
**South African English in the post-apartheid era: Hybridization in
Zoë Wicomb's *David's Story* and Ivan Vladislavic's *The Restless
Supermarket***

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*To learn how to speak
With the voices of this land¹*

Standard English imposed by globalization and colonialism is in a state of devolution in South African literature in the post-apartheid era, as it is now forced to compete with previously muted voices.² It is being both disempowered and reinvigorated as a result of hybridization.³ I argue that this process mirrors the revitalization of Latin in the Renaissance as a result of travesty forms, as discussed by Mikhail Bakhtin. *David's Story* (2000) by Zoë Wicomb and *The Restless Supermarket* (2001) by Ivan Vladislavic are two novels which engage with the contemporary devolution of English as well as its renewal through hybridization. This allows English to be in a state of becoming rather than being in South Africa today.

The status of English in South Africa

English was first introduced into South Africa in the 19th Century by soldiers, and then by administrators, missionaries, settlers, and fortune-seekers. It became established as a southern African language as a result of the settlements of 1820 (in the Eastern Cape) and 1848-1862 (in Natal), and of the incursion to the diamond mines of Kimberley (1870) and the gold mines of the Witwatersrand (1886).⁴ It was pronounced the sole official language of the Cape Colony in 1822, when it supplanted Dutch. From the outset, English was imposed on a resistant Dutch (later Afrikaans) community at the Cape. The endeavour to create English as sole language of law and education, even in the predominantly Dutch/Afrikaans-speaking rural districts, instigated a deep resentment still apparent in certain Afrikaner groups today. This resentment was reinforced by the South African War of 1899-1902 when English became known as *die vyand se taal*, 'the language of the enemy'.⁵ In the beginning of the 19th century English was brought into many black communities of the Eastern Cape, and thereafter Natal, by missionaries, who simultaneously codified Xhosa, and later the other African languages. English was employed as the medium of instruction in mission schools: "superior English, classical and mathematical education" were offered.⁶ By the end of the century there was an influential corps of articulate, black English speakers, including educators, writers, ministers, and political leaders. The accomplished, elegant writings of John Tengo Jabavu, Gwayi Tyamzashe, Sol Plaatje, John Knox Bokwe, and many others, evidence this.⁷

In 1910, once the Union of South Africa, which united the former Boer republics of the Transvaal and Orange Free State with the Cape and Natal colonies, had been established, English and Dutch were designated as the official languages. Dutch was later replaced with Afrikaans in 1925. During apartheid (as well as after the formation of the Republic of South Africa in 1961) this policy persisted, but among a significant element of the Afrikaans people English was considered an oppressor, with the result that from the inception of the National Party's power in

1948, Afrikaans became the openly-privileged language. According to Penny Sylva, although English was the other official language, affairs of government and administration were managed almost exclusively in Afrikaans, and State resources were assigned to the promotion of Afrikaans while English was afforded a lesser status and the African languages were discounted (except for some being proclaimed the official languages of the discredited ethnic ‘homelands’).⁸ In spite of this attempt to disempower English, however, Sylva claims that as a language English was too powerful to be adversely affected and it managed to preserve its dominance as the language of higher education, commerce, science and technology, and as the internal and international language of communication. In the homelands too, English rather than Afrikaans was usually employed by homeland authorities for official purposes in conjunction with other African languages of the area.⁹

Amongst the black majority, English was perceived to be the language of liberation and black unity, as opposed to Afrikaans, which was associated with oppression. Whereas in other post-colonial countries English has frequently been regarded as an intruder, externally enforced and so politically problematic, in South Africa Afrikaans protected English from this stigma as it instead was seen as "the language of the oppressor": apartheid was implemented in Afrikaans, as it was the language of the bureaucracy and the police force.¹⁰ In contrast, the African National Congress (ANC) and the other liberation organizations during the freedom struggle selected English as the language of communication. In addition, English came to be perceived as the language of the social elite, as the language of aspiration and empowerment for black South Africans. The advent of Nelson Mandela’s government in 1994 brought about rapid changes in the balance between English and Afrikaans in government and the media, and also increased the use of African languages on television. Consequently, since 1994, the status of English has undergone a significant elevation.

The elevated status of English has been considered by academics to be merely entrenching present unequal power relations in the country, as English is the language of the previously privileged whites and has been acquired by the black elite.¹¹ Alistair Sparks has commented that South Africa has a double-decker economy comprised of its First World Sector and its Third World Sector. He maintains that while the upper deck is now multiracial, “those down below are nearly all black, just the odd pinched face of a poor white here and there”.¹² Furthermore, there is no stairway from the lower deck to the upper one. English, as a language of power and exclusion, helps to reinforce and maintain this divide, making it impossible for unskilled, black South Africans to climb up to the top of the bus. As the language of globalization, and as the official language of government and commerce, English necessarily claims access to power. English is regarded with suspicion as a language which is not neutral, which belongs to the elite and so discriminates against the majority of South African citizens.¹³ We have been warned by Ngugi (1986) and Ndebele (1987) of the potential threat of white languages being used as instruments of black subordination even in a post-colonial society. English is viewed as the language of upward mobility and empowerment by black South Africans: yet it is the historically disempowered (and particularly the black, rural poor), who are least likely to have access to this resource. According to Vivian de Klerk:

Alongside its growth because of its perceived neutrality and its high status..., and despite a pragmatic recognition of what English can offer, there is a very real

possibility that elitism, domination and social injustice, as well as personal language loss could result from the spread of English..., and this is particularly true of South Africa.¹⁴

Albie Sachs similarly reveals his concern:

[T]he omnipresence of English can be inconvenient and suffocating and induce a sense of disempowerment and exclusion. In a sense, all language rights are against English, which in the modern world is such a powerful language that it needs no protection at all.¹⁵

In addition to these fears of injustice and inequality, since the decline in stature of Afrikaans with the demise of apartheid, the ANC seems to have adopted English to serve both global interests as well as to unify local divisions. The danger exists of enforced homogenization as a radical response to apartheid's enforced separation – or as Annie Gagiano puts it in “Adapting the National Imaginary”, of “fusion, to replace fission” – in which case English runs the risk of supporting and sustaining a grand, concluding narrative that reduces a vast array of cultures, political stances, and social groups in the name of nationalism.¹⁶ This dominance of English is liable to create increasing resentment of English, and thus will be perceived as an oppressor – by both those who have an ‘old’ political agenda or those who do not have access to becoming proficient in the language. As a result of this and the colonial history of English, academics seem to fear the reification of English as an oppressive language.

There is, however, I believe, a tension in South Africa between this homogenizing effort and a tendency towards fission or difference. English is now merely one of eleven official languages and state policy seems to have shifted towards highlighting multilingualism and the rights of indigenous languages as a prerequisite for democracy. Standard English cannot convey the “South Africanness” that the post-apartheid government seems to be striving for, therefore these other languages are required to create a particularly “South African” democracy. As part of this effort, it has recently been declared that English will no longer be compulsory in schools. Penny Sylva objects that the reality of the high cost of multilingualism is beyond the reach of South Africa, and she sees English as the only ‘neutral’ national language available to government: She sees that “in this context the status of English is a highly-charged issue; and yet practical considerations usually result in the choice of English, with no apparent struggle and little argument”.¹⁷

If English is to be the ‘glue’ that holds multilingualism together, it needs to be re-standardized for a specifically South African context. White South Africans have in the main been oblivious to the extent to which their particular form of English as South African English differs from other world varieties of the language. White mother-tongue speakers are usually disparaging of South African English (SAE), identifying it as an inferior, ‘incorrect’ version of Standard or British English.¹⁸ English in South Africa has long since passed out of the hands of mother-tongue speakers, however, as “with its increased public use by the new black elite, and in the electronic media, it seems likely that standard SAE is entering a period of accelerated change”.¹⁹ New ‘standards’ are required and ‘standard’ is likely to become an increasingly difficult issue. Ndebele has noted that English cannot be deemed an innocent language, as it contains hidden

“white anxieties” and assumptions. He continues, “[T]he problems of society will also be the problems of the predominant language of that society, since it is the carrier of a range of social perceptions, attitudes, and goals”.²⁰ In his opinion, it is through the predominant language that the speakers absorb entrenched attitudes. It is necessary then, for the guilt of English to be recognized and accepted before continued use of the language should be promoted.

In addition, Ndebele believes that the homogenization of English in South Africa derives from the concept of an “international or world language”, which he sees to be an invention of western imperialism:

Consequently, the spread of English went parallel with the spread of the culture of international business and technological standardisation. From there, the jump towards the standardisation of international thought becomes easy to make. Today, the link between English and the western corporate world is stronger than ever.²¹

Standardized English then, in Ndebele’s view, would promote neo-colonialism and the interests of multinational corporations. In place of a homogenized or standardized form of English, I intend to show how the language can be reappropriated in a post-apartheid South African context through hybridization.

Hybridization

In his essay, “In Good Faith”, Salman Rushdie opposes “the absolutism of the Pure” and celebrates “hybridity, impurity, [and] intermingling”, claiming that it is from “new and unexpected combinations of human beings, cultures, ideas, politics, movies, songs” that transformation is effected and that “Mélange, hotchpotch, a bit of this and a bit of that is *how newness enters the world*”.²² I find this concept of transformation useful when applied within the context of South Africa. During apartheid, the voices of all indigenes were prevented from being heard outside their own communities,²³ so that when the previously separated and independent social groups were thrown together, the result was that coexistence of distinct languages which seems to define polyglossia.²⁴ An example of this kind of polyglossia can be seen in the national anthem, which attempts to unite some of the different official languages of South Africa, including Xhosa or Zulu, Sesotho, Afrikaans and English, while still maintaining distinct linguistic and cultural categories. There is no interaction between the different languages, no polyphony of voices, a characteristic celebrated by Bakhtin, but rather each linguistic group seems to wait for its own section which it proceeds to belt out, while having only a superficial knowledge of the other language components in the song. This is not to say that it is not an improvement on the previous national anthem however, as J.M. Coetzee notes in his “Jerusalem Prize Acceptance Speech” that there was a general failure of love and fraternity owing to an emphasis on the land rather than the people:

...their talk [the whites], their excessive talk, about how they love South Africa has consistently been directed toward *the land*, that is, toward what is least likely to respond to love: mountains and deserts, birds and animals and flowers.²⁵

The previous national anthem demonstrated this love for the land rather than for the people. In the current anthem, however, the focus has moved from the land to the people and the inclusion of different languages shows a clear attempt for equality and fraternity but there still remain distinct ruptures between these languages. I perceive this continuation of division within the national anthem to be a result of the historical moment in which it was created, a time when the ANC government was attempting to alleviate “white fears”. Now, however, eleven years since the implementation of democracy, there appears to be a movement towards linguistic hybridization in South African literature.

In *Disgrace*, a novel that demonstrates and engages with white fears, English is denounced as an unsuitable language in post-apartheid South Africa. In the words of J.M. Coetzee’s morally-dilapidated protagonist, David Lurie, “More and more he is convinced that English is an unfit medium for the truth of South Africa...Like a dinosaur expiring and settling in the mud, the language has stiffened”.²⁶ Although one cannot presume Lurie’s opinions to be those of Coetzee’s, I find Lurie’s comments about the English language in the post-apartheid time useful for this discussion. According to Lurie, English as a formal institutional language, as a language of oppression, is irrevocably suffused with colonial and apartheid discourse and carries with it sinister overtones in the post-apartheid era. For Lurie, the language is in a state of disgrace and needs to start from a humble beginning:

‘Lucy is our benefactor,’ says Petrus; and then, to Lucy: ‘You are our benefactor.’

A distasteful word, it seems to him, double-edged, souring the moment. Yet can Petrus be blamed? The language he draws on with such aplomb is, if he only knew it, tired, friable, eaten from the inside as if by termites. Only the monosyllables can still be relied on, and not even all of them.

What is to be done? Nothing that he, the one-time teacher of communications, can see. Nothing short of starting all over again with the ABC. By the time the big words come back reconstructed, purified, fit to be trusted once more, he will be long dead.²⁷

This paper will argue that South African English in the post-apartheid era is not an expiring language, but rather is in a state of renewal through hybridization, *polyglossia*, and *heteroglossia*, and parody. *Polyglossia* refers to the simultaneity of two or more national languages in the same society, a phenomenon which developed, as Bakhtin points out, in ancient Rome and during the Renaissance. *Heteroglossia* (the Russian *raznorechie* literally means “different-speech-ness”), refers to the conflict between ‘official’ and ‘unofficial’ discourses within the same national language. *Heteroglossia* is also present, however at the micro-linguistic scale; every utterance contains within it the trace of other utterances, both in the past and in the future.²⁸ In *David’s Story*, English is hybridized with the ‘Cape Coloured’ spoken vernacular known as *Kaaps*. *The Restless Supermarket* portrays both the local and global hybridization of English in post-apartheid South Africa. This shows that English in South Africa is undergoing “change-by-fusion, change-by-conjoining”²⁹ with the necessary effect of transformation, as linguistic hybridization offers permanent resistance to the tyranny of totalitarian monologic ideologies. Bakhtin delineates hybridization as:

[A] mixture of two social languages within the limits of a single utterance, an encounter, within the arena of an utterance, between two different linguistic consciousnesses, separated from one another by an epoch, by social differentiation or by some other factor.³⁰

The result of hybridization then is a kind of “double-voicedness”, which demonstrates “the ability of one voice to ironize and unmask the other within the same utterance”.³¹ “‘Double-voiced’ discourse”, put in another way by Graham Pechey, is “author and other speak[ing] together in the sense of *with each other at the same time*”.³² This can have a culturally productive effect:

[T]he mixture of linguistic world views in organic hybrids...have been...profoundly productive historically: they are pregnant with potential for new world views, with new ‘internal forms’ for perceiving the world in words.³³

Bakhtin differentiates between unconscious, *organic* hybridity (unintentional linguistic hybridization arising from the mixture of co-existing languages – the cause of the evolution of all languages) and *intentional* hybridity, which for him serves a political function. According to Bakhtin, in organic hybrids the mixture remains mute and opaque and does not consciously contain contrasts or oppositions. In other words the result is amalgamation rather than contestation. Intentional hybridity, on the other hand, involves division and separation: the different points of view “are not mixed, but set against each other dialogically”, as it seeks to undermine authoritative discourse.³⁴ Applying this idea to post-colonial settings, Homi Bhabha developed Bakhtin’s notion of intentional hybridity into his own conception of the “Third Space”, which arises out of the hybrid moment of political transformation and to which he ascribes resistance against a dominant cultural power. While hybridity indicates a fusion, it equally depicts an articulation that is dialectical, like Rushdie’s “mongrelization”. This kind of doubled hybridity explains the syncretic form of postcolonial literatures and denotes the interrogative languages of minority cultures.³⁵

Bakhtin explains that during the Renaissance an attempt was made to eliminate the bilingualism of Italian and Latin and to establish Latin as the national language. This very act transfigured it into a dead language, as it was impossible to uphold its classic Ciceronian purity while using it in everyday life. As Bakhtin says, “It was as if the language were being measured against a new world. And the language could not be stretched to fit”.³⁶ Bakhtin sees this to be a result of the new world, which “broke the bonds of Cicero’s language and its pretense at being a living idiom” thus “this world, with all that was new threw light upon the face of Cicero’s Latin and disclosed a beautiful but dead face”.³⁷ At the same time, classical Latin showed the face of medieval Latin to be ugly and limited. As the modern times placed the “mirror of comedy” before the face of the stiff, stylized Latin of the Ciceronians” so Cicero’s Latin could hold up the “mirror of comedy” to medieval Latin.³⁸ According to Bakhtin, the new social forces were best articulated in the vernacular, thus the process of interanimation of classical and medieval Latin occurred in the light of the national popular languages, and the result of this ultimately was the novel.

In this process of interanimation and illumination, Bakhtin finds that “an exceptional self-awareness developed by living reality, that is, by all that was new and had not existed formerly:

new objects, new concepts, new points of view”.³⁹ The boundaries of epochs and philosophies became evident so that the present could be realized and ‘today’ could be contrasted with ‘yesterday’. Inter-illumination was able to galvanize the awareness of both time and its changes, as well as historic space in the dialects, which reinforced and articulated the local, provincial particularities.⁴⁰ Thus “the modern time became conscious of itself”, states Bakhtin, and “it too could reflect its face in ‘the mirror of comedy’”.⁴¹ The new consciousness came about “not in a perfected and fixed linguistic system but at the intersection of many languages and at the point of their most intense interorientation and struggle”, as languages are concrete, social philosophies, penetrated by a system of values inseparable from living practice and class struggle.⁴² Such an active plurality of languages and the ability to see one’s own media from the outside, that is through the eyes of other idioms, led to exceptional linguistic freedom, including fluidity of grammar and freedom from speech norms. This is the direction in which South African literature needs to embark, and is embarking, I argue. Although writing of a different context, Bakhtin’s theory of language and hybridity can be reappropriated and applied to postcolonial contexts with some illuminating results, as Bakhtin writes:

If the creative spirit lives in one language only, or if several languages coexist but remain strictly divided without struggling for supremacy, it is impossible to overcome this dogmatism buried in the depths of linguistic consciousness. It is possible to place oneself outside one’s own language only when an essential historic change of language occurs.⁴³

In “From the prehistory of novelistic discourse,” Bakhtin stresses the little known *parodic-travestying* forms that accompanied the serious genres throughout antiquity and into the Renaissance, even going so far as to suggest that the major European literary languages were created out of the parodic dissolution of official language and culture in the Renaissance. I would like to make a link between these *parodic-travestying* forms of which Bakhtin writes, and the humorous hybridized texts which mimic Standard English in contemporary South Africa to show how an out-dated and tainted language, can be transformed and revitalized. I intend to illustrate how English can be, and is, animated by other languages, such as *Kaaps*, to create a medium which can reconcile its painful association of the past while being reinvigorated for the future. In Bakhtin’s words the dialogue between languages reveals “how much of the old [is] dead and how much of the new [is] born”.⁴⁴

David’s Story

This is the case in *David’s Story*, where hybridization, which has a comedic effect, resists monoglossia and so resists a single, correct truth or ideology. David Dirkse, an anti-apartheid activist, attempts to tell his story and in so doing attempts to fathom his identity as a ‘Coloured’ of Griqua descent as well as the history of his ancestors. Wicomb’s postmodern novel seems to endorse David’s statement that, “There is no need to fret about writing, about our choice of words in the New South Africa; rather, we will have to make do with mixtures of meaning, will have to rely on typographical devices like the slash for many more years”.⁴⁵ The fact that punctuation has to be appropriated for the sake of amalgams shows the extent to which hybridization in Bakhtin’s sense is taking over South African English language as an authoritative language in *David’s Story*. The double-voicedness in the novel comes about partly as a result of the class discrepancy between her middle class female narrator and the male

protagonist, David, who is a teacher: “This is and is not David’s Story”.⁴⁶ The sparring that occurs between the narrator and David over how the story should be portrayed, allows for irony and double-voicedness, as the role of the narrator, who usually controls how a story is perceived, is reduced. This effect helps to resist the imposition of one dogmatic truth but also arises out of the difficulty of the representation of language, or the image of language, and this has to be achieved through characterization. A person is a bearer of language and “each point of view is also described as an *interested* point of view: it embodies not just a perspective but a set of values and desires”.⁴⁷ Characters and their language(s) inevitably enter the animated struggle that indicates the competition between languages, ideologies, and interests in heteroglossia. In addition to reduced status of the narrator, there is a necessary distance between the narrator and the implied author, so that the author can employ irony and be free from a unitary and single language. This can result in

the possibility of never having to define oneself in language, the possibility of translating one’s own intentions from one linguistic system to another, of fusing ‘the language of truth’ with ‘the language of the everyday’, of saying ‘I am me’ in someone else’s language, and in my own language, ‘I am other’.⁴⁸

In this way languages are able to “illuminate” each other: they can peer into each other’s faces and become more aware of themselves, of their potentialities, of their limitations, each in the light of the other.⁴⁹

Much of Wicomb’s humour arises from her mixture of Standard English with everyday *Kaapse* Afrikaans and this “double-voiced, hybridized discourse serves a purpose, whereby each voice can [ironize and] unmask the other”.⁵⁰ This mutual unmasking occurs not only in the case of the narrator and David, but also when Ouma Ragel narrates Rachel Susanna Kok’s story. Ouma Ragel frequently places inappropriate, anachronistic words such as “ag” in the mouth of Rachel Susanna Kok: “Ag ja, she [Rachel Susanna Kok] said, oh shame, yes, nodding sympathetically”.⁵¹ This relocation of style from one genre to another according to Bakhtin, “not only alters the way the style sounds, under conditions of genre unnatural to it, but also violates or renews the given genre”, thus Standard English is recontextualized and in this way defamiliarized, leaving it fresh for reappropriation.⁵² The *Kaaps* is also ironized, however, as Zoë Wicomb throughout her novel tries to oppose the notion of a monolithic, essentialized coloured identity, as, after all, coloureds themselves are hybrids and are, in her opinion, so various that they resist categorization.⁵³

English is hybridized in very specific, technical ways in the novel. Firstly, Wicomb directly incorporates colloquial Afrikaans words into her English text, which creates a distinctly local flavour. By this I mean words such as *Ja, nee, mos, ag, skollie, windbroek, moffie*, etc. which are specifically South African. Also, Wicomb’s text is peppered with “mongrel” expressions such as, “oulik as anything”.⁵⁴ Secondly, Wicomb translates Afrikaans grammar into English. For example, the repetition of adjectives for emphasis is an Afrikaans construction, which she appropriates into the English language, e.g. *sharp-sharp*,⁵⁵ *nice-nice*,⁵⁶ *quick-quick*.⁵⁷ Thirdly, Wicomb uses set English and Afrikaans expressions and often compares the two. “Rooi soes ’n

roos” is a colloquial Afrikaans expression, as *soes* is phonetic for the formal *soos*.⁵⁸ “But the day was getting long in the tooth” is an example of hybridization of an English expression where it is removed from its usual context and applied to something else.⁵⁹ This serves to defamiliarize the expression and so revitalize the English language, as in the words of Terry Eagleton, laughter “arises from things being suddenly deprived of their familiar meanings, a kind of estrangement”.⁶⁰ In another example, Wicomb undermines idiomatic English by deeming the Dutch expression superior to the English one: “Den morgenstond heft goud in den mond – the dawn holds gold in its mouth – so much nicer as a message, his mother said, than the English version of an early bird with a mouthful of fresh worms”.⁶¹ Simply by wording the English expression differently, defamiliarization is achieved.

There are many forms of hybridization in Wicomb’s text, all of which provide comic relief as well as serving the purpose of providing alternative perspectives and ideologies. In her novel, Wicomb has made *Kaapse* Afrikaans what Dentith calls the *common language*, by which he means “the average norm of spoken and written language for a given social group – is taken by the author precisely as the *common view*”.⁶² This means that Standard English is displaced with this local vernacular, thus marginalizing and disempowering it. The first conversation Mrs. Meintjies (Sally) has is with a young white woman but the reader does not get to find out what she says as her sentence is interrupted by Mrs. Meintjies’ own thought, which deems it as unimportant: “blah blah big-words”.⁶³ The places where Standard English does exist in the novel, such as Rachel Susanna Kok’s story, are still not safe from the intrusion of Ouma Ragel’s *Kaapse* Afrikaans. The various instances of Standard English, deprived of social formality, lack the sanctioned, official discourse, which legitimates them, and so are subverted by the recontextualization within a familiar style. The conversational incorporation of a narrator’s voice constitutes a kind of social leveling. In addition, various formal texts of authority are interspersed in the novel. These are consistently undermined by their context in the novel, and often contain damning prejudices or stereotypes, which obliterate their credibility. Later on in the novel, the written word is undercut by the narrator’s ironic comment, “A function of literacy: to read your name on a hit list, but silently, as you do the other names”.⁶⁴ Wicomb satirizes the written word, as precognition of one’s own death is hardly the desired benefit of literacy. The names on the hit list themselves form a hybrid text: the first name, we are told, is that of Oupa Mtshali – Oupa being an Afrikaans word and Mtshali a Xhosa name. Dulcie is a Romance name stemming from English. Dawid has Judea origins and Dirkse is Afrikaans. Wicomb is trying to subvert racial categories and show identity to be hybrid and fluid.

Even grimmer is the way an English word, which has varying connotations, can seem particularly insensitive in a certain context.

The atmosphere could have been called electric, although that was not the word David would have chosen...The old familiar, upright words leaned promiscuously in any old direction, attaching themselves to glossy new contexts...Ant Mietjie...said hoarsely, Talk bout ‘lectric, I wouldn’t have a black and crusty throat like a bladdy chimney if there were some of it in this house...Then her eyes scrambled awkwardly, an inept monkey scrambling up the length of the electric pole, to meet the mechanical eyes of the riot lights glaring fiercely across the township.⁶⁵

This piece seems to echo Lurie's accusation that English is not sufficient and can have unfortunate reverberations in the context of the New South Africa. A harmless expression like "the atmosphere is electric", can have more sombre overtones, as it brings to mind the fact that Ant Mietjie complains she does not have electricity. The electricity that does work, however, is that which supplies the riot lights. This piece demonstrates that the Standard English words are no longer 'upright' or rigid, instead they have been defamiliarized in their new post-apartheid context.

Wicomb ends her novel in an uncontrollable explosion of hybridization: "I shriek as a bullet explodes into the back of my computer. Its memory leaks a silver puddle onto the desk, and the shrapnel of sorry words scuttle out, leaving behind whole syllables that tangle promiscuously with strange stems, strange prefixes, producing impossible hybrids that scramble my story...My screen is in shards. The words escape me".⁶⁶ This demonstrates how hybridization weakens the author and prevents one point of view, as the artistic possibilities are produced by the mobile linguistic variety of the novel. Ultimate artistic truth is not located in the author's intention as there is no last word to be spoken. Rather, the provisional truth that emerges is "inextricably fused with the local and particular evaluations implied in 'the language of the everyday', inextricably grounded, that is to say, in historical particularity".⁶⁷

When interviewed Wicomb discusses the need for chaos in writing, stating, "Precisely because there isn't order, there's conflict and that's not only in the South African situation...I think it's important to have chaos on the page",⁶⁸ which Dorothy Driver argues is opposed to "proposition, or... cliché, or... meaning,...or truth".⁶⁹ Driver admits that "Cleansing language of its history or history of its language, is not an easy task," but she does realize that "*David's Story* is not only about revolutionary struggle; it is also about a revolution in language".⁷⁰

The Restless Supermarket

A revolution in language, hybridization in South African literature, is a concept which the narrator of Ivan Vladislavic's *The Restless Supermarket* would despise. Aubrey Tearle, a retired proofreader of telephone directories in Hillbrow, is forced to come to terms with a new South Africa, and all the complex hybridities this entails. Tearle, like the stultifying ideology of the Renaissance in its attempt to make Ciceronian Latin measure against a new world, is convinced that Standard English is the ideal order and intends to spread English over the whole of South Africa, and the world: "My one aim, has been to raise standards of conduct and thought, not just between these four walls, but in the world beyond".⁷¹ He advocates a rigid upholding of impeccable grammar and spelling: to him English is a fixed entity, not a continuously reshaping, dynamic process. In his hands, English would be a dead language. His defense of Standard English has to contend, however, with local disruptions in language as well with the pernicious globalizing pressure of what Stefan Helgesson has termed, *instrumentalised English*.⁷² For Vladislavic, instrumentalised English is the language of advertising and commercial media.

Standard English occurs in the novel in the speech and writing of Tearle but also in *lexical fartlek*, his game which forms a narrative through dictionary entries. As Helgesson points out there is a "paradox of (printed) language as an arbitrary structure in which words relate to words rather than to things", which results in the tension between the slippage of meaning and Tearle's confidence in its stability, comprising the novel's basic irony.⁷³ It is significant that the source to

which Tearle always returns as evidence of the constancy of meaning is the second edition of *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*, which, as Mike Marais indicates in “Visions of Excess”, “in itself testifies to the fluidity of meaning” since between 1929 and the time of narration “it underwent no less than seven editions”.⁷⁴ Tearle depends on etymology to secure a stable meaning for a word, which indicates his belief in origins and essentialism, but as Vladislavic himself has said in an interview, “etymology is precisely the last place you should look to establish a fixed meaning for a word...It’s precisely where you look to establish the fluidity of meaning in language...one can look to etymology for evidence that words have histories, biographies”.⁷⁵ Language thus has its own history and is in a constant state of evolution (and devolution) and by extension should not necessarily be bound to a particular historical moment.

I concur with Helgesson that it is Vladislavic’s rejection of realism and his focus instead on the “shape-shifting materiality of the sign” which is the cause of the minoritisation of English in *The Restless Supermarket*.⁷⁶ Language itself then becomes the novel’s subject. According to Flora Veit-Wild, resistance literature of the anti-colonial period mainly employed realist modes of writing and a linear structure unified by the perspective of an authorial narrator. This, she believes, was consistent with the anti-colonial paradigm, based upon clear contradictions, definite identities and unambiguous truths. Instead, in her opinion “the mimetic, realist mode of nation and identity-building in African writing has been replaced by new stylistic features and literary tropes which transcend or disrupt the limits and perceptions of realism”.⁷⁷ I believe this disruption to be as a result of hybridization.

Spilkin is an ophthalmologist who significantly informs Tearle of his monoblepsia, a “condition in which vision is perfect when one eye is used, but confused and indistinct when both are used”.⁷⁸ It is clear Spilkin means this metaphorically; he is criticizing Tearle’s narrow-mindedness and his pathological abhorrence for mixing. Tearle’s refusal to mix the purity of Standard English reveals a monoglotic, totalitarian perception of the world. Upon meeting Spilkin, Tearle begins to recite lexical fartlek from the *M* section. He moves from *mélange* to *memento* and *memoir*, thus juxtaposing the notions of newness and memory. This must be one of Vladislavic’s intentional ‘mistakes’, as these words are not actually connected in the dictionary thus I interpret it to be significant. Spilkin interrupts Tearle’s game with a mnemonic, which Tearle converts into “Elephants find Pretoria the superior zoo”.⁷⁹ The link between elephants and memory (as it is a mnemonic) invokes the familiar expression of elephants having the longest memories. As zoos contain different species which are neatly separated, it is not difficult to see in Tearle’s words the endorsement of apartheid. Tearle connects Elephants with whiteness (by associating them with Pretoria), and with a longer memory, thus making them superior. This invokes the common colonial assertion that writing, which serves as the beginning of difference, distinction, opposition, and hence progress and history, shows the superiority of the civilized colonizer over the primitive African. Lack of inscription entails the failure to mark difference between nature and its others, between presence and absence, between present and past, and therefore the failure to show memory of a history.

The pink elephant with which the novel opens is ‘buggered’ first by a salesman then by a prostitute who proceeds to accidentally break off its ear. The elephant itself is described in terms of punctuation, “[I]ts trunk curled an outraged question mark over its little gasping mouth” and it is chained to an expired parking meter.⁸⁰ If the elephant is linked with language, with Standard

English, it is expired, but for Tearle, its travesty is a violation and his concern for the elephant continues throughout the novel: at first the ear is put on backwards and he sees to it that it is correctly replaced. This carnivalesque episode is situated in a cacophony of voices: “Hey, Arch! Check what Darryl’s doing”; “Ag, stop it man Darr. You making your name tawty”; “Suffer, baby, suffer”; “Meesta Ferreira! Meesta Ferreira! Pleece comb tew da frount!” which culminates in what Tearle terms, “multilingual sobbing...in a word: chaos”.⁸¹ He retires from it in disgust lamenting that “a reef of disorder lay just below the surface”.⁸² The ultimate chaos for Tearle, death, he envisages to be a chaos of language: “a precipitate efflux of vocabulary and idiom...one immaculate vintage running into another, and the whole adulterated brew spilt on the dirty macadam”, which proves his repugnance for hybridity.⁸³

Tearle’s pathetic attempt to uphold purity, to hold back change and maintain ‘standards’ is doomed to failure, and his defeat in the reality of Hillbrow is emphasized further by Fluxman’s success in Tearle’s own fiction, a collection of corrigenda, “The Proofreader’s Derby”. This ironic use of Standard English constantly undermines its power. In the corrected form of “The Proofreader’s Derby”, it is word which creates the world. According to Helgesson: “Maps determine the make-up of Alibia, not the other way around. Punctuation makes sure buttons are kept in place, and the continued existence of individuals depends on their inclusion in the phonebook”.⁸⁴ At the beginning of this story order is jeopardized, as grounds, suburbs and streets move in the night; full stops vanish; and bizarre hybrid creatures develop.⁸⁵ For the proofreading team, this is a disastrous state of affairs, which it manages to put right by reinstating (or imposing) order, particularly in the Restless Supermarket itself. The ending of Vladislavic’s novel is particularly humorous then in contrast to this perfect proofreader’s world when Tearle’s worst fears are founded: he has lost the uncorrected “Proofreader’s Derby” and has therefore “wreak[ed] havoc among the impressionable” by unleashing chaos on the world.⁸⁶ Just as in Wicomb’s novel, language proves it cannot be contained and rigidly ordered.

Tearle’s obsessive horror of fusions or combinations is not relegated to the linguistic, as according to Marais, “Vladislavic collapses the distinction between his protagonist’s *linguistic* proofreading and his *social* proofreading”.⁸⁷ This is particularly evident when one notes his distress over the movement of particular names in the phone book. The implication is that segregation, and in its extreme form apartheid, is not a remote, improbable historical phenomenon, but rather is a latent potential in any ordering process, particularly the discursive network of print “which every literate person, every reader of this Anglophone novel, is party to”.⁸⁸ Thus Helgesson makes the crucial point that power, print, literacy and the English language are merged with one another and Tearle’s sense of power stems from his allying himself with the power of the English discourse. He thus associates himself with the colonizers and the Europe of his fantasy. Ironically, however, Tearle cannot assert this power, as his letters to the editor prove more and more fruitless as the novel progresses and of course expeditions like that of “The Proofreader’s Derby” are only a fiction. He recognizes that “movements were afoot in those dark spaces that would never be reflected in the telephone directories. Languages were spoken there that I would never put to the proof”.⁸⁹ In the words of another Vladislavic critic, Simon Lewis, in his article, “The Democratic Potential of Demotic Language”, “The future belongs to the portmanteau”.⁹⁰

It is the historical change in South Africa that has enabled the authority of English to be disputed in the novel. Vladislavic’s microcosm of South Africa is the Café Europa and nowhere is

increasing hybridization more apparent than in this white *Alibia*. Café Europa starts off, as its name implies, as completely European, or white. As history changes, however, gradually more and more blacks and coloureds are found there, until eventually there is a complete change in management. Tearle is forced to compete with new voices and narratives as the ‘clientele’ alters over time. He soon discovers, too, that another hybridized form of English has sprung up: the instrumentalised English of advertising and commercial media, which has increased since the lifting of sanctions after 1994 and since an intensification of globalization. This has, as Stefan Helgesson has argued, resulted in the marginalization of English “from within the very site of power”.⁹¹ British culture too is threatened when the piano of Café Europa is replaced by a jukebox, and most ominous of all is the introduction of the television, which continuously espouses consumerism and commercial language as well as historical information such as the release of Nelson Mandela. Tearle in Café Europa, just like whites in South Africa, just like Standard English in South African language, has to shift in accordance with hybridization and adapt to disempowerment.

Vladislavic connects the change of English and the transition in general to the extension of consumerism, as indicated by the title.⁹² It is not only sophisticated, Standard English that is undermined by Vladislavic but also instrumentalised language. Both forms of institutionalized English are forced to vie with one another. Tearle’s aversion to commercialized English is apparent in the difficulty he finds in venturing into “the murkier depths of the classifieds”.⁹³ This can be interpreted as Standard English trying to resist instrumentalised English. The competition of Standard and instrumentalised English can be seen when Tearle disputes with a German restaurant owner over the composition of his menu. Tearle, in attempting to extend Standard English to everything, resents Herr Toppelmann’s portmanteau word, *currywurst*. He states,

Currywurst? It was ersatz, a jerry-built portmanteau word if ever I heard one...I vowed never to eat one. For the same principled reason, I avoided the pickle-barrel tables on the pavement outside: they were tacky, in the senses popular on both sides of the Atlantic, they smacked of fast food, grubby little hands that might tug at one’s flannels and spoil one’s appetite.⁹⁴

Fast food culture associated with America, is portrayed as destroying the very British “flannels”. This is essentially a battle of culture taking place as a result of globalization. Another discourse has been allowed entry into South Africa and so the English discourse is forced to contend for its survival, which Tearle expresses through the struggle of language.

Vladislavic’s unusual use of consumerism and its advertising techniques defamiliarizes contemporary logo-centrism and provides “unlikely stylistic potential” for example Tearle’s listing of “Hyperama...Meatarama...Cupboard-a-rama...Veg-a-rama...Leatherama...Motorama...Computerama” is a kind of hybridization.⁹⁵ Vladislavic manages to release words from their instrumental meaning, according to Helgesson, to “become pure sound”, which can then be reappropriated in a particularly South African context.⁹⁶ Tearle lists his associations with milksop which similarly become pure sound and have already been appropriated in South African language: “iffy...butty... whiffy...naff...dishy...dinky...fab”.⁹⁷ I concur with Helgesson’s assertion that the reappropriation by South Africans of language suffused with both “British cultural authority” and “the entropic blandness of consumerism”, creates a transnationally conceived but local minor discourse. He claims:

In both respects, Aubrey Tearle's dream of an authoritative language anchored in Oxford is undone and replaced by a bold acknowledgment of language as a mode of becoming, rather than being, or being done. 'Minor disorders' no longer seem to be exceptions to the rule, but rather the new rule that cannot be legislated.⁹⁸

The Restless Supermarket thus contains Standard and archaic English, hybrid colloquial speech incorporating different local languages, and the instrumentalised language of advertisements, technology and American jargon in one hybridized text, which serves to undermine the authority of Standard English. Just as in Wicomb's novel, *The Restless Supermarket* hinges on narrative and syntactical structures, such as hybridization and pluralism, to make sense of the various discourses at play.

I have shown with *David's Story* and *The Restless Supermarket* that South African English in the post-apartheid era is a language that is becoming not being, that it is being reinvigorated by hybridity, which is persistently overturning the claim to speak with the voice of authority and to say the final word. Mimetic realism, typical of anti-colonial writing, is being rejected for new stylistic features such as hybridization, which Flora Veit-Wild extends to contemporary post-colonial literature in general. I return to Coetzee, who concludes *Disgrace* with the observation, "It is not the erotic that is calling to him after all, not the elegiac, but the comic".⁹⁹ It seems that what is required to ease the tension of shifting power relations in post-apartheid South Africa, is the ability to laugh at oneself, which can only be done by objectivizing one's own language by looking at it through the eyes of another.

¹ J. Cronin, *Inside and Out*. (Cape Town: David Philip Publishers, 1999), P. 48.

² I have taken the term *devolution* from Stefan Helgesson's article " 'Minor Disorders': Ivan Vladislavic and the Devolution of South African English", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 30.4 (Dec. 2004). He delineates *devolution* to mean literally "rolling down," but other figurative meanings are incorporated in his definition including "degeneration", "passing on through a series of revolutions or stages", and "a democratic process of handing over, of delegating powers of decision, or of the lapsing of a proprietary right to the true owners or heirs" (778).

³ Hybridization is even more prevalent in South African poetry. See for example such poets as Mphutlane wa Bofelo (his poem "Kwaito"), Kgafela oa Magogodi, Lesego Rampolokeng and Jeremy Cronin.

⁴ P. Sylva, "South African English: Oppressor or Liberator?" *The Major Varieties of English* (Papers from MAVEN 97, Vaxjo, 20–22 November 1997), p. 1.

⁵ Idem.

⁶ Idem.

⁷ Idem.

⁸ Idem.

⁹ English newspapers also received wide readership in the townships.

¹⁰ The attempt to launch Afrikaans as medium of instruction in 'Bantu Education' schools, even replacing English in certain subjects, led to the 1976 Soweto uprising. Penny Sylva writes of how since 1994 Afrikaans has severed its intimate connection with power and oppression, and she sees a new emphasis being placed by Afrikaners on the fact that Afrikaans is the community language of blacks as well as whites: "The public use of Afrikaans (in government and the media) has shrunk dramatically, and its symbolic role has changed from being the language of power to being one of a number of community languages, leading (understandably) to insecurity and considerable anger amongst many Afrikaans-speakers. It is notable that some Afrikaners have recently identified themselves in public forums with speakers of the African languages, 'standing together' against the perceived threat of the juggernaut, English." 5. This is echoed by such critics as Simon Lewis who sees democratic potential in the Afrikaans language, "If the Zoot Fits, Wear It: The Democratic Potential of Demotic Language in Twenty-First Century South Africa" *Kunapipi: Journal of Post-Colonial Writing* 24.1-2 (2002), p. 79.

¹¹ D. Gough, "English in South Africa", *A Dictionary of South African English on Historical Principles*, ed. Penny Sylva (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996) xix.

¹² A. Sparks, *Beyond the Miracle: Inside the New South Africa* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 2003), p. 333.

¹³ P. Sylva, 5.

¹⁴ V. de Klerk (ed.) *Focus on South Africa Varieties of English Around the World*, General Series 15 (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1996), p. 7.

¹⁵ Idem.

¹⁶ A. Gagiano, 812.

¹⁷ P. Sylva, 5.

¹⁸ Penny Sylva hopes that the publication of specialized SAE dictionaries, and especially the appearance of the *Dictionary of South African English on Historical Principles* (1996), will help to improve the perceived status of the variety within the mother-tongue community and will possibly increase appreciation of the 'flavour' of SAE, as well as of the role played by all language communities to this variety. She quotes a black journalist who commented on the benefit of a specifically hybridized, local, South African English, which would be open to everyone, "Publishing a dictionary of words which are as exclusively South African as *pap en wors* [porridge and sausage] frees indigenous people from balking at using their own version of the English language. This book recognizes, traces, documents, celebrates and elevates our English. It is an affirmation of this eclectic language and the freedom of a people (Saint Molakeng, *The Sowetan*, 29 Oct. 1997, p.17), p. 4.

¹⁹ P. Sylva, 7.

²⁰ N. Ndebele, "The English Language and Social Change in South Africa", *Rediscovery of the Ordinary* (Johannesburg: COSAW, 1991), p. 112.

²¹ N. Ndebele, p. 102.

²² S. Rushdie, "In Good Faith", *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism 1981-1991* (London: Granta Books, 1991), p. 394; italics in the original.

- ²³ M. Lenta, "Ethnicity and Hybridity: Noni Jabavu Writes Against Apartheid", Wittenberg, Hermann (ed. and introd.) and Nas, Loes (ed. and introd.) *AUETSA 96, I-II: Southern African Studies* (Bellville, South Africa: U of Western Cape P, 1996), p. 231.
- ²⁴ K. Hirschkop, "Introduction: Bakhtin and Cultural Theory", Hirschkop, K. and Shepherd, D. (eds) *Bakhtin and cultural theory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), p. 18.
- ²⁵ J.M. Coetzee, *Doubling the Point: Essays and Interviews* (London: Harvard University Press, 1992), p. 97.
- ²⁶ J.M. Coetzee, *Disgrace* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1999), p. 117.
- ²⁷ J.M. Coetzee, p. 129.
- ²⁸ *Heteroglossia* should not be confused with *polyphony*. The latter term is used by Bakhtin primarily to describe Dostoevsky's multi-voiced novels, whereby author's and heroes' discourses interact on equal terms. *Heteroglossia*, on the other hand, foregrounds the class of antagonistic social forces.
- ²⁹ S. Rushdie, p. 394.
- ³⁰ M. Bakhtin. Holquist, Michael (ed) *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* (Austin: U of Texas P, 1981), p. 358.
- ³¹ R. Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 20.
- ³² G. Pechey, "Not the Novel: Bakhtin, poetry, truth, God", *Pretexts* 4.2 (Summer 1993), p. 70.
- ³³ M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, p. 360.
- ³⁴ M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, p. 360.
- ³⁵ R. Young, p. 24.
- ³⁶ M. Bakhtin, "From the prehistory of novelistic discourse", Lodge, David (ed.) *Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader* (New York: Longman Inc., 1988), p. 154.
- ³⁷ M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, trans. Iswolsky, Helene (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1984), pp. 466-7.
- ³⁸ M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, p. 467.
- ³⁹ Idem.
- ⁴⁰ M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, p. 469.
- ⁴¹ M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, p. 468.
- ⁴² M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, p. 471.
- ⁴³ Idem.
- ⁴⁴ M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, p. 468.
- ⁴⁵ Z. Wicomb, *David's Story* (Cape Town: Kwela Books, 2000), p. 3.
- ⁴⁶ Z. Wicomb, *David's Story*, p. 1.
- ⁴⁷ K. Hirschkop, p. 20; italics in the original.
- ⁴⁸ M. Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 315.
- ⁴⁹ M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais*, p. 465.
- ⁵⁰ R. Young, p. 21.
- ⁵¹ Z. Wicomb, *David's Story*, p. 56.
- ⁵² M. Bakhtin, "The Problem of the Text", Emerson C. and Holquist M. *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays* (Austin: U of Texas Press, 1986), p. 66.
- ⁵³ Z. Wicomb, "Shame and identity: the case of the coloured in South Africa", Attridge and Jolly (eds) *Writing South Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998) 106. Wicomb uses the image-text work, *THEN WHAT?* by the African-American artist Carrie Mae Weems at the end of this article to demonstrate the resistance of racial descriptions and includes it too in *David's Story*: DEEP BLACK, ASHY BLACK, PALE BLACK, JET BLACK, PITCH BLACK, DEAD BLACK, BLUE BLACK, CHOCOLATE-BROWN, COFFEE, SEALSKIN-BROWN, DEEP BROWN, HONEY BROWN, RED BROWN, DEEP YELLA BROWN, CHOCOLATE, HIGH-BROWN, LOW-BROWN, VELVET BROWN, BRONZE, GINGERBREAD, LIGHT BROWN, TAN, OLIVE, COPPER, PINK, BANANA, CREAM, ORANGE, HIGH YALLA, LEMON, OH, AND YEAH CAMEL.
- ⁵⁴ Z. Wicomb, *David's Story*, p. 8.
- ⁵⁵ Z. Wicomb, *David's Story*, p. 5.
- ⁵⁶ Z. Wicomb, *David's Story*, p. 8.
- ⁵⁷ Z. Wicomb, *David's Story*, p. 75.
- ⁵⁸ Z. Wicomb, *David's Story*, p. 10.
- ⁵⁹ Z. Wicomb, *David's Story*, p. 51.
- ⁶⁰ T. Eagleton, "Bakhtin, Schopenhauer, Kundera", Hirschkop K. and Shepherd, D. (eds) *Bakhtin and Cultural Theory* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1989), p. 185.
- ⁶¹ Z. Wicomb, *David's Story*, p. 21.
- ⁶² S. Dentith, *Bakhtinian Thought: An Introductory Reader* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 197; italics in the original.

- ⁶³ Z. Wicomb, *David's Story*, p. 5.
- ⁶⁴ Z. Wicomb, *David's Story*, p. 113.
- ⁶⁵ Z. Wicomb, *David's Story*, p. 125-6.
- ⁶⁶ Z. Wicomb, *David's Story*, p. 212-3.
- ⁶⁷ Dentith, p. 56.
- ⁶⁸ Z. Wicomb, "Zoë Wicomb, interviewed by Eva Hunter, Cape Town, 5 June 1990", *Between the Lines II: Interviews with Nadine Gordimer, Menan du Plessis, Zoë Wicomb, Lauretta Ngcobo*, Hunter, Eva and MacKenzie, Craig (eds) (Grahamstown: National English Literary Museum, 1993), p. 92.
- ⁶⁹ D. Driver, "Afterword" to *David's Story* (New York: Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 2001), p. 251.
- ⁷⁰ Driver, p. 250.
- ⁷¹ I. Vladislavic, *The Restless Supermarket* (Cape Town: Kwela Books, 2001), p. 259.
- ⁷² S. Helgesson, " 'Minor Disorders': Ivan Vladislavic and the Devolution of South African English", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 30.4 (Dec. 2004), p. 777.
- ⁷³ S. Helgesson, p. 783.
- ⁷⁴ M. Marais, "Visions of Excess: Closure, Irony, and the Thought of Community in Ivan Vladislavic's *The Restless Supermarket*", *English in Africa* 29.2 (Oct. 2002), p. 113.
- ⁷⁵ M. Marais and Carita Backstrom, "An Interview with Ivan Vladislavic", *English in Africa* 29.2 (Oct. 2002), p. 125.
- ⁷⁶ S. Helgesson, p. 777.
- ⁷⁷ F. Veit-Wild, "Carnival and Hybridity in Texts by Dambudzo Marechera and Lesego Rampolokeng", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 23.4 (Dec. 1997), p. 3.
- ⁷⁸ I. Vladislavic, *The Restless Supermarket*, p. 241.
- ⁷⁹ I. Vladislavic, *The Restless Supermarket*, p. 50.
- ⁸⁰ I. Vladislavic, *The Restless Supermarket*, p. 3.
- ⁸¹ I. Vladislavic, *The Restless Supermarket*, p. 6.
- ⁸² Idem.
- ⁸³ I. Vladislavic, *The Restless Supermarket*, p. 24-5.
- ⁸⁴ S. Helgesson, p. 784.
- ⁸⁵ Idem.
- ⁸⁶ I. Vladislavic, *The Restless Supermarket*, p. 101.
- ⁸⁷ M. Marais, "Visions of Excess", p. 101.
- ⁸⁸ S. Helgesson, p. 784.
- ⁸⁹ I. Vladislavic, *The Restless Supermarket*, p. 304.
- ⁹⁰ S. Lewis, "If the Zoot Fits, Wear It: The Democratic Potential of Demotic Language in Twenty-First Century South Africa", *Kunapipi: Journal of Post-Colonial Writing* 24.1-2 (2002), p. 79.
- ⁹¹ S. Helgesson, p. 778.
- ⁹² S. Helgesson, p. 785.
- ⁹³ I. Vladislavic, *The Restless Supermarket*, p. 64.
- ⁹⁴ I. Vladislavic, *The Restless Supermarket*, p. 52-3.
- ⁹⁵ I. Vladislavic, *The Restless Supermarket*, p. 41.
- ⁹⁶ S. Helgesson, p. 786.
- ⁹⁷ I. Vladislavic, *The Restless Supermarket*, p. 145.
- ⁹⁸ S. Helgesson, p. 787.
- ⁹⁹ J. M. Coetzee, *Disgrace*, p. 184.