CONSERVATION DISCOURSES RELATED TO NATURAL RESOURCE USE: LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND KRUGER NATIONAL PARK CONSERVATION OFFICERS MPUMALANGA PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA

By

Carmen Curtayne

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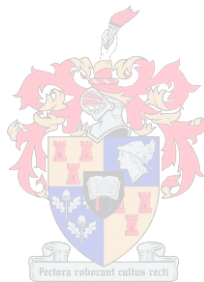**at**

Stellenbosch University

Study Leader: Professor Christine Anthonissen

March 2011

DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

There is a shift by conservation authorities in post-apartheid South Africa away from management strategies based on law enforcement towards strategies aimed at facilitating local community participation in the management of natural resources.

South African National Parks has established community forums in order to facilitate better communication with the communities neighbouring it parks, especially around issues of natural resource consumption. However, at its largest Park, the Kruger National Park, a pervasive miscommunication between the Park and the communities appears to exist despite the ongoing activities of its forums.

This study attempted to identify what miscommunication, if any, was occurring between three groups of participants in the Conservation Discourse related to the Kruger National Park environment. The participants were (i) South African National Parks (SANParks) conservation managers, (ii) Kruger Park community outreach officials, and, (iii) members of local communities settled on the borders of the Kruger Park. Specifically, the study was interested in how different perceptions of various participants, who also represent different cultural communities, were foregrounded in relation to different communicative goals.
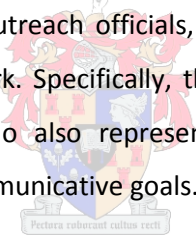
It is suggested that an understanding of where the different Discourses diverge can help identify where possible misunderstandings are occurring which may be resulting in communicative problems.

My primary research questions were: (1) how do different communities of practice take part in and construct Conservation Discourse related to the Kruger Parks conservation goals, in particular, those related to the use of natural resources; and, (2) how do members of at least three interest groups construct their own identities in relation to conservation matters in the course of various discursive events where SANParks conservation programmes, particularly those related to the use of natural resources, are topicalised.

My assumption was that the Parks conservation officers would have a common Conservation Discourse, and that the local communities would have a common discourse but one which deviates entirely from that of the Parks.

From 23 September 2008, I conducted three semi-structured interviews with the Parks conservation officers, I was an observer of a Park departmental meeting as well as a Park Forum, and I conducted a focus group with eight members from one of the local communities. This approach enabled me to collect data from a number of different types of communicative events in order to collate a multi-dimensional picture of the complete Discourse on Conservation.

A number of different Conservation Discourses were identified, some of which present significant discrepancies, and which, as in the case of the two of the departments, may be contributing towards what appears to be a serious breakdown in communication.

The communities show that while they are supportive of the populist concept of nature conservation, they are completely unaware of the Parks conservation policies.

This lack of awareness indicates a failure of the existing communication between the Park and its neighbouring communities despite the Park Forums having been set-up.

Finally, the different discourses also appear to be resulting in misunderstandings and feelings of animosity between the different participants.

BEWARINGSDISKOERSE OOR DIE GEBRUIK VAN NATUURLIKE HULPBRONNE: PLAASLIKE GEMEENSKAPPE EN KRUGER NASIONALE PARK-BEWARINGSBEAMPTES MPUMALANGA-PROVINSIE, SUID-AFRIKA

OPSOMMING

In post-apartheid Suid-Afrika beweeg bewaringsliggame weg van bestuurstrategieë wat op wetstoepassing gebaseer is, na strategieë wat daarop gemik is om die plaaslike gemeenskap se deelname in die bestuur van natuurlike hulpbronne, te fasiliteer.

Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Parke het gemeenskapsforums in die lewe geroep om beter kommunikasie met die gemeenskappe wat aan sy parke grens, te bewerkstellig, veral rakende kwessies rondom die verbruik van natuurlike hulpbronne. By die grootse Park, te wete die Kruger Nasionale Wildtuin, kom dit egter voor asof miskommunikasie endemies is tussen die Park en sy aangrensende inheemse gemeenskappe, ten spyte van die forums se aktiwiteite.

Hierdie studie het nagegaan watter miskommunikasie, indien enige, tussen drie groepe deelnemers aan die Bewaringsdiskoerse rondom die Krugerpark, plaasgevind het. Die deelnemers was (i) Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Parke (SANParke)-bewaringsbestuurders, (ii) Krugerpark Gemeenskapsuitreik-beamptes, en (iii) lede van plaaslike gemeenskappe wat op die grense van Krugerpark gevestig is. Die studie het spesifiek gekyk na hoe verskillende persepsies van die onderskeie deelnemers, wat ook verskillende kulturele gemeenskappe verteenwoordig, in die diskoerse op die voorgrond geplaas is afhangende van verskillende kommunikatiewe doelwitte.

Daar word voorgestel dat begrip van waar die verskillende diskoerse uiteenloop, kan help om te identifiseer waar moontlike misverstande wat tot kommunikasie-probleme lei, ontstaan.

My primêre navorsingsvrae was: (1) hoe neem verskillende gemeenskappe wat rondom gedeelde praktyke gevestig is deel aan Bewaringsdiskoerse wat die Krugerpark se bewaringsoogmerke (en veral daardie oogmerke wat met die gebruik van natuurlik hulpbronne te make het) en hoe konstrueer hulle daardie Diskoerse; en (2) hoe konstrueer lede van ten minste drie belangegroepe hul eie identiteite vis à vis bewaringskwessies in die loop van verskeie diskursiewe gebeurtenisse waar SANParke se bewaringsprogramme, veral daardie wat met die gebruik van natuurlike hulpbronne te doen het, bespreek word.

My aanname was dat die Park se bewaringsbeamptes 'n gemeenskaplike Bewaringsdiskoers sou hê, en dat die plaaslike gemeenskappe 'n gemeenskaplike Diskoers sou hê wat heeltemal van die Park s'n verskil.

Ek het van 23 September 2008 drie semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude met die Park se bewaringsbeamptes gevoer, ek was 'n nie-deelnemende waarnemer by een van die Park se departementele vergaderings asook by 'n Park Forum, en ek het 'n fokusgroep met agt lede van een van die plaaslike gemeenskappe gelei. Hierdie benadering het my daartoe in staat gestel om data van verskeie tipes kommunikatiewe gebeurtenisse in te samel, om sodoende 'n multi-dimensionele beeld van die volledige Bewaringsdiskoers saam te stel.

'n Aantal verskillende Bewaringsdiskoerse is geïdentifiseer, waarvan party noemenswaardige diskrepansies toon en wat, soos in die geval van die twee departemente, moontlik bydra tot wat lyk na 'n ernstige breuk in kommunikasie.

Die gemeenskappe toon dat, hoewel hulle die algemene konsep van natuurbewaring ondersteun, hulle heeltemal onbewus is van die Park se formele bewaringsbeleid.

Hierdie gebrek aan 'n bepaalde soort bewussyn dui op mislukking van die bestaande kommunikasiestrukture tussen die Park en aangrensende gemeenskappe, ten spyte van die instelling van die Park Forums.

Uiteindelik blyk dit dat die verskillende Diskoerse ook lei tot misverstande en gevoelens van vyandig-gesindheid tussen die verskillende deelnemers.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CMD: Conservation Management Department

CSD: Conservation Services Department

DCAs: Danger Causing Animals

PCD: People and Conservation Department

SANParks: South African National Parks
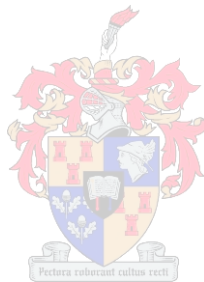
SSU: Scientific Services Unit

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study investigates Conservation Discourses currently developing between national conservation agencies, regional conservation projects and local communities in Southern Africa. It focuses on pertinent aspects of intercultural communication between nature reserve officials working in different departments, and local residents whose traditional way of life is to some extent in conflict with the aims and perspectives of well-resourced conservation projects and agencies. Various discourses have developed around the management and use of natural resources. This thesis reports on an ethnographic study into the organisation of such discourses in a context where different conservation cultures intersect.

1.1   BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

There is a shift by conservation authorities in Sub-Saharan Africa away from management strategies based on law enforcement towards strategies aimed at facilitating local community participation in the management of natural resources (Venter 1998:1).

The concept of local community participation in nature conservation is relatively new in this region, due in part to a history of forced removals of rural communities from their land, especially where such land was converted into national parks and game farms (Mosidi 1996:17).

In the new South African dispensation this presents a challenge to the aim of securing local participation in nature conservation, which is aggravated by the fact that rural communities largely lead a hand-to-mouth existence. Rural peoples livelihoods depend on subsistence farming resulting in more and more natural land being converted into grazing land for livestock (Hogan 2000:12).

Where a rural community is established in close proximity to a national park or game reserve, difficulties of providing a livelihood for the community can result in tensions between national park officials and local communities. In order to avert misunderstandings around conservation programmes that have an impact on the community, South African National Parks (SANParks) employs social ecologists, who can speak the language of the community, and who have an understanding of the social and cultural milieu of the community, to act as intermediaries. These officers report directly to the respective parks regional managers but also work closely with the

SANParks People and Conservation Department (PCD). The PCD was established to engage with local communities, provide environmental education and conserve heritage sites within the national parks.

One of the tasks given to the SANParks intermediaries is to discuss the conservation goals of SANParks with representatives from the local villages at monthly forums. SANParks's conservation policies and management plans are formulated and governed by a department called the Conservation Services Department (CSD). A regional office of the PCD and a unit within the CSD, namely the Scientific Services Unit (SSU), are situated in the Kruger National Park in South Africas Mpumalanga Province, and are each tasked with a different aspect of the larger conservation project. They interact with each other, one dependent on the contribution of the other, while at the same time seeking platforms for interaction with local communities whose interest in the conservation of natural resources may be at odds with SANParks interest.

The monthly forums are events where the Kruger Park intermediaries interact with representatives of the local communities whose land borders on the Kruger Park. The main communicative goal here is to find common ground on conservation matters, simultaneously taking care of natural resources and considering the local community's subsistence needs. According to the Head of the PCD at the Kruger Park, who is based at Skukuza, a camp on the western side of the Park, the monthly forums are proving to be successful in influencing communities towards more environmentally aware and responsible behaviour. However, it appears that despite the establishment of these communication bodies, there are still many instances of a breakdown in communication between the Kruger Park officials and some of the communities living on its border (Venter 1998:49-120).

1.2   RESEARCH PROBLEM

The research problem that this study addresses is the apparent miscommunication between three groups of participants in Conservation Discourses related to the Kruger National Park environment. The participants here are (i) South African National Parks (SANParks) conservation managers, (ii) Kruger Park community outreach officers, and (iii) members of local communities settled on the borders of the Kruger Park. Specifically, the study focuses on how Conservation Discourse in this environment is organised among participants with an interest in the local natural resources, but with different histories and different needs in relation to these resources. It will pay special attention to different perceptions of various participants, who also represent different cultural communities, and will consider how different communicative goals fail, are partially achieved or succeed within the current communicative structures. The study will investigate how different aspects of participants

individual and group identities are articulated in their understanding of a number of pertinent aspects of nature conservation.

1.2.1 Context

According to Abrams, O Connor and Giles (in Gudykunst 2003:215), people use language strategically to achieve or maintain a positive personal and social identity. Thus Kruger Park officials working in the PCD and SSU, the Kruger Park-based intermediaries, as well as community members all negotiate their position in the Conservation Discourse, and co-construct their own and others identities in the course of the communicative events where they meet.

Illustrative of the complexity of the context and the nature of the Conservation Discourse, is the position of the intermediaries who are deployed to educate communities on conservation issues around the Kruger Park, and who generally do not speak English as a first language. In terms of subscribing to a particular discourse model and of structuring identity through discourse, the intermediaries structure the content of their Conservation Discourse in such a way that they articulate different aspects of their personal identities in different communicative contexts. Thus they may primarily articulate their ethnic identity when speaking to community members, and then on other occasions, structure their discourse differently to express their association with the institutional identity of SANParks.

This could result in the intermediaries intentionally, or perhaps unintentionally, delivering different messages to the two kinds of audience. Hence community members on the one hand and parks officials on the other, may receive the same content with different kinds of uptake, in other words, they may understand the same message differently. Similar complexities in conveying messages to different audiences and in relating to members of different interest groups, are to be found among most of the participants.

1.2.2 Aim and objectives

The aims of this study are:

a. to determine how different communities of practice take part in and construct Conservation Discourse related to the Kruger Parks conservation goals, in particular, those related to the use of natural resources;

b. to establish how members of at least three interest groups construct their own identities in relation to conservation matters in the course of various discursive events where SANParks conservation programmes, particularly those related to the use of natural resources, are topicalised.

1.2.3   Research questions

In order to achieve the above research aims, the following questions have directed this study:

1. How is the Scientific Services Units views and goals towards natural resource conservation articulated and communicated in relation to the People and Conservation Department and the local communities?

2. How are the People and Conservation Departments, and the Park intermediary's views and goals towards natural resource conservation articulated and communicated in relation to the Scientific Services Unit and the local communities?

3. How are the local communities views towards natural resource conservation articulated and communicated in relation to the Kruger National Park?

4. Based on observation and of recorded discursive data, what perceptions of one another can be identified as being held by the various interest groups regarding the organisation of communication around use of natural resources in the local environment?

1.3   RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This research is qualitative in that it has been conducted on a small sample of data that records discourses which illustrate the nature of Conservation Discourse between conservation authorities that represent larger concerns, and local communities whom the authorities hope to engage as collaborators in the conservation endeavours. Various insights of ethnography, the study of how culture and social identities are structured through language use (Fasold 1990:62), were used in interviews and observing authentic discourses between indigenous local communities and intermediaries. Employees in the PCD and the SSU who are situated in the Kruger Park were interviewed; also, the researcher was invited to join one of the forum meetings and so (with due permission[1]) collected recordings of the spontaneous oral interaction that took place there. The researcher was also able to observe a departmental meeting of the Kruger Parks Conservation Management Department.

Primary data was collected between 21 and 25 September 2008 via interviews conducted with the following parties who are all based at Skukuza, in the Kruger National Park:

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[1] See Appendix 6 for the permission given by the SANParks Social Science Research Department, to conduct this research.

1. A conservation manager from SANParks, employed in the Scientific Services Unit;

2. One representative from the PCD, and one Kruger Park intermediary, who are both involved in interaction with communities living on the south-western border of the Kruger Park;

Data was also collected from a focus group session held with eight members of the Lumbabiswano Forum - the community forum which represents the communities on the south-western border of the Park.

I sat in on the Lumbabiswano Forum meeting on 23 September 2008, and recorded the discussions while a local translator assisted me in understanding what general topics were being raised. On 27 July 2009 I sat in on one of the Conservation Management Department (CMD) meetings. This department is based primarily at the Kruger Park and is tasked with implementing the conservation policies of the CSD within the Park. It works very closely with the SSU, and should ideally be working closely with the PCD; however, this did not seem to be the case. Excerpts from both these meetings have been included in the analysis.

The interviews and focus group discussions were transcribed to enable analysis and comparison of the discourses. These were used along with the researcher's field notes, to interpret and gauge the positions of the three parties, related to SANParks's conservation programmes. The discourses were analysed in order to achieve the research aims given in section 1.2.2, and to answer the research questions given in section 1.2.3.
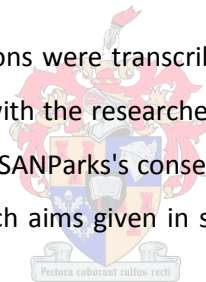
Secondary data in the form of written texts, were sourced from the SANParks website, educational material developed by the PCD, and a draft of SANParks's new policy document on natural resource conservation. While this data is not analysed as such it is discussed in order to elucidate the primary data, namely the recorded discourses.

1.4   RESEARCH SITE: KRUGER NATIONAL PARK

1.4.1   History

For most white South Africans the Kruger National Park is a symbol of pride which even under Apartheid (as from 1948) managed to maintain a positive international image for its excellent conservation practices (Honey 1999:383).

For many black South Africans, however, it represented the oppressive past of racism and disenfranchisement. Even before the National Party rule, in 1926 and 1938, under the National Parks

Act, people living in the Park were forcefully removed to where they are now living. They had to leave behind most of their belongings, and their houses and cattle were destroyed. In 1961 the current Kruger Park fence was erected which made access to the Park difficult for communities living on its borders (Kolkman 2005:4 - 7).

During the 1960s four homelands, or Bantustans, were proclaimed along the western border of the Park for Tsonga, Venda, Northern Sotho and Swazi people. Further forced removals brought people from other areas of the country into the respective Bantustans. This whole area was known to have little potential for agriculture. The continuous influx of people due to forced removals from elsewhere rapidly increased the population of the Bantustans putting increasing pressure on natural resources that could sustain such communities (Venter 1998:29).

The Kruger Park disregarded existing indigenous knowledge, systems and the local culture. Instead it concentrated on conservation through biodiversity with an emphasis on promoting the natural scenery (Kolkman 2005:4).

After 1994, the rural communities applied to have their land returned to them. However, the new, democratic government ensured that nature reserves remained intact and most were earmarked for further expansion. Nowadays the South African government is using ecotourism to redress the past, attempting to compensate for infringement of human rights and restricted access to resources that occurred under the "old order" by involving, and partly also employing, members of the community now settled on the border of the Kruger National Park (Honey 1999:383).

Unlike ecotourism initiatives in east and southern Africa, South Africa's current development of ecotourism does not stem from environmental concerns only. In this country it is deeply affected by a drive to redress the inequalities of the past brought about by the former white minority rule. Ecotourism is considered a vehicle for social development and it has close ties to the objectives of the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) (Honey 1999:382).

Even though there has been progress in conservation principles since the end of Apartheid, some officials from the old regime are still working in the national parks system as well as in well-known environmental organisations such the Endangered Wildlife Trust (Honey 1999:383). Thus at times there appears to be a conflict between conservation of precious natural resources and proper concern for poor, indigenous communities.

1.4.2　Perceptions of the Kruger Park as conservation site

The Kruger had been managed by what has been referred to as an "old white boys network" with an us-versus-them attitude, the "them" being the poor communities living on its boundaries (Honey 1999:340).

In her interviews with communities bordering the Park and still suffering from recent histories of displacement, Meskell (2008:4) found that residents still see the Kruger Park as 'the state, answerable to the Government, despite it now being under black ANC management.

Mosidi (1996:19) points out that up until 1996 South African conservation strategies followed a Eurocentric approach towards local communities by embodying what Fourie (1994, in Mosidi 1996:19) believes is "paternalism, elitism and an attitude of supremacy". Venter (1998:26) also refers to the European-centred conservation laws which regarded "subsisting" on game as less "civilised" than selling game or killing it for sport. Furthermore, as Carruthers (1993, in Venter 1998:26) notes, traditional African hunting techniques were regarded as cruel, even though local communities were not allowed to own guns and so had no alternatives in subsistence hunting. Carruthers (1993, in Venter 1998:33) also records that local communities who were found hunting were seen as "evil, cruel poachers" whereas rangers policing the park were regarded as "brave and loyal".

Meskell (2006:113) concurs by referring to how conversely the "taxonomies" of hunting for sport or hunting for survival are shaped by a financial prerogative - who can afford to hunt and who cannot. She argues that this assertion, within the biodiversity realm, can lead to hypotheses that the indigenous communities bordering the Park are a threat to its natural heritage, and that such communities therefore need to be educated and controlled by conservationists.

Before colonial occupation, Africans coexisted with wildlife and had a traditional conservation ethic, even protecting rare species for royal and sacred ceremonies. Their attitude towards wildlife only changed to hostility after the formation of exclusionary game reserves (Honey 1999:341).

In the past, according to Kiss (1990, Balyamajura 1995:99) indigenous African people regarded wildlife as a gift of nature to be utilised for physical and social needs. Due to the previous government's separatist conservation policies, the rural population came to consider wildlife not so much a valuable commodity but rather a danger and menace to them.

Kolkman (2005:3) uses the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park as a case study to show how the

current approach to conservation neglects the ideological meaning of the surrounding area. Little attention has been paid to traditional and place-based identity. He points out how destructive constructions of territorial boundaries by external parties with little understanding of the occupants perceptions of place and region, have been.

In Theron (1995:41) Communication Consultants warn against perceptions from external parties that see a "community" as analogous with stereotyped needs and motivations, as community engagement strategies which do not factor in the indelible variety of social identities found within communities will appear superficial and ignorant.

Mosidi (1996:105) believes that the Parks Boards need to change their way of thinking and adopt an open-minded attitude when engaging with neighbouring rural communities. This calls for transforming existing conservation guidelines towards constructs that embrace rural communities as equal partners and that lie comfortably in what Fourie (1994, in Mosidi 1996:105) calls "the lap of Africa".

A report on ecotourism by Weekly Mail (1993, in Mosidi 1996:20) proposed that empowering black communities to play a decisive role in conservation projects would overcome the legacy of antagonism brought on by forced removals and racist policies.

1.4.3   Forums as sites of engagement between different interest groups

According to the SANParks website (http://celtis.sanparks.org/people/community), the Kruger Park set up community forums to assist in encouraging communities to "actively participate in the management of their local park and raise issues affecting their lives and the environment." The scope of matters discussed at these forums is described as "extensive, particularly in the rural areas and ranges from HIV/AIDS through to employment, and issues like the security of park fences."

Four of the Kruger Parks community forums are discussed in Venter (1998:49 - 120). These forums, namely the Hlanganani Forum, Lumambiswano Forum, Sabie River Forum and the Phalaborwa Forum, are held with communities living on the western border of the Park. The recurring issues that featured in Venter's interviews with the communities attending the various forums were poacher-related problems, cattle losses within the Park, and concerns about the Parks employment of local village residents.

Honey (1999:348) refers to the Hlanganani Forum as the largest and most politically aggressive forum, representing 29 communities. Its three most pressing issues are the communities lack of

resources such as water, wood, and food, the loss of cattle to wild animals, and land claims within the park. The communities are evidently frustrated with the killing of live stock and damage to communal farming land by animals of the Kruger Park. Venter (1998:77) recorded the following comment made by a Mahlati village resident:

> "We are crying about the lion. We have lost a lot of our stock…We paid a lot of money for the cattle. When we asked to be allowed to trap the lions, we were told that they had cubs which would be motherless."

Honey (1999:348) reports that the Kruger Park officials have made some progress in dealing with these complicated and costly grievances by compensating farmers for their loss of cattle and erecting an electric fence between the Park and the communities to contain the wild animals more securely. Other steps to involve the communities in the Park include granting them access to ancestral graves inside the Park and starting reciprocal economic projects such as buying linen, staff overalls, craftwork, and vegetables for the Park from them. More sustainable projects include the training of guides and assisting traditional healers to pick medicinal plants and manage community nurseries.

Another issue raised during one of the interviews at the Hlanganani Forum, and recorded by Venter (1998:77), was a complaint of locals that they did not understand some of the rangers motives. This is sometimes a direct result of translation errors. For example, in this scenario recounted by a Gawula village representative, the Afrikaans ranger uses the word *donker* which means "dark" in Afrikaans, and the community members hear the word *donkie* (meaning "donkey") which results in confusion:

> "In the past we called Gazankulu Nature Conservation to shoot a lion. They sent another man who didn't shoot. He said it was 'donker'. This confused the community because they didn't know what 'donkey he was talking about".

Despite many unresolved issues the Forums appeared to have achieved a change of perception amongst participating villages towards the Park. The following comment by a Matiyani village resident is recorded in Venter (1998:50):

> "We are grateful to see you. Your words are fruitful. In the past we couldn't work with the KNP. When we saw KNP people we had to run away, they were like lions and elephants to us …"

Apart from issues similar to those raised at the Hlanganani Forum, the Lumambiswano Forum had a specific dispute around a strip of land between the Kruger Parks boundary and the Nzikazi river. The erection of a fence in 1959 between the villages and the river resulted in a lack of access to the water for the communities (Venter 1998:87). The Forum had been unable to reach a quick resolution on this matter which caused the community to doubt the Forums effectiveness, as indicated by the following comment made by a Spelenyane community member (Venter 1998:89):

> "I used to attend every forum meeting, and I raised our problems with the river every time. But the Skukuza people refused to help us. Now my people don't believe that I'm trying hard enough, so I've stopped going to the forum. The forum is all talk and no action. Nothing has changed. Skukuza still cares more for animals than it does for people!"

As Venter (1998:85) reports, the communities also use this forum to raise their concerns about how poachers are punished by the Park:

> "We are grievously concerned by the killing of human trespassers into the Kruger National Park with the intention to poach ... There are children who regard the perpetrators as breadwinners. Who will pay compensation to the perpetrators families if they are killed?"

The Sabie River Forum had a particular problem around the selection procedure of community representatives which ultimately led to the failure of this forum. When the Parks Community Liaison staff members were appointed, community members questioned how the Forums representatives had been selected especially as there seemed to be a marked partiality towards the local Chief. As a way of assessing the community's support of the community representation, Park officials asked the forum members to arrange a village-to-village field trip. The representatives agreed to organise this on condition that their positions at the Forum would be secure. This indicates that the village representatives had their own interests at heart and not necessarily those of the villages (Venter 1998:120).

In another instance the Kruger Park granted fishing permits to the farmers working along the edge of the Sabie River. The Forums representatives believed that they were also entitled to fishing permits which the Parks management refused. The management responded to such demands by contesting the transparency of the community decision-making, and withheld the bestowing of any privileges until a public meeting had been held to review the credibility of the representatives. The representatives refused to co-operate which created suspicion and discord around this issue (Venter 1998:93).

At the time when Venter (1998:68) conducted interviews with members of the Phalaborwa Forum it had representatives from the local community as well as two representatives from civic, youth, women, and education organisations. As with the case of the Sabie Forum, the Phalaborwa Forums vision, membership and representation were not corroborated via a public review process.

As Mosidi (1996:33) contends, referring to Haywood (1988), the community should be allowed to choose its own representatives in order to mitigate the risk that it ends up regarding its representatives as mere tokens and their participation as pointless.

1.5   OUTLINE OF THESIS

This chapter provided an introduction to the research problem and the aims and objectives of the research. It also gave a background to my choice of the Kruger National Park, which is a conservation institution that was built on the backbone of Apartheid, and the Lumbabiswano Forum, as research sites. I also provided a description of current issues dominating the interaction between the Park[2] and its neighbouring communities.

I review different approaches to garnering local community participation in the conservation of natural resources in Chapter 2. To contextualise the discourses used as data in this project, I discuss how politically fraught the relationships between conservation agents and indigenous communities are because of how nature reserves in South Africa were established, often at the expense of the communities. I highlight the common reasons for conflict between game reserves and neighbouring communities. Chapter 2 finally examines the notion of intercultural communication and how cultural differences may have an impact on Conservation Discourses. Here, specifically, attention is given to situations where conservation institutions promulgate a western approach to conservation whereas local, indigenous communities practice subsistence consumption of natural resources.

In Chapter 3 I describe ethnography as a theoretical framework that has informed the methodology used in this project. To determine how the various interest groups communicate on the Parks conservation goals, to assess the various approaches to organising communication, and to assess whether the Park is succeeding in its communication with neighbouring communities, I use discursive data. Therefore, a section on Discourse Analysis is included. I discuss this methodology and how I will apply it to the research problem of this project.

In Chapter 4 I give an analysis referring to the transcripts of the interview I held with the conservation manager from the SSU, the interviews I held with the PCD and the Parks

intermediaries, as well as interviews with members of the Lumbabiswano Forum. I pay particular attention to utterances that convey perceptions and attitudes towards the use of natural resources and how each of the institutions sees themselves in relation to the other participants. I then provide a summary of the various discourse models I have identified in the transcripts.

In Chapter 5 I discuss how the discourse models to which each interest group subscribes differ so that a degree of misunderstanding and breakdown in communication between the different conservation departments within the Park, as well as in the communication between the Park and its neighbouring communities, is inevitable.

In the concluding chapter I point out existing opportunities where the Park could immediately remedy some of the miscommunication that has already been noted.

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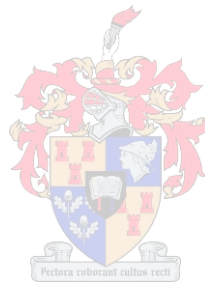
[2] I refer to the Kruger National Park as "the Park" in the remainder of this thesis.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL CONCEPTS: CONSERVATION DISCOURSE AND INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Programmes are put in place at many national parks to engage indigenous African communities in conservation programmes such as those involving the use of natural resources. The hunting of wildlife and consumption of natural resources often puts local communities at odds with conservation agencies, and these conflicts scupper the progress of conservation goals. This chapter will first (in sections 2.1 to 2.3) introduce a number of central concepts pertinent to the Kruger Park Conservation Discourses, specifically where they have relevance for discussing aspects of intercultural communication on the management of natural resources. In section 2.4 I shall discuss certain aspects of intercultural communication theory pertain to the organisation of communication among three groups of speakers from different cultural communities.

2.1 LOCAL COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

The following definitions of 'local participation are useful: Segar (1999:12) quotes Drake (1991) in describing it as "the ability of local communities to influence the outcome of development projects such as ecotourism that have an impact on them". Theron (1995:44) quoting Brandon and Wells (1992), states that it involves "empowering people to mobilize their own capacities, be social actors rather than passive subjects, manage their resources, make decisions and control their lives". Balyamajura (1995:99) defines local participation, following Paul (1987), as: "A situation whereby people act in groups to influence the direction and outcome of development programs that affect them".

One of the most common ways that parks involve communities is through Protected Area Outreach. A "Protected Area", as defined by the World Conservation Union (IUCN), is "an area of land and/or sea especially dedicated to the protection of biological diversity, and of natural and associated cultural resources, and managed through legal or other effective means" (Ormsby 2003:4). Venter (1998:3) describes Protected Area Outreach as a management tool to procure a constructive working relationship between protected area staff and their neighbours. Protected Area Outreach is

built on two central methodologies, namely (i) resolving problems for the mutual benefit of the community and the protected area, and (ii) the management of resource consumption within the protected area so that the livelihoods of the neighbouring communities are positively affected.

Venter (1998:5) refers to activities that form part of this kind of community outreach, specifically the formation of problem-solving forums between the protected area staff and the community, as "consumptive resource use" ventures that sustain the day-to-day lives of the local community members, and "non-consumptive resource use" schemes such as eco-tourism developments. These activities are aimed at reducing the negative effect, and boosting the beneficial effect of the protected area on the quality of life of communities living along its boundary. Venter (1998:6) argues that this approach is short term and ineffective in assisting communities to grasp those conservation concerns underlying the management of protected areas. In fact, Ormsby (2003:9) reiterates Brandon's point that parks were designed to preserve nature, not to be a panacea for socio-economic problems such as poverty, land ownership or economic downturn. As such, effective conservation that depends on the participation of communities should be distinguished from making the well-being of the community the primary goal of a park.

Mosidi (1996:99) is also critical of protected area management, citing the Madikwe game park in the Pilansberg as an example of a failing project. Like so many South African Parks it still has a traditional approach of conserving biodiversity through the Protected Outreach model. A better option, he claims, would be to promote sustainable utilisation of the game reserve and to provide as many benefits to the surrounding communities as possible. Mosidi (1996:34), quoting Place (1991), argues that community education based on consciousness raising should "… facilitate local peoples transition from an economy based on resource extraction to one based on the preservation of the ecosystem around them".

Theron (1995:34-35) concurs by saying that communities who give up their rights to access a protected area in exchange for compensation such as money or commodities will not draw a connection between conservation practices and the positive outcomes thereof. This means that their perceptions about conservation and protected areas will not be necessarily positively developed. Nevertheless, in her research Ormsby (2003:65) found that communities developed positive attitudes towards conservation when they received financial benefits from ecotourism, gained access to legal aid or improved access to natural resources. Those residents who had limited access to natural resources such as water, wood, and food developed negative attitudes.

In Theron (1995:5), Communication Consultants are said to regard awarding compensation to the

communities for relinquishing land rights as a paternalistic approach that reduces the community's involvement to one of mere utilisation of resources. Burns and Barrie (2005:484) refer to this as the "dependency theory", which they claim is based on historic constructs of colonialism and global power structures. Segar (1999:3) raises a concern that the imposition of western values related to use of land rights for hunting could lead to cultural deterioration. She (1999:22-26) also warns against environmental interventions that are founded on western ideologies being introduced to a traditional society.

The negative impact of modernisation on livestock husbandry is highlighted in a paper by Frank, Hemson, Kushnir and Packer (2006) for a conservation workshop, where the authors point out how traditional methods promoted the building of protective bomas and involved keeping a close eye on livestock in protecting them against predators. Now they find poison is more widely used to diminish threats to livestock because it requires less time and effort to administer.

Segar (1999:22) quotes Steenkamp (1999) when saying that external interventions could carry covert cultural "baggage" that imposes "hard structures" of decision-making onto a community. Such interventions generally do not achieve what they intended to.

Burns and Barries (2005:482) paper includes a case study of a Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) rural development project with such a local community. The NGO in question is African Foundation, which is affiliated to CCAfrica, a South African-based exclusive, luxury lodge operator. The community with which they collaborated is Luphisi, one of a number of villages close to the Kruger National Park. Interviews with the community elders revealed that they prefer their traditional way of life and don't really want the kind of development brought about by the Foundations ecotourism programmes. It is however noted that the financial benefits they derive from their participation encourages them to show superficial support and appreciation of the NGOs activities.

According to Theron (1995:13) the 1982 World Congress on National Parks in Bali recommended that the impact of conservation programmes on the traditional knowledge of local communities should be studied. Mosidi's (1996:104) view that community participation should respect the traditions and lifestyles of local communities supports this recommendation. In a related way, Burns and Barrie (2005:479) highlight the importance of assisting local communities to comprehend the value of the animals to the reserve. Similarly, Hogan (2000:13) provides an example where this strategy has proved successful. The Save the Rhino trust, a UN-sponsored group, started a project which allowed local populations to benefit from the conservation of rhinos through ecotourism. The

project has generated revenue for the local community, and former poachers have been recruited as rhino trackers for tourists. Simon Pope who worked on the project is quoted as saying that they worked with the communities and the communities were eventually convinced that the rhino was worth more to them alive than dead.

2.2   PEOPLE-PARK CONFLICTS

According to Modisi (1996:13), national parks are widely seen as "islands of plenty in a sea of poverty", where basic amenities such as running water, electricity and telephone lines are made available to the residents of the parks, while the communities living just outside of the parks borders do not share such facilities. Furthermore, where ecotourism could be endorsed by communities as a potential revenue stream, most of the financial rewards appear to go towards international tour operators (Hogan 2000:12).

Factors such as these could account for the local communities negative perceptions of conservation efforts which in turn could hinder their willingness to participate in conservation projects initiated by conservation agents. For indigenous communities it may even seem that Africa is once again being colonised, this time by conservationists (Hofstatter 2005:2-101).

Apart from conflicts about financial benefits there are also conflicts between parks and communities about fishing and the hunting of wildlife. Further, Frank et al's (2006) workshop report on conflict related to the conservation of lions in East and Southern Africa. They find a connection between overhunting of large- to medium-sized ungulates by the local community and attacks on the community's livestock by lions. A reduction in the lion populations in various regions is put down to retaliatory killing of lions in an attempt to curb the number of incidents. In Kenya, rural people consistently complain that wildlife authorities do not react effectively when people report stock raiders; such complacency of the authorities leads to resentment not only against government, but also against wildlife, conservation, and tourism more generally.

Elephants are also a bone of contention between Parks and communities. *The Citizen* (28 December 2007, p4) reports on ward councillors having asked government to build game stations at villages to control the movement of elephants. A few days earlier elephants had invaded villages destroying hundreds of hectares of farmland planted with food crops.

2.3   CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

The term "conservation" has also been given many definitions. Theron (1995:9) uses Garrats (1984) definition given at the World Conservation Strategy: "The management of human use of the biosphere so that it may yield the greatest sustainable benefit to present generations while maintaining its potential to meet the needs and aspirations of future generations".

According to Balyamajura (1995:95), conservationists believe that biodiversity should be managed for future benefit, where wildlife is promoted for the good of people, and wildlife species enhance people's quality of life in a sustainable manner.

In reality, however, people generally solve the most pressing problems before considering problems that lie in the future. Impoverished people spend most of their time finding ways to provide for themselves and their families. It is therefore hard for them to think about conserving for the future, when they are struggling to meet their daily needs (Balyamajura 1995:3).

Many of the impoverished communities rely on subsistence farming which in itself can lead to the long term destruction of natural resources. Morell (1999:63-64) found that in southwestern Madagascar poor farming practices such as the slash-and-burn method used by traditional farmers have resulted in significant environmental degradation, with hundreds of tons of topsoil and acres of forest being lost each year. However, the farmers appear oblivious to the forests destruction. When she questioned the locals as to whether they had noticed that the forest was receding, they replied that "there will always be a forest here." If she questioned them over a specific tree species such as the palm that they use to sweep their floors, they would acknowledge that it now took them longer to find a palm tree, but without drawing the connection between their own actions and deforestation (Morell 1999:68).

Additional time taken for harvesting due to the depletion of natural resources was also reported in the Bushbuckridge area adjacent to the Kruger National Park by Kirkland, Hunter and Twine (2007:339). On average households spent five hours a week collecting wood in the early 1990s, whereas ten years on this had increased to ten hours per week, indicating a decline in available forestation.

The actual volume of harvesting in this area also increased from what is was in the early 1990s. The socio-economic reasons cited for this were the deterioration of institutional control of resources, rising unemployment, and with the new democracy post-1994, a belief that everyone had the right to unrestricted access to natural resources (Twine, Siphugu and Moshe 2003:1). Traditional

authorities lost the control they had previously exercised over the harvesting of natural resources. Prior to 1994 village chiefs, headmen and traditional councilors enforced laws such as those preventing the cutting of live trees (Twine, Siphugu and Moshe 2003:7). Twine (2005:95) notes that that the sense of entitlement to natural resources did not come with a sense of responsibility towards the natural reserve.

Over-harvesting is especially rampant in Malawi. On a recent trip to the country I was struck by how little land was not being farmed. Malawi's high population has resulted in conservation areas being invaded for more arable land and resources. Forest reserves that were cultivated to protect against watershed are now destroyed and illegal fishing of endemic cichlid fish is endangering the species (Briggs and Bartlett 2006:29-30).

In Tanzania the destruction of the natural habitat has resulted in the depletion of medium sized antelopes (Frank et al. 2006).

Even though green spaces are crucial for human existence because they provide essential raw materials, prevent soil erosion, enable the pollination of plants and curb agricultural pests, people continue to harvest them to exhaustion (Morell 1999:80).

According to a Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE) representative in Madagascar this could be due to young farmers learning "tavy" (slash-and-burn) while growing up, and finding it difficult to break from the farming traditions of their community (Ormsby 2003:21,133).

Another impeding factor in the efforts of conservation agents to educate rural communities as to sustainable natural resource usage, is unclear communication of policies. In Clement and Amezagas (2008) article on the gap between afforestation policy intentions and their outcomes in Vietnam it was found that policymakers had misconceptions about the capability of locals to use natural resources sustainably. They also oversimplified elements of natural resources such as environmental systems. In fact, a discourse analysis showed contradictions in what was being communicated to the locals about community-based forest management (CBFM) and the concomitant benefits.

Twine (2005:97) suggests that inappropriate conservation interventions and policies could stem from a misunderstanding of the incentives behind resource-harvesting behaviour. For example, unsustainable harvesting could be put down to a lack of education on the part of resource users. An intervention based solely on this perception would be very different from one which addresses weakened institutional structures or poverty alleviation.

Morell (1999:70) also found that the people who live on Mount Analevelona in Madagascar have a different appreciation for what benefits can be derived from preserving forest density from those conceived by western conservationists: for the indigenous inhabitants, a thick forest provides a good hideaway for their cattle from rustlers.

In her interviews with rural communities bordering the Kruger National Park, Meskell (2008:12) reports that many residents did not understand what biodiversity involved, whereas South African National Parks believed that they do, and that they supported its preservation. Contrary to regarding the Park as a national treasure, most interviewees were more concerned about being compensated for land, having access to the Park to visit their ancestors' graves, and what employment opportunities existed for them within the Park.

This false assumption of assimilation could be a result of the Park officials adopting what Meskell and Masuku Van Damme (2008:132-133) refer to as a "Cosmopolitan" stance which assumes that all cultures have enough of an overlap in their parlance of values to be able to enter into a dialogue.

Contrary to this assumption, Meskell (2008:2) supports Adams and Mulligans (2003) argument that biodiversity and conservation stem from a discourse rooted in the US model of a "protected areas" strategy. Such discourses propagate the global desire for untouched wilderness areas, oblivious of people and anthropological interference.

Furthermore, as Litzinger (2006, in Meskell 2008:7-8) finds, the populist taxonomy of biodiversity is intrinsically positively positioned as "scientific", "forward-looking", "entrepreneurial", "economically indexical", and "neutral" by not belonging to any particular person, group or institution.

In this discourse, nature is presented as "supra-racial" therefore easily adopted by the new, multicultural society of South Africa (Meskell 2005, 2006). The idea of species diversity is assumed to be a universally understood and respected phenomenon which rises above racial or ethnic lines and is aligned with civilisation and first world goals (Meskell 2008:7-8).

Meskell (2008:9) aligns with Hayden (2003) in questioning the type of participation and subjectivity that is garnered through promises of benefits arising from biodiversity. These benefits are often based on "future-generated common goods" that are dependent on the unwavering participation, the self-denial and self-management of those communities whose livelihoods are directly affected by conservation policies. There seems to be little room for indigenous knowledge and practices to be accommodated into the parks management strategies.

2.4   INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Bennett (1998:193) criticises the concept of 'similarity and single reality which embraces the theory that all human beings are the same. According to Barna (in Bennett 1998:180-183), people from different cultures have diverse sensory realities. They see, hear, feel and smell based on what is relevant to them. This supports Whorf's concept of relativity[3] which maintains that witnesses do not arrive at the same picture of the universe even when shown the same physical evidence, not unless they have a similar linguistic foundation. Definitions of events, objects and relationships are derived from lexicons and grammar specific to the definer's language and not from the nature of a thing in itself (Bennett 1998:90-91). Whorf argues that if one language makes distinctions that another does not make, then those who use the first language will more readily perceive the differences in their environment which such linguistic distinctions draw attention to. You perceive the world according to what your language allows you to (Wardhaugh 2006:223-224).

Tae-seop Lim (in Gudykunst 2003:59-60) offers a divergent opinion and believes that most empirical research on language use across cultures seems to adopt functional relativism rather than Whorfs linguistic relativism. Functional relativism assumes that the particular form taken by the grammatical system of language is closely related to the social and personal needs that language is required to serve (Halliday 1973, 1978, in Gudykunst 2003:59-60). Because different cultures have different environments, values, beliefs and attitudes their languages tend to be different from each other (Gudykunst 2003:59-60). This view is shared by Collier (in Samovar and Porter 2003:417) who believes that a shared history or geography creates and reinforces commonality in worldview.

Another perspective holds that ancient cultures such as those in Africa favour using events from the natural world to create structures by means of which they can think about and explain their world of experience (Gee 1996:48). In this regard Gee (1996:181) refers to peoples "lifeworlds" which is that space where people can claim to know things without basing that claim on access to specialised or professional discourses. He suggests that people conceptualise reality in terms that are familiar to them in their everyday life. In cultures of people living from the land, "folk taxonomies"[4] are often created which are classifications, normally involving nature and the environment, that make sense to those that use it, and are an antithesis to scientific classifications (Wardhaugh 2006:232).

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[3] Certain versions of the Whorfian Hypothesis of linguistic relativity has been criticised for being overly deterministic. Nevertheless, Whorf's view that language provides "a screen or filter to reality" does carry some weight and can be followed in considering how language helps to form a worldview (Wardhaugh 2006: 218-224).

[4] While only folk taxonomies amongst rural communities are discussed here, they are widespread and exist among Western city dwellers as well.

In developed countries, however, science is favoured over natural lifeworlds because it is perceived to be based on fact and objectivity (Gee 1996:181). According to Lèvi-Strauss, the founder of structuralism in anthropology, modern science manipulates, not objects and images from the natural world, but abstract systems, whether numerical, logical, or linguistic and through these systems seeks to change the world (Gee 1996:48). What is often overlooked, however, is that science is a human construct, and is therefore rooted in social relationships with all the associated strengths and weaknesses thereof (Gee 1996:181).

It would seem therefore that aspects of mental processes could differ between cultures as they are learnt through interaction. For instance, if people believe that it is proper to accept the world rather than try to change it, learning based on problem solving, and future forecasting would prove challenging for them (Guirdham 1999:131- 133).

This phenomenon is what Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961, in Ting-Toomey 1999:57, 59, 61) describe as "cultural value orientations". These refer to the basic lenses through which we view our own actions and the actions of others within the boundary of our own culture. For example, a community may tend towards a more individualistic or a more group based culture. Or assumptions may be made as to ones relationship to the environment, to each other, to activity, to time, and to the basic nature of human beings. For example, people might assume that they have control over the environment, or that they can live in harmony with it, or that they are at the mercy of their environment (Bennett 1998:23).
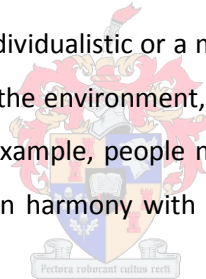
These common perceptions, according to Guirdham (1999:73), are so deeply entrenched that they pervade even after close contact with other cultures, and result in the formation of collective ideologies and norms within a community (Ting-Toomey 1999:61).

Tajfel and his associates (in Ting-Toomey 1999:27-28) argue that such deeply entrenched ideological affiliations give rise to a person's social identity which is an individual's conceptualisations of the self that derives from memberships in emotionally significant categories or groups.

Social identity theorists claim that the desire to maintain a positive self-image motivates people to favourably evaluate the groups to which they belong, and in the process of doing so, disparage outgroups (Gudykunst 2003:116). In addition, the more important the group identity, the stronger the tendency to treat outgroup members as having uniform characteristics.

If such characteristics are deemed negative, members of the outgroup may distance themselves from their own group, de-emphasise the importance of their social identities, and maximise the

importance of their personal identities (Ting-Toomey 1999:150). This dissociation can be accomplished through the use of language. Gudykunst (2003:215) refers to this as the strategic use of language in order to achieve or maintain a positive, social identity.

Saville-Troike (1996) contends that people have the capacity to belong to one group on one occasion and another group on a different occasion (in Wardhaugh 2002:124). People demonstrate a similar capability when it comes to speech in that they choose to adopt certain linguistic characteristics in order to bond with, or separate themselves from others (Ting-Toomey 1999:146).

An individual can therefore belong to various speech communities at the same time but on any particular occasion can identify with only one of them, depending on what is especially important in the circumstances (Wardhaugh 2006:123-124). Adopting the linguistic codes used by another speech community, such as its language or dialect, is one way people associate themselves with another social identity (Ting-Toomey 1999:92). According to Myers-Scotton, speakers are usually cognisant of situational power dimensions, and switching between codes enables them to affirm positions of power, or solidarity or neutrality (Wardhaugh 2006:110).

2.5 CHARACTERISING THE CONSERVATION DISCOURSE ON USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES

This study deals with a very specific kind of discourse that is embodied in interactions between various stakeholders in the same natural resources. Considering how language and language use is shaped by the cultural features of the speakers, and conversely, how speakers understanding of their lifeworld is articulated in the kind of discourses they enter into, the organisation of communication among identified interest groups in the Kruger Park has been scrutinised. Here, the notion of 'culture does not refer to linguistic distinctions only - although often language is taken to be the main marker of culture. There are also cultural differences between different communities of practice. Thus, a community whose lifeworld is focussed on maintaining scarce wildlife resources, will probably exhibit cultural difference in comparison to a community whose lifeworld is focussed on subsistence farming where their livestock is threatened by the wildlife resources in the their vicinity.

Cultural difference can be assumed between those employed by the Kruger Park and those living off the land outside the borders of the Park, but not isolated from the larger ecosystem. However, cultural difference can also be expected between employees working in different departments with relatively different assignments within the Park. On the one hand, there is the SSU where there is a primary interest in protecting wildlife within the borders of the Park, and where employees have long subscribed to a rigid conservationist perspective and a "scientific" form of discourse; on the

other hand, there is the PCD where there is an interest in finding collaboration between the community of Park officials and the community outside the Park, and where some employees are themselves from the neighbouring communities, speaking the same languages as the local people. The people who work in the different departments, and those that live in the community alongside the Park, belong to their own speech communities; at the same time they also belong to different communities of practice where various languages may be represented, thus showing that language and shared practices intersect in a non-linear way. Wenger (http://www.ewenger.com/theory) explains that communities of practice are groups of people who share an interest or concern for something that they do, and they improve their ability to do it by interacting regularly. Furthermore, in the course of their conversations they develop a set of stories that become a shared repertoire for their practice.

The different departments each form their own community of practice related to the Parks natural resources, determining for which aspects each group takes responsibility and how they are to manage this. The analyses and discussion given in chapters 4 and 5 will return to this complexity of communities of practice as they are represented across the three interest groups I have identified.

The following chapter will explain not only the design of this research project, but also give background about the methodological approach I have taken.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1   RESEARCH PROCESS RELATED TO SPECIFIC RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to answer the research questions stated in chapter 1, I adopted a two-pronged qualitative research methodology which utilised some methods developed within ethnography. The main concern of the research was socio-linguistic, and considered how within an organisation different groups with some shared and some diverting interests, are linguistically constructed. A small data-set was used, and was not examined over a long period of time, therefore the study is qualitative, using a "mixed method" rather than being purely ethnographic.

Besides interviews with some of the Parks employees, I was allowed to join discussions held at a Conservation Management Department weekly departmental meeting, and I was invited to attend and observe one of the Forum meetings. I also used a discourse analytic approach, using transcriptions of the recorded communicative events and interviews I held with Park officers and representatives of local communities.

The analysis of these recordings was done with a view specifically to determine the organisation of communication among the three interest groups, and the nature of the Conservation Discourse in their interactions. From such an analysis certain aspects of identity of the participants and the groups to which they belong, became evident.

In order to answer the first research question on how the SSUs views and goals towards natural resource conservation are articulated and communicated in relation to the PCD and the local communities, information gained in the course of interviews with various participants was analysed. In addition, data recorded during a CMD weekly departmental meeting was analysed.

In order to answer the second research question on how the PCDs views and goals towards natural resource conservation are articulated and communicated in relation to the SSU and the local communities, educational material that was produced by the PCD was reviewed, and information was gained through interviews with the Head of the PCD was analysed. In addition, information that was gained from an interview with one of the social ecologists who reports loosely to the PCD, was also analysed.

In order to answer the third research question on how local community members' views and goals towards natural resource conservation are articulated and communicated in relation to the Kruger National Park and the PCD, data recorded during a forum meeting was analysed.

In order to answer the fourth research question on the perceptions various participants have of one another as participants in the Conservation Discourse that is reflected in the data, an analysis of transcribed recordings of group discussions, and individual interviews was executed.

3.2   DATA COLLECTION

As was mentioned in chapter 1, the data that has been used to answer the particular research questions and so achieve the aims set out in section 1.2.2, are transcribed recordings of group discussions, individual interviews and researchers field notes.

As stated before, the data collection was done during observations of one of the Lumbabiswano Forum meetings, and one of the CMD meetings, through semi-structured interviews conducted with Park officers, and responses from a focus group held with community members.

The Forum which I attended was held on 23 September 2008, and the focus group discussion took place immediately afterwards. The interviews with Park officers were held on 22 and 25 of September 2008. I returned to the Park on 27 July the following year to sit in on one of the CMD departmental meetings. By applying aspects of an ethnographic approach, where I was present during a Forum meeting, held a focus group discussion and interviewed various participants in their natural living and working environments, I was able not only to collect what had been said and written, but also to gauge what emotional dynamics were motivating utterances from participants' facial expressions, tone of voice and body language. In order to elicit identity constructions and/or conflicts within and between participants, I could also probe certain lines of questioning which evoked strong responses. I would not have achieved this through a structured, individual questionnaire.

The Discourse Analysis of transcripts emanating from my data collection enabled me to identify the identity negotiations and cultural value orientations at play in the interactive events and interviews. These assisted in answering questions as to the ways in which various participants perceived central concepts in the use of natural resources and nature conservation, as well as their own role and that of the other participants in the given communicative space.

3.2.1 Collecting data in the Kruger Park

The process of setting up research in the Kruger Park is co-ordinated by the Social Science Research division based in Pretoria that requires research proposals to be presented and approved by the Social Science Research Committee. It took from October 2007, when I sent my application to the manager of the division, until March 2008 to receive the Park's permission to conduct my research at the Kruger National Park.

For specific information on the structure and content of communication between the Kruger Park's officers, who effectively represent the policies of SANParks and the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, and the rural communities living on the borders of the Park, I adopted what Morse and Richards (2002:173) refer to as "purposeful sampling". This entailed that participants were selected because of their position and identifying characteristics. I conducted interviews with a small sample of the staff at Kruger Park who either directly or indirectly communicate with the communities, specifically about collaborating in nature conservation without inhibiting the development and livelihood of the communities. I also interviewed one of the Kruger Parks employees who is the custodian of the Park's conservation management and who does not work directly with the communities, but whose actions often directly impact on the neighbouring communities, and vice versa. Further, I held interviews with members who represented one village that borders the Park to gain insight into the conflict of interest over natural resource use that is particularly pertinent between such villages and the Park. Interviewing members of the village was aimed additionally at gaining insight into the underlying cultural values of Seswati-speaking communities. The sample of interviewees was deliberately kept small in order to better control note-taking and to assure more accuracy and a certain degree of depth in the participants contributions.

As Mouton (2001:104-107) suggests, I kept a record of the process involved in accessing the field. Before I pursued interviews at the Park, I acquired a good understanding of the methodologies I was going to use. In June 2008 I contacted the Social Science Research division to organise the commencement of my data collection. It referred me to a researcher from the Park's Scientific Services Unit with whom I corresponded for two months in order to identify interview candidates at the Park, as well as from the neighbouring communities. The researcher advised me that there was a certain protocol to follow when approaching local communities to conduct research. I needed to present my proposal at a community forum in order to get the local chiefs' permission to interview members of his community. The researcher advised me to seek the necessary permission from the

community elders who attend the Park's Lumbabiswano Forum, which represents 34 villages on the south-west border of the Park, stretching from Hazyview to Nkomazi, because it is one of the more established forums with meetings taking place on a bimonthly basis.

From my preliminary research it was clear that longstanding issues of dissent between the Park and the villages were represented at this particular forum. This increased the likelihood that a forum meeting could give access to authentic discourse that exemplifies pertinent aspects of the reported breakdown in communication between the Park and the communities over the use of natural resources.

I met with the Forum representatives on 21 August 2008 at Pambeni Lodge, next to the Kruger Park's Numbi Gate, where the Department of Science and Technology was meeting with them to present an IT knowledge library called the Digital Doorway. I was lucky enough to be able to join this meeting that had already been arranged. I was given a brief opportunity to present my proposal to the group, and received the elders' endorsement. They suggested that I sit in on the next Forum.

3.2.2   Collecting data by means of interviews

The next Forum meeting was scheduled for 23 September 2008. I also used this opportunity simultaneously to visit the Park's research camp based at Skukuza to conduct the interviews I needed and had planned to do.

I followed a semi-structured interview approach in order to identify what discourse models are presented by park employees as they speak about the Park's engagement with local communities. Semi-structured interviewing is defined as "guided conversation in which only the topics are predetermined and new questions or insights arise as a result of the discussion" (Ormsby 2003:42). Chambers (1983, in Ormsby 2003:42) finds an advantage of conducting interviews in this manner to be that unforeseen themes and opinions materialise giving a fuller, more accurate picture of what is being researched.

According to Morse and Richards (2002:99) interviews with participants about their experiences or perceptions of an event should be valued not so much for the accuracy with which they have captured an event, but rather for the emotions the event evoked and how they perceived the event at the time. In addition, Fasold (1990:49) describes the purpose of semi-structured interviews as guarding against interviewees responding to direct questions in a way that they think is desired as opposed to responding naturally and honestly.

I secured interviews with the Head of PCD, the Head of the SSU, and one of the Park's Social Ecologists who acts as an intermediary between the Park and the Lumbabiswano Forum. These three individuals represent an important value chain in terms of the Park's conservation goals and its engagement with the neighbouring communities.

The Head of the PCD is a Setswana woman in her late forties who has been involved in the Park's community outreach programmes for four years. The interview was an hour long and took place in her office which is in the same building as the CMD.

The Head of the SSU is a white Afrikaans male in his late-thirties to early-forties. The interview was half-an-hour long and took place in his office which is part of the same building block as the CMD.

The Social Ecologist was a black Tsonga male in his mid-twenties. The interview with him was an hour long and took place in his office which is based within the Skukuza camp.

I was also able to sit in on one of the CMD weekly departmental meetings, and record the discussions around the table. The meeting was just short of an hour-and-a-half. Of the seven members of the meeting, five were conservation officers, one of which was a white English female in her late-thirties to early-forties. The other members were one black male in his late forties, and three white men ranging in age from early-thirty to early-fifty. Two of these men appeared to speak Afrikaans as a first language, however the meeting was conducted in English. The head of the department was a white, Afrikaans man in his mid-fifties. His assistant, who facilitated the meeting on his behalf, was a white, Afrikaans woman in her late fifties.

3.2.3 Collecting data through the Kruger Park's departments

The PCD, according to the SANParks website (http://celtis.sanparks.org/people/community) "enlarges understanding, support and participation, particularly amongst neighbouring communities and young people". The division has key objectives of which "Community-based Conservation" is one. It is defined on the website as:

> "Explaining to neighbouring communities what the parks are doing and why it is very important and has been neglected in the past. By promoting conservation, improving park access, assisting with environmental initiatives and inviting local people to discuss and cooperate in future policies."

Furthermore, the website explains that:

> "People and Conservation works hard at building understanding and support for

biodiversity conservation within communities living around our parks, and also works on improving how communities can access our national parks for cultural, spiritual and recreational purposes.

People and Conservation also assists communities to decide how to use their natural resources wisely and live sustainable lifestyles."

SANParks conservation policies and management plans are researched and formulated by the Conservation Services Department (CSD) within which ecological research is conducted by a specialist unit called Scientific Services. The SANParks website:

(http://www.sanparks.org/parks/kruger/conservation/services)

describes the CSD as: "supporting the KNP (Kruger National Park) mission by providing professional guidance, auditing and specialist services for conservation management, through an integrated and sustainable socio-ecological approach". Focus areas of the department include the control of alien and invasive organisms as well as "illegal exploitation" which in simple terms means poaching.

The Scientific Services Unit is a very hierarchical department which has clearly defined reporting lines with a head of department reporting into the Managing Executive of Conservation Services. The unit is described on the SANParks website:

(http://www.sanparks.org/parks/kruger/conservation/scientific)

as a "hub of formal learning in the biophysical science, and of rigorous scholarly yet practical thinking, within SANParks."

With specific reference to biodiversity, the SANParks website refers to Scientific Services conservation biologists are tasked with:

- Integrating best available biodiversity data into park management through interactions with external researchers and research institutions.

- Maintaining inventories of biodiversity in national parks, including species checklists for vertebrates and higher plants, and the mapping of landscapes, geology, soil and vegetation.

- Identifying and averting threats to biodiversity in national parks, including:

    o overabundance of certain wildlife populations,
    o invasive alien plant and animal species,

- o   pollutants,

- o   human development,

- o   excessive resource exploitation,

- o   climate change or other factors.

- Ensuring that development within parks takes place in a manner that does not compromise biodiversity conservation.

- Providing scientific inputs on biodiversity aspects of park management plans and activities.

- Identifying biodiversity conservation priorities for park expansion.

From what I could gather through the interviews with both PCD members and members of SSU, there is not much knowledge sharing and communication between them at present. It appears that these two departments work within silos. As this study primarily focused on the discourses related to conflicting conservation interests regarding wildlife as an asset or threat to the neighbouring communities, no further attention will be given to the SSUs work on bio-diversity.

3.2.4   Collecting data in community representative focus groups

I was aware that because the Park assisted me in allowing and facilitating my data collection, the neighbouring communities could view me as an ally of the Park or as a possible conduit to the Park. They could therefore have approached interview questions as an opportunity to make their grievances heard, which would have had some impact on my research results. I attempted to minimise my direct involvement in interviews with the community members by attempting to stimulate an open discussion in Seswati amongst the members in a focus group scenario. Even though I worked through a translator in presenting discussion topics, I found that those community members who were bilingual chose to answer directly in English despite the translator's efforts in asking them questions in Seswati. The focus group discussion was therefore mainly conducted in English.

When deciding on who should be included in the focus group, I applied Morgan's (1997:35-39) recommendations that the participants come from a homogenous background, are not close acquaintances, and that the discussion be quite structured. Homogeneity allows for more free-flowing conversations among participants and facilitates analyses that examine differences in perspective between groups. As Agar and MacDonald (1995, in Morgan 1997:35-39) state, when forum members share a similar background they can converse more readily due their ability to rely on the kind of taken-for-granted assumptions which are exactly what the researcher is trying to

investigate. A structured group approach is useful when there is a strong, pre-existing agenda for the research as it keeps the discussion concentrated on the topics that interest the researcher.

The focus group therefore, comprised eight people from different communities represented in the Lumbabiswano forum. There were six adult men, aged in their late forties to early fifties, and two adult women who were in their late twenties to early thirties. They all spoke Seswati, however, three of the men spoke English proficiently. The session lasted an hour-and-a-half, and was held in a small room adjacent to the community hall.

3.3   ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

According to Hymes (1974, in Wardhaugh 2006:247) an ethnography of a communicative event should provide a description of the setting, the participants and the act sequence, as well as the tone and norms of interaction. Ethnographies are essentially first-hand observations of a group of people's behaviour within their natural setting (Wardhaugh 2006:249). An ethnomethodologist seeks to identify the categories and systems people use to interpret the world around them (Wardhaugh 2006:252). According to Morse and Richards (2002:51-52), a comprehensive ethnography follows distinct stages during which data are collected: negotiating entry, becoming better acquainted with the participants' routines, and gaining acceptance and co-operation from the participants. Most ethnographic research aims to produce a "thick description" (Geertz 1973, in Morse and Richards 2002:51-52) which is a detailed and rich narrative of the characteristics of a culture or of particular cultural practices.

Participant-observation is required where the researcher is analysing the values and beliefs of a culture to which s/he does not her-/himself belong, and attempts to become immersed in that community (Fasold 1990:47).

Ormsby (2003:46) refers to Bernard's (1988) explanation of the reasons why participant-observation is essential to any research involving another culture: it facilitates data collection while reducing reactivity by participants, it gives the researcher an intuitive understanding of what is going on in a culture, and it also addresses research questions that may not be possible to investigate by using another method. In Chapter 4 I give the framework within which Conservation Discourses around the Kruger Park take place by referring to ethnographic notes taken as part of participant observation.

3.4   DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

The term "discourse" refers to language in use for communication. Discourse Analysis is the investigation of how certain things are made coherent (Cook 1989:6). In other words, it intends to disclose how people make connections between things in the way they use language (Gee 2005:11). People's assumptions about the world and about the people with whom they are communicating can also be revealed through their language use (Cook 1989:64- 67).

Moreover, people use language to make things meaningful, to show that they are engaging in a certain type of activity, or taking on a certain identity or role. Language can be used to signal the type of relationship someone has or wishes to have with their listeners, and to convey a perspective on the nature of the distribution of social goods (Gee 2005:11). Gee (2005:2) defines social goods as everyday phenomena to which people attribute value and power.

To conduct Discourse Analysis, texts such as written reports, sound recordings, transcripts of spoken words and interactive events are used as data. Analysts are specifically interested in the problems and successes people have when using language in interactions of various kinds (Fasold 1990:65). Pennycook (2001:81) identifies two main areas of interest in Discourse Analysis, namely power and linguistic interactions; important aspects include the control of topics, turn-taking in an interaction, and how such features co-determine power and meaning. In Critical Discourse Analysis the interest is in the linguistic perpetuation of ideologies.

Ideologies are reinforced amongst members of the group through "discourse models" which Gee (2005:71) describes as simplified, often unconscious and taken-for-granted theories that we default to in an endeavour to make sense of the world. Even though our understanding of life is derived from personal experiences we have had, our perception of these experiences is unconsciously shaped by knowledge and beliefs circulated in the social and cultural groups to which we belong (Gee 2005:71).

Discourse models prompt people to draw inferences from certain words, phrases, or discursive structures used in particular contexts. Gee (2005:59) calls such inferences "situated meanings" and states that these are based on our perception of the context, and are influenced by our past experiences. People formulate linguistic constructs of "situated meanings" in order to prompt action in the world (Gee 2005:65). Such constructs are always determined by our socio-cultural experiences and are normalised through the discourse models we belong to, and their inherent social practices. Discourse models do not exist independently in the minds of individuals, but are shared within a

society through books, the media and social practices. Situated meanings are therefore negotiated between people through interaction (Gee 2005:65). Not all people who belong to a discourse model necessarily embrace the ideologies propagated by that model. Discourse models can also promote social values that do not serve the interests of all the members of the model (Gee 2005:85). As will be illustrated in Chapter 4, the concept of 'discourse models is particularly useful in recognising and explaining the different meanings constructed from core themes found in Conservation Discourses between Park officials and local communities.

Groups who hold the power within their societies are able to promote their ideologies to the extent that their beliefs and assumptions become naturalised in the discourse models to which they belong. The resulting discourse models in turn further entrench such positions of power (Pennycook 2001:81).

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) attempts to uncover the ideologies that have become naturalised through discourse models that belong to broader social structures. CDA aims to discover how social structures determine such discourses, and how they are sequentially shaped (Pennycook 2001:81). This analytic approach has a special interest in institutional discourses where the interests of those in power often dominate so that their position is perpetuated at the cost of the interests of weaker parties.

3.5   VALIDITY OF ANALYSES OF ALL LINGUISTIC MATERIAL

Conducting research on multilingual discourse where one of the languages is not familiar to the researcher can be problematic in regard to issues of validity. I attempted to minimise linguistic impediments by ensuring that transcriptions and translations of communicative events conducted in African languages were done by first language speakers of those languages.

In terms of the validity of the analysis of a particular discourse, Gee (2005:113 -114) makes a number of recommendations to ensure that the transcript of linguistic material in a language unfamiliar to that of the researchers works with all the other elements of the analysis in order to create a 'trustworthy' analysis.

Firstly, there must be convergence between a collection of answers to questions related to how people use language to achieve their objectives. Secondly, first language speakers of the local languages reflected in the data should agree with the way in which the analysis depicts how their language functions in the described setting. Thirdly, the analysis must provide insight into what occurred before and after the discourse was analysed, as well as predict what is likely to occur in future, similar situations.

Lastly, the analysis must show the grammatical tactics used to serve the functions of the local languages. These findings must be checked by first language speakers of the local languages. The analysis has to pay close attention to the linguistic structures of the communicative events. The researcher must be forthcoming about any answers or any linguistic details that, according to L1 speakers of the language, offer an opposing conclusion to the findings s/he has come up with.

3.6   COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS OF WRITTEN MATERIAL

In order to understand the discursive features of educational material developed by the SSU and the PCD, I requested copies of any brochures, leaflets and presentations that the respective departments had produced in connection with sustainable harvesting of natural resources. Archival material was presented which gave insight into the SANParks structures and conservation goals and policies. Besides the forum meetings, there are educational initiatives which focus on, for example, matters of invasive, alien plant species. Such initiatives, however, appear to be directed at schools in the region and not at adults living in the communities bordering the Park. Therefore, although archival material helped in understanding the discourse context, it is not otherwise used in this thesis.

The following two chapters will turn to the data. The data will be presented in accordance with other principles and procedures expounded in chapters 2 and 3 to show how the three different communities of practice all have an interest in the conservation and use of wildlife in their environment, but from different perspectives. Different discourse models are identified, which articulate different identities, different institutional histories, and different understandings of what should be given priority in addressing potential areas of conflict between the Park and neighbouring communities.

CHAPTER 4

DIFFERENT VOICES REPRESENTED
IN THE DISCOURSE ON COMMUNITY AND
CONSERVATION AROUND A NATIONAL PARK

This chapter analyses data gained from different types of discourses presented by Park officers on the one hand, and members of the local community on the other hand, in order to characterise the Conservation Discourse of various interest groups working for and with SANParks. The analysis will consider (i) what is topicalised in the Conservation Discourse, what is agreed on, and what is contested, (ii) how the identities of participants and groups are discursively constructed, and (iii) what power relations are constructed, maintained or challenged among the various participants of the Discourse.

4.1   THE VARIOUS PARTIES REPRESENTED IN THE DISCOURSE

Four Park officers, and eight members of the Lumbabiswano community forum were included as participants in the research so that a variety of perspectives could be considered. Data was collected from a number of different types of communicative events in order to collate a multi-dimensional picture of the complete Discourse on conservation. The following sections provide excerpts from the recorded data that will assist in characterising the Discourse. Each section is representative of a particular category of participant, and of the kind of ideological position that is embedded in the Discourse of this participant's interest group.

4.1.1   Conservation management units

4.1.1.1   Head of the scientific services unit

(White Afrikaans male - *Bill*)

Data was collected by means of an interview. Three excerpts (nrs 1-3) are selected specifically for the way in which they illustrate pertinent aspects of the three points given above. The interview was constantly interrupted by phonecalls to Bill which he duly took. It was clear that the calls were from people requiring his guidance, and he felt it important not to set such work aside during our interview.

EXCERPT 1

1. I mean obviously, it would (hhh) it would concern, um ... it should
2. concern um the Park mean that, that use is not sustainable/
3. um ... the systems // outside would be degraded/ um ... like
4. (for instance) areas where ... aquatic systems go direct
5. (to the communities)/ you can't have the Park functioning
6. completely in isolation/ it's part of a bigger system. Whatever
7. happens outside it affects us ... as well/ um ... whether it's (x)
8. were losing/ or ( ) impact increasing/ or because impact results
9. in agrarian ... uh ... areas being degraded/ which results in *rivers*
10. being degraded/ means that it is impacting directly on us. So ...
11. all of that in addition with important species (x) rare and
12. endangered species ... ( )/ means the pressure is very big on the
13. Park ( ). So now ... the *problem* ... comes in with/ if you, if you
14. want to assist communities/ and allow them ... uh ... how do you in fact ...
15. Monitor/ that ... such harvesting is sustainable? The populations
16. now ... < are very scattered or/ isolated > / it's not ... difficult to get
17. to ... uh ... it's not something that we can easily have
18. a >/ monitoring programme there/ and say okay now ... we know
19. exactly what is happening/ with this population harvest is controlled/
20. there is people that go with to ensure / that they don't take out
21. too many of this thing<.

EXCERPT 2

1. you really need ... sort of ... fairly … expertise to ... talk to the communities/
2. because the ... the sangomas and people that use medicinal (x)/ now to
3. send a little ... um ... extension office/ that came out with a little diploma
4. out of Technikon/ uh ... to go and talk to him about resource use/ what is
5. he going to tell him? they can easily see you know he knows buggerall/
6. what he's talking about/ so ... uh ... so you need sort of somebody/
7. that ... with … enough / knowledge of the issue/ he is discussing with them/
8. that he can ... discuss it their level

1. so ... all that they can do is ... is complain/ when lion or elephant
2. or buffalo walk into their land / uh ... I think it's possible to change ( )
3. then the situation can change where they actually/ where communities
4. are given a *say …* and *decide*/ how ... what do we want to do with this
5. lion or elephant or buffalo/ (that is now on our land)/ take it back? /
6. come from Kruger but were not allowed to ... to come and deal with
7. the animals ( ) not allowed/ it's not on national parkland anymore
8. provinces must come handle it/ provinces have got no ... urgency to
9. do that/ cos … they know that (x) ... / so it's, it's just a recipe for a disaster
10. pay for it?/ or … hunt it?/ eat it?/ the community know very well that
11. animals comes from the Kruger/ previously ( ) we say ja: ... it does
12. come from Kruger but were not allowed to ... to come and deal with
13. the animals ( ) not allowed/ it's not on national parkland anymore
14. provinces must come handle it/ provinces have got no ... urgency to
15. do that/ cos … they know that (x) ..../ so its, it's just a recipe for a disaster

The adoption of an academic discourse by the Scientific Services Unit (SSU) is illustrated in Bill's use of scientific terms when referring to the day-to-day conflict of interest between the Park with its efforts to conserve the fauna and flora within its jurisdiction, and the communities with their need for thatch grass, wood, meat and plants (see excerpt 1 lines 3, 4, 9, 15, 16).

While the use of a scientific discourse model enables Bill to portray a neutral, academic identity in the beginning of the interview (excerpt 1 lines 1-13), he projects a more protective attitude towards the Park indicated by references to the need to control and closely monitor the local communities harvesting of natural resources (excerpt 1 line 14, 20). This is also apparent in his suggestion that the harvesting of firewood would have to be monitored (excerpt 1 lines 14-15 and 19-20), which presents the neighbouring communities as unreliable in utilising plant matter in a responsible manner.

In addition, by referring to the communities living on the Parks border as "outside" (in excerpt 1 line 7), and only taking them into account in terms of how their existence impacts on the rivers that feed the Kruger (excerpt 1 lines 7-10), Bill's language use establishes an inside-outside dichotomy (see excerpt 1 lines 10, 14).

Communication with the communities falls within the ambit of the PCD. Bill positions the diploma courses studied by the intermediaries as academically lacking (see excerpt 2 lines 3-5), potentially compromising the intermediaries' ability to mediate effectively between the Park and the local communities. Plus, the questioning of the extent of their knowledge (in line 5) implies that he does not view them as competent communicative partners in the Parks negotiation process with the local communities. Interestingly, he does not use similar derogatory terms when mentioning the sangomas, positioning them at a similar "level" to himself.

In excerpt 3 Bill presents the intermediaries as being prohibited from solving the problem of Danger Causing Animals (DCAs) (illustrated by the repetition of the word "allowed" in lines 8-9). He also indicates that the communities have been disempowered by the new legislation which prevents them from having any say in what action should be taken against the animals (excerpt 3 lines 1-5). The fate of the animals that escape the protection of the Park is no longer in the hands of the Park; instead he indicates that the province, another state authority, has to take responsibility for them. But as Bill implies, the authorities do not show due concern despite the situation being a "recipe for disaster" (line 11).

The SSU has recently introduced a Resource Use Policy which is still in draft form. Based on the Protected Areas Act of 2003 Section 23 (c) and (d), the draft provides for the availability of a sustainable flow of natural products and services to meet the needs of local communities, and enables the continuation of a sustainable, traditional consumptive use. The resource policy acknowledges that illegal harvesting will increase as the demand for natural resources increases, which will compromise the ability of conservation managers and enforcement agents to regulate and monitor use. Further, the draft contains provision for legal action by the communities where the community has a right to access natural products and is denied that access.

4.1.1.2   Head of conservation management department (Kruger National Park)

(White Afrikaans male - *Pieter*)
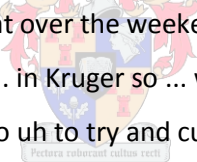
Data was collected in a recording of a weekly departmental meeting where five officials in the Department each took a turn to report back on the weeks activities which fall within their core areas of responsibility. The data was therefore not captured in an interview, but part of the natural language used during an authentic meeting. One excerpt (nr 4) that captures the HoD's update on rhino poaching was selected because it is representative of what appears to be the style of communication and language used by the senior conservation managers in relation to the three points given above (discourse features, identity of participants, power relations).

The Conservation Management Department (CMD) reports directly into the Managing Executive of Kruger National Park, works closely with the SSU, and is responsible for conservation management at the Park. The Department has weekly meetings that take place at offices just outside Skukuza in the Kruger Park. I was given permission to sit in on the weekly meeting which took place on 27 July 2009 in order to record work-related discussions. The meeting was meant to start at 8.30am but was delayed due to the Head of Department (HoD) attending to an urgent phonecall.

At 10am, the time to which the meeting had been rescheduled, five people seated themselves around the table, and the HoD's assistant introduced me. As ten minutes passed and there was still no sign of the HoD, his assistant proceeded with the meeting in his absence.

> *As the hour long meeting is drawing to its close, the Head of Department, a white man in his early to mid- fifties, enters the boardroom. His assistant stops mid-sentence and welcomes him providing him with a quick summary of what information she has shared with the group. Pieter apologises for his lateness to the Chair of the meeting and myself, and then takes complete ownership of the meeting as the designated Chairperson.*

EXCERPT 4

1. the the reason that I'm *late* is that over the weekend another three rhino
2. were *poached*/ (hhh) in in in uh ... in Kruger so ... were busy with all sorts of/
3. *plans* now to ... to put in place/ to uh to try and curb *that*/ its again from
4. Mozambique/ so there's definitely a syndicate working from *there*
5. somewhere/ and uh: ... causing us ... a lot of troubles / we will ... during
6. hopefully during this week (hhh) ... get some *plans* on the table and so
7. on/ ... Sort that out. // o/kay?

Pieter refers to the poachers indirectly (see excerpt 4 lines 3, 7), even though the poachers are most probably members of the neighbouring communities.[5] By labelling them as poachers, and by stripping them of any other identity, Pieter presents them as a faceless, nameless enemy of the Park.

The protective approach that was evident in Bill's discourse is apparent in Pieter's discourse indicated by what appears to be a strong desire to end the activities of the poachers (lines 3, 7). In addition, Pieter ends his report with an abrupt "okay" (line 7) which shows that this is the end of the discussion, and that there is no opportunity for further discussion.

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[5] The recent arrest of alleged rhino poachers in Polokwane who are white game farm owners and veterinarians clearly shows that not all poachers are local, black community members.

4.1.2 Community outreach unit

4.1.2.1 Head of Department of People and Conservation

(Black Setswana woman - *Rose*)

Data was collected by means of an interview. There are three excerpts (nrs 5-8), selected specifically for the way in which they illustrate pertinent aspects of the three points given above (Discourse features, identity of participants, power relations).

EXCERPT 5

1. In terms of resources as I said earlier/ um … we are coming as an
2. organisation/ we are coming from … a position/ that has ... that has
3. been *saying*/ no use at all … okay/ [I:In the Park?]/ in the Park/
4. no use at all/ but recently … we have moved to with the current/
5. because we have developed our management plan/ and the
6. management plan ... in relation/ because to the new legislation that's
7. the Protected Areas Act/ warranted *us* to start to talk about resources/
8. [I: mmmm]
9. that was now in in in a legislative kind of (interaction)/
10. [I:To involve the communities?}
11. to involve the communities/ to start talk about benefitting the people
12. like that/ that's what the legislation says/ so < *as* we then developed >
13. as then as we then developed the management plan/ we needed *now* to
14. talk about resources/ and … we then realised that we don't even
15. have the policy/ that ... talks about resources/ then ... efforts to come
16. up to develop a committee was put in place/ and that's when now we
17. really started to work together/ I think ..in developing that policy/ it is
18. pretty much working together with the ... all the conservation players/
19. I think that the policy also says ... for us to really implement the policy/
20. there will be a need to interact / because firstly you need to *make* sure
21. that what ... what gonna be used/ you need to understand/ and we
22. understand.
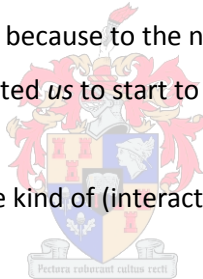
EXCERPT 6

1. if ... I think that ... if communities can start to ... to ... to ... act/ on their ... own

2. challenges and ... and experience/

3. [I: Mmmm]

4. I think it will make ... a better place/ so we won't just have ... a *Park* that is

5. c*onserved*/ but it will be having an *area* that is ... looked after/ in terms of

6. conservation standards/ whatever work that we do like manage it/ to

7. communities out there/ okay?/ whether it has been *prescribed* by the

8. Scientific Services or not/ it will definitely affect what is happening in

9. the Park./ On a broader perspective of course/ I cannot say with specifics/

10. because I am not a scientist/ but from a broader ..a broader perspective/

11. we are aware of the conservation issues/ yes/ and that is why we ...

12. as we understand them from that broadness/ we want to relate them

13. to communities/ and say ... what are the issues here?/ what are the

14. problems here? okay?/ so and we *believe* and

15. hope that the (small laugh) little ... solutions/ that we might effect in the

16. communities/ it *will* have an impact in the Park/ so ... the ... the ... it's

17. not only what you ... what you ... (1) ... what you tell the people/ it's *how*

18. you do it.

19. [I: Mmm]

20. And *again* it is ... it is issues of ... > as I said < ... transparency/ and ... and ...

21. and ... (be truthful)/ It is not have ... to *say* you puts facts as they *are* /

22. and people ... can start to ... make deductions out of it/ And ... and I that ...

23. I found that ... very ... very ... *help*ful/ people start to ... understand where

24. you coming from/ or where ... where the Park *is* in terms of certain

25. things/ and they start to support it.
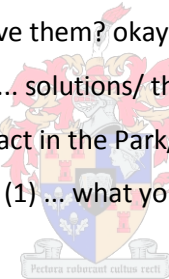
EXCERPT 7

1. *Interviewer: I get the feeling that the communities are cutting the wires?*

2. but wh- ... *HAVE* WE EVER ASKED THEM/why are they cutting the wires?/

3. have *we* asked them?/

4. [I:uhuh]

5. { (stressing each word) *have* we asked the community/ why are you

6. cutting the wires?} / {(sympathetic tone) they are angry}/ they will tell

7. you that/ < it doesn't make a difference>/ whether this wire is

8. {(knocks on desk to emphasise the words) on or not!}/ *swa-fana!/*

9. actually that is the word that they use/ *swa-fana!/* it's the *same*./

10. [I:What does it mean?]

11. it means eh ... it means ... *whether* this thing is there or not/ it's the same/

12. it's ... it's ... I.. I lose anyway/ do you understand what I am saying?/

13. {(empathises) I lose anyway / so I might as well as just cut it off!/

14. and that is ... that is out of *anger*/ and understandably so.

EXCERPT 8

1. I mean/ on the issue of the DCA/ that's gone that's gone on their own/

2. they went to Government/ okay/ and to say/ we've been talking to Kruger and

3. we understand/ maybe some of the issues a a a about ... the Park/

4. so we want you as government to come into here/ and ... and the next thing was/

5. (xxx) the ... the ... the ... C*ommission* of ... of.. human rights had summoned us/

6. so that for me is *strength*. they were acting within their */right/* you understand

7. what I'm saying?/ it could be really a bad thing but {quick chuckle} I don't know/

8. I think it's a right thing for ... for/ because they represent a society / so ... so ...

9. so they are saying as a society/ that we represent ... / it is a (1) it is a hurt

10. society about this/ and we see this not only as a conservation issue/ but

11. obviously as a human rights *issue*.

Rose's contribution to the interview is peppered with social consciousness language (for example in excerpt 5 line 11, excerpt 6 line 4 and excerpt 8 lines 6, 8-9, 11), indicating that she draws a connection between conservation and the rights and well-being of the community. She even goes so

far as to propose that the Park has a responsibility towards assisting the communities in solving their problems (illustrated in excerpt 6 line 14).

While she constantly shows that she is aware that she is a Park representative and therefore also represents the Park (for example the constant use of the word "we" in excerpt 5), she portrays the Parks conservation policies as exclusionary (excerpt 6 lines 4-6). The ambiguity of her personal position is illustrated in excerpt 8 where she admits to supporting a particular community forum, the Hlanganani Forum, for using its legal right and having the Park summoned (excerpt 8 lines 6). She acknowledges that her position may not be within the interests of the Park; nevertheless, she seems to take a certain delight in this (excerpt 8 line 7), inadvertently pitting herself against the Park.

In excerpt 7 Rose demonstrates the empathy she has towards the communities by switching to the Tsonga phrase for "what's the use" as a way of describing their sense of hopelessness (lines 8 - 9), and then by concluding her opinion statement with "understandably so" (line 14).

She describes the communities as having a lack of voice, signified by her repetition of the question "have we asked them", which she appears to feel strongly about as indicated by her play on tonal emphasis (excerpt 7 lines 2 - 5). The impression that she creates is that the Park makes its own determinations as to the reasons behind the fence cutting without basing these on consultations with the communities - the very people responsible for cutting the fence. This is reminiscent of the non-consultative approach indicated in both Pieter and Bill's discourses.

By using and placing emphasis on the word "prescribed" she presents the SSU and CMD's approach to conservation as non-consultative and autocratic (see excerpt 6 lines 7-8), which she indirectly contrasts with what she implies is her departments more open and engaging communication approach (see excerpt 6 lines 12-14 and 19-24).

Further, by raising possible questions that could be posed to the communities in order for them to make their own deductions (extract 6 lines 13-14, 21), Rose characterises the communities as completely capable of making constructive decisions when presented with honest facts (excerpt 6 line 19). This characterisation of the community contrasts directly with Bill's implication that the communities cannot be relied on to always make the right choices. In fact, Rose goes as far as suggesting that if communicated with more consultatively, the communities are more likely to support the Parks programmes (excerpt 6 lines 23-24).

In excerpt 7, Rose appears to express the belief that the fence cutting is as a result of a feeling of hopelessness and anger amongst community members, a direct result of losing their livestock to

Danger Causing Animals (DCAs) (lines 7-8, lines 11-12). By referring to the fence as "this thing" (line 11), Rose articulates the dislike of the division that the fence creates.

Despite legislation legalising the communities access to natural resources within the national parks, in excerpt 5, Rose alludes to the fact that she is not empowered to drive progress on the Parks new resource policy because she has been constrained by the Parks bureaucracy (excerpt 5 lines 19-20), as well as by what she alludes to as resistance by her colleagues (indicated by the word "effort" in excerpt 5 lines 15-16, and the word "need" in line 20). She further intimates that she has a lack of influence or acknowledgement within the Kruger management by her short laugh and use of the word "little" (excerpt 6 line 15). However, she shows that she exercises her right to call meetings and hold discussions in an attempt to advance the implementation of the policy (line 7). This again creates an impression that she and her colleagues in the SSU and CMD are on opposing sides.

The PCD appears to have produced very little educational material considering the apparent need for a constructive form of Educational Discourse. One pamphlet that it has produced, and that was shared with me, is on rare and invasive species. This was created to promote the PCD's youth awareness campaign, not primarily to provide informative content to the communities at large.

Another publication of the PCD is an educator's resource guide brought out on invasive alien species in 2006. This guide was endorsed by the then Department of Environment and Tourism, and forms part of the Park's environmental outreach programme in schools. Aimed at grade 9 learners, the guide is focused on Natural Science, and learning outcomes are described as doing scientific investigation, constructing science knowledge and contributing to science, society and the environment.

The guide also attempts to correlate with the Department of Education's Social Sciences curriculum. One of the lesson plans looks at the role of power and control in shaping the use of resources. It encourages the learner to identify factors that affect selected social and environmental disputes such as rights, gender, social and political demands.

The PCD has also set up a community outreach campaign entitled "Kruger to Kasie"[6] which comprises a branded minibus equipped with a DVD player, projector and screen. A DVD produced by the Department is screened, and provides information on the Park's animals, accommodation options, facilities and rules. The function of this communication tool is to encourage local communities to visit the Park for the enjoyment it gives, and not to provide any environmental educational content.

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[6] *Kasie* is a shortened form of the Afrikaans word "lokasie" which means location. This term is widely used colloquially.

4.1.2.2 Social ecologist as an intermediary

(Black Tsonga male - *Lebo*)

Data was collected by means of an interview, and by recording the speakers address at a community forum. There are three excerpts (nrs 9-11), selected specifically for the way in which they illustrate pertinent aspects of the three points given above (Discourse features, identity of participants, power relations).

The Social Ecologist is a Tsonga male in his late twenties who is not from the area but grew up in a township near Polokwane. Lebo started his career as a guide, and then studied environmental conservation. He also completed a degree in science management at a technikon, and is studying a masters degree in organisational change with the view that he may eventually leave the field of ecology.

EXCERPT 9

1. *Interviewer: But do they ... do they understand why you place these*
2. *restrictions on them? Do they understand?*
3. Lebo: They just now starting to understand/ but you know: the *elders*
4. especially in the villages they are/
5. [I: mmm]
6. that is why it makes us/ *again* to go and en*gage*/ with some other
7. stakeholders like you know ... ehh ... NGOs ... eh ... municipalities/ you know/
8. that you know guys/ we are pleading to you/ it's better if maybe you
9. can ... make it a point/ that that villages those villages they can get
10. you know: electricity/ the more they've got they get electricity/ the *more*
11. they will stop chopping down you know ... firewoods/ you know/ they
12. will stop chopping down you know cutting down the Kruger National Park
13. *fence* / whereby in their intention is to get firewoods/ but in the long
14. run/ it will be causing the issue of DCAs you know/ the animals will
15. come you know/ outside of the Park/ to the people.

EXCERPT 10

1. *Interviewer: Why do you think it is important that they buy into*
2. *conserving?*
3. Lebo: its important you know they're stray from ... poaching you know/
4. I remember ... it was last year around/
5. (x) those those guys you know they didn't understand the the
6. the time you know/ ( ) they almost ( )/ that's because they don't see
7. any ... *importance* you know/ of *why* are we conserving/ but if we want to
8. have that buy-in you know/ they will start you know/ tell that eh ... where
9. we also < you know/ it hurts our: you know … *income*> you know/ but
10. most of the people that are coming from those villages/ they employed
11. in the Park/ and you know: that ... and they will stop looking you know
12. those animals as *meat* you know/ as something that they can eat/ but they'll
13. see that it is you know a *treasury* of ... our economy here/ then they:
14. re*spect* you/ you know/ they really respect you/ *once* they know that
15. you're coming/ coming from Kruger National Park you know/ then they
16. respect you on the outside you know/ they think that you are coming
17. with food/ then you know then you provide them with meat sometimes
18. something like that/ that's what we *do* sometimes you know/

At 8 'o clock on Tuesday, 23 September 2008, I accompanied Lebo to the Lumbabiswano Forum meeting in order to observe the interchanges between him and the community representatives.

We drive for an hour and a half until we eventually pull up at the building of the Inkambeni Tribal Authority just outside Hazyview. People are arriving for the forum using mainly organised transport and greet Lebo in a friendly manner.

We enter the medium-sized room where the forum takes place. Twenty people have come to the forum, eight of which are community elders. Lebo takes his place at a table in the front next to the Chairman. The Chairman delivers a report on the last meeting, and once finished invites Lebo to address the group on pertinent issues, particularly Damage Causing Animals.

I am then invited to explain the purpose of my attending the Forum which I do in English and the Chairman translates what I say into Seswati for the benefit of the attendees. After I am done, a general question and answer session commences where the issue of a legal case against the Park over livestock loss is discussed. Once the Forum is over I move to an adjacent, smaller room to conduct a focus group with eight of the Forums community members.

The following excerpt is from Lebo's address to the forum members. It was delivered in Seswati and was recorded. Here Lebo is referring to the communities' pursuit of compensation for livestock killed by DCAs.

EXCERPT 11

1. when I say this story is the same as having a car/ you find that [you]
2. collide with someone/ you find that you don't have money to pay/
3. even though you've insured your car/ you cry to the insurance/
4. asking them to pay the other person/ that's why I say the lawyers
5. don't represent us/ but represent the community/ the lawyers are
6. pushing that the insurance is not clear/ them not being clear is that
7. when your cow is dead/ they say they will sympathise with you
8. with R500/ saying this is deal/ if someone says their cow costs
9. R2000 for example/ then the team has to pay the money/

In a similar way to Rose, in excerpt 9, Lebo shows a sympathetic position towards the communities' predicament around natural resource use (lines 9-10). Lebo provides an excuse for the communities cutting the Kruger fence, and proposes that they would stop doing so if they had access to electricity (lines 12-14). His portrayal of the communities as being partly justified in their actions when it comes to poaching is once again apparent in his use of the word "stray" (excerpt 10 line 3), which implies that poaching is an unintentional action on the part of the communities.

Lebo does not, however, portray the Park as a dogmatic, bureaucratic institution in the way Rose does. Conversely, he represents the Park in positive terms, citing its provision of employment and meat to the locals (excerpt 10 lines 10, 17). In addition, he positions the Park as a victim of red tape, illustrated in excerpt 11. Here he uses the example of car insurance in what appears to be an attempt to present the Kruger Park as the unwitting perpetrator of an accident who is seeking to pay

for the damages of the injured party, but is being prevented from doing so by the uncompromising, aggressive lawyers who represent the insurance company.

It is interesting that Lebo echoes the SSUs use of the word "outside" when referring to the communities (excerpt 10 line 16), which as discussed earlier, tactically distances the speaker from the communities. He also resorts to marketing rhetoric (excerpt 10 lines 7, 9, 13) when attempting to project a more neutral stance, similar to the way in which Bill uses scientific rhetoric.

In terms of his interaction with the communities, Lebo attempts to show that he is succeeding in his efforts to engage with the communities (see excerpt 9 line 3), and that he is respected by the community because he has the capacity to bring bushmeat (extract 10 lines 14-17). His contribution towards the association of the Park with the provision of meat would appear to be a contradiction to the conservation messages he professes to relay (excerpt 10 lines 11-12). Such contradictions are evident throughout the interview which suggests that Lebo vacillates between a number of identities for himself, from identifying with the Park (excerpt 10 line 7, 18), to identifying with the communities (excerpt 9 lines line 10-11).

Any influence he may suggest he has is negated by his allusion to the lack of cooperation from the local community chiefs (excerpt 9 lines 3-4) which forces him to seek solutions from the provincial government and local municipalities. This route does not seem to prove fruitful either, as is indicated by his use of the word "again" and his switch to dialogic language making us privy to the extent of his frustration (excerpt 9 lines 6-8). Further, as his speech progresses in excerpt 9, he reveals that he acts as a "go-between" in what appears to be an impasse between the Park, the local government, and the communities (lines 6-8).

4.1.3 Local community

4.1.3.1 Members of the Lumbabiswano Forum

Data was collected by recording a focus group discussion where members were asked to talk about topics tabled by the interviewer. Although eight community members participated in the focus group, only three members responded regularly and enthusiastically to prompts by the interviewer. The other members were less proficient in English which most likely made them less confident in actively joining the discussion. Although there was a translator at the meeting, who introduced me and raised the first discussion point in Seswati, the members who could speak English elected to respond in English and the majority of the discussion continued in English. At intervals, the translator repeated questions in Seswati for the benefit of those members who were less proficient in English,

most particularly the two women, but the responses to these were mainly softly spoken and limited to a short discussion amongst themselves. The translator would explain to me what they were saying but it appeared that the discussion consisted of the members trying to understand the concepts and terms that were being raised in the discussion.

Two excerpts (nrs 12, 13) are selected specifically for the way in which they illustrate pertinent aspects of the three points given above (Discourse features, identity of participants, power relations). I used Morgans (1997:60) data coding guidelines when selecting which excerpts were to be analysed. The excerpts selected provided the most interesting insight into the community's discourse on key conservation concepts.

In response to my asking the group whether they had heard terms such as "sustainable harvesting", "biodiversity" or "alien plants" before, the only phrase that the group seemed to have heard previously was "alien plants".

EXCERPT 12

1. [A] it means well move the plant in order to save the grass/ because
2. it ... save the ... growth of ... grass
3. *Group discussion in Seswati*
4. [B] and some of those ... alien ... plants / where they grow/ there is
5. no grass growing under them
6. *Group discussion in Seswati*
7. *Interviewer: do they ... do they remove them in the community as*
8. *well or?*
9. [B] yes/ inside ... the Kruger Park and outside
10. [C] also a very high () if I can mention/ nobody like ... that kind of
11. tree/because/
12. [B] (X)bush
13. [C] {laughs} ja/and we don't ... eat it/ and we don't ... use it for ... for
14. wooding/for anything like that/ we don't know what we use it for/
15. they hate that tree {laughs} I can say.
16. *Interviewer: what tree is it do you know?*
17. [B] ja
18. [C] it's not beautiful
19. [A] the tree is a ... dangerous tree to the community and to the
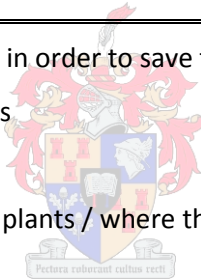
20 animals/ and that's where lions when they escape from the

21 Kruger National Park/ they hibernate in that bushes/ so when you

22 pass just near the lions/ they can attack you/ and it attacks the cattle

23 and go and hide again there

24 [C] some of the tree we cannot be able to transfer them into English/

25 to the way we have be brought up using their names

EXCERPT 13

1. *Interviewer: The people ... the conser ... the environmental educators*

2. [B] *from the Park. What do you think they do?*

3. they are: ... they are that eh ... helping that eh ... people mustn't ... eh

4. ... destroy the nature/ [B] plants and animals/ [B] because everything which

5. ... here on Earth depends on another/ [B] like lions eating the buffalo/

6. and buffaloes eating grass

7. and the new generation will not know about the lions and the elephants

8. and also they ... the contribute again to the ... to the soil/ by when

9. they die ... they make like ... manure/ or when they excrete they ...

10. (sponsor) manure for the grass to grow

11. *Interviewer: anybody else?*

12. and preventing people from slaughtering animals/ [B] so that the new

13. .. the new generation can see a lion/ if it was not for the ... Nature

14. Conservation Board/ animals would ... will go/ all of them will vanish/

In excerpt 12 the responses of the community members reveal some recognition that alien plants kill off other species (lines 4-5), and that they do not necessarily offer anything of substance to the community (lines 13-14), but the connection to conservation terms such as "biodiversity" is not provided.

Earlier in the interview, speaker B disclosed that he watched 50/50, which is a conservation television programme that is broadcast on South Africa's national broadcaster, SABC. This could account for his show of support for the function of conservation agencies (illustrated in excerpt 13 lines 3-4, 12-13). Without using language that is typical of ecological discourse, such as "ecosystems", "food chains", "extinct" or "compost", he draws a connection between human

behaviour, and the preservation of the animal species (excerpt 13 lines 3-10).

It is notable that the reference to the communal lands adjacent to the Park as "outside" is used by a community member (see excerpt 12 line 9). In addition, speaker B also depicts the communities as consuming in an unsustainable manner (excerpt 13 lines 3-4, 11, 13). This echoes Bill's concerns about allowing the communities to harvest the Parks natural resources unsupervised.

The importance of an inclusive communication approach to the community is illustrated in excerpt 12 as individual opinions are not expressed. Instead the use of the word "we" to express views or feelings is preferred (see excerpt 12 line 13-14), and if an opinion is expressed it is softened by the use of a hedge (for example: excerpt 12 lines 10, 15). Further, the three main speakers each take a turn to respond with little or no interjection, no speaker challenges the views of another. The less bilingual members are given an opportunity to contribute to the discussion, albeit in Seswati, and as the discussion is in English, their participation is inhibited, thereby illustrating that the voices of local, monolingual, indigenous language speakers are less represented.

4.2   THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF THE DISCOURSE

The following findings are a result of an analysis of the general discursive characteristics identified in excerpts based on interviews held with Park officers who are responsible for the conservation of the Parks fauna and flora, and with Park officers who are responsible for engaging with the communities. Findings are also based on group discussions held with members of the communities who attended one of the Parks forums, has resulted in the following findings.

As the study is qualitative, the data collection was confined to a few participants who represented the various groups. Furthermore, the data was not collected over an extensive period of time and was confined to interviews of between 30 and 90 minutes long. Therefore, the analysis of the various discourses is based on the impressions that were created in the interviews, as well as during the one focus group. As a consequence, although this gives interesting insight into the communicative patterns of specific small groups of participants, generalisations cannot be made as to whether such impressions are a general feature of the interviewees' characteristics, or of the departments and communities they represent.

4.2.1   Identity constructions

There is evidence of strategic language use amongst the interviewees in their quests to portray their desired social identities.

For example, Bill and Lebo attempt to adopt neutral, dispassionate positions on the issue of consumptive harvesting of natural resources by using specialised discourse models. Bill uses scientific, ecological concepts when discussing the topic, and Lebo uses popularised conservation rhetoric, reminiscent of what one reads in promotional texts on conservation projects.

Bill, Pieter and Lebo affirm their solidarity with the Park by referring to anything beyond the Parks borders as "outside". Bill and Pieter refer to members of the community in indirect terms in what could be an attempt to dissociate themselves from any connection with the communities' circumstances.

Lebo constantly attempts to reconcile the various social identities he subscribes to, namely, that of a Tsonga speaker tasked with engaging with Seswati speakers, that of a tertiary-educated person from a township employed to resolve issues between the Park and rural villagers, and also that of a representative of an entity which is disliked by the people with whom he is mandated to foster positive relations. This is apparent in the manner in which he adopts the linguistic characteristics of the various community of practice with whom he associates. For example, he echoes the western ideologies of community participation in conservation in order to affirm his association with the Parks conservation management units, and when addressing the members of the forum, he switches to Seswati, and speaks of "us" and "our" when discussing the benefits of conservation for them as a "seeking solidarity strategy.
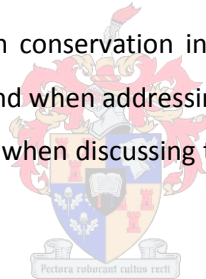
Rose assumes the institutional identity of the Park, indicated by her use of pronouns such as "we" and "our" when referring to the Parks conservation activities; however, further into the interview she recounts the difficulty she has experienced trying to implement a management plan based on the Protected Areas Act, and hints at being scuppered by a bureaucratic, internal process, as well as a lack of support by her colleagues, which could be from the Parks SSU and CMD.

Rose dissociates herself from her colleagues in the SSU and CMD by appearing critical of their non-consultative style of interaction with the community. She does not hold back from expressing her support for the communities even where their actions are hostile to the Park. In a sense, it appears that Rose has taken on the role as the voice of the community, further evidenced by her use of a Tsonga phrase that the communities use to describe the level of hopelessness they feel.

For his part, Bill disagrees with Rose's department's engagement approach with the communities as being ineffective and inadequate.

While Rose feels disempowered by the Parks bureaucratic processes, Bill and Lebo show that they too have been disempowered by bureaucratic structures. By Bill and Lebo's account, the political structures that have been put in place to resolve the issue of DCAs are not working, and both Park officers and communities are prevented from dealing with the animals themselves. Bill relays how the provincial government has the sole jurisdiction over animals who escape from the Park, and that his Department is not "allowed" to take any action in order to resolve the problem. Lebo appeals to the local government to prioritise the provision of electricity to communities. He re-enacts how he pleads with the officials indicating that his request has been met with little success, most likely because of bureaucratic obstacles. The provincial department is depicted as non-responsive and are by default exacerbating the problem of DCAs.

Lebo portrays the communities as victims who are not responsible for their actions, and are only cutting the fence in order to source firewood because they have no alternative. However, in my site visit to one of the Kabokweni village homesteads, even though the houses were electrified, people were still using wood for cooking as it was cheaper than using electricity. Electricity was used for lighting and powering of televisions. This indicates that the reason the community is cutting down trees is not because electricity is not available, but because cooking with wood is cheaper than using an electric cooker. In a way, both Lebo and Bill give the communities juvenile characteristics portraying them as not being able to control their own behaviour.

While Rose and Bill share the view that the communities have been denied a say in how the problem of DCAs should be handled, and both propose that the communities should be given a voice, they differ in how the situation should be managed. Rose believes that a more consultative approach to the Parks conservation practice would empower the communities, whereas Bill implies that despite a disastrous situation being imminent, the situation is out of his hands.

On the one hand, Bill shows some empathy for the communities' situation, and yet, on the other hand he presents the communities as untrustworthy when it comes to the consumption of natural resources. The picture he creates of the communities could present a clear disincentive for the Park to implement the new resource policy which provides that the communities would have a legal recourse if they were denied access to the Parks natural resources.

Conversely, Rose shows that she understands that the Act gives the community the constitutional right to access the Parks natural resources, and believes that they are more than capable of contributing towards conservation efforts, and that she intends pushing the agenda on the implementation of the new Natural Resource Policy at Park meetings. Thus, the two departments

(PCD and SSU) who play a role in the conservation of resources, and the communities' participation therein have opposing constructions of the local communities. It is therefore noteworthy that to date the communities are not allowed access to the Parks natural resources, suggesting that the SSUs recommendations may have more power in the Park, and that the PCDs recommendations are possibly subdued, indicating that Rose could hold less power within the institution.

As for the communities' construction of the Park, in the focus group meeting, the community members presented a positive attitude towards the Park, as well as explicit support for the conservation of natural resources. The reason for such favourable sentiments, apart from what could be a genuine support for conservation, is possibly due to them believing that I represented the Park and would therefore report their feelings back to the authorities, which could have some or other favourable outcome. In addition, exposure to television programmes on conservation where the discourse model reflects that of SANParks's, given that its park officials are often featured on the programme in interviews or as information sources, would most likely result in the perpetuation of the Institutions desired social ideologies.

Another possibility for their positive construction of the Park is that the Chairman of the Forum sat in on the focus group session. The Chairman has a close relationship with the head of the PCD having travelled to Botswana on an information gathering trip as its guest. I noticed that the members of the focus group were very aware of his presence, and at one point, one of the respondents even paid him respect when replying to one of my questions related to the Park.

4.2.2   Conservation of natural resources

The Kruger's SSU deems natural resources to be a biological phenomenon which is part of a wider physiological system. It focuses on the protection of biodiversity as an end in itself, and any concerns about consumptive harvesting appear to be confined to the negative impact it may have on the Park.

The SSUs discourse is in line with a western discourse model of conservation which assumes that the desire for untouched wilderness areas is universal, and therefore the communities' aspiration to access the Park so as to harvest natural resources is considered threatening. In contrast, its ambition to conserve biodiversity is considered neutral, apolitical, and correct. The Parks fauna and flora are also appreciated in terms of statistics grounded on empirical research.

The PCD proposes that natural resources are a public asset, belonging to the communities as much as they do to the Park. Barring the communities' access to natural resources is considered an infringement on their rights. Further, the position presented is that the Parks conservation activities

should extend beyond its fences, and one of its objectives should be the upliftment of poor communities through natural resource preservation. This latter position resonates with the discourse model of the Protected Areas Act, as well as that of the Parks new Resource Use Policy.

In addition, the PCD puts forward the notion that an intermediary does not need a degree in science to appreciate the importance of conserving natural resources. Moreover, natural resources are only excessively exploited because of the government's failure to meet the basic needs of the poor.

The absence of education material on the sustainable consumption of natural resources developed by the PCD for the broader community, outside of school material, was surprising given that it is a subject that appears close to the heart of the head of the PCD. It appears that at present the engagement with the communities is more about relationship building and issue management than about education.

Where it has not been influenced by supplementary input such as television programmes on conservation, the community's Conservation Discourse includes what Wardhaugh (2006:232) calls "folk taxonomies" which relies on personal and traditional experience of nature, and excludes scientific data. This discourse holds that wildlife exists for the physical needs of human beings, and should be conserved so that future generations can benefit from it. It also purports that wild animals can be a danger and a menace to the community if not managed effectively.

4.2.3   Power relations

There appear to be three social goods that are afforded political power in the discourses analysed. These are knowledge, legal rights, and access to natural resources.

The SSU appears to regard scientific knowledge as superior to ecological studies provided by technikons. Nonetheless, the Units representative does acknowledge the credibility of the sangomas anecdotal biological knowledge.

It seems that scientific knowledge holds a higher status in the Park than more informal data. The PCD has a theoretical position of power due to the legal obligation on the Park to allow for sustainable harvesting of natural resources. Even so, in practice the only unit at the Park who can determine what counts as sustainable use, is the SSU, and this is determined through qualitative, scientific research.

One therefore assumes that the current findings are that consumptive use is not sustainable in the immediate term given that there is little evidence of consumption currently taking place. There does

not seem to be a strong intention within the SSU to build a case for sustainable usage either. Furthermore, as the Protected Areas Act includes a caveat that the harvesting of resources must be deemed sustainable, the SSU has an influence on the implementation of the Parks natural resource use policy. Moreover, while the conservation managers at the Park use scientific data in their argument that consumptive resource use by communities is not sustainable; the act continues to live in academic terms only.

Knowledge can also pertain to cultural or idiomatic knowledge. In previous informal discussions with Lebo, he noted the challenge he faces by not being a first language speaker of Seswati, the language of the communities represented at the Lumbabiswano Forum, which falls within his jurisdiction. He also referred to the disdain held by the chiefs of the participating villages towards him because he is not from the same cultural background as they.

The jurisdiction of natural resources is one of the main conflicts of interest between the Park and its neighbouring communities. The Park owns the rights to all fauna and flora that fall within the confines of its fences. Nevertheless, if animals venture outside of the fence, the provincial government claims ownership of them, and it is then the only entity that is legally entitled to remove the animals from the surrounding areas. However, the community has a legal recourse against the Park if escaped animals destroy their livestock.

The Parks wild animals are important to the communities because they are a source of meat and money, although these are sometimes procured through poaching. Escaped animals, however, pose a threat to their personal property and safety. Wild animals are of value to the Park because they attract tourists, and are therefore integral to its prosperity. Certain species of animals are worth more than others because they are considered to be endangered, and therefore are a bigger drawcard to tourists. Preventing the poaching of such animals is the responsibility of the Parks CMD which depicts poachers as a material problem that needs to be quashed.

The PCD, on the other hand, subscribes to the notion that the rights of animals need to be weighed up against the rights of people, and feels that losses sustained as a result of DCAs infringes on the rights of the communities.

For the SSU, the fence signifies a definitive line between what is considered to be inside the Park and therefore a material asset, and what is considered to be outside of the Park, and therefore, a threat. The PCD believes that the Parks responsibility should extend beyond the fence.

Social justice, underpinned by the legal framework of the new constitution, is clearly a weapon the

communities can now use against the Parks conservation practice illustrated by the Lumbabiswano Forums legal battle with the Park over compensation for damage caused by DCAs.

4.2.4   The role of the Park

The SANParks website positions the Parks role as conserving the natural environment for the benefit of future generations, while providing a sustainable flow of natural resources to the surrounding communities. Interviews with those that are responsible for implementing the Parks conservation policies, project the stance that the Park owns valuable, natural assets that need to be protected from the surrounding communities.

The PCD propounds that the Park is responsible for the conservation within and outside of its fences so that it can benefit the neighbouring communities as well as protect the fauna and flora. In addition, the Park is reneging on its legal obligation to support the local communities.

The communities make overtures that the Park is doing a good thing by conserving the animals and plants, but do not believe that they are personally benefiting from it. In their view, the Park should take responsibility for any damages caused by the animals which escape from it.
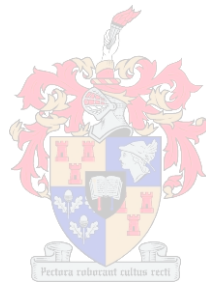
4.2.5   Communication style

The three interest groups represented in the discourse on conservation around the Kruger Park have different perceptions of the functions of various communicative platforms, and they consciously and unconsciously subscribe to different models of communication. As noted by Gee (1996:181), some cultures subscribe to a more "lifeworld" discourse model where people claim to know things about the natural world without basing that claim on access to specialised discourses, whereas other cultures, mostly westernised societies, place more value on scientific data. It was interesting to discover that such discourse models were evident in the Conservation Discourse related to the Kruger Park.

The conservation management units, namely the SSU and CMD, adopt what is interpreted as a top-down communication style with little opportunity for consultation. Furthermore, the SSU believes that in order to communicate effectively on ecological matters intermediaries must have a scientific background.

The community outreach group, comprising the PCD and the Park intermediaries, believes in an inclusive communication approach, which serves to solve problems and gain consensus.

The community exhibits an inclusive and collective communication style characteristic of a group-based culture.

To summarise: this Chapter provided an analysis of the data gained from different types of communicative events that relate to the conservation of natural resources in order to characterise the different Conservation Discourses of various interest groups working for, and interacting with the Kruger National Park. The Chapter also expanded on what is topicalised in the discourses and how the identities of the participants and groups are discursively constructed. Chapter 5 provides a summary of conclusions based on what was indicated in the discourse analysis, and offers suggestions as to how existing communicative problems could be approached based on insights gained in the analysis.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter I summarise my conclusions based on what was indicated in the discourse analysis conducted on communicative events pertaining to the consumption of natural resources. Besides reporting on the insights gained by applying theoretical, abstracting procedures to naturally occurring and promoted oral discourses, I also offer suggestions as to how existing communicative problems could be approached. This is a preliminary study that provides pointers on how to approach and hopefully resolve problematic aspects of the Conservation Discourse, but it does not pretend to be conclusive. A further in-depth study with more representatives from the two departments, as well as from the local communities will provide a fuller picture.

5.1   CHARACTERISATION OF THE DISCOURSE

The Parks Conservation Discourse is inconsistent because of the mismatch of schema between the organisational units that manage the conservation of the Park, namely the SSU and CMD, and those that manage the Parks engagement with neighbouring communities (the PCD and Park intermediaries). This could have the effect of each misjudging the other, contributing towards the tension and conflict that is evident between them. This is reminiscent of Ting-Toomeys (1999:61) proposition that problems may arise when individuals from different approaches to "people-nature"-solutions come together.

The SSU and PCD display aspects of ethnocentricism which, according to Jandt (2004:76), is an attitude one finds when individuals or groups believe that their culture is superior to others, and judge aspects of another culture negatively. For example, the scientific and exclusive discourse of the SSU being found objectionable by the PCD, and the unscientific, more affective discourse of the PCD deemed ineffective by the SSU.

In addition, the different discourses also construct opposing, even if also overlapping, identities of the local communities. For example, both the SSU and PCD indicate that the communities have been denied a voice when it comes to the issue of Danger Causing Animals (DCAs); however, other constructions justify the denial of voice. The PCD contends that the communities should be equal partners in resolutions around natural resource consumption, and the SSU asserts that the

communities cannot be relied upon to consume resources sustainably. Ironically, the social ecologist who loosely reports to the PCD, and who engages with the communities through one of the Parks forums, effectively deprives them of the ability to take ownership of their behaviour, also by claiming that they cannot be held responsible for their actions. The SSU asserts that it has to protect the Parks vulnerable natural assets against an external threat, whereas the PCD takes a personal interest in the communities' plight against what it positions as uncaring, bureaucratic institutions. It is another irony that the Head of SSU portrays the provincial government's local institutions as indifferent.

The Park intermediary speaks a different language to the communities represented in the Lumbabiswano Forum. This could result in a distortion of his Conservation Discourse, so that in tone and in content his message may not be received as it was intended. For example, Lebo's analogy of the car insurance for explaining the status of compensation to the communities for livestock lost to DCAs is given in unclear and confusing terms, and does not really explain that the Parks insurance company is the one contesting the values that the community has put forward for their livestock.

The community's Conservation Discourse is anecdotal. They seem mainly to be concerned about the negative impact of natural resource consumption; however, it is mostly remonstrative on the Parks lack of taking responsibility for any adversities experienced as a direct consequence of the Parks policies.
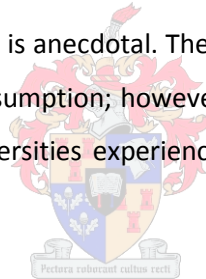
5.2   MAIN FINDINGS

This study aimed to determine how the communities living in proximity to the Kruger National Park take part in the Parks Conservation Discourse, and whether SANParks has an accurate picture of the variety of approaches to, and interpretations of, its conservation policies. In other words, it attempted to identify what Conservation Discourses are being expounded by all the parties involved in the communication around the local communities use of natural resources, and whether there is evidence of misunderstanding and omission, which results in communicative problems and even conflict. The study aimed also to establish how various participants structure their own and others identities in this discourse.

In order to structure the process, I set out to identify some of the most pertinent discursive features that characterise the communication style of two of the Parks organisational units; namely those that are involved either in the implementation of the Parks conservation policies and those that are involved in engaging with the local communities. In the following sections I refer specifically to differences I have noted in the modes of discourse (Gee 2005:71) of each of the participating groups.

5.2.1 Conservation management units (SSU and CMD)

Based on what impressions were created in the interviews with representatives from the two departments, it appears that the SSU adopts a western-based, scientific discourse model, presenting conservation as factual and objective. This discourse is explicative of the US discourse that, according to Meskell (2008:2), propagates that a protected area should remain unscathed by human interference. It is this type of Protected Area management approach which Mosidi (1996:19) criticises as being paternalistic and exclusionary. The Head of the SSU, as well as the Head of the CMD, see outgroups as a threat to the Park, which in this case are members of the local communities who want to consume, or are poaching, the Parks natural resources. Inferences, or what Gee (2005:59) refers to as "situated meanings", are inherent in terms such as "outside" or "out there" that appear consistently in the SSU and CMD discourse model. The SSU also positions the Parks intermediaries who are responsible for communicating with the local communities as outgroups because their knowledge is unscientific and typical of what Gee (1996:181) refers to as "lifeworld". It appears that the SSUs "cultural value orientation" (Ting-Toomey 1999:57, 59, 61) espouses the belief that the natural environment is there to be controlled (Bennett 1998:23).

5.2.2 Community outreach unit (PCD and Intermediaries)

The PCD assumes a social-consciousness discourse model which is pro-poor, and sensitive to social injustices as well as critical of what it recognises as institutional indifference. Its discourse is far more reminiscent of the Protected Area Outreach goals that Venter (1998:3) advocates, and which the Protected Areas Act decrees.

The Head of the PCD demonstrates the distancing tactic that Ting-Toomey (1999:150) alludes to when a person deems the characteristics of the group that they belong to, in this case the Park, as unfavourable. Rose exhibits this by siding with the community, and adopting their linguistic characteristics to emphasise her connection with them as well as her dissociation from the Park (Ting-Toomey 1999:146).

While the PCD is involved in community environmental education, this is mostly aimed at schools. Its adult communication material is devoid of information on sustainable, natural resource consumption, and is rather preoccupied with promoting the Park as a recreational destination. This seems to undermine the PCDs intention and capacity to facilitate the communities understanding of the Parks conservation policies. It could be that the community forums are intended to play that role, although the forum on which I sat in did not seem to focus on developing mutual understanding of central issues. Its focus at the time was on trying to resolve existing conflicts of

interest between the Park and the communities, as well as to discuss side-benefits which the communities expected. These benefits included discounted entry permits and complimentary overnight stays. This could inadvertently result in the community being encouraged to show superficial support and appreciation of the Park as a conservation area simply to gain benefits from a development in which they were otherwise not primary stakeholders. This was found to have happened in the Luphisi community discussed in Burns and Barrie (2005:482).

The intermediaries that the Park uses to engage with the communities espouse an unscientific Conservation Discourse model more akin to the lifeworld discourse which the SSU vilifies. Further, having to enter into dialogue with the communities in a second language, and without having first-hand experience of their culture, appears to be compromising the effectiveness of the intermediaries' communication of the Park's conservation policies. These intermediaries then face the difficult task of being mediators between the Park, the provincial government, and the communities. They appear to manage contradictory self-identities by using language strategically in order to belong to different speech communities depending on which one is more appropriate (Wardhaugh 2006:123-124).

5.2.3   Local community

The community representatives project a predilection for a "lifeworld" (Gee 1996:181) discourse model, and view nature as existing for the good of humankind. Further, it seems that unless a person is exposed to educational material that demonstrates how his or her action is contributing towards the depletion of natural resources, she or he will not draw the connection between his or her actions and his or her contribution thereto, as illustrated in Morell's (1999:63-64) research in Madagascar. Instead, the sense of entitlement to natural resources without a sense of responsibility towards conserving them, which Twine (2005:95) encountered, will most likely prevail. Those community members that have been exposed to educational material tend to expound the ideologies perpetuated by the material, and distance themselves from consumptive behaviour that is not sustainable, as was exhibited by speaker B in the Lumbabiswano focus group.

In complete contrast to the SSU's value orientation, the communities claim that they are at the mercy of their environment (Bennett 1998:23).

5.2.4   Perceptions groups have on one another

On the basis of collected discursive data, the following will discuss perceptions which the various parties featured in this study hold towards each other.

The conservation management units (SSU and CMD) view the local neighbouring communities as a threat to the Park because they are deemed to be incapable of consuming recourses sustainably, as would be demonstrated by the escalation in the poaching of endangered species. The officials also depict the communities as disenfranchised by the very government structures that were put in place to manage the risks and benefits resulting from their proximity to the Park. The communities seem to be of no particular interest to the SSU apart from when their behaviour impacts negatively on the Park.

The SSU perceives the PCD and Park intermediaries as ineffective in communicating with the communities on important conservation issues, as illustrated by the Head of SSUs reference to the inadequacy of the intermediary's academic qualifications.

Similarly, the PCD considers the SSU and CMDs communication approaches as ineffective in garnering support from the local communities because they are prescriptive and obstructive.

Residents who had been exposed to educational conservation programmes expressed positive sentiments towards the protection of natural resources by national Park officers. Negative perceptions towards the Park among community members were a result of them not feeling adequately compensated, for the loss of livestock due to escaped wildlife.

The PCD finds that the communities are rendered voiceless because of the Parks non-consultative approach to communication around natural resource use. Given the opportunity, the community would contribute towards resolving issues constructively. Further, the communities are victims of institutional structures that are indifferent to their plight, and are negligent in their responsibilities towards the communities. The communities are therefore not responsible for their actions, such as cutting holes in the Parks fences, but are forced to do so because of circumstances beyond their control.

5.3 CONCLUSION

Contrary to the assumption that there are different, participating communities of practice who subscribe to a Conservation Discourse given in SANParks's policies, this research concludes that in fact there are a number of different Conservation Discourses in the same communicative space. An analysis of the discourses recorded in a variety of communicative events involving parties with diverse cultural backgrounds has disclosed different interests, different evaluations of priorities and different perceptions of participant's roles. All the parties that participated in the study have a vested interest in the conservation of natural resources. The Parks SSU is the custodian of

SANParks's natural assets, the CMD is mandated to manage the conservation of the Kruger National Parks assets, the PCD and intermediary's role is to engage the community on issues of natural resources, and the local communities require natural resources to fulfil some of their basic, physical requirements, and at times they are victims of dangerous and destructive wildlife that have escaped from the Park.

It has emerged that there is a significant discrepancy between the discourse of the different organisational units within the Park, more specifically, those that manage its conservation and those that engage with local communities. This may have contributed towards what appears to be a serious breakdown in communication between the two. At face-value, it would seem that racial differences have caused the breakdown, given that senior managers in conservation management are mainly white people, and the community outreach officers are mainly black people; however, a closer examination shows that ignorance or intolerance of each other's cultural value-orientations could be causing the misunderstanding and antagonism.

The lack of trust between the two units presents an immediate problem for the PCD as it is reliant on the SSU for agreeing to the practice of consumptive harvesting. For the SSU, the PCD is its only contact with the local communities, and any negative perceptions held by the PCD could be exacerbating hostility towards the Park. Further, while the scientific discourse constructed and used within the SSU may currently hold more power within the Park, if political pressure continues to mount for the lives of the poor to be improved, the power balance could shift in favour of the PCD. If there is no constructive engagement between the two departments, it could prove detrimental to the Parks longer term conservation management.

The effectiveness of the intermediaries' communication with the communities is also uncertain as cultural and language differences appear to inhibit clear messages being relayed to the communities via the Park forums. Despite the PCDs good intentions, unless the Parks conservation policies are clearly communicated to the communities, misconceptions about the Parks goals and activities will result in continued antagonism towards the Park. Further, the content on conservation developed by the PCD shows a lack of information that could assist the communities in understanding the importance of, and behaviours required for, the sustainable harvesting of natural products. It begs the question as to what the basis is for the PCDs confidence that the communities are in a position to contribute towards a solution on consumptive harvesting that is in line with the Parks conservation policies.

The communities show that they are supportive of the popular concept of nature conservation. However, it is unclear whether they truly understand what nature conservation in their context implies, and the extent to which they grasp the ecological implications thereof. Moreover, it is very apparent that they are largely unaware of the Parks conservation policies apart from them being denied access to its natural resources, and that it appears indifferent to the damage and loss caused by animals which escape into the surrounding areas. This lack of knowledge and awareness of Park policies indicates a failure of the existing communication between the Park and its neighbouring communities despite forums having been set-up.

Despite the PCD contending that the communities are beginning to understand the Parks conservation policies, there was no indication in the focus group that community members were familiar with Park conservation activities or messages relating to biodiversity, or sustainable consumption. The SSU did not pretend to know, nor did it indicate that it needed to know, what the communities understood about its management plans.

5.4   GAPS, ANOMALIES AND DEVIATIONS

As mentioned above, before I commenced with my data collection I had assumed that the Park had a single Conservation Discourse which all Park officers subscribed to, and would like to translate into their everyday activities. However, my analyses have disclosed this to be a mistaken assumption. I have identified at least two kinds of discourse which fit different models and which are diametrically opposed to one another.

I had also expected that departments responsible for conservation management and those that are responsible for community outreach worked closely together in developing material and communication strategies in order to engage with the local communities. Instead, I found that the organisational units have very little interaction with each other, and are in fact quite disparaging of one another.

Where I had initially expected to interview Park intermediaries who were from the local communities, I discovered that in some cases the intermediaries are not from the area and struggle to communicate with the local communities due to language and cultural barriers.

Another surprising revelation to me was that the SSU does not seem concerned about the degree to which the communities understand or adopt sustainable environmental practices. Although it appreciates that the interaction of the communities with the surrounding environs will have an

indirect impact on the Park, the activities of this Department are wholly focused on the areas within its boundaries, that is, until trespassers poach valuable natural assets.

Contrary to my expectations, I found the members of neighbouring communities with whom I had contact friendly and warm as well as open to participating in the study. I had anticipated resentment and opposition towards my presence and research activities due to my being associated with the Park.

5.5   RECOMMENDATIONS

I would suggest that a similar and more in-depth study is conducted with other members of all the departments featured in this research as well as members of other Park forums to determine whether the research findings are confined to particular members of each party, or whether they are indicative of the Discourses of the broader Park and most local communities.

It is clear that much subsistence farming and hunting of local communities is related to poverty. Eradication of such poverty is a pronounced ideal of local and national government. Nevertheless, improvement of living condition in these communities is a slow process. In these circumstances SANParks can play a valuable role in assisting local communities to manage better the natural resources they already have at their disposal, particularly given the wealth of ecological knowledge of their employees. It would serve both the Kruger National Parks SSU and PCD better in the long term if they can establish a shared Discourse where access to natural resources is articulated similarly by the various interest groups, so that when the Natural Resource policy is finally implemented, it can be done successfully.

This would require of both departments to neutralise their own discourses, to recognise the real reasons for misunderstandings, and to identify overlapping perceptions in order to find a common ground from which to proceed. Indications are that the local communities are willing, even keen, to co-operate in conservation endeavours provided their own life chances are improved and not further limited.

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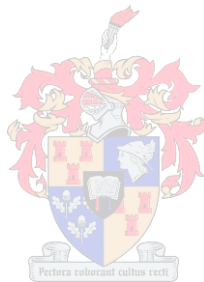
APPENDIX 1:
INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PEOPLE AND
CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

This interview guide makes extensive use of Ormsby's interview guide (2003:222). The interview was guided but open-ended allowing for additional questions to be raised for further clarity.

1. As a park employee, how do you spend most of your work time, doing what?

2. What strategies and material do you use for your community outreach? And especially in relation to natural resource use and biodiversity?

3. What do you think are the parks goals and benefits? And especially in relation to natural resource use and biodiversity?

4. Which groups or intended audience do you currently work with?

5. What are the intended outcomes/goals of your job?

6. What do you think the communities want or need from the park?

7. What do you think the communities feel about the parks conservation programmes?

8. What do you think the community understands by the term biodiversity?

9. What are the pros and cons of working with local communities?

10. What do you see as the strength of your current community relations? The main weaknesses/areas that could be improved

APPENDIX 2:
INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SCIENTIFIC SERVICES UNIT

This interview guide makes extensive use of Ormsby's interview guide (2003:222). The interview was guided but open-ended allowing for additional questions to be raised for further clarity.

1. What are the sociodemographic characteristics of Lumbabiswano Forum community?

2. How is the Park currently communicating its conservation goals to the community?

3. What are xx community's resource needs from the area? And the Park?

4. What are the main concerns around natural resource use in respect of this community?

5. What do you think that they are doing that is destroying biodiversity?

6. What would you like the community to do to assist in conserving natural resources?

7. How does Lumbabiswano Forum community feel about the KNP employees (PCOs)?

8. What do residents know about biodiversity and the Parks goals and characteristics?

9. Has the local resident's resource use changed since the Parks environmental education programme was implemented, how?

10. Is there any miscommunication occurring between the Park and the community around issues of natural resource use? What do you think the nature of this miscommunication is? How is it being resolved?
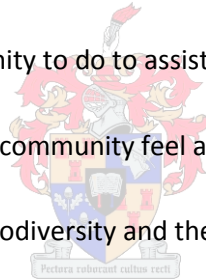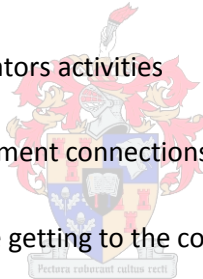
APPENDIX 3:
FOCUS GROUP GUIDELINES

This guideline makes extensive use of Ormsby's interview guide (2003:227)

Discussion topics

1. What is biodiversity?

2. Key features of KNP and the biodiversity of Mpumalanga/Limpopo (or specific area)

3. List them in order of priority

4. What do conservation agents do?

5. Focus on education, what do these people do in terms of education?

6. Examples of environmental educators activities

7. Research, education and management connections

8. Is what they are trying to educate getting to the community

9. What is causing current conflict

10. What is the solution for these conflicts

APPENDIX 4:
A HOMESTEAD IN KABOKWENI

APPENDIX 5:
SCIENTIFIC SERVICES UNIT OFFICES AT KRUGER NATIONAL PARK

APPENDIX 6:
PERMISSION GRANTED BY SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

To acquire and manage a system of national parks which represents the indigenous wildlife, vegetation, landscapes and significant cultural assets of South Africa for the pride and benefit of the nation.

South African NATIONAL PARKS

Scientific Services
Kruger National Park
Private Bag X402
SKUKUZA
1350
14 February 2008

Ms. CS Curtayne
59 The Braids Street
GREENSIDE
2193

Dear Ms. Curtayne

APPROVAL LETTER FOR A RESEARCH PROJECT

Your project entitled "**The functions of intermediaries in intercultural communication between South African National Parks officials and local communities on the periphery of the North-Western Border of the Kruger National Park**" has been approved for the period 14th of February 2008 until 31 December 2010 in the Kruger National Park.

The Researcher shall work with the People and Conservation Department in Skukuza in identifying the community to work with.

Standard conditions apply, refer to the project agreement for detailed conditions.

Should you have any query, please contact me.

Regards

Stefanie Freitag-Ronaldson
Science Operations Manager: Savanna Ecology
Kruger National Park

addo elephant
agulhas
augrabies falls
bontebok
cape peninsula
golden gate highlands
karoo
kgalagadi transfrontier
knysna
kruger
marakele
mountain zebra
namaqua
tankwa karoo
tsitsikamma
richtersveld
vaalbos
vhembe dongola
west coast
wilderness

643 Leyds Street
MUCKLENEUK
0002

P.O. Box 787
PRETORIA
0001

Tel: 012 426-5000
Fax: 012 426-5511

central reservations: 012 428-9111
reservations@sanparks.org
www.sanparks.org

APPENDIX 7:
TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

Based on those found in Kerekes, J. 2003. *Distrust - a determining factor in the outcomes of gatekeeping encounters*. In House, Juliane, Gabrielle Kasper and Steven Ross. Misunderstanding in Social Life. London, New York: Longman: 227 - 257.

/	higher pitch in following syllables
\	lower pitch in following syllables
(h h h)	audible aspiration
( )	unintelligible speech
..	pause less than 0.5 seconds
…	pause greater than 0.5 seconds and less than 1 second
(x x)	unintelligible speech with guess at the number of syllables
Italics	slightly louder volume
CAPITALS	much louder volume
><	higher pitch
?	final rising tone
:	elongation
{(phenomenon) text}	vocal or nonvocal expression

APPENDIX 8:
ORGANOGRAM DEPICTING ORGANISATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE PARTICIPANTS
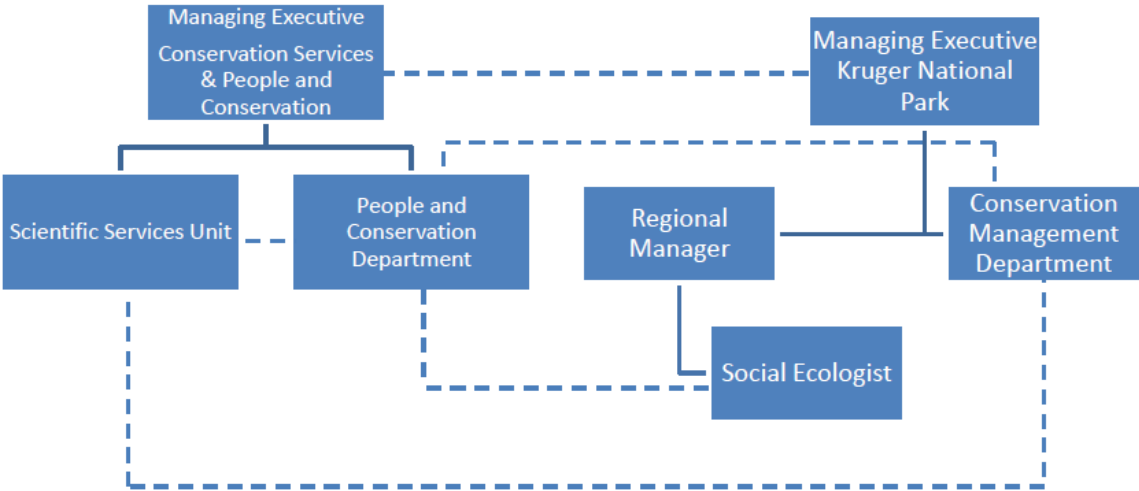
APPENDIX 9:
SESWATI TRANSCRIPT OF EXCERPT 11

"Mangisho kutsi lendzaba ifana newunemoto, kutfile kutsi ushayisana nalomunye umuntfu, ukhandze kutsi awu nayo imali yekunubhadala konje imoto yakho waifaka kumshwatensi. Uyakhala kumshwalensi kutsi bakamshwalensi wako iyobhadala lomuntfu. Ngiko ngsiho kutsi baneli abameli tshe bamela umphakatsi. Bameli baphusha kutsi umshwalensi awuvakali. Kungavakali kwabo kutsi inkhomo yakho ifile batsi bayakukhalela nga R 500 batsi kufile loku. Uma umuntfu atsi inkhomo yakhe beyibita R 2000 ngesibonelo bese kufuneka licembulibhadale lemali."