolinguistic effect that will receive our attention below.

6.1.5.1. Three frontiers¹⁵⁵ with the Europeans

The process of expansion was not the consequence of a colonial policy of conquering the land, but was impelled by the demand for provisions, increasingly meat, on the one hand, and the push of the growing free burgher population on the other.

As the Company's need for meat exceeded what could be provided by the Peninsulars, so the search for new supplies pushed the Europeans further inland, as did the new needs stemming from land cultivation. Fresh meat was a priority for the Company from the very first and the search for it was the motor that drove the exploration of the region, although rumours of precious metals and fabulous kingdoms were also motivations. Seen from the perspective of the indigenous peoples, European incursion into their land came in three 'waves' and led to three moving frontiers, which overlapped. The first phase was associated with trade, the next with agriculture and the third one with the *trekboers*, the semi-nomad cattle-farming burghers, whose activity created an alternate supply of meat for the VOC. With each wave, the options open to the Khoekhoen were reduced, as was their value as an independent trading partner meeting the crucial VOC demand for meat.

Bearing in mind how valuable their beasts were to them, the Khoekhoen were willing to exchange a great many of them for, mainly, copper, iron (only initially) and tobacco. The process of trading was controlled by the Company for as long as possible,

¹⁵⁴ The Company's authority theoretically followed the free burghers, but in practice the situation was more ambiguous. Legassick points out that the situation can be described in terms of the concept of 'frontier' but not explained, and that other colonial regimes sometimes gave in to what seemed to be happening anyway, allowing the settlers to 'go native' and integrated into the indigenous population. He holds the question of why this did not happen in the Cape to be one of the fundamental issues facing historians of South Africa (Legassick 1982:265).

¹⁵⁵ The term "frontier" is used here to describe the area in which there is the interaction of two or more culturally distinct communities, with one of these communities trying to control the other but not yet succeeding fully (Legassick 1982; Newton-King 1999:37-42). The frontier closes when this control is achieved. In the case of the Khoekhoen, this was a process in which the burghers became able to control the labour of the by then less-than-free Khoekhoen towards the end of the VOC period.

with the aim of reducing violence and keeping prices low (Elphick 1982:10). The VOC policy of friendly relations and recognition of the Khoekhoen as a free people was slowly replaced with an increased awareness of the vulnerability of the Khoekhoen and the ability of the Europeans to defend themselves. Khoekhoen strategies of resistance (the war of 1659-60 under the leadership of Doman¹⁵⁶, the territorial withdrawal of Gonnema in response to the expeditions against him in 1673, 1674 and 1676, and co-operation as agents) all failed. Trade began to be forced on the Khoekhoen, who were now worried about the reduction of the herds and flocks. For them, stock was not only a trade commodity, but a way of survival (milk, meat and skins were consumed by the Khoekhoen). Slowly, the Company was reducing the sovereignty of the Khoekhoen, through military, economic, diplomatic and legal means (Elphick 1982:13), just as the European social and economic model was reducing the independence of the Khoekhoen.

Parallel to this was the trend for increasing numbers of Khoekhoen to go to work on the farms (Elphick 1982:17). The agricultural frontier began in 1657 but was always far behind the trade frontier. A few Khoekhoen had already accepted employment Riebeeck's time, but for security reasons it was only after about 1670 that they were employed as herders. With the expansion of the colony (Stellenbosch and Drakenstein districts), the demand for such labour increased, as did the willingness of the Khoekhoen to take such jobs. The second phase of the agricultural frontier, the trekboer frontier, affected the core area of the colony little. However, on the eastern and northern borders it soon became the biggest threat to the Khoekhoen. As the land was ploughed for agriculture and the tug-of-war over land, cattle and water continued, the Khoekhoen were forced to either withdraw ever deeper into the interior or to find a place for themselves in the new order (Giliomee 2003:8). Soon they were to find themselves between the free burghers and the Bantu-speaking tribes, increasingly unable to continue with their traditional nomadic mode of life, and forced, in times of need, to decide which community to join. The trekboers need for land and water rapidly pushed the frontier further away from Cape Town¹⁵⁷. In 1717 independent stock-farmers

¹⁵⁶Doman was leader of Goringhaiquas, who had been sent to Batavia in 1657 to learn the language in order to return as an interpreter.

¹⁵⁷The link to Cape Town was tenuous due to distance and terrain – the mountain ranges were natural barriers and the building of passes and roads lagged far behind the furthestmost outposts.

constituted 10% of all agricultural producers, whereas in 1770 they made up two-thirds of the colony's farmers (Guelke, cited in Giliomee 2003:31). The need for manpower attracted some of the Khoekhoen, offering them at least a measure of security against the attacks of their traditional enemies, the hunters, and the meeting of their physical needs for food and shelter. The attraction was 'freedom from', in this case freedom from the need to meet the two most basic levels in Maslow's hierarchy of needs: physical and biological needs, and safety needs. Addiction to European products, especially to the alcohol and tobacco, played their part. In periods of high demand for labour, threats and the holding of family members as hostages were coercive techniques of binding the Khoekhoen to the farms (Elphick 1982:30). On the incentive side, the Khoekhoen were allowed to keep their own herds on the farms and were paid by being given cattle or sheep, and their families could stay together (Giliomee 2003:66). This clientship relationship was essentially the same as had existed previously in Khoekhoen society, but the pressures created by the closing of the frontier eventually led to it being restructured into a master-servant relationship in the first half century of British rule.

Although some Khoekhoen men made a living as porters for the sailors or messengers in Cape Town, the majority worked as farm labourers. As such they were part of the plaas, but less so part of the household, since their work was done outside, at a distance from the house, looking after the herds. Their families often lived with them, in grass huts close to the house. The women were more likely to spend time in close contact with the European families, especially the women and children, being employed as cooks, domestic servants and nannies (Elphick 1982:29). In this environment their opportunities for natural language learning would have been good. Even if there were slaves, the limited number of people made intensive contact inevitable. Children growing up in the narrow confines of the house or the yard would have acquired their first language in this environment. In the 1770s, the traveller Sparrman reported that most houses had but two rooms – one in which the farmer his wife and children slept and the other for visitors and the Khoekhoen servants. In the same period, Swellengrebel wrote of one-roomed houses in which everyone slept. Swellengrebel was concerned lest the burghers on the frontier become degenerate and wild (both cited in Giliomee 2003:33). This latter did not happen: according to Giliomee the burghers themselves were aware of the danger of cultural decay and tried to orient their norms to those of the burghers in the more settled areas (2003:34). What did

happen, however, was miscegenation. Unlike in the wine and wheat belt, where little evidence has been found of mixed relationships, on the eastern frontier this was so common that the administrative machinery slowly reflected it, as did language use in that a term, the *Baster* was coined to describe the group. Their defining characteristic, their illegitimacy, was reflected in the name given to them.

The social category, *Baster*, came to have two meanings. On the one hand, it referred specifically to people of mixed origin, usually Khoekhoen and European. It could also refer to offspring of slave-Khoekhoe unions, in which case they were called *Baster-Hottentots* (Elphick & Shell 1982:143). On the other, it referred to a socio-economic category of people of mostly of mixed origin, owning some property and more civilised (Legassick 1982:275). Their genetic link to the higher status groups lead to their getting better opportunities as regards employment, working as overseers or wagon-drivers, or earning a living as craftsmen or small-scale farmers on their own land. They were also more likely to be entrusted with the responsibility for a farm in the absence of the owner. On the eastern frontier, they were listed separately as ‘baptised Bastards’ and made up five to ten per cent of Graaf-Reinet’s farming population, according to the census of 1798 (Giliomee 2003:40). On the northern frontier some of them referred to themselves as ‘swarthy Dutchmen’ (Giliomee 2003:41). They were to develop into an important social group at the turn of the century and thereafter, forming part of what were later called the *Griquas*¹⁵⁸ and attempting to establish an alternative social order in this area, helped and/or hindered by the missionaries (Legassick 1982:). In this area Griqua families (such as the Kok and Barend families), tended to intermarry within their own community and were seldom incorporated into burgher society (Giliomee 2003:41).

The plaas situation provided both the need (marked predominance of men in both the European and slave populations) and the solution (the presence of indigenous women in a normal ratio to men). In this situation, the status of the Europeans gave them an advantage. On the other hand, the practice of erecting Khoekhoe huts on the burgher farms and living in close proximity but nevertheless apart (Elphick & Shell 1982:142) served to restrict relationships across the culture gap. Similarly, the close

¹⁵⁸ The name was given to them by Reverend Campbell (Theal 1900:163). Theal, G.M. (1900) *Progress of South Africa in the Century*. Toronto: Linscott Retrieved from: <http://www.ebooksread.com/authors-eng/george-mccall-theal/progress-of-south-africa-in-the-century-hci.shtml>

proximity allowed the Khoekhoen ample exposure to the Dutch language but also to their own Khoekhoe mother tongue. The presence of the family supported normal intergenerational language transmission in both groups.

Little is known about the conditions in which the Khoekhoen were employed on the farms. The pattern was initially for the men to accept temporary work for the season, in which case their families stayed at home. In the next phase, from the mid-1690s, the whole family moved on to the farm, but remained in their huts. Finally, some of the Khoekhoen farm labourers lived in one of the main buildings (Elphick 1982:18). The Europeans, too, went through a process whereby the outlying farms were initially temporarily occupied, in which period they likewise lived very simply, sometimes camping out in their wagons, or constructing simple houses with clay walls and a thatched roof, with little furniture. Increasing prosperity led to better living conditions, but many did not achieve this: overstocking led to the deterioration of grazing, the value of loan farms dropped and many burghers sank into debt (Giliomee 2003:31-32). The slaves and Khoekhoen on a farm shared the fate of the burgher owner. For the burghers, one of the mechanisms of closing the frontier was the process of *inboekseling*, whereby children born to Khoekhoe women and brought up at the cost of the burgher were indentured to force them to work for a number of years to compensate for these costs. This idea was first raised in a request to the Council of Policy in 1721, when it was refused. It was later allowed in Stellenbosch in 1775 and became commonly practised from then onwards.

As the eighteenth century progressed, so the frontier reached the Xhosa, a Bantu-speaking tribe. For the Khoekhoen, the Xhosa were not an unknown quality and offered an alternative to working for the burghers. In choosing to join them, the Khoekhoen would be in a position of subordination to begin with, but could become fully integrated and enjoy equal status with other tribe members (Giliomee 2003:65). As the frontier closed, so tensions increased: the Xhosa with their denser pattern of settlement, superior numbers and more formidable military capacity exerted increasing pressure on the European farmers, leading to burgher uprisings and a long and bloody series of wars. In this struggle, the Khoekhoen herds could no longer be accommodated and had to be reduced. All that remained was for the Khoekhoen to 'sell' their labour, but the economics of the frontier farms made cash wages unlikely. The coercive factor gained in significance and there is evidence from complaints filed with the landdrost that in the last two decades of the eighteenth century acts of brutality and cruelty became more

frequent, accompanied by desertions of the Khoekhoen, together with guns and horses, and acts of retribution, such as the burning of crops and homes, and the capture of stock (Giliomee 2003:66). On the other hand, relations based on greater trust and the recognition of mutual need meant that the Khoekhoen often bore arms, enabling them to better protect the herds (both their own and that of the farm owners), and to ride out on commando. The commando carried the responsibility for the protection of the frontier and participation was compulsory for the burghers. It had considerable freedom to act, for example, to ride in hot pursuit of stock thieves. The VOC exercised some measure of control by being the source of ammunition, making it known that the use of unnecessary aggression would lead to a suspension of supply. Nevertheless, the Company turned a blind eye to abuses at least some of the time, since this system had the advantage of costing it nothing. In its instructions to one of the first commandos, the Company formulated its standpoint as follows: the commando could “fire freely and take prisoners and act otherwise as they saw fit since the marauders cannot be considered as any other but enemies of the Hon. Company” (quoted in Giliomee 2003:59).

The Company tried to keep peace on the frontier, but the frontier was advancing away from the Company headquarters and distance was not the only problem - bad roads and the need to cross mountain ranges made the frontier remote. However, the system of landdrosts and *veldkornets* (the variously termed officers in charge of the commandos) worked adequately on the whole. At the beginning, the Company tried to keep the Khoekhoen from gaining access to guns and horses, and in this it failed. The Khoekhoen learned to ride horses and shoot, and first accompanied the big game hunters, and later sold ivory and skins on their own initiative (Walker 1968:96). Their skill in shooting was useful to the burghers – except when a discontented or maltreated worker turned on them, or deserted. Khoekhoen and men of mixed origin regularly took part in the commandos of the eighteenth century, on all the frontiers (to the north, north-east and east). The details of this are not directly relevant here, but the commandos – as the only form of protection available to the burghers, as the legitimating arm of the incursions, as a way of recapturing stolen stock, or of stealing it and as a way of capturing children to be indentured, or pursuing labourers who had absconded – played a central part in the economic and political processes of expansion and occupation of the land. On the social level, it bound the members together as comrades, even if status differences were replicated in the distribution of bounty or the

assumption of command. Not all commandos were even superficially legal, and they supported trade which was likewise illegal. Some seemingly respectable farmers, who had access to shot and weapons, hired commando leaders who were less so, and the frontier had its share of deserters and escaped convicts. To give just one example, Petrus Pienaar, owner of several farms in the north-west, employed Jan Bloem (a German deserter from a ship, who had murdered his wife and fled to the border region) and Klaas Afrikaner, a so-called Oorlam with military experience and little conscience (Legassick 1982:274-275).

Relations with the Bushmen who had refused the option of integrating into the evolving new social structure had deteriorated and it was becoming a battle to the death on the north-eastern frontier. Raids by the hunters were followed by punitive expeditions of the commandos, and women and especially children were captured and forcibly integrated into subordinate roles on the farms, in essentially the same category as the slaves. The same ideology of paternalism used to defend slavery was used to justify indenture. Indentured children were taught the master's language and given tasks to do (Giliomee 2003:61). For example, the Stellenbosch landdrost (essentially the headquarters of the commando system) ordered the field-commandant of the 1774 general commando to divide men and captured children amongst the poorest inhabitants, who they were to serve "for a fixed and equitable term of years, in consideration of their receiving proper maintenance" (from Moodie, quoted in Walker 1968:9). Ironically this was the lesser evil: the aim was to reduce loss of life in massacres where entire Bushmen bands were wiped out. Generally in the Cape the trend was less to wipe out the enemy than to acquire indigenous labour, forcibly acculturated into the new system and language community. Small children would be socialised in their new environment and would learn the language they were exposed to as a mother tongue, or become bilingual. Under such circumstances, language maintenance was possible only amongst those who fled farthest. As outlined above, in the roughly 170 years following 1740, the extreme conditions elicited by warfare, starvation and dislocation led finally to language death (Traill 2002:36-37). Those San who grew up on the farms mingled with the African and Eastern slaves, the Khoekhoen and the whites, being absorbed into the lower caste of this community (Traill 2002:28).

The ancient conflict of the hunter and the herder was played out again and the hunter-warriors were exterminated or driven away. In this struggle, the Khoekhoen saw their own interest as siding with the farm owners and took their part in the armed

conflict. On the part of the burghers, the Khoekhoen were of more use alive than dead, if they could be convinced to work as herdsman. There was a matching of interests that resulted in the clientship relationship in which the Khoekhoen and burgher both ran stock and in caring for the burghers' animals, the Khoekhoen could also build up their own herds (Giliomee 2003:61). The stock was also better protected against attacks, and knowledge could be pooled. The irony of the situation was that as the burghers became better able to supply the Company's needs, so the Company's need of the Khoekhoen as suppliers was reduced. Acting in their short-term interests, the Khoekhoen undermined their own bargaining position, leading to their eventual disappearance as an independent ethnic and language community.

Early processes of integration and assimilation were associated, as we have seen, with survival needs. In cases where relationships developed between the men of European origin and Khoekhoe women, it was the culture of the men that dominated, leading to the women and children speaking Cape Dutch/Afrikaans and being baptised. These women and children became detribalised and took on trekboer habits, such as travelling in wagons or on horseback, or wearing European clothes. Those who left the Khoekhoen community in this way looked down on those who had not. On the other hand, the arrangements whereby the Khoekhoen lived alongside but together with the burghers allowed bilingualism to persist for a long time (Ponelis 1993:40-41). On the farms, the 'European life-style' was adapted to the circumstances: lack of capital, the exigencies of the migratory farming mode, the distance from the organised state, reduced contact with the Church and book-learning, and the interlocked pattern of daily life with the slaves and the Khoekhoen led to a decline of European civilisation. Learning to live off the land had included learning many of the skills of the indigenous Khoekhoen and acculturation was recognisably a two-way process. For example, the burghers started using hides for clothing and utensils, stored milk in skin sacks, dried strips of meat to make what is today called *biltong*. Generally, they learnt from the Khoekhoen how to survive and keep stock in an arid environment (Ponelis 1993:40). The hunting and stock-farming life-style of the two groups was similar enough to establish common ground.

The perceptions of visitors and officials were coloured by their own prejudices and standards, and need to be understood against a background of their norms. Coming from the Europe of the Batavian Republic espousing many of the new revolutionary ideas, and basing his conclusions on the many reports available to him from Company

officials and others, Commissioner de Mist saw the frontiersmen on the outer fringe of Cape society as “half-wild Europeans”, who suffered from a “complete corruption of their moral sense”, due to the “long distances ... from Cape Town ...; the lack of social intercourse with civilised individuals; the monotonous life of the herdsman ...; the daily hunt, the continual diet of meat ...; the war ... conducted for some years against the Bushmen and Kaffirs” (quoted in Walker 1968:99). In the rapid expansion of the frontier in which these burghers had staked a claim to vast tracts of land between the Tulbagh mountains, the Fish River and the Orange River, before coming to a halt due to the opposite direction of migration and land claims of the Xhosa, the conditions of life, characterised by isolation and independence, had led to the loosening of ties with the order of colonial society, which was itself different from the culture of the motherland, and from that of the Dutch settlements in the East. As the influence of Europe waned, so the influence of Africa and the indigenous peoples of Africa waxed, complemented by the multiple cultures of the imported slaves. These various cultural influences combined and conflicted on African soil in differing patterns, with the impact of the local conditions and the local peoples greatest on the outmost reaches of the European settlement.

6.1.5.2. The effects of Khoekhoe-European language contact

As we have seen, Den Besten (1989) argues for the pre-1652 use of trade jargons between the Khoekhoen and the Dutch, which developed into a pidgin in the few years before the arrival of the slaves. According to him, the slaves learnt a version of this, and added modifications to it. When the Khoekhoen withdrew from the colony, they took this language (possibly already creolised) with them and affected other Khoekhoen living beyond the borders of the colony. This became the variety now known as Orange River Afrikaans, whilst the Khoekhoen who remained in the Cape were affected by the ‘decreolising’ effects of Cape Dutch, due to their exposure to that language. A decreolising effect seems to be what High-Commissioner van Rheeде suggests as an antidote to the imperfect way in which the Khoekhoen spoke Dutch and to the way in which the Dutch had picked up this way of speaking.

Five days after his arrival in 1685 High-Commissioner recorded his impressions after being present at a visit to Company officials in the Castle by tribal Khoekhoen. His observations are often quoted and have been analysed and debated in great detail:

... hier is een gewoonten onder al ons volck, dat lerende dese inlanders de Nederduydsche spraek, en dat deselve die op haer manieren seer krom en bij nae onverstandelijck spreken, soo volgen de onse haer daer in nae, ja soodanigh, de kinderen van onse Nederlanders haer dat mede aenwendende een gebroken spraek gefondeert werd, die ongemogelyk sal wesen nae de hand te verwinnen, veel min onder de Hottentots de duydsche tale in te voeren, daer het deselve niet en gebreekt aen bequaemheyt, sprekende all woorden prompt uyt, sonder eenigh gebreck, indien men haer die wel voorsegt, waer omtrent wel nodigh was wat meer agt geslagen wiert. (quoted in Van der Merwe 1968:22).

Since the debate is in part about the correct translation of the text, I have given here the original to allow everyone to decide for themselves what the text means. The disagreement hinges on the illocutionary force of the comment: is it intended as a warning or merely a description? What is it that Van Rheeде observed? Foreigner talk? Pidgin? A language learning/teaching encounter? It seems appropriate not to exclude any plausible interpretation and yet to try to focus on the holistic message and its content. That content includes the following: the Hottentots mangle the Dutch language, despite being able to say the words faultlessly, and the Dutch children imitate this instead of taking more care with their own speech, thereby laying the basis for a broken language which can then not be eradicated, nor will it be possible to establish the Dutch language amongst the Hottentots.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁹ The English translation by Smith (of the somewhat shortened text) that appears in Ponelis (1993: 28) is as follows:

It is a custom among all our people that when these natives learn the Netherlands speech and speak it in their own way in a very crooked and almost unintelligible manner, our Netherlanders imitate them, indeed yes in such a way that if the children of our Netherlanders also accustom themselves to it, a broken language will be established which it will be impossible to overcome afterwards.

For those readers interested, the translation into Afrikaans by Scholtz (1981, quoted in Van der Merwe 1986:22) is given as well:

Hier bestaan 'n gewoonte onder al ons mense, waar hierdie inlanders die Nederlande tall leer en dit op hul manier baie krom en byna onverstaanbaar praat, on hulle dan daarin na te volg, sodat, waar die kinders van ons Nederlanders hul ook die gewoonte aanwen, die gronslag gelê word tot 'n gebroke spraak, wat mens onmoontlik sal kan uitroei [en veel minder nog sal mens onder die Hottentott die Nederlandse taal kan invoer, terwyl dit hulle tog nie aan bekwaamheid ontbreek nie en hulle alle woorde pront uitspreek, sonder een fout, as 'n mens hulle dié maar goed voorsê, waarop wel 'n bietjie meer ag geslaan behoort te word].

It is not surprising given the differences between the Khoekhoe and Dutch languages and cultures (let us not forget that the lexicon of Dutch expressed a culture and civilisation that was unimaginable for the Khoekhoen) that the Khoekhoen should find it difficult to speak Dutch; nor is it surprising that Dutch children, in play or with the intent to facilitate communication should copy what they hear. The suggestion that the Dutch take more care in providing a good model is likewise sensible if the goal is to pass the language on to the Khoekhoen. The fear that bad habits could spread is not unreasonable. Furthermore, his words need to be kept in perspective as a statement of a subjective impression. Just how 'krom' *krom* is, and just how incomprehensible *bij nae onverstandelijck* is, remains to be seen. What would Van Rhee de have commented about the language used by a Dutch farmhand in a dialect different from his own? There is no way to answer this and far-reaching explanations of what the situation he was describing actually was, should be avoided. Nor is it easy to decide if he is referring to pronunciation only, or grammar as well. Of direct relevance are his framework of reference and the steps he decides upon to achieve his objectives. His observation was made within the process of taking stock of a situation, in his role as the direct representative of the top management of one of the most powerful companies in the world, and making decisions about company policy and action. It is quite clear that he lays value on the correct pronunciation and use of Dutch by both the Dutch and the Khoekhoen and sees the establishment of Dutch amongst the Khoekhoen as the goal. The Cape differed from the other settlements of the East in that there was not established civilisation, instead there were the hunter-gather San and the semi-nomadic pastoralist Khoekhoen, who the Dutch did not consider merited the term *beskaafd*.

The effects of the contact between the Dutch and Khoekhoe cultures and languages does not seem to have had an unambiguous outcome. The continued debate about whether Dutch was creolised at the Cape suggests that this is not an either-or question. Various linguistic solutions were found to the basic problem of communication and these may have run from rudimentary and fleeting pidgins to the acquisition of acrolectal Cape Dutch. It is suggested here that the issue of sociolects could be revisited. As the process of language learning and language shift was accompanied by the fundamental social changes outlined above, the lects that developed would have given evidence not only of interlanguage but also of learning the 'right' way in which to speak in particular circumstances to specific people. The upper echelons of society were not easily accessible to the burghers, and were closed to the Khoekhoen. The social level on

which Khoekhoe-European social intercourse took place would have determined the kind of language used. Becoming assimilated into an alien society in a subservient role required learning the appropriate register. Leaving that society to create one's own meant using the language learnt, to the degree that it was learnt, for different purposes, ones in which the master-servant relationship did not have to be reflected in the language used.

To summarise:

- the Khoekhoen were somatically distinct and therefore evidently different, contemporary accounts emphasised their difference;
- their language was considered barbarous (in the original sense in which the Greeks had used it for people who could not speak Greek and therefore made mumbling noises);
- they were willing and able to learn Dutch and the expectation was that they would solve the communication gap in this way (few Dutchmen even attempted to learn Khoekhoe);
- they seemed not unwilling to accept this role and took no recorded steps to defend their right to use their own language.
- the Khoekhoen were often in conflict with the slaves, yet there are cases attested of Khoekhoen using Portuguese¹⁶⁰, and Khoekhoen-slave enmity would not have entailed lack of language contact.
- they were accustomed to living in small, family-based clans and the social structure of the plaas was essentially similar;

¹⁶⁰ A French priest, Father Tachard, who visited the Cape in 1685 spoke Portuguese to Commissioner van Rhee de and was addressed by a Khoekhoe in Portuguese (Ponelis 1993:15). This was not the only mention of Khoekhoen speaking Portuguese, Ponelis (1993:15) lists two other visitors who mention such encounters.

- their position in society was increasingly close to that of the slaves but also resembled that of the knechts, and the tenant farmers who were attached to the households on the eastern frontier;
- as owners of herds and flocks, they proved willing to trade until they felt their own security threatened (but were then liable to be forced to trade), contributing to the redefinition of their role in society;
- as pastoralists, they followed their animals, meaning that the concept of fixed and privately-owned property was alien to their thinking, consequently they moved on easily, until there was no easy way for them to move on;
- they shared a common economic interest with the trekboers and they became inter-dependent on the outskirts of the settled areas, having to deal with the same challenges and dangers;
- the impact of European patterns of living and trading, coupled with the technological advantage of the Europeans, and their lack of immunity to smallpox combined to disrupt the traditional Khoekhoen life-style and led to detribalisation;
- proximity to Dutch L1 speakers in the household meant normal exposure to the language they were learning, either as children or as adults, but little exposure to language used for other purposes (such as in the church, school, administration);
- deliberate interventions in their family arrangements, like indenture and kidnapping, contributed to the disruption of Khoekhoe family life and made normal intergenerational language transmission less likely;
- their status as free people did not accord them the status of burghers;
- their language was sufficient for the needs that they had had before the advent of the Europeans, but new functions and new domains were introduced to them through the medium of Dutch;

- although they were allowed to participate in the schooling that was made available at the Cape, no compulsion or persuasion was used to encourage this – for the Khoekhoen speaking Dutch was clearly an advantage, knowing the prayers in Dutch less so, and that is true of writing as well;
- due to the lopsided collection of data at the Cape, the statistics for the burghers were more accurate than for the slaves (except for the VOC slaves since their records were kept), data for the Khoekhoen are simply not available or based on individual estimates;
- there was reason to learn Dutch but no reason not to learn Khoekhoe and the language situation shows this in their maintenance of their L1: by the end of the period, their language shift was not yet complete but was under way;
- their knowledge of Africa and African conditions was valuable to the trekboers and whilst their culture contracted, the process of acculturation did go both ways;
- according to Den Besten, they did affect the Cape Dutch dialect, although these effects are rather rare; on the level of lexis, some words of Khoekhoe have entered ABA;
- dependable demographic data regarding the frequency of intermarriage could shed light on details, but we can deduce the existence of various kinds of cross-culture couples from the number of offspring of mixed relationships/intermarriage, although these data too are inadequate;
- the possible outcome of contact include genetic mixing (Basters), separation (the departure of Khoekhoe clans and the later movement of the Oorlams out of the settled areas where they had been employed), and blending and assimilation into the culture of the Dutch;
- as active members of the plaas communities, they contributed to the evolution of micro-dialects;
- their exposure to Dutch was possibly limited by the nature of L1 speakers: the language of basic interpersonal contact did not require context-

independence, the trekboers themselves struggled to acquire literacy and were generally content with the basics;

- the Khoekhoen had not developed their own literate culture and were not targeted as potential converts until the early nineteenth century.

Chapter 7

Conclusions

For each of the panels of the triptych and for each community of speakers of a language it has proved possible to identify key factors that contributed or hindered changes in language and language use.

7.1. The Language of the Cape Dutch, in the Light of VOC Language Policy

Throughout the period, Dutch, whether an acrolectal form close to metropolitan Dutch or a local, extraterritorial dialect, retained its position at the Cape, and would survive the end of VOC rule. This would not necessarily be surprising, were it not for the contrary outcome of the situation in the Batavian eastern centre of VOC operations, and the other settlements of the area. A crucial difference lies in the fact that the Cape was not a centre of trade and did not have commercial products of value to the VOC for re-sale. Rather, it was a support centre, facilitating trade. The settlement pattern was consequently different, with the number of burghers and their percentage of the total European population diverging markedly from the Batavian pattern. The natural population increase of the burghers changed the nature of the settlement and created a new pattern, based on a locally born populace of burghers and, with a lower rate of increase, slaves, in addition to the indigenous population. Another factor was the increasingly detribalised and acculturated nature of the Khoekhoe population. The population statistics, in addition to other omissions, did not include the Khoekhoen – a logically consistent step, since the Khoekhoen were technically a free people, but not one that reflected the changing reality on the plaas. The social convergence in progress by the end of the VOC period between the slaves and the Khoekhoen changed the proportion of the total population represented by the burghers. Consequently, the number of speakers of some variety of Dutch more or less removed from the language of the Netherlands was substantially higher at the Cape than in the other VOC settlements and was made up of the descendants of the freed VOC servants, the small

number of immigrants and the second and subsequent generations born into the new society. This society was an increasingly singular mixture, differing in important respects from the mother societies of the East and West and Africa. Thirdly, the Dutch presence was continuous through the period, unlike in Formosa, the other settlement where it appeared that Dutch was gaining ground, since there the settlement was lost before Dutch could really establish itself. It has been suggested that the pattern of language spread in Formosa differed from that of the other settlements in the East Indies. Significantly, there, as at the Cape, the prior incidence of an accepted lingua franca was absent, reducing the competition and facilitating the spread of Dutch as the language of wider communication. On Formosa, the missionary zeal of the Dutch was more marked and education more widespread. By establishing a seminary as early as 1659 to train teachers to spread the Gospel, a multiplier effect was envisaged. Instruction was in Dutch but also in the local Formosan languages. At the Cape, evangelising fervour was low and there was no possibility of publishing religious texts in Khoekhoe, due to lack of second language proficiency in this language. Language prejudice may have played a part, since the Khoekhoe language was considered unlearnable and barely human. Had Dutch become the language of Formosa, its route to that outcome would have differed from that of the Cape. It appears that the role of the particular situation on the ground was of more significance than the similarities in VOC language policy, which was applied pragmatically and not dogmatically.

As for the other Dutch factories and settlements in the East discussed in the dissertation, namely Batavia, Ceylon and Ambon, the conclusion was drawn that VOC language policy was consistent only in one respect: the language of the VOC administration was Dutch. The status of the language was therefore never in question: it was the language of official correspondence and action, and it was the language of religion, which in the Dutch areas functioned under the direction of the VOC. On the other hand, commitment to making it the language of the population was absent except sporadically. Spreading the Calvinist form of Christianity was more important than spreading Dutch. Countering the lingering influence of the Portuguese was more important than replacing it with a Dutch influence. Finally, the exigencies of trade had higher priority than that of any 'civilising mission', and also determined the size of the European population, which tended to be negligible in comparison to other societal groups.

7.2. For the French, the Outcome was Language Loss and Language Shift

The only cohesive group of planned immigrants to reach the Cape, the Huguenots had an impact on the new society out of all proportion to their numbers. They brought with them their Calvinist religious conviction, with its accompaniment of literacy; a variety of skills, including viniculture; a European mindset, culture and appearance; and their families. It was this last characteristic that set them off from others in the community. Only high-ranking VOC officials had their families with them, and for these families the Cape was only a temporary posting. This locus of the family for the French would lead us to expect a high degree of normal intergenerational language transmission. Since the French language all but died out in two generations, this needs explanation. One of these is the success of the deliberate VOC policy of creating geographical distance between the French speakers. Contact with the neighbours would require communication across a language barrier. Contact with the authorities, despite a limited amount of flexibility allowed by the VOC for a short time, required a knowledge of Dutch. Getting ahead in this society was possible only through and with the VOC, providing an immediate instrumental motivation to learn Dutch. The existence from their arrival on of schooling facilities facilitated the acquisition of Dutch by the children of the community, since not all the children attending would have been French. The school provided opportunity for contact amongst the members of the younger generation and by the time they came to choose marriage partners, language would no longer be a barrier. Finally, the rising tension between the colonists and the Governor and his clique, culminating in a trial of strength lost by the Governor, led to increased solidarity between the French and their neighbours. The community could retain its religion, for which it had sacrificed so much, and could create a sustainable future for itself in co-operation with the Dutch neighbours and authorities. It could become an integral and even decisive part of the new society. The price paid was the swift relinquishment of their mother tongue.

7.3. For the Germans, the Outcome was Language Loss and Language Shift

The Germans at the Cape were less obviously present than the French. In fact, it comes as a bit of a surprise to discover that the 'Dutch' at the Cape were not all Dutch, but also German. The group referred to here as the Germans were also not all German, included in their ranks were numerous Scandinavians. Like the French, they lost their language and shifted to Dutch in a process of acculturation. Like the French, they

shared a European background with the Dutch, and like the French, their route to self-advancement required learning Dutch. Here, however, the similarities ended. The Germans were not refugees from religious persecution, rather they had left their homes to escape deprivation, or in the interests of economic advancement. Although most of them signed up as soldiers, some of them brought with them previously learnt skills and literacy. Many of the itinerant school-masters were Germans. For these individuals the Cape did present opportunities and there are 'rags to riches' success stories amongst the German immigrants. For them the process of acculturation was facilitated by similarities of custom, culture and language with the Dutch. The barrier to merging was therefore lower and easier to cross than even for the French, whose language, albeit held in high regard by Dutch society in the Netherlands, was not close to Dutch. The religious factor seems to have been less important than in the case of the French. The lack of families and the low likelihood of marrying a woman of German extraction was, however, crucial. The Germans were typically single men, who arrived individually rather than in groups, already accustomed to communicating with the Dutch on board ship and in the garrison, and prepared to find work in the port or in the interior on the farms. Their chances of marriage were not good, but their status as ranking above that of the slaves and Khoekhoen could make them more attractive to women of those communities. Many individual stories of accommodation and adjustment added up to the overall pattern of blending in. For new-comers to the Cape, there was little advantage to be had from being different and this created a pressure to conform. The advantages of human contact and communication would have outweighed the cost of doing this in a language not quite their own.

7.4. For the Slaves, the Outcome was Language Loss and Language Shift

The case of the slaves is more complex than that of the French or the Germans. To start with, they represented a whole range of cultures. Even if we group them into slaves from India, from the archipelago, from Madagascar and from Africa, the diversity is marked. Their languages were typologically distant from the European languages of the French, as were their cultures. For the Asian slaves, the institution of slavery may have been known: debt slavery and slavery as a consequence of war existed in the area. Their experience of slavery at the Cape depended on various factors. For some of them, it was/could be temporary, but manumission was not common at the Cape. There are various ways of grouping the slaves and each of these sheds insight in a different way on their language situation. First of all, they can be split along occupational lines into

domestic slaves and agricultural slaves. For the domestic slaves, close contact with their owners and adequate exposure to the Dutch was likely. For the agricultural slaves, and those involved in doing the hard labour of the settlement, such as collecting firewood or clearing ditches, such contact was less. It also meant more contact with other slaves, for the duration of their lives. Their chances of living on to an old age were limited as slave mortality was high. Significantly for the genesis of creoles, the size of the slave groups was generally small. In the case of masters owning many slaves, the chances were higher that they also owned several farms, and the slaves would be spread thinly. It was only in the case of the Company-owned slaves that conditions may have been conducive for community building and the creation of a common culture. Another way of approaching the slave community is to look at their geographic distribution. Three different spheres can be identified: slaves living in town, possibly with opportunity to mingle with others, with a wider range of possible occupations (from fishing, to construction crafts, to retail trade of foodstuffs, in addition to being in the homes or on the fields), slaves living on the wine and wheat farms, possibly in groups and with some contact with their fellows at harvest-time; and slaves living out on the borders of the colony as it expanded, in relative isolation but possibly more integrated into the households of their masters. The final way of categorising the slaves has to do with whether they arrived at the Cape from elsewhere or were born into slavery there. Cape-born slaves had advantages, such as seldom being sold, having more access to education (especially if they were born in the Slave Lodge), and being better acculturated generally to Dutch society. The incidence of unacknowledged genetic ties with their masters is hard to estimate, but certainly existed, as did marriage across the colour bar, which appears not to have been such a barrier in those times. In a pioneer society with few marriageable women, marrying 'up' in society was a real opportunity for women. For these women, knowledge of Dutch could mean their acceptance in the church (and therefore as a legal wife) and in society. It would be in the interests of their children to learn Dutch as their primary language. This straightforward link between personal advantage and proficiency in Dutch meant that the community of 'Europeans' was soon a community of people with some European blood. Moreover, the logic of the economics of slavery at the Cape meant that many slave-owners could afford but one or two slaves. Their need for human contact and communication on both sides would have made it imperative for the slaves to learn either Dutch or a lingua franca as soon as possible. The choices made in this regard by only a few individuals are available to us through court records, and from these it appears that Dutch and the

lingua francas of the East (some form of Malay or Portuguese) were known to the slaves, to varying degrees, to the end of the VOC period. Some slaves would have brought the lingua francas of the East with them, especially in the early years when many slaves originated in India, where Portuguese had previously made much headway. Since the VOC servants travelled the trade routes, it is possible that for those with experience of speaking Malay or Portuguese of some sort to slaves in the East, this was a custom to be kept at the Cape as well. Nevertheless, this required effort on their part and there seems to be no reason to suppose that such a custom would have been widespread, even in Cape Town.

7.5. For the Khoekhoen , the Outcome was Language Loss and Language Shift

The needs and interests of the Company had a devastating effect on the traditional life-style of the Khoekhoen – previously, owning cattle had been the outward sign of wealth and offered security as regards physical survival, now the cattle had value as a commodity. For the Khoekhoen, the Dutch social and economic order was incomprehensible and their lack of understanding contributed to their not being able to find suitable strategies for response. The combined effect of culture shock, cattle disease, smallpox and interethnic violence resulted in their social and political structure collapsing by about 1720, at least in the area of the south-western Cape. Two main directions were taken: progressive detribalisation and accommodation to European society, and departure, to less fertile land in the interior. For those who stayed, the process involved language shift with bilingualism. In the years to about 1700 few Khoekhoen learned Dutch, and they functioned as interpreters, but by mid-century the Khoekhoen dialects had started to disappear in the more settled regions. On the farms, common interests, common dangers, and common life-style served to move the two communities, the Khoekhoen and the burghers, closer to each other and freely moving Khoekhoen were becoming a rarity within the colony. For a transition period, the Khoekhoen had access to their own L1 and were therefore able to pass on their language in a normal intergenerational way.

In the late eighteenth century, the *Oorlams*, Cape-Dutch speaking Khoekhoen who had worked for the burghers, and the *Basters*, of mixed slave, Khoekhoen and European origin moved to the edges of the colony and beyond, establishing their own communities and their own distinctive dialect, usually referred to as Orange River Afrikaans. Roberge explains that “the differences between Cape and Orange River

Afrikaans are attributable to the fact that historically, the greater the distance from Cape Town, the larger the proportion of Khoekhoe among the speakers of Cape Dutch (Roberge 2001:83).

The process of language shift among the Khoekhoen differed from that of the slaves, most of whom had been forcibly deprived of their own mother tongue. Nevertheless, by the end of the VOC period, the slaves and the Khoekhoen had been forced into a similar status, one characterised by subservience. The register of language used by their employers/owners when dealing with these domestic servants or agricultural workers would have been the same. Children may have played together, but with maturity, the status gap would have been reflected in their language use. Later intensification of race based societal stratification contributed to creating a joint caste for the descendants of the once independent Khoekhoen and the slaves.

7.6. For the Dutch, the Outcome was Language Maintenance and Language Spread

The social group most associated with the power of the VOC was able to keep its connection to the language brought from Europe. So much so, that later debates about language in South Africa would include the opinion that Dutch should be retained as the language of the colony. It was to take many years of *Taalstryd* (language struggle), for the reinterpretation of the provision for Dutch as an official language in the Union of South Africa as including Afrikaans. Metropolitan Dutch had many factors in its favour, but for us the fact that this was an option at all indicates the degree of retention of Dutch at the Cape. As the language of power, administration and religion, and as the language linking the scattered burghers to the Netherlands, Dutch exercised a conservative influence. This influence was reinforced by the regular influx of transients, and by the VOC servants stationed at the Cape. The men who, in dribs and drabs but relatively constantly throughout the VOC period, decided to leave the service of the Company took their own dialects with them. Much of the dialectology of Afrikaans has centred on the identification of the dialects that were present at the Cape. In particular, the idiolect of Jan van Riebeeck has received attention, since his influence on the founding group could have been considerable (Van der Merwe 1968a, 1968b). The importance of the first dialects spoken has been emphasised by Mufwene (1996:84) who points to the fact that the European languages heard by the slaves and indigenous peoples was not that of the metropole, but rather the non-standard vernaculars of the

founding population which led to features of these being selected over competing dialects.

The variety of dialects present at the Cape from the start, the prior koineisation that had influenced the vernacular of the port cities from whence the ships departed, the VOC experience in the East, and the pervasive influence of the Dutch 'spirit of commerce' affected the linguistic culture of the Company, its servants and its settlements. It is suggested that an attitude considering language as a means to an end, a solution to a communication problem, which could be adapted according to need, prevailed above normative ideas about language purity. This was only strengthened by the additional challenges presented by communicating with the Khoekhoen and the slaves, and the 'foreign' Europeans. The distinguishing features of Afrikaans can be seen as the outcome of the influence of its superstratum, Dutch, its substrata, Khoekhoe and Malayo/Portuguese, and the interlanguage varieties of its learners. The situation in the twenty-first century shows points of similarity, where the international language of global communication, English is being treated in much the same way by its speakers and learners.

The processes in the focal point of this dissertation did not come to an end with the VOC. When the British arrived, the overwhelming majority of the Europeans at the Cape spoke 'Dutch', as did many of the Khoekhoen and the slaves. English, however, was soon made the official language (1828). In the 1830s and 1840s, about 15,000 Boers (or Afrikaners) left the Cape and British rule to set up their own republics in the interior. Knowledge of metropolitan Dutch in the Cape Colony declined, whilst the vernacular Afrikaans gained ground. Muslims schools in Cape Town printed books in this language. The 1825 publication of a dialogue of Afrikaans as it was spoken in the Cape provides one impression of the language (see appendix).

The complex mapping of the multilingual society at the Cape from 1652-1795, focussing on the groups of speakers and their interactions, and the linguistic outcomes of these, can provide researchers with a complementary sociolinguistic foundation for historical linguistic research. For the study of societal multilingualism and language policy, such a historically situated description and analysis illuminates the processes and characteristics of such linguistic settings. In an age of globalisation, the effects of the previous wave of globalisation offer useful insights.

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Note: This text contains typographical and layout corections.

Chapter 8

A disszertáció magyar nyelvű tézisei

INDOKLÁS ÉS ÁTTEKINTÉS

Magyar szülőktől Dél-Afrikában született és jelenleg Magyarországon élő polgárként a 2010. évi labdarúgó világbajnokság okán felkavaró élményekben volt részem. Százmilliókkal együtt én is néztem a labdarúgó mérkőzéseket, de ellentétben másokkal, nem elsősorban a csapatok erőfeszítései kötötték le a figyelmemet, hanem egy olyan múltnak fel-felvillanó képei, melyet már magam mögött hagytottnak hittem: a földnek és az égnek a színe, az emberek mozgása, amikor spontán táncra perdülnek, a számtalan árnyalatú és formájú arcon felvillanó széles mosoly. Váratlanul érintett meg valamiféle nosztalgia vagy inkább honvágy, és valahogy helyénvaló volt, hogy íróasztalomnál ülve pont ennek a csodálatos országnak a lakóit és nyelveit tanulmányoztam, nemcsak sok ezer mérföld, hanem immár mérhetetlen időbeli távlatból is.

A dátum – 2010 – két okból is jelentős: egyrészt, mert ebben az évben volt száz éve, hogy létrejött a Dél-Afrikai Unió, másrészt, mert az alapító okiratban lefektették, hogy az újonnan létrehozott államban a holland nyelvet ugyanazok a jogok illetik meg, mint az angolt. Azóta Dél-Afrika megújult, és most a nyelvi egyenlőség kérdése sokkal több nyelvet érint, és még több, e nyelveket beszélőt. Már ebből a néhány sorból is látható, hogy Dél Afrika eseménydús és színes történelemmel rendelkező ország. Egy olyan történelemmel, melyet csak azóta jegyez a história, amióta az európai Óvilág betette oda a lábát az úgynevezett Felfedezések Korában. Az persze máig nem teljesen világos, hogy a bennszülöttek mit fedeztek fel az európaiakban. Ami azonban világos, hogy a Fokföldön 1652-től kezdődően hanyattatások között kialakuló társadalomban különböző származású és nyelvű emberek gyűltek össze, és ennek a találkozásnak az egyik eredménye lett az a nyelv, melyet később afrikánsznak hívtak. Ez a számomra közhelynek számító tény korábban nem volt része tudományos munkásságomnak, és csak a doktori szigorlatomon vizsgáztatók kitartó bátorítása ébresztett rá, hogy itt valójában semmiféle közhelyről nincs szó. Sőt, valószínűsíthető, hogy a kollégák közül is sokan szeretnének többet tudni az afrikánsz nyelvről, annak eredetéről és beszélőiről. Miután a szigorlatom egybeesett azzal a szerencsétlen ténnyel, hogy az eredeti kutatási területem – tartalmi tárgyak oktatása főiskolai szinten a második nyelv oktatásának keretein belül Magyarországon – megszűnt azzal a tanszékkel együtt, melyen a

vizsgálathoz szükséges oktatás történt, a biztatás, hogy figyelmemet az afrikánsz nyelv és Dél-Afrika felé irányítsam, pont a kellő időben jött.

A kezdetektől világos volt számomra, hogy érdeklődésem a dél-afrikai szociolingvisztikai helyzetre irányul, a kétnyelvűség és a nyelvpolitika oldaláról közelítve az afrikánsz nyelvhez. A született dél-afrikai önbizalmával felvértezve ugyan, de be kellett látnom, hogy valójában milyen hiányosak a témával kapcsolatos ismereteim. Ahogy nekiláttam a téma általános háttérének kutatásához, egyre messzebb sodródtam vissza a múltba: gyermekkorom és fiatal felnőtt korom időszakát kezdtem először vizsgálni, azonban hamarosan rájöttem, hogy az akkor kialakult képem az afrikánszról nem volt feltétlenül teljes. Ahogy elkezdtem ezt a képet kiegészíteni a felmerült kérdésekre való válaszokkal, lépésről-lépésre mentem visszafelé az időben, míg arra a következtetésre jutottam, hogy a korai évek, az alapok megértése elengedhetetlenül szükséges ahhoz, hogy ki lehessen bogozni a jelen helyzet gyakran ellentmondásos és kusza szálait, valamint hogy a korai idők önmagukban érdemesek egy önálló vizsgálatra. Így születtek meg ennek a dolgozatnak a körvonalai. A vizsgált időszak tekintetében a tények feltárása, a szociolingvisztikai helyzet feltérképezése és elemzése jó alapot biztosíthat azoknak, akik e téma iránt érdeklődnek.

Ha a szociolingvisták kísérleteket tudnának végezni, akkor Fokföld 1652-ben, amikor egy holland cég szálláshelyet létesített ott, nagyon hasonlított egy kísérlethez, amelynek a menetét a következőképpen lehetne leírni: „Végy egy maroknyi embert különböző földrészekről és kultúrákból, akik a társadalmi és gazdasági fejlődés különböző fokán állnak és különböző nyelveket beszélnek; adj nekik különböző társadalmi szerepeket, majd keverd őket jól össze, és helyezd őket egy cég irányítása alá. Aztán figyeld meg, hogy mi történik.” Szociolingvisták nem tudnak kísérleteket végezni, és bár a valós élet megadja az összefüggéseket, a megfigyeléshez szükséges tudományos feltételeket nem, olyannyira, hogy amit tudni szeretnénk, az rejtve maradhat előttünk. Ugyanakkor vannak előnyei a múlt szociolingvisztikai vizsgálatainak. Igaz, a rendelkezésre álló adatok hagynak kívánnivalót maguk után – az adatok általában hiányosak –, azonban az eredmények már részei a történelemnek. A társadalomtudományok gyenge pontja a mai napig, hogy nem tudják megmondani, mi fog történni a jövőben, ezért a múlt vizsgálata lehetőséget nyújt arra, hogy arra összpontosítsunk, ami volt, és abba betekintést nyerjünk, ezáltal megértsük a jelent és következtessünk arra, ami a jövőben lehetséges. Az évek távlata elősegítheti a vizsgálat semlegességét.

Az értékes Fokföld összetett szociolingvisztikai helyzetét tárgyalja 1652 és 1795 között, különös tekintettel az akkor ott élő, különböző nyelveket beszélők csoportjaira annak érdekében, hogy érthetővé válják, hogy az adott helyzet hogyan érintette az egyes beszélőközösségeket. Egy része az ezekről a csoportokról rendelkezésre álló adatoknak nem közvetlenül releváns a nyelv és nyelvhasználat szempontjából, azonban ezek szociolingvisztikai összefüggésbe helyezésével azt a célt követtük, hogy betekintést adjunk az egyes csoportok makroszociolingvisztikai helyzetébe egy soknyelvű

társadalomban. A nyelvi kultúra, mely kialakult Fokföldön, ennek részét képezi. A társadalom kereteit a hatalmas, nemzetközileg is kereskedő VOC – a holland cég, mely a szálláshelyet alapította –, adta meg. Nyelvpolitikája és annak kihatásai ennek a disszertációnak másik központi témája. Annak érdekében, hogy érthetővé váljanak a nyelvi és szociolingvisztikai folyamatok, melyek egy helyi nyelvváltozat kialakulásához vezettek – és amit a XVIII. század közepétől kezdve afrikánszként azonosítottak (Raidt 1983) –, szükséges azoknak a társadalmi tényezőknek a részletes ismerete, amelyek befolyásolták a nyelveket, a beszélők nyelvhasználatát, és szükségszerű ellensúlyát képezik a nyelv történeti-nyelvészeti analízisének. Minden nyelv szakadatlanul változik, így azoknak a nyelveknek is megvolt a saját múltjuk, amelyek Fokföldön megjelentek.

A disszertáció első része a status quo ante helyzetet tárgyalja, ami a kívülről érkező nyelveket illeti, és elhelyezi az eseményeket a globalizáció első fázisának keretei között – ez a téma az egész disszertáció tartalmát átszövi. Azokat a nyelveket, melyek már jelen voltak Fokföldön, külön tárgyaljuk. Ezt követően tömören áttekintjük az 1652 és 1795 közötti időszakot társadalomtörténeti szempontból. A Grice-i mennyiségi maximát nehéz volt alkalmazni, így a megfelelő mennyiségű háttérinformáció beemelése a disszertációba nem bizonyult könnyű feladatnak. Ha túl sok, úgy az olvasó türelmét kérem, ha viszont nem elegendő, akkor bízom benne, hogy a megadott referenciák segíteni fognak a hézagok kitöltésében. A 4. és 5. fejezet képezi a triptichont, a nyelvi helyzet háromszárnyú figuratív képét, melynek első szárnya az európai szempontot, a második a keleti, a harmadik a helyi afrikai aspektust ábrázolja. Mindegyik szárny vizsgálatánál figyelmet fogunk szentelni a részleteknek, melyekből az egész összeáll: Európánál az európai nyelveknek, a Kelet esetében a származási helyeken alkalmazott több lingua franca lesznek vizsgálatunk tárgyai, míg Afrikánál elsősorban a khoesan (hottentotta) nyelvekre összpontosítunk. Azok a nyelvek, melyek a vizsgált időszak vége felé kezdtek szerepet játszani, mint a bantu nyelvek és az angol, csak szükség szerint kerülnek megemlítésre. Azzal, hogy az értekezés az 1652 és 1795 közötti periódus áttekintésére szorítkozik, lehetőség nyílik arra, hogy részletesen megvizsgáljuk a helyzetet, amely az afrikánsz nyelv bölcsője volt. Körülbelül a XVIII. század közepétől a bantu nyelvekkel való érintkezés kezdett befolyással lenni a nyelv beszélőire, majd a britek megjelenése a saját nyelvükkel 1795-től kezdve új és erős nyomást gyakorolt a kialakulóban lévő afrikánszra, fessegetve fennmaradási képességeinek határait. A nyelv történetének következő fázisa a britek első fokföldi okkupációjának idejére tehető, mely időben valószínűsíthető, hogy az afrikánsz éppen az angol nyelv ellenében és a tőle való elkülönződéstől motiválva erősödött, ennek a kifejtése azonban meghaladja ennek a disszertációnak a kereteit.

Szerkezetét tekintve is kihívásokkal szembesített a disszertáció: a tudományos diszciplínák mesterséges határain átívelve a De Swaan (2001) által megfogalmazott globális nyelvi rendszer analitikus elvéből táplálkozik. A kétnyelvű helyzetek tanulmányozása során használt vizsgálati elveket alkalmaztuk a csoportokról szóló részekben, és a nyelvpolitika tanulmányozása adta felismerések segítettek a fókusznak kezelhető méretűvé való leszűkítésében. Továbbá ott vannak a nyelvek a maguk változásoktól vezérelt átmeneti állapotában. Ezeket a szerteágazó tartalmi elemeket szem előtt tartva arra a következtetésre jutottunk, hogy a szokásos szerkezeti felosztás –

ti. egy elméleti háttér és a belőle fakadó metodológia alkalmazása – nem kivihető jelen disszertáció esetében. Ezért egy alternatív, gazdaságosabb szerkezetet állítottunk fel, melyben az elméleti ismereteket azon a helyen vezetjük be, ahol az adott téma vizsgálata ezt szükségessé teszi. A vizsgált téma terjedelme, ha tágabb értelemben nézzük, meghaladja egy disszertáció kereteit, ezért be kell vallani, hogy a döntések arról, hogy mit tartalmazzon az értekezés és mi maradjon ki belőle, csak annyira lehettek helyesek, amennyire azokat a szerző helyesen hozta meg saját megítélése alapján. Irányvonalként a Holm (2003:21) által javasolt azon tényezők listáját alkalmaztuk, melyek egy ilyen típusú tudományos írásmű szempontjából relevánsak. Megkíséreltük ezekről a tényezőkről a lehető legtöbb információt összegyűjteni, valamint azt, hogy ezeket az információkat a lehető legkoherensebb formában prezentáljuk és értelmezzük. Némi módosításokkal a figyelembe vett tényezők a következők:

- a. a beszélők származása
- b. a beszélők egymáshoz viszonyított aránya
- c. a korai társadalmi kapcsolatok természete a beszélők között
- d. annak valószínűsége, hogy a csoportok valamelyike érintkezett-e, beszélt-e kreollal vagy pidginnel
- e. demográfiai változások
- f. társadalmi, gazdasági és politikai változások és ezek csoportközi hatása
- g. bármely létező kasztrendszernek merevsége, akár faji, akár más alapon
- h. oktatás, hozzáférhetőség, a tanítás tényleges nyelve
- i. kommunikáció – a földrajzi izoláció foka
- j. bármely változás a csoportok státusában

A TÁRSADALMI KÉTNyelVŰSÉG

A kétnyelvűség helyzetének feltérképezése, illetve megértése alapvető szemléletváltást tett szükségessé a nyelvészetben, miszerint a jelenség tanulmányozása és kutatása során kiemelt figyelmet kaptak annak társadalmi és pszichológiai vonatkozásai, szemben az addig uralkodó tisztán nyelvészeti, különösen a történeti nyelvészeti megközelítéssel. Ez a szemléletváltozás az 1950-es években kezdett körvonalazódni. Ebben az időben látott napvilágot két, a kétnyelvűség kutatását megalapozó és azóta már megkerülhetetlennek bizonyult mű: Weinreich (1953) *Languages in Contact: Findings and Problems*, valamint Haugen (1953) *The Norwegian Language in America: A Study in Bilingual Behaviour*. Bartha (1999:25) Haugen két kulcsfontosságú meglátására mutat rá:

[Haugen] „a kétnyelvűséget nem nyelvek, hanem beszélők kontaktusaként értelmezte. Felismerte, hogy a kétnyelvű beszélők (és közösségek) nyelvi rendszereiben bekövetkező változások hogyanjáért és mikéntjéért a nyelven kívüli tényezők épp annyira felelősek”.

Ezzel a megállapításával természetesen nem a történeti nyelvészet és a dialektológia érvényességét, illetve relevanciáját vonja kétségbe, hanem kiegészíti azt.

Ugyanakkor teret nyit az interdiszciplináris megközelítésnek, miszerint azok a tudományterületek, melyek a társadalommal foglalkoznak, segíthetnek a kétnyelvűség leírásában és megértésében. Ezek a diszciplínák, különösen a politológia, szociológia, kulturális-társadalmi antropológia és a közgazdaságtan, sajátos elméleti és módszertani megközelítésükkel gazdagíthatják a kétnyelvűség kutatását. Mindez természetesen érvényes mind a közösségi, mind az egyéni kétnyelvűségre, hiszen a „beszélők” hangsúlyozása ezt egyértelművé teszi – ebben a dolgozatban az utóbbi azonban csak áttételesen van jelen. A dolgozatban, mely megkísérli a vizsgált időszak soknyelvűségi helyzetét elemezni, nem annyira az egyénben zajló folyamatokat és a nyelvészetiileg motivált jelenségeket vesszük górcső alá, mint inkább hangsúlyosan a politikai, gazdasági és társadalomtörténeti jelenségek, befolyások és hatásaik kerülnek feltárássra. E megközelítés megalapozottságát támasztja alá Thomason és Kaufman (1988:4) megfogalmazása, miszerint:

„...the history of a language is a function of the history of its speakers, and not an independent phenomenon that can be thoroughly studied without reference to the social context in which it is embedded.” [a nyelv története beszélői történelmének függvénye, nem pedig attól elkülönülő jelenség, melyet mélyrehatóan tanulmányozhatnánk anélkül, hogy utalnánk a társadalmi kontextusra, melybe be van ágyazva.]

A szerzők megközelítése azonban nem szociolingvisztikai, mivel, ahogy írják: „vizsgáltunk olyan eseteket, ahol érintkezés által kiváltott nyelvváltozás történt, és korreláltuk a nyelvészeti eredményeket azzal (a néha nagyon csekély) ismeretanyaggal, mely a különböző érintkezési helyzetek társadalomtörténeti körülményeiről rendelkezésre állt” (1988:4). Jelen dolgozat célja pontosan ezeknek a körülményeknek a széleskörű összegyűjtése és feltárása volt, ezáltal egészítve ki szociolingvisztikai vonatkozásokkal a számos történeti nyelvészeti elemzést.

A korabeli dél-afrikai nyelvi helyzet megismerésében az egyik szűkítő tényező a nyelvi változásokra való összpontosítás és nyelvtörténeti elemzés. A másik tényező ideológiai alapú: az afrikánsz nyelv XX. században végrehajtott standardizálása, kibővítése és státuszba emelése rendkívüli társadalmi erőfeszítést igényelt. A társadalom mozgósítása az elérendő eredmények érdekében összetett jelenség, melynek nélkülözhetetlen része az elszántság és az elkötelezettség. Az afrikánsz nyelv támogatói ezt egy tágabb ideológiai tudatparadigmán belül fejtették ki, tegyük hozzá, sikeresen. Azt, hogy ez mekkora eredmény volt – bár nem egyedülálló, ha csak a malajziai *Bahasa Indonéziára* vagy a héber nyelv újjáélesztésére gondolunk –, világosan szemlélteti a számos hasonló szándékú, de bukásra ítélt kísérletet szerte Afrikában és másutt a világban. Az ideológia számos pontját (pl. hogy az afrikánsz a „fehér ember nyelve”) támadó elemzők szintén az afrikánsz nyelvre és az afrikánerekre összpontosítottak. Pedig az afrikánsz nyelv bölcsője, a XVII–XVIII. századi Fokföld, számos nyelvnek adott otthont, és csak a vizsgált időszak vége felé alakul ki az a nyelv, melyet már hagyományosan afrikánsznak hívunk. A korabeli nyelvi helyzetet azonban tágabb megközelítésben is vizsgálhatjuk, nem kizárólag azt nézve, hogy mivé alakult, hanem azt is, hogy honnan jött az afrikánsz nyelv. Fokföldön az adott korszakban számos, különböző nyelvet beszélő népcsoport élt,

melyek részben szöges ellentétben álltak egymással, és akiknek a nyelve is esetenként egymástól távoli nyelvcsaládokból származott. A jelen dolgozatban követett megközelítés semlegesebben tárja fel a korabeli többnyelvű nyelvi helyzetet Dél-Afrikában. Fishman (1965) már klasszikusnak számító írásában arra a kérdésre keresi a választ, hogy „Ki beszél, milyen nyelven, kihez és mikor?” Ezt a kérdésfeltevést nem csak a nyelvválasztással kapcsolatban tesszük magunkévá ebben a dolgozatban, hanem az alaphelyzet feltárásában is alkalmazzuk. Fishman vizsgálja a beszédhelyzeteket és -témákat is, melyeknek jelen dolgozat is figyelmet szentel olyan terjedelemben, amilyenben ezek makro-szociolingvisztikai szempontból rekonstruálhatók.

A VOC NYELVPOLITIKÁJA

Hatalmi monopóliumból következően a VOC volt az az intézmény, amelyről joggal feltételezhetjük, hogy létezett nyelvpolitikája. Valóban vannak erre utaló források, mint ahogy azokra a kísérletekre is, – igaz, gyakran csak a látszat kedvéért –, hogy átültessék ezt a politikát a gyakorlatba.

A XX. században a nyelvi tervezés és nyelvpolitika összetett szakiránnyá fejlődött, melynek felismerései és kutatási eredményei kiindulási pontként szolgálnak számunkra a történelmi események és folyamatok vizsgálatához. Ennek a szakterületnek a terminológiáját gyakran következtetlenül használják a kutatók (vö. Kaplan 1990:3-13; Kaplan & Baldauf 1997; Ferguson 2004). Ricento (2000:23) a „*nyelvpolitikát*” mint magasabb rendű fogalmat használja, mely magába olvasztja a *nyelvtervezést*”, míg Kaplan és Baldauf (1997:xi) inkább úgy tekintenek a nyelvpolitikára és a nyelvtervezésre, mint a „rendszerezett nyelvvaltozási folyamat” két aspektusára. Ebben a folyamatban a nyelvtervezés

egy, a kormány által végzett, jól észlelhető tevékenység (egyszerűen azon okból, mivel mélyreható változásokat idéz elő a társadalomban) annak érdekében, hogy előmozdítsa egy tervszerű nyelvi változást a beszélők egyes közösségeiben. A nyelvtervezés egy nyelvpolitika törvénybe iktatásához vezet (a kormány vagy más hatóság vagy arra felhatalmazott személy által), vagy éppen utóbbi által irányított. Ezért a nyelvi helyzetet is vizsgálhatjuk ezen keretek között. Egy nyelvpolitika nem más, mint ötletek, törvények, jogszabályok, szabályozások és bevett gyakorlatok összessége, melynek célja, hogy megvalósítsa a tervezett nyelvi változást a társadalomban, egyes csoportokban vagy a rendszerben.

A hangsúlybeli különbségek ellenére ezek a kutatók egyetértenek abban, hogy az elemzéseknek és kutatásoknak másra is kell irányulniuk, mint a kormány és az államigazgatási szervek hivatalos vagy nemhivatalos jogi aktusaira. Ki kell terjedniük a 'nem-tervezett' nyelvpolitikára és -tervezésre (Baldauf 1994:82-83), a „történelmi és kulturális eseményekre és folyamatokra, melyek meghatározták és továbbra is meghatározzák a társadalom magatartását és gyakorlatát, ami a nyelv használatát, elsajátítását és státuszát illeti” (Ricento 2000:23). Kaplan és Baldauf (1997:59-83) áttekintést adnak a nyelvtervezés céljairól, melyek közül a nyelv megőrzése és

terjesztése releváns vizsgált tárgyunkkal kapcsolatban. Ezek segítségével azokra a módszerekre összpontosíthatunk, amelyekkel a VOC igyekezett állandósítani és kikényszeríteni egy olyan nyelvi viselkedési mintát, amely megfelelt nemzeti, politikai, társadalmi és gazdasági törekvéseinek (Shohamy 2006:3).

Tudományos munkák gyakran a kihirdetett és kézzel fogható nyelvpolitikára összpontosítanak, azonban „megpróbálni megmagyarázni fejlődéseket a nyelvpolitikában azzal, hogy kizárólag a kihirdetettre és kézzel foghatóra összpontosítunk olyan, mintha azt hinnénk, hogy az Egyesült Királyságnak nincsen alkotmánya csak azért, mert nincs leírva, vagy hogy nem léteznek jogok a *common law* országokban csak azért, mert nincs egy Nyilatkozatuk, melyben azokat leírták” (Lo Bianco 1999:39). Schiffman (1996) a nyelvi kultúrából [*linguistic culture*] – mely kivétel nélkül a nyilvános nyelvpolitika alapja – fakadó kevésbé nyilvánvaló területekre irányítja a figyelmet. *Nyelvi kultúra* alatt „a viselkedési formákat, előfeltevéseket, kulturális formákat, előítéleteket, a népi hit rendszereit, magatartási normákat, sztereotípiákat, a nyelvről való gondolkodásmódot és egy adott nyelvvel kapcsolatba hozható vallási-történelmi körülményeket” érti. Továbbá azt állítja, hogy ezek a hitek „részei azoknak a társadalmi feltételeknek, melyek befolyásolják a nyelvmegtartást és -átadást (Schiffman: 1996:5). Wiley (idézi Tollefson-t 1991) a Történelmi-Strukturális Analízis alkalmazását javasolja, mely szerint a nyelvi konfliktusokban a társadalompolitikai konfliktusok öltenek testet, és azt sürgeti, hogy meg kellene vizsgálni a csoportok és az uralkodó ideológia között történelmileg kialakult konfliktust annak érdekében, hogy ennek mechanizmusa érthetővé váljék.

Az oktatáspolitikai eszközök a hatóságnak, mellyel befolyásolni tudja a nyelvi jogokhoz való hozzáférést és a társadalmi kilátásokat. Politikai és kulturális irányítás céljából egyaránt alkalmazzák, épp úgy, mint az etnolingvisztikai csoportok közötti státuszbeli különbségek és politikai konfliktus szítására, fenntartására vagy csökkentésére. A VOC nyelvpolitikája (vagy politikái) a Csendes-óceáni szigeteken és különösen Fokföldön visszatükrözte és gerjesztette a társadalmi csoportok közötti különbségeket, valamint kifejezésre juttatta a VOC társadalmi rendre vonatkozó elképzeléseit. Az alábbiakban bemutatjuk azon kevés fennmaradt kifejezett intézkedést, melyek a nyelvhasználatra és a holland nyelv terjesztésére, illetve használatától való távoltásra vonatkoznak. Célunk ezzel az, hogy általában rávilágítsunk a VOC nyelvpolitikájára, és hogy érthetővé váljék, miért bukott meg Keleten minden kísérlete a holland nyelv meghonosítására, és miért tudott Fokföldön kialakulni egy helyi színezetű változata a hollandnak. Annak története, hogyan vált ez a dialektus az angol mellett először az Unió, majd később a Dél-Afrikai Köztársaság hivatalos nyelvéné, a jelen dolgozatban tárgyalt időszak folytatása. Annak ismerete nélkül azonban, hogy az afrikánsz honnan jött és hogyan, aligha értelmezhető sikertörténet akkor is, ha ez a sikertörténet átmeneti jellegűnek bizonyulhat. Ezeknek az ismereteknek a birtokában világosabbá válik jelenlegi státusza és helyzete. A múltnak a feldolgozása elengedhetetlen ahhoz, hogy meg lehessen érteni a jelent, és hogy megbízható alapokon nyugvó prognózist készíthessünk a lehetséges jövőbeli nyelvfelépítés irányáról.

AZ AFRIKÁNSZ NYELV TÖRTÉNETE

A nyelvtörténet az élő nyelvek változását, a változás mibenlétét, okait tanulmányozza. Az afrikánsz nyelv központi fontosságúvá válása – mind politikai, mind társadalmi és kulturális okokra visszavezethetően – a XX. századi Dél-Afrikában magával hozta a nyelv alapos vizsgálatát, az egyes nyelvészek aktív részvételét a tudatos standardizáció és nyelvpolitika folyamataiban. A vernakuláris holland 'konyhanyelvből' hivatalos nyelvet kovácsoltak, kitérve a nyelvtervezés mindhárom modelljére: a korpusztervezésre, a státusztervezésre és az elsajátítás-tervezésre (Cooper 1989), valamint ezeknek minden alfajára. A nyelvészek gyakran fontos szerepet játszottak ebben a folyamatban, aktivistaként. A vitatott témákról indult párbeszéd esetenként személyeskedésbe ment át. Még az afrikánsz nyelv apró részleteire is akadt lelkes kutató. Ily módon az afrikánsz nyelv leírása, a szótárak elkészítése, az egyes szavak etimológiája, a nyelvművelés és a nyelv oktatása (mint anyanyelv, második nyelv és idegen nyelv), mind figyelmet kaptak. A nyelvtörténeti elemzések rendkívül heves vitákat váltottak ki. Legfőbb oka ennek az 1897-ben és 1899-ben (ill. módosított formájában 1923-ban) Hesseling, kreolista nyelvész által felállított elmélet volt, miszerint az afrikánsz, bár holland eredetű, túl gyorsan alakult ki ahhoz, hogy csupán belső hatásra változott volna. A külső hatás, amely érte, fokozott szubsztrátum befolyásként jelentkezett, ami nyelvkeveredéshez vezetett. Szerinte a szubsztrátum a malayo-portugál volt, ami véleménye szerint elterjedt nyelv volt a rabszolgák és a tengerészek körében. Az afrikánsz féltreol maradt a holland nyelv, a vallás és a lakosok 'színérzékenysége' miatt. Abban az időben a köztudatban – és még nyelvész körökben is – a kreol nyelvek még 'primitívnek' számítottak, és Hesseling vélekedése nagy vitát váltott ki. Ez a vita a mai napig nem csitult el teljesen. Némi túlzással azt lehetne állítani, hogy azok a nyelvészek, akik a holland dialektusok belső változásaiban látják a nyelv fejlődését, csak abban látják: akármilyen jelenségről van is szó, keresnek neki egy germán dialektust, amiben megtalálható. Másfelől, azok a nyelvészek, akik kreolizációs folyamatot látnak az afrikánsz múltjában, minden jelenségre ezt alátámasztó magyarázatot keresnek. Mára lassanként csitulni látszanak az indulatok, és a tudományos vélemények udvariasabb és árnyaltabb kifejtése sok új szempontra világít rá. Ezekben a nyelvtörténeti eszmefuttatásokban általában található egy hosszabb-rövidebb leírás, mely elhelyezi a tárgyalt jelenséget térben, időben és társadalomban. Ebben az értekezésben egy hasonló, de fordított stratégiát választottuk: a körültekintő és árnyalt szociolingvisztikai leírás/elemzés mellé helyenként odakíváncozott egy kiegészítés a nyelvtörténeti oldalról. Mivel a dolgozat tárgyából fakadóan egy nagyon összetett képet kívántam festeni a korabeli fokföldi nyelvhelyzetről, nagyon sok háttérinformációra volt szükségem. Az előnye egy visszatekintő tanulmánynak az, hogy tudni lehet a folyamatok kimenetét, de ezeket is szem előtt kell tartani az elemzés során. Forráshoz jutni kihívás volt, különösen, mivel sok alapmű, történelmi feldolgozás, amelyre a későbbi kutatók is alapoznak, régebbi kiadás. A nemzetközi könyvkölcsönzésre támaszkodtam, igyekeztem széleskörű forrásokhoz jutni. A már említett eltérő szakmai- és világnézetekből származó véleményeket a tényállást figyelembe véve törekedtem mérlegelni.

A triptichon minden szárnyára és egy adott nyelv beszélőinek mindegyik közösségére lehetségesnek bizonyult olyan kulcstényezők feltárása, melyek elősegítették, vagy éppen hátráltatták a nyelv és a nyelvhasználat változását.

AMI A FRANCIÁKAT ILLETI, AZ EREDMÉNY NYELVVESZTÉS ÉS NYELVCSERE LETT

Az egyetlen egységes bevándorló csoport, amely Fokföldre érkezett, a hugenották voltak, akik létszámukhoz képest aránytalanul nagy hatással voltak az új társadalomra. Kálvinista vallási meggyőződést hoztak magukkal és az azzal járó írástudást; a szakmák egész tárházát - ideértve a borászatot is -, európai gondolkodásmódot, kultúrát és megjelenést; és családjaikat. Ez utóbbi volt az, ami megkülönböztette őket a közösség többi tagjától. Csak a magas rangú VOC tisztviselők vitték magukkal családjaikat, azonban ezeknek a családoknak Fokföld csak időleges kiküldetés volt. A franciák ilyen családba ágyazottsága arra engedte következtetni, hogy magas fokú, természetes, generációk közötti nyelvtadás ment végbe. Miután azonban a francia nyelv két generáció alatt majdnem teljesen kihalt, a kérdés némi magyarázatra szorul. Az egyik ok a VOC tudatos politikájában keresendő, miszerint igyekezett minél nagyobb földrajzi távolságot teremteni a franciául beszélők között, így a szomszédokkal való kommunikáció nyelvi akadályokba ütközött. A hatóságokkal való kapcsolattartáshoz, egy rövid időszaktól eltekintve - amikor a VOC rugalmasságot mutatott a kérdésben -, a holland nyelv ismeretére volt szükség. A társadalomban csak a VOC által és vele lehetett érvényesülni, ami közvetlen motiváció volt a holland nyelv elsajátítására. Megérkezésüktől kezdve a helyi iskolák elősegítették, hogy a közösség gyermekei megtanuljanak hollandul, különösen, mert nem csak franciául beszélő gyermekek jártak oda. Lehetőséget adtak a fiatal generációnak a nyelveken átívelő kapcsolatteremtésre, ami azt eredményezte, hogy mire házasságkötésre került sor, a nyelv már nem volt akadály. Végül utolsó okként meg kell említeni a növekvő feszültséget a telepések és a Kormányzó és csapata között, ami egy erőpróbában csúcsosodott ki, amit a Kormányzó elvesztett, de ami megerősítette a franciák és szomszédjaik közötti szolidaritást. A közösség megtarthatta vallását, melyért oly sokat áldozott, és holland szomszédaival összefogva, a hatóságokkal együttműködve meg tudott teremteni magának egy fenntartható jövőt. Integráns, sőt, meghatározó részévé válhatott az új társadalomnak. Az ár, amit mindezért fizettek, az anyanyelvükről való lemondás volt.

AMI A NÉMETEKET ILLETI, SZÁMUKRA AZ EREDMÉNY NYELVVESZTÉS ÉS NYELVCSERE LETT

A németek kevésbé feltűnően voltak jelen Fokföldön, mint a franciák. Olyannyira, hogy bár meglepő, de a „hollandok” sem voltak mind hollandok, hanem németek. Ugyanakkor az a csoport, melyet itt németnek nevezünk, az sem csak németekből állt, hanem számos skandináv is tagja volt. Éppúgy, mint a franciák, ők is elvesztették nyelvüket, és elmozdultak a holland felé egy kulturális asszimiláció folyamatában. Ahogy a franciáknak, nekik is közös európai gyökereik voltak a hollandokkal, és nekik is az út az önmegevalósításhoz a holland nyelven keresztül vezetett. A hasonlóságok sorának itt

azonban vége. A németek nem vallási üldözés elől menekültek, hanem a nélkülözés, vagy egy jobb anyagi jövő reménye készítette őket otthonuk elhagyására. Bár legtöbbször katonaként érkezett, néhányuk volt szakmája, és írni-olvasni is tudtak. A vándortanárok közül sokan németek voltak. Ezeknek az egyéneknek Fokföld nyújtott lehetőségeket, aminek a bizonyítékai a német bevándorlók sikertörténetei. Az ő kulturális asszimilációjukat a hollandokéhoz hasonló szokások, kultúra és nyelv segítette elő. A beolvadást akadályozó küszöb még alacsonyabb volt és még könnyebben átléphető, mint a franciák esetében, akiknek a nyelvét, bár nagy becsben tartották Hollandiában, nem hasonlították a magukéhoz. A németeknél a vallási tényező kisebb szerepet játszott, mint a franciáknál. Meghatározó volt viszont a családok hiánya és annak valószínűtlensége, hogy a férfiak német feleséget találjanak maguknak. A németek jellemzően nőtlen férfiak voltak, akik általában egyedül és nem csoportosan érkeztek, hozzá voltak szokva, hogy a hajón vagy a laktanyában kommunikáljanak a hollandokkal, valamint készek voltak munkát vállalni a kikötőben vagy a farmokon. Esélyeik a házasságkötésre csekélyek voltak, azonban a rabszolgákhoz és a khoekhoen néphez képest magasabb státuszuk miatt vonzóak voltak ezen közösségek női számára. Az alkalmazkodás sok különálló történetéből áll össze a beolvadás teljes mintája. Az újonnan Fokföldre érkezőknek aligha volt előnyük abból, ha mások voltak, így erős konformizáló nyomás nehezedett rájuk. Az emberi kapcsolatok és a kommunikáció lehetősége súlyosabban nyomtak a latban, mint annak az ára, hogy mindezt nem saját nyelvükön tehetnék.

AMI A RABSZOLGÁKAT ILLETI, SZÁMUKRA AZ EREDMÉNY NYELVVESZTÉS ÉS NYELVCSERE LETT

A rabszolgák esete összetettebb, mint akár a franciáké, akár a németeké. Azzal kell kezdeni, hogy egy egész sor kultúrát képviseltek, még akkor is, ha tágabb származási helyük szerint csoportosítjuk őket - tehát India, a szigetvilág, Madagaszkár és Afrika -, a diverzitás jelentős. Nyelveik tipológiailag távol voltak az európai nyelvektől, épp úgy, mint kultúráik. Az ázsiai rabszolgák számára az intézmény ismert volt: a térségben létezett adószolgálat és rabszolgaság a háborúk következményeként. Tapasztalataik Fokföldön több tényezőtől függtek. Némelyük számára átmeneti állapot volt, bár Fokföldön nem volt elterjedt a manumissio. Tehát a rabszolgákat több rendszer szerint csoportosíthatjuk, melyek mind különböző módon világítják meg nyelvi helyzetüket. Először, foglalkozásuk szerint tehetünk különbséget a házimunkát és a mezőgazdasági munkát végzők között. Akik házaknál dolgoztak, szoros kapcsolatba kerültek gazdáikkal, és így érintkezésbe kerültek a holland nyelvvel is. Azok számára, akik a mezőgazdaságban dolgoztak, vagy a településen a nehéz fizikai munkát végezték, pl. tűzifagyűjtés vagy ároktisztítás, ezek a kapcsolatok kevésbé voltak lehetségesek. Ugyanakkor nekik egész életükben több érintkezésük volt más rabszolgákkal. Esélyük a hosszú életre csekély volt, miután a rabszolgák elhalálozási aránya magas volt. A kreol nyelvek kialakulására meghatározó volt, hogy a rabszolga csoportok általában kicsik voltak. Abban az esetben, ha egy rabszolgatartónak sok rabszolgája volt, ez általában párosult azzal, hogy több farmja is volt, miáltal az egyes farmokon a rabszolga populáció továbbra is gyér maradt. Csak a VOC által tulajdonolt rabszolgáknál álltak fenn azok a

körülmények, melyek alkalmasak voltak közösségépítésre és egy közös kultúra kialakítására. Másodsor, csoportosíthatunk a rabszolgák földrajzi megoszlása szerint. Itt három területet különböztethetünk meg: (1) a városban élő rabszolgák, akiknek lehetőségük van keveredni másokkal, jobb munkalehetőségekkel; (2) a rabszolgák, akik szőlő- és gabonafarmokon élnek, néha kisebb csoportokban és a másokkal való néhanapi találkozás lehetőségével aratáskor, valamint (3) a kolónia peremén lévő farmokon élő rabszolgák, akik, bár leginkább izolálva vannak a világtól, mégis valószínűleg közelebbi kapcsolatba kerülhettek tulajdonosaikkal, mint sorstársaik. A harmadik csoportosítási alap az, hogy máshonnan hozták-e őket Fokföldre vagy már ott születtek bele a rabszolgaságba. Az ott születetteknek számos előnye volt: ritkán adták el őket, több lehetőségük volt tanulásra, különösen, ha a rabszolgaszálláson születtek (Slave Lodge) és általában jobban asszimilálódtak a holland társadalomhoz. Nehéz megbecsülni, hogy milyen mértékű volt a rabszolgotartók és a rabszolgák közötti genetikai kapcsolat, annyi azonban bizonyos, hogy létezett, pont úgy, mint a vegyes házasságok, és úgy tűnik, hogy akkoriban a bőrszín nem játszott meghatározó szerepet a házasságkötéseknél. Egy úttörő társadalomban, ahol kevés volt a házasodó korban lévő nő, számukra nagy lehetőség volt, ha „felfelé” tudtak férjhez menni. Ha tudtak hollandul, az azt jelenthette, hogy befogadták őket az egyházba (ami házasságuk legalizálását is jelentette), és a társadalomba. Gyermekeik érdeke is az volt, hogy első nyelvként a hollandot tanulják meg. Ez az egyenes összefüggés a személyes érdek és a holland nyelvben való jártasság között hamarosan oda vezetett, hogy az „európaiak” közössége egy közösséggé vált, melynek ereiben némi európai vér is csordogált. Továbbá, Fokföldön a rabszolgotartás nem volt gazdaságos, így a legtöbben nem engedhettek meg maguknak egy-két rabszolgánál többet. Az emberi kontaktus és kommunikáció iránti igény ezért elengedhetetlenné tette, hogy a rabszolgák megtanuljanak mielőbb hollandul vagy valamilyen lingua franca-t. A kettő közötti választásra vonatkozóan csak néhány személlyel kapcsolatban maradtak fenn adatok, többnyire bírósági jegyzőkönyvekben. Ezekből úgy tűnik, hogy a rabszolgák beszéltek hollandul és a keletről származó lingua franca-kat (a maláj és portugál sajátos formáit) a VOC periódus végéig. Voltak rabszolgák, akik magukkal hozták a keleti lingua franca-kat, különösen a korai években, amikor sok rabszolga jött Indiából, ahol korábban a portugál nyelv nyert teret. Miután a VOC szolgálatában állók beutazták a kereskedelmi utakat, lehetséges, hogy azok számára, akik útjaikon megszokták, hogy a rabszolgákkal egyfajta maláj vagy portugál nyelven kommunikáljanak, ezt a szokásukat Fokföldön is megtartották. Ugyanakkor ez erőfeszítést jelentett számukra, és semmi okunk nincs arra, hogy feltételezzük: ez a szokás széles körben elterjedt lett volna, még Fokvárosban sem.

AMI A KHOEKHOEN-OKAT ILLETI, SZÁMUKRA AZ EREDMÉNY NYELVVESZTÉS ÉS NYELVCSERE LETT

A khoekhoen népnek megvolt a saját L1 nyelve, ezért lehetőségük volt nyelvüket a normális, generációk közötti úton továbbadni. Nyelvcseré folyamatuk különbözött a rabszolgákétól, akik közül sokakat erőszakkal fosztottak meg anyanyelvüktől. A VOC korszak végére a rabszolgák és a khoekhoen-ok hasonló státuszon osztoztak, melynek

jellemzője az alárendeltség volt. A tulajdonosok/munkáltatók által velük szemben használt nyelv regisztere ugyanaz volt. Akkor is, ha gyermekeik együtt játszottak, későbbi nyelvhasználatukban visszatükröződött a státuszbeli különbség.

A Cég szükségletei és érdekei megsemmisítő hatással voltak a khoekhoen nép hagyományos életmódjára – korábban a szarvasmarha a jólét és a biztos túlélés külső jele volt, míg most csak áruértéket testesített meg. A khokhoen nép számára a holland társadalmi és gazdasági rend érthetetlen volt, és a megértés hiánya miatt nem voltak képesek megfelelő válasz-stratégiát felállítani. A kulturális különbözőség, a marhavész, a bárányhimlő és a belső etnikai erőszak összetett hatása végül 1720 körül a társadalmi és politikai struktúra teljes összeomlásához vezetett, legalábbis Dél-Nyugat Fokföldön (Giliomee 2003). Két különböző irányt vettek ezt követően: egy részük feladta a törzsi életet és alkalmazkodott az európai társadalomhoz, míg mások a kontinens belseje és ezzel kevésbé termékeny földek felé vették útjukat. Azoknak, akik maradtak, a folyamat része volt a kétnyelvűség és a nyelvcsere. Az 1700-as évekig kevés khoekhoen tanult meg hollandul; akik beszélték a nyelvet, tolmácként ténykedtek. A farmokon a közös érdeklődés, közös veszélyek és közös életforma közelebb hozta egymáshoz a két közösséget, a khoekhoen-okat és a burgher-eket, aminek eredményeként ritkaságszámba ment a nem letelepedett khoekhoen. Egy átmeneti időre a khoekhoen nép megtartotta saját L1 nyelvét, és ezért át tudták azt adni a normális generációk közötti kommunikációban. A késő XVIII. században az *Oorlam*-ok, fokföldi hollandot beszélő khoekhoen-ok, akik a burgher-eknek dolgoztak, és a *Baster*-ek, rabszolgák, khoekhoen-ok és európaiak kevertvérű leszármazottai, elhagyták a kolóniát, és saját közösségeket alapítottak saját dialektussal, melyet általában Orange River afrikánsznak hívnak. Roberge magyarázata szerint „a különbség a fokföldi és az Orange River afrikánsz között abból fakad, hogy történelmileg minél nagyobb a távolság Fokvárostól, annál nagyobb a khoekhoen-ok aránya a fokföldi afrikánszt beszélők között (Roberge 2002:83).

FOKFÖLD NYELVE A VOC NYELVPOLITIKA TÜKRÉBEN

Az időszak teljes egészére igaz, hogy a holland nyelv akár egy, a városi hollandhoz közeli akrolektus formában, akár mint egy helyi, területen kívüli dialektus megtartotta pozícióját Fokföldön, és a VOC uralomnak a végét is túlélte. Ez nem lenne meglepő, ha nem az ellenkező helyzet állt volna fenn a VOC batáviai központjában, keleten és a többi térségbeli településen (Groeneboer 1993). A meghatározó különbség abban keresendő, hogy Fokföld nem volt kereskedelmi központ és nem rendelkezett a VOC számára értékes, értékesítésre alkalmas termékekkel. Sokkal inkább ellátó központ volt a kereskedelem elősegítésére. Ezért a település szerkezete is különbözött a batáviaitól, amennyiben a burgher-ek száma és százalékos aránya az egész európai populációhoz viszonyítva teljesen más képet mutatott. A burgher-ek természetes népességszaporulata megváltoztatta a település természetét, és egy új mintát hozott létre, melynek alapja a helyben született burgher és kisebb mértékben rabszolga, illetve bennszülött populáció volt. Egy másik tényező a khoekhoen népesség egyre nagyobb mértékben történő eltávolodása a törzsi léttől és az idegen kultúra asszimilációja volt. A népességstatisztikák nem foglalták magukba a khoekhoen populációt, ami önmagában

logikusnak tekinthető, ha figyelembe vesszük, hogy ők technikailag szabad nép voltak, ugyanakkor nem tükrözték vissza a plaas életének változó valóságát. A rabszolgák és a khoekhoen népesség folyamatban lévő társadalmi konvergenciája a VOC korszak vége felé megváltoztatta a burgher-ek százalékos arányát a teljes népességhez viszonyítva. Ezért azoknak a száma, akik az anyaországi hollandnak egy tőle kisebb-nagyobb mértékben eltávolodott változatát beszélték, Fokföldön sokkal nagyobb volt, mint a VOC más településein. Ezek a felszabadított VOC szolgák leszármazottai voltak, a kisszámú bevándorló és a második és további generációk, melyek már az új társadalomba születtek bele. Ez a társadalom egy egyre különösebb keverékké formálódott, fontos szempontok szerint a keleti, nyugati és afrikai anyatársadalmaktól teljesen különböző. A harmadik tényező a hollandok folyamatos jelenléte az egész időszak alatt. Nem úgy, mint Formosán, a másik helyen, ahol úgy tűnt, hogy a holland nyelv megtud gyökeresedni, de amelyet elvesztettek, mielőtt ez bekövetkezhetett volna. Vannak nézetek, miszerint a nyelvterjedési minta Formosán különbözött a többi kelet-indiai településtől. Ott épp úgy, mint Fokföldön, nem volt egy elfogadott lingua franca, így nem volt a nyelvek között verseny, ami elősegítette volna, hogy a holland váljék az általános kommunikáció nyelvéné. Formosán a hollandok hittérítési elszántsága erősebb volt, és az oktatás szélesebb körben volt hozzáférhető. Már 1659-ben alapítottak egy szemináriumot, ahol tanárokat képeztek ki az Evangélium terjesztésére, amitől multiplikátor hatást vártak. Az oktatás hollandul és a helyi nyelveken folyt. Fokföldön az evangelizálási lendület kicsi volt, és arra sem volt lehetőség, hogy a vallásos szövegeket kiadják khoekhoen nyelven, hiszen hiányzott a második nyelvi jártasság ebben a nyelvben. Talán a nyelvi előítélet is szerepet játszott, mert a khoekhoen nyelvet megtanulhatatlannak és épphogy emberinek tartották. Még ha a holland Formosa nyelvéné vált volna is, az odavezető út különbözött volna a Fokföldön bejárttól. Úgy tűnik, hogy a helyi körülmények meghatározóbbak voltak, mint a VOC nyelvpolitikájában fellelhető hasonlóságok, melyet pragmatikusan és dogmatikusan alkalmaztak.

Ami a többi, a disszertációban tárgyalt holland üzemet és települést illeti keleten, úgy is, mint Batavia, Ceylon és Ambon, azt a következtetést lehetett levonni, hogy a VOC nyelvpolitika csak egy szempontból volt következetes: a VOC adminisztráció nyelve a holland volt. Ezért a nyelv státusza soha nem volt kérdéses: ez volt a hivatalos levelezés és működés nyelve, és a vallásé, mely a holland területeken a VOC irányítása alatt működött. Ugyanakkor hiányzott az elkötelezettség, hogy a lakosság nyelvéné tegyék, kivéve néhány próbálkozást. Fontosabbnak tartották a kereszténység kálvinista formájának terjesztését, mint a holland nyelvét. Fontosabbnak a lappangó portugál nyelvi befolyás ellensúlyozását, min azt, hogy a hollanddal helyettesítsék. Végül a kereskedelem magasabb prioritást élvezett minden „civilizációs küldetésnél”, így az európai népesség létszámát is meghatározta, mely a többi társadalmi csoporthoz képest elhanyagolható volt.

AMI A HOLLANDOKAT ILLETI, SZÁMUKRA AZ EREDMÉNY NYELVMEGTARTÁS ÉS NYELVTERJEDÉS LETT

Mint a VOC hatalmához legszorosabban kapcsolódó társadalmi csoport, a hollandok meg tudták tartani kapcsolatukat az Európából hozott nyelvvel. Olyannyira, hogy későbbi nyelvi vitákban Dél-Afrikában olyan vélemények is voltak, miszerint a hollandot meg kellene tartani, mint a kolónia nyelvét. Sok év *Taalstryd*, nyelvharc folyt annak eldöntésére, hogy a holland helyett az afrikánsz legyen a Dél-Afrikai Unió hivatalos nyelve. Sok érv szólt a metropol holland nyelv mellett, számunkra azonban az, hogy a kérdés mint lehetőség felmerült, a holland nyelv megtartására utal Fokföldön. A hatalom, az adminisztráció és a vallás nyelveként és mint olyan nyelv, mely a szétszórta burgher-eket az anyaországhoz kötötte, a holland nyelv konzervatív befolyást gyakorolt az afrikánszra. Ezt a befolyást erősítették az átutazók és a Fokföldön állomásozó VOC alkalmazottak. Azok, akik kisebb-nagyobb számban, de relatíve folyamatosan a VOC korszak alatt úgy döntöttek, hogy kilépnek a Cég szolgálatából, magukkal vitték saját dialektusukat. Az afrikánsz dialektológia tetemes része foglalkozik a korabeli dialektusokkal Fokföldön. Különösen Jan van Riebeeck idiolektje kapott kiemelt figyelmet, miután az ő befolyása az alapító csoportra számottevő lehetett (Van der Merwe 1968a, 1968b). A korai dialektusok fontosságát emeli ki Mufwene (1996:84), aki rámutat, hogy a rabszolgák és bennszülöttek által hallott európai nyelvek nem a városi nyelvek voltak, hanem sokkal inkább az alapító populáció nem-standard vernakulárisa, ami ahhoz vezetett, hogy más dialektusokkal szemben inkább ezekre esett a választás.

A Fokföldön kezdetektől fogva jelenlévő dialektusok, az előző koinizáció, ami attól kezdve befolyásolta a kikötővárosok vernakulárisát, hogy a hajók kivitorláztak, a VOC keleti kísérlete és az erőteljes holland „kereskedő szellem”, mind-mind hatással voltak a Cég nyelvi kultúrájára, az alkalmazottakra és a településekre. Véleményünk szerint olyan hozzáállás uralkodott, mely a nyelvet eszközként tekintette a cél eléréséhez és a kommunikációhoz, melyet szükség szerint lehetett az adott helyzethez adaptálni. Ezt tovább erősítette a khoekhoen-okkal, a rabszolgákkal és az 'idegen' európaiakkal való kommunikáció kihívása. Az afrikánsz nyelv megkülönböztető sajátosságait a filológia a szupersztrátum hipotézissel, a köztesnyeli hipotézissel, illetve a kreolista hipotézissel magyarázza Roberge szerint (2002:84-90). A XXI. századi helyzetben hasonlóságot lehet felfedezni: a globális kommunikáció nemzetközi nyelvét, az angolt tanulói és nemzetközi beszélői szintén nem kezelik másként.

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Afrikaans

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Introduction

Afrikaans is the youngest fully standardized member of the West Germanic branch of the Indo-European language family. A daughter of Dutch (*Afrikaans* = the Dutch adjective meaning 'African'), it is primarily spoken in South Africa, where it is one of 11 official languages. Currently, it boasts the third largest speaker population, with only Zulu and Xhosa being more widely spoken (1996 Census). Afrikaans also represents a minority language in Namibia and, increasingly, in expatriate communities, notably in Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada.

History

The precise circumstances surrounding the development of Afrikaans as a language in its own right have been energetically disputed. What is uncontroversial is that the Dutch East India Company's establishment of a refreshment station in 1652 led to the introduction of various varieties of 17th-century Dutch at the Cape. During the next 150 years, these Dutch speakers came into contact with indigenous Khoekhoe, with slaves imported from Asia (India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka), East Africa, and Madagascar, and also, more sporadically, with French- and German-speaking Europeans. Written records reveal that a distinctive local variety of Dutch – so-called Kaaps Hollands (Cape Dutch), which was also variously described at the time as *geradbraakte/gebroke/onbeskaafde Hollands* ('mutilated/broken/uncivilized Hollandic'), *verkeerde Nederlands* ('incorrect Dutch') and *kom-buistaal* ('kitchen language') – already existed by the mid-18th century. There are three main positions on how this extraterritorial variety became a distinct, structurally simplified and reorganized language: the superstratist, variationist/interlectalist, and creolist positions. On the superstratist view, Afrikaans is essentially the product of the normal linguistic evolution that typically occurs in the absence of strong normative pressures, with the influence of Khoekhoe and the slave languages (i.e., Malay and Creole Portuguese) being confined to the lexical domain (see below). The variationist/interlectalist position similarly downplays the role of the non-Germanic languages interfacing with Dutch at the Cape, identifying dialect-leveling/convergence as the impetus behind the emergence of a new Dutch-based language. By contrast, the creolist view analyses Afrikaans as a semicreole, the product

of interaction between the 'creolizing' and 'decreolizing' influences of the matrilectal Cape Dutch(es) and the Dutch-based pidgin(s) spoken respectively by the Cape's European and non-European populations. Exactly when Afrikaans was 'born' is also disputed, but official recognition of its distinctness came in 1925 when it was finally standardized following two *Taalbewegings* ('language movements') and recognized, alongside English, as one of South Africa's two official languages. The Bible was translated into Afrikaans in 1933 and a rich literary and cultural heritage accrued during the 20th century, with two major annual arts festivals now being dedicated solely to Afrikaans (the *Klein Karoo Kunstefees*/'Little Karoo Arts Festival' and *Aardklop*/'Earth-beat'). Because of its unfortunate association with the apartheid policy pursued between 1948 and 1994, there are, however, concerns about Afrikaans's future in post-apartheid South Africa and there has, in recent years, been a move to promote it as the only South African language which is both European and African.

Varieties of Afrikaans

The three basic varieties of Afrikaans traditionally identified are *Kaapse Afrikaans* (Cape Afrikaans) spoken in the western Cape, *Oranjerivier-Afrikaans* (Orange River Afrikaans) spoken in the northwestern Cape, and *Oosgrens-Afrikaans* (Eastern Cape Afrikaans), the variety that provided the basis for standard Afrikaans, spoken in the rest of the country (see Figure 1). *Kaapse* and *Oranjerivier Afrikaans* are both spoken by people of color, the former reflecting particularly strong Malay and English influences, and the latter, that of Khoekhoe. Various subvarieties are discernible within these regional boundaries, one example being the Arabic-influenced Afrikaans spoken by Cape Muslims. Additionally, Afrikaans also forms the basis of a number of special group languages. Of these, *Bantu-influenced Flaaitaal* ('Fly-language'), a township argot spoken mostly by black migratory workers in urban areas, represents the best-studied case. During the apartheid era, normative pressures promoting *suiwer Afrikaans* ('pure Afrikaans') were strong and often directed against Anglicisms. Socio-political changes and attempts to promote Afrikaans as more 'inclusive' have, however, led to a more relaxed attitude in many contexts, with many younger speakers frequently speaking and writing Afrikaans, which is lexically heavily influenced by South Africa's other languages, particularly English. In its turn, Afrikaans has also left its mark on the other languages spoken in South Africa, with South African English featuring lexical items such as *braai* ('barbecue'), *veld*

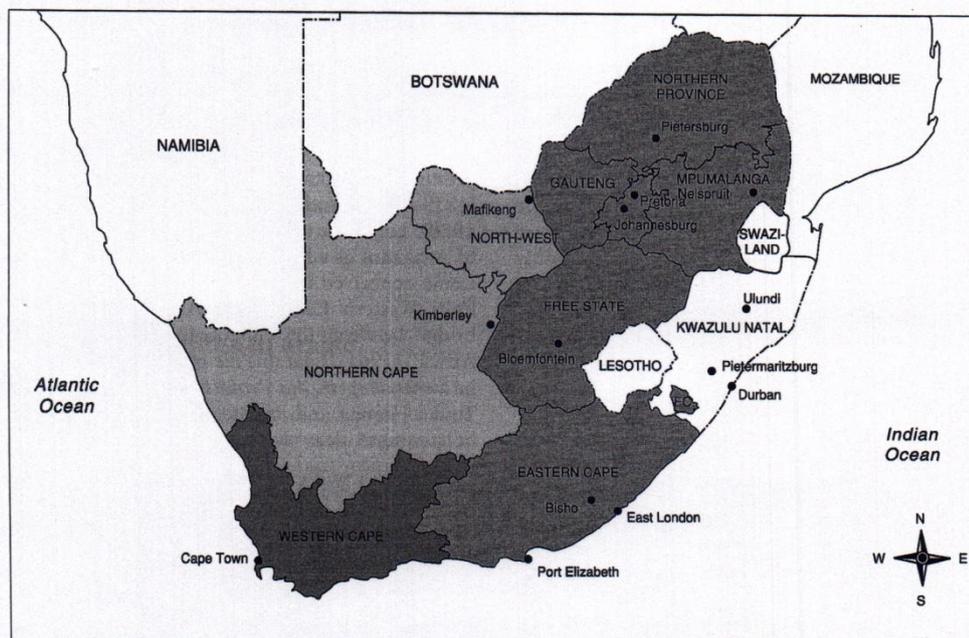


Figure 1 Map of South Africa showing the nine provinces created in 1994 and the areas in which the three main regional varieties of Afrikaans are spoken. Key: dark grey, Cape Afrikaans; light grey, Orange River Afrikaans; mid grey, Eastern Frontier Afrikaans.

(‘bush’), and *stoep* (‘verandah’); Xhosa with *ispeki* (> *spek* = ‘bacon’), *isitulu* (> *stoel* = ‘chair’), and *ibhulukhwe* (> *broek* = ‘trousers’); and Sotho, with *potloto* (> *potlood* = ‘pencil’), *kerese* (> *kers* = ‘candle’), and *sekotelopulugu* (> *skottelploeg* = ‘disc-plough’).

Formal Features

Many aspects of Afrikaans’s formal structure represent simplifications of their Dutch counterparts, but the language also features a number of structural innovations. Phonologically, striking differences between Afrikaans and Dutch are that Afrikaans features:

- apocope of /t/ after voiceless consonants – cf. Afrikaans *lig* (‘light’) and *nag* (‘night’) versus Dutch *licht* and *nacht*
- syncope of intervocalic /d/ and /g/ – cf. Afrikaans *skouer* (‘shoulder’) and *spieël* (‘mirror’) versus Dutch *schouder* and *spiegel*
- fricative devoicing – cf. Afrikaans *suid* (‘south’) versus Dutch *zuid*
- diphthongization of long vowels – cf. Afrikaans [bruæt] versus Dutch [bro:t] for *brood* (‘bread’).

There are also consistent orthographic differences, with Dutch *ij* and *sch* being rendered in Afrikaans as *y* and *sk*, respectively.

Morphologically, Afrikaans is characterized by extreme deflection: it lacks both Dutch’s gender system and its system of verbal inflection, pronouns being the only nominals exhibiting distinct forms, although fewer than in Dutch (cf. Afrikaans *ons*, which corresponds to both Dutch *wij* – ‘we’ and *ons* – ‘us’), and all lexical verbs taking the same form, regardless of their person, number, and finiteness specifications. Afrikaans also differs from Dutch in employing reduplication – cf. *gou-gou* (‘quick-quick’), *stuk-stuk* (‘piece-piece,’ i.e., bit by bit), and *lag-lag* (‘laugh-laugh,’ i.e., easily).

Afrikaans’s retention of West Germanic’s distinctive word-order asymmetry (main clauses being verb–second/V2 and embedded clauses, verb–final) distinguishes it from Dutch-based creoles, which are exceptionlessly SVO and undermines extreme creolist accounts of its origins. Among the syntactic peculiarities that distinguish Afrikaans from Dutch are:

- *its negative concord system* – cf. Afrikaans *Ons lees nie hierdie boeke nie* (‘Us read not here – the books NEGATIVE’) and Dutch *Wij lezen niet deze boeken* (‘We read not these books’)
- *verbal hendiadys* – cf. Afrikaans *Ek sit en skryf* (‘I sit and write’) versus Dutch *Ik zit te schrijven* (‘I sit to write,’ i.e., I sit writing)

- use of *vir* with personal objects – cf. *Ek sien vir jou* ('I see for you') versus Dutch *Ik sien je* ('I see you')
- *dat*-dropping in subordinate clauses – cf. *Hy weet ek is moeg* ('He knows I am tired'), which alternates with *Hy weet dat ek moeg is* ('He knows that I tired am'), whereas standard Dutch permits only the latter
- retention of main-clause ordering in subordinate interrogatives – cf. *Hy wonder wat lees ek* ('He wonders what read I') versus *Hy wonder wat ek lees* ('He wonders what I read'), which is the only permissible structure in Dutch.

Lexically, Afrikaans differs substantially from Dutch in featuring borrowings from Khoekhoe, Malay, and Creole Portuguese (see 'Lexical Borrowing' section), and also, as a consequence of the 'suiwer Afrikaans' policy, in respect of many neologisms, which were created to avoid adopting an English expression – cf. *skemerkelkie*, *rekenaar*, and *trefferboek* or *blitsverkoper* whereas Dutch uses *cocktail*, *computer*, and *bestseller*, respectively.

The Taalmonument

Afrikaans is unique in being the only language with its own monument (see Figure 2). The *Taalmonument*

('language-monument') in Paarl was erected to celebrate the 100-year anniversary of the 1875 *Eerste Taalbeweging* ('First Language-movement') at which the first concerted calls for the elevation of Afrikaans to the status of written language were made. The monument was inspired by the writings of two prominent Afrikaans writers, C. J. Langenhoven (1873–1832) and N. P. van Wyk Louw (1906–1970). Langenhoven visualized the growth potential of Afrikaans as a hyperbolic curve, whereas van Wyk Louw conceived of Afrikaans as "the language that links Western Europe and Africa ... form[ing] a bridge between the enlightened west and magical Africa" (1961, 'Laat ons nie roem!'/ 'Let us not extoll' in *Vernuwing in die Prosa/Renewal in prose*. Cape Town: Human and Rousseau). The monument symbolizes these ideas as follows:

- it features two curves (A and B) representing the influences of Europe and Africa respectively
- A, which starts as a colonnade, flows into the main column symbolizing Afrikaans (D), signifying the direct manner in which Afrikaans grew out of Dutch
- B, which features three semispherical mounds symbolizing the indigenous languages and cultures of

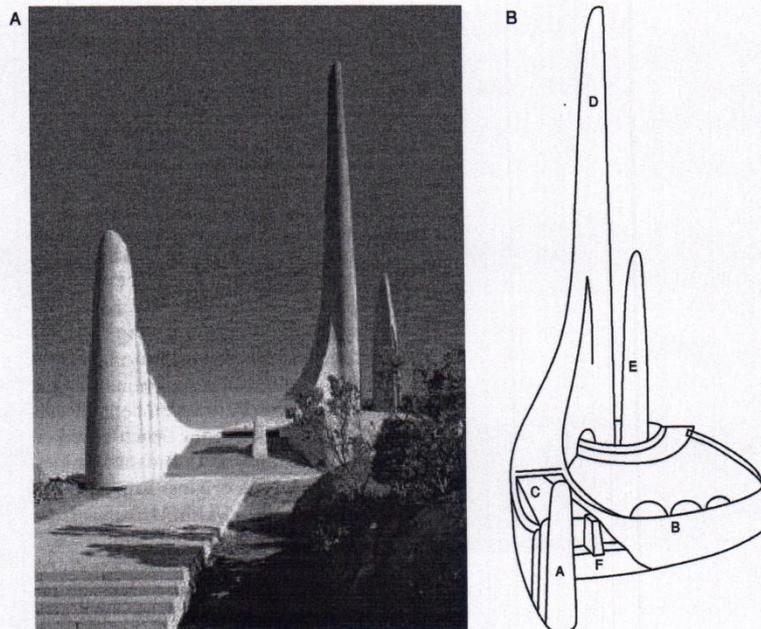


Figure 2 (A) The Afrikaans Language Monument (*Taalmonument*) in Paarl, South Africa. Reprinted by kind permission of the Afrikaans Language Museum, Paarl. (B) Diagrammatic representation of the structure of the Afrikaans Language Monument. A, The Enlightened West; B, Magical Africa; C, the bridge between the two; D, Afrikaans; E, The Republic of South Africa; F, Malay. Adapted from *Die Afrikaanse Taalmonument*, the official brochure of the Afrikaans Language Museum, Paarl, with permission.

South Africa, also flows into the main column via a lesser curve

- at the base of the column, A and B form a bridge (C) symbolizing the confluence of linguistic and cultural influences from Europe and Africa
- a low wall (F) located between A and B symbolizes the contribution of Malay
- column E represents the Republic of South Africa, the political entity established in 1961, within which Afrikaans was well established as one of two official languages.

Afrikaans was Written in Arabic

By the mid-19th century, Afrikaans was being used by the Cape Muslim community in the exercise of their religion and some of the *imams* were beginning to translate holy texts into Afrikaans using Arabic script. The first of these *ajami* (Arabic–Afrikaans) manuscripts, the *Hidāyat al-Islām* ('Instruction in Islam'), is said to have been prepared in 1845 but is no longer extant. The first *ajami* text to be published, the *Bayānu ddīn* ('Exposition of the religion'), was written by Abu Bakr in 1869 and published in Constantinople in 1877. Seventy-four texts, written between 1856 and 1957, survive today.

Lexical Borrowings

Afrikaans has drawn on the lexical resources of a wide variety of languages with which it has been in contact during the course of its history. Here are some examples of the range and nature of this borrowing:

- From Khoekhoe: animal names such as *geitjie* ('lizard'), *kwagga* (a zebra-like creature), and *gogga* ('insect'); plant names like *dagga* ('cannabis'); place names such as *Karoo* and *Knysna*; and also miscellaneous items such as *kierie* ('walking-stick'), *abba* ('carry') and *kamma* ('quasi/make-believe')
- From Malay: *baie* ('very/much'), *baadjie* ('jacket'), *baklei* ('fight'), *piesing* ('banana'), *rottang* ('cane'), *blatjang* ('chutney')
- From languages spoken on the Indian subcontinent: *koejawel* ('guava'), *katel* ('bed')
- From Creole Portuguese: *mielie* ('corn/maize'), *kraal* ('pen/corral'), *tronk* ('jail')
- From Bantu languages spoken in South Africa: *malie* ('money'), *aikôna* ('no'), *hokaai* ('stop'), *babelas* ('hangover').

See also: Dutch; Germanic Languages; Indo-European Languages; Krio; Namibia: Language Situation; South Africa: Language Situation.

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Khoesaaan Languages

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The recognition of Khoisan (Khoesaaan) as one of the four language phyla in Africa received initial impetus mainly through the 'Macro-Khoisan Hypothesis' of Joseph Greenberg, first published in 1950. This controversial phylum comprises his 'Click languages,' which formerly were known as 'Hottentot' and 'Bushman' languages, respectively. Dorothea Bleek (1929) had paved the way for their integration into one family by challenging the prevalent view that Hottentot as a Hamitic language had been influenced by Bushman, and by suggesting instead that Nama (as representative of Hottentot) was a Bushman language with Hamitic admixture. Bleek divided the Bushman languages into Northern, Central, and Southern groups. In essence, these divisions are still recognized today, although their validity is open to challenges (see Table 1).

The compounded name Khoisan was coined in 1928 by Leonhardt Schultze to signify the somatoracial relatedness of the Hottentots and Bushmen, with *khoi* ('human being,' correctly spelled *khoë*) representing Hottentot, and *san* – the Nama designation for the Bushmen, meaning 'foragers' (correctly spelt *Sān* or *Saan*) – Bushman.

Greenberg distinguished South African Khoisan (with the major Northern, Central, and Southern branches) as opposed to the East African isolates Sandawe and Hadza (some 70 000 and 400 speakers, respectively). These views are not unanimously accepted, as genetic relatedness between the major linguistic branches cannot be proved satisfactorily. Although scholars remain divided on the issue of genetic relatedness, the term 'Khoesan' or 'Khoisan' (more correctly spelled 'Khoesaaan') is now widely used as a term of convenience to denote all non-Bantu and non-Cushitic click languages of Southern and Eastern Africa.

Only some 30 Khoesaaan languages still exist today, with the great majority of languages being extinct.

Table 1 Southern African Khoesaaan languages

Branch	Languages († = [virtually] extinct)
1. Northern (<i>Ju</i>)	!Xung (DC), Jul'hoan, Xaull'e, !'Olxung
2. Southern (! <i>Ui-Taa</i>)	
2.1 †! <i>Ui</i>	†!Xam, †!'Auni, † ≠ Khomani, † Xegwi
2.2 <i>Taa</i> Isolate	!Xôô (DC), †Kakia ≠ Hôâ
3. Central (<i>Khoe</i>)	
3.1. Khoekhoe	
3.1.1. Northern/Namibian	Khoekhoegowab DC (= Nama, Damara, Haillom, ≠ !Khoe)
3.1.2. †Southern/South African	†!Gora ('Korana'), †Xri ('Griqua'), †Cape Khoekhoe (DC)
3.2. Kalahari Khoe	
3.2.1. Western	Khwe, Buga, Ani (DC); Naro (DC); Gana, !Gui, ≠ Haba (DC); Shua, Ts'ixa, Danisi, !Xaise, †Deti; Kua-Tsua (DC)
3.2.2. Eastern	
4.	†Kwadi (Angola)
5.	Sandawe (Tanzania)

With the possible exception of Khoekhoegowab in Namibia (formerly better known as 'Nama,' and for classificatory purposes briefly referred to as 'Khoekhoe'), virtually all of these languages can be considered to be endangered.

While the Northern (*Ju*) and Southern (!*Ui-Taa*) branches with the isolate ≠ Hôâ are spoken by hunter-gatherers (Bushmen/Saan), the languages of the Central branch (*Khoe*) are today spoken by Khoeid (Nama; !Gora!/Ora, Xri, and Cape Khoekhoe being extinct), Saaid (of especially the Kalahari Khoe branch), and Negroid (Damara) peoples. Linguistic and racial classifications of these groups are thus not coextensive. The following classification is largely based on the classifications of Köhler (1989) and of Güldemann and Vossen (2000). The reader is referred to the latter publication for more detailed information on Khoesaaan languages. For a classification of !Xung and Jul'hoan dialects (Northern Khoesaaan) see Snyman (1997), for Central Khoesaaan see Voßen (1997), and for dialects of Khoekhoe(gowab) Haacke *et al.* (1997). Several of the language names below represent dialect clusters (DCs). The iconic classificatory names *Ju*, !*Ui*, *Taa*, and *Khoe* mean 'human being' in their respective branches. The now extinct Kwadi was probably related to Namibian Khoekhoe. Although Sandawe does show evidence of affinity to Central Khoesaaan, *i.a.* also in its tonology, recent research by Bonny Sands (1998b) considers Hadza of Tanzania to be an isolate with no satisfactory

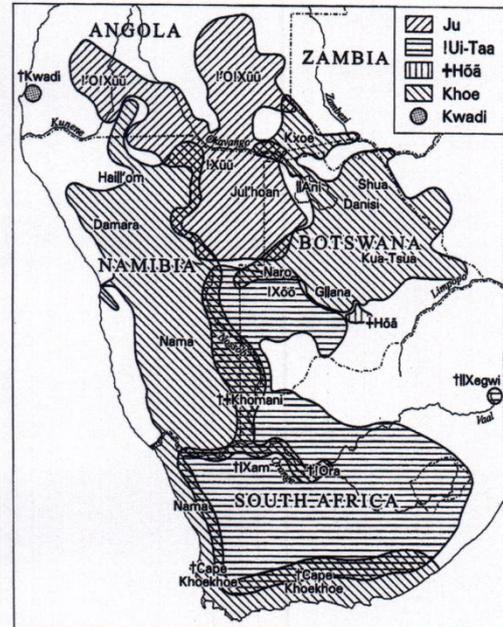


Figure 1 South African Khoesaaan languages (precolonial situation). (Note: '†' = language now extinct.) Map reproduced with kind permission of Cambridge University Press from Güldemann T & Vossen R (2000). 'Khoisan.' In Heine B & Nurse, D (eds.). *African languages: an introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 100, map 5.5.

evidence for a genetic relationship to Khoesaaan, despite lexical similarities and the use of clicks (Figure 1).

Before the Bantu diaspora, Khoesaaan peoples probably inhabited the entire Southern Africa up to the east coast of South Africa and into southern Angola. Displacement and absorption led to a drastic reduction of territorial domains, which was further aggravated by the arrival of European colonizers in the seventeenth century. Social marginalization still determines the life of all groups considered to be Saan. Khoekhoegowab in Namibia is the only Khoesaaan language that is officially recognized for language-planning purposes and is a major subject at university level. Demographic figures are largely based on estimates, totalling over 200 000 for Southern African Khoesaaan. Khoekhoe(gowab), with 175 554 speakers (1991 census of Namibia), represents by far the largest Khoesaaan speech community and constitutes some 12.5% of the Namibian population.

The most conspicuous phonological characteristic of Khoesaaan languages is the use of click consonants (Table 2). Clicks consist of an influx and an efflux phase. The influx (basic click) produces the actual

Table 2 The 20 click variants of Khoekhoegowab

Influx	Efflux				
	Glottal stop	Voiceless velar stop	Delayed glottal fricative	Voiceless velar affricate	Voiced nasalization
Dental	[ʔ]	ǀg [ǀ]	ǃh [ǃh]	ǀkh [xʰ]	ǃn [ŋ]
Alveolar	ǀ [ʔ]	ǀg [ǀ]	ǃh [ǃh]	ǀkh [tʰ]	ǃn [ŋ]
Palatal	ǃ [ǃʔ]	ǃg [ǃ]	ǃh [ǃh]	ǃkh [xʰ]	ǃn [ŋ]
Lateral	ǁ [ǁʔ]	ǁg [ǁ]	ǁh [ǁh]	ǁkh [lʰ]	ǁn [ŋ]

Table 3 The six main citation melodies of Khoekhoegowab and their sandhi correlates (as recorded by Eliphas Eiseb)

Citation	Sandhi	Gloss
ǀǀǀǀ	ǀǀǀǀ	to butt
ǀǀǀǀ	ǀǀǀǀ	female genitals, udder
ǀǀǀǀ	ǀǀǀǀ	to force escape from burrow (of: aardvark)
ǀǀǀǀ	ǀǀǀǀ	to coagulate;
		to remove thorn with aid of utensil
ǀǀǀǀ	ǀǀǀǀ	fist
ǀǀǀǀ	ǀǀǀǀ	pollard

clicking sound and is produced without pulmonic airstream. There are five influx variants: ǀ (bilabial), ǀ (dental), ǀ (alveolar), ǃ (palatal), and ǁ (lateral). Each of these influxes then combines with a specific number of effluxes, depending on the language. This efflux constitutes the resumption of the pulmonic egressive airstream, and its nature depends on the manner of release of the posterior, velaric (and at times glottalic) closure. The bilabial 'kiss-click' ǀ is manifest only in Southern Khoesaaan. The number of effluxes can vary from five in Khoekhoe(gowab) to 16 in !Xõõ, yielding a total of 83 click variants in the latter language, with a total of 117 consonants (cf. Traill, 1985) – a possible world record.

The tonology of Central Khoesaaan languages is typologically most akin to those of Southeast Asian languages on account of perturbational (sandhi) processes and the interaction of tonal and segmental phonemes, with depressor consonants triggering tonogenesis (development of contrastive pitch as compensation for the depletion of consonantal contrasts).

According to research thus far, available roots in Khoesaaan languages appear to be generally bimoraic. Roots of at least Central Khoesaaan languages are disyllabic, with syllable and mora being in isomorphic relation; hence tonal melodies (Table 3) consist of a sequence of two register (level) tonemes. The following minimal set illustrates the six main melodies of Khoekhoegowab in citation and sandhi form (Haacke, 1999). The second syllable of *ǀom* consists of a syllabic nasal [m]. Verbs are quoted here in their infinitival form with the third person fem. sg. pgn-marker *s*). Vowel

qualities generally vary between oral and nasalized vowels; in addition, pharyngealized, laryngealized, and breathy vowels or their combinations are found in most non-Khoekhoe languages.

The most distinctive morphological characteristic of Central Khoesaaan languages is that they mark nouns for sex gender with postclitic person–gender–number markers, whereas Northern and Southern languages do not. This occurs most consistently in Khoekhoegowab, which marks nouns for person (third, as well as first or second), gender (masculine, feminine, neuter/common), and number (singular, dual, and plural). Non-Central languages have little inflectional morphology. Whereas Non-Central languages have SVO constituent order, Central languages have SOV order in the case of lexically specified NPs.

See also: Botswana: Language Situation; Namibia: Language Situation; Phonetics, Articulatory; Phonetic Classification; South Africa: Language Situation.

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Khoikhoi See: Khoesaaan Languages.

Khoisan Languages See: Khoesaaan Languages.

Appendix 2.

Marten Douwes Teenstra, *De vruchten mijner werkzaamheden* (ed. F.C.L. Bosman). Die Van Riebeeck-vereniging, Kaapstad 1943

Retrieved from:

http://dbnl.nl/tekst/teen002vruc02_01/teen002vruc02_01_0011.php

Extract

Roberge (2002:83) identifies this text from 1825 as one of the first truly 'Afrikaans' texts

Zamenspraak of uittreksel van een door mij gehouden gesprek met een' boer, deszelfs vrouw en hunne slaven, te Caledon, kolonie Kaap de Goede Hoop.

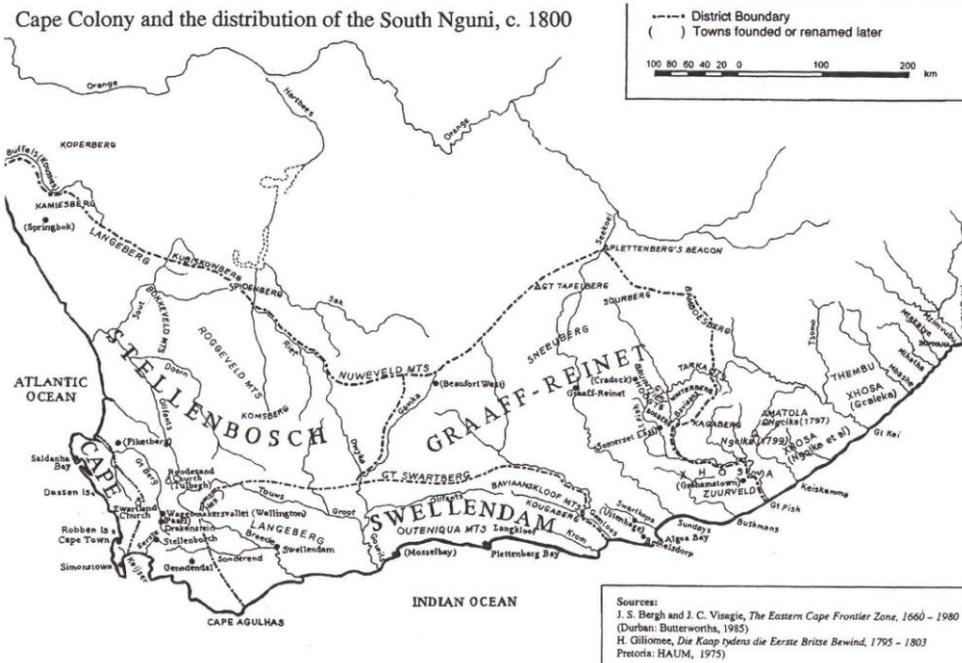
(Ik zit voor des landmans woning op den wagen.)

<i>De Boer.</i>	Koom af!
<i>Ik.</i>	Dat zal mij met mijne stramme beenen veel moeite kosten, echter zal ik een weinigje afkomen.
<i>De Vrouw.</i>	Voorzigtig, mijnheer! die stoep is banja hoog, dat zal niet braaf gaan nie.
	(In huis komende.)
<i>De Boer.</i>	Zit.
<i>Ik.</i>	Hoe gaat het hier nog al in de buurt van <i>Caledon</i> , alles wel?
<i>De Boer.</i>	Zóó. (Dat is tamelijk zoo bij 't oude.)
<i>De Vrouw.</i>	P a m e l a ! het die water nog niet gekookt nie?
<i>Slavin.</i>	Nee.
<i>De Vrouw.</i>	Roep voor <i>Leida</i> , dat ze hout in die combuis breng. (Dat is roep aan <i>Leida</i> .)
<i>De Boer</i>	(tot den slaaf <i>November</i>). Ga hier naast naar mijn' buurman de <i>Rottumen</i> en zeg voor hem, dat het braaf slecht is, dat hij die vark maar zoo loopen laat.
<i>De Vrouw.</i>	<i>November</i> ! Zie daar is die aap weer uit de ket - Sies! ik ben bang, dat hij hier komt; kenje hem niet beter vastmaken nie?
<i>De Boer.</i>	Die aap is braaf slim.
<i>De Slaaf.</i>	Ja sueur! die aap al te danig listig, rech! rech! hij niet spreek, om hij geen boodschap doen wil nie.
<i>De Vrouw.</i>	Het pad (de weg) zal braaf nat wezen, het heet banja geregend.

[p. 241]

<i>Ik.</i>	Ja jufvrouw! maar ik zit midden in een' digten wagen, zoodat mij dit niet hindert.
<i>De Vrouw.</i>	Ons het gedenkt, doe wij die wagen zagen, dat het die wagen van Marré was; ik is zoo even buiten geweest.
<i>De Boer.</i>	Het kuijeren is braaf koud voor u; als men het bad gebruikt, kan men niet te voorzigtig voor de koude zijn.
<i>De Vrouw.</i>	Wilje geen kelkje wijn hewwe nie?
<i>De Boer.</i>	Ja, kom vrouw! die vraag geef nie graag, breng maar op; je moet er een' boterham met biltong bijgeven.
<i>Ik.</i>	Gezondheid, mijnheer! - Jufvrouw! is dat wijn uit uwen wijngaard?
<i>De Boer.</i>	Ja! maar ze is nog wat te nieuw, anders is ze al te danig lekker. P a m e l a ! kom roep voor <i>Nonna</i> , dat zij een van die oude bottels wijn geef.
<i>De Vrouw.</i>	Kom, mijnheer! laat die bogt maar staan, hier is beter wijn. - L e i d a ! geef voor mijnheer een schoon kelkje!
<i>De Boer.</i>	Vindt uwe wat baat bij 't bad?
<i>Ik.</i>	Zeer weinig.
<i>De Vrouw.</i>	Voor die jicht is die bad anders al te danig goed.
<i>Ik.</i>	Nu kom, het zal ook tijd worden, om weder huiswaarts of liever badwaarts te keeren. - Mijnheer! jufvrouw! verpligt voor uwe vriendelijkheid.
<i>Boer en Vrouw.</i>	Mijnheer! plezierlig!

Appendix 3.



(copied from Giliomee, 2003:xx)