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Cultural and Linguistic Influences on Wine Aroma Perception: A Comparative Study Across South African Languages

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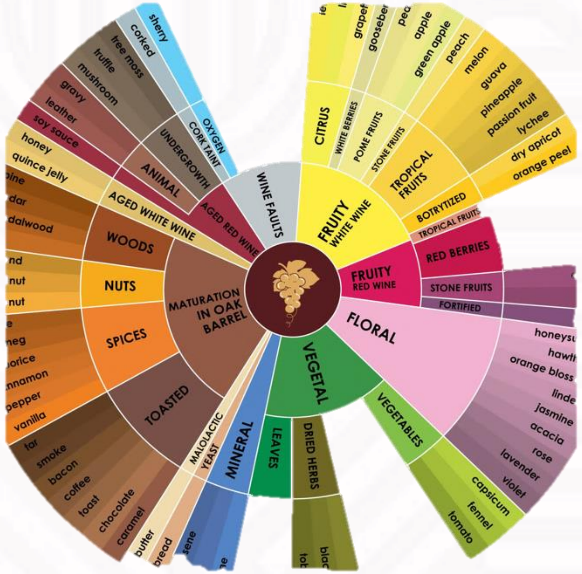
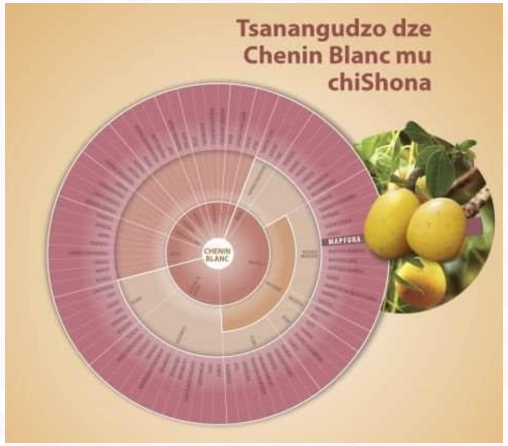
Photo by Stefan Els

INTRODUCTION

WINE LEXICON



DESCRIPTORS



TRUFFLE, OAK, GOOSEBERRY

MARULA FRUIT, NAARTJIE PEEL, BILTONG

MOVING TOWARDS AN INCLUSIVE SOUTH AFRICAN WINE SENSORY LEXICON

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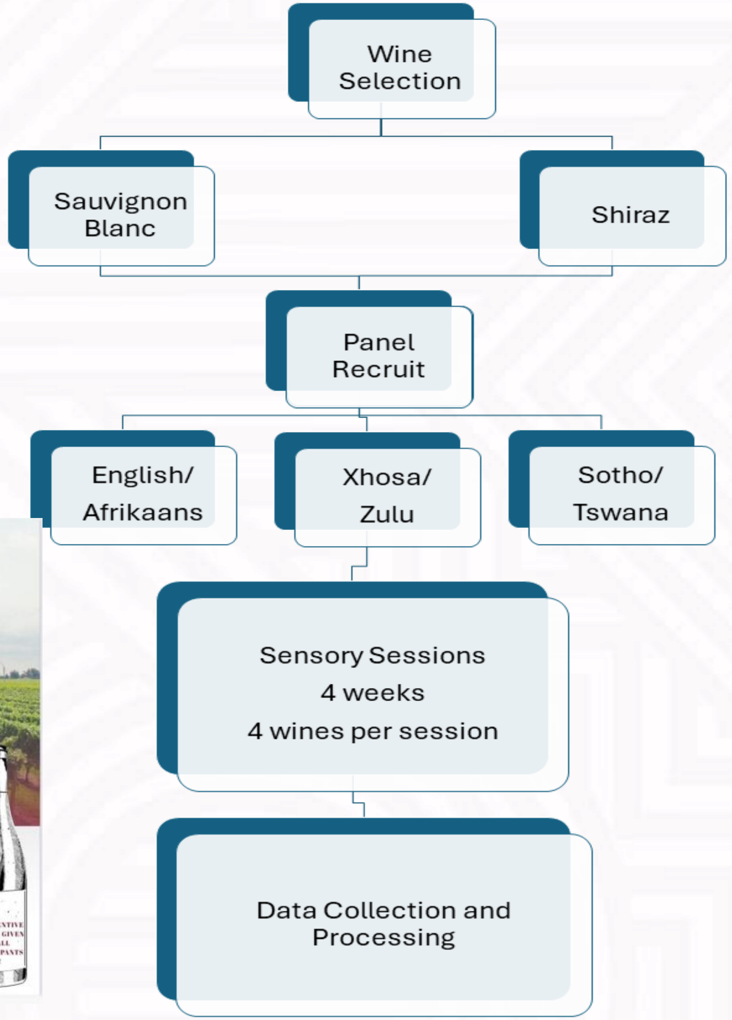
AIM

- Investigate the linguistic and cultural determinants of wine sensory language
- Potential integration of indigenous South African languages and sensory cultural associations

OBJECTIVES

1. Recruit three (3) distinct sensory panels representing diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds within South Africa.
2. Conduct controlled consumer sensory evaluation sessions using Sauvignon Blanc and Shiraz to obtain sensory descriptors from each panel group.

Materials & Methods



RESULTS:

- 753 and 535 aroma descriptors were collected
- Descriptors were processed on XLSTAT
- Setswana/Sesotho/Sepedi panel were excluded from analysis
- 29 (English) and 18 (Xhosa) distinct groups in which the descriptors could be categorized

SAUVIGNON BLANC

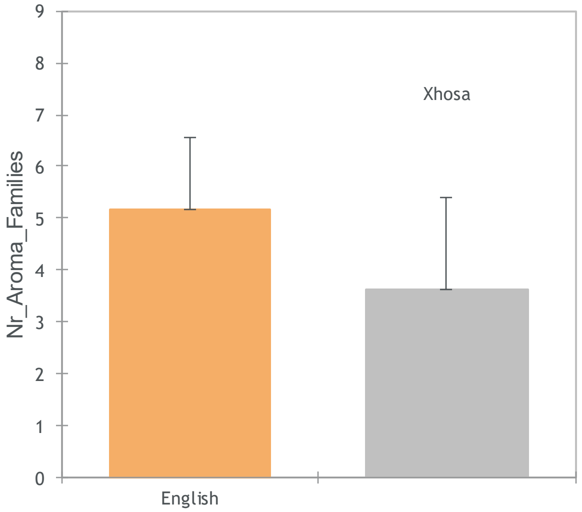


Fig 1a: Mean chart for number of aroma families

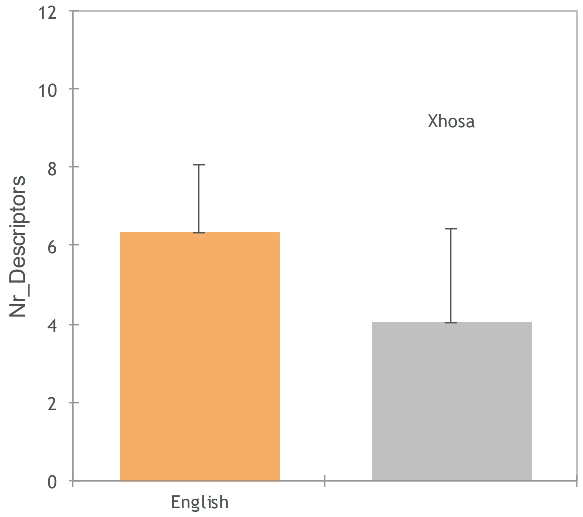


Fig 1b: Mean chart for number of descriptors

SHIRAZ

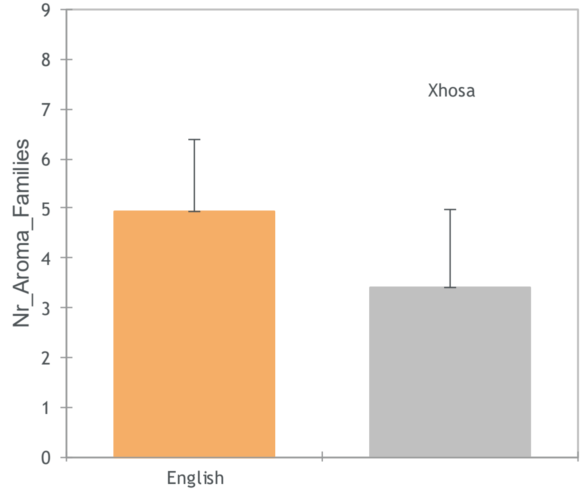


Fig 2a: Mean chart for number of aroma families

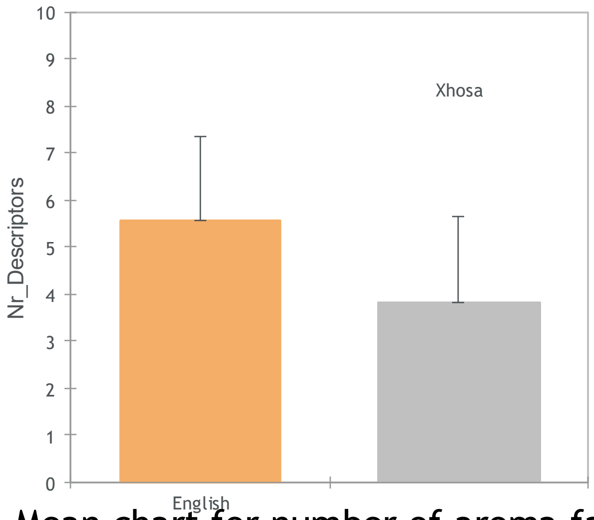


Fig 1: Mean chart for number of aroma families

English

Xhosa

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- English panel consistently used a greater number of descriptors per wine cultivar
- Terms rooted in local experiences, familiar foods, natural environments, and traditional beverages
- Indigenous languages offer alternative pathways for expressing complex sensory experiences
- Xhosa panel struggled to identify references in their language
- Language group had a strong effect on the quantity and diversity of descriptors

CONCLUSION

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- Pilot Study revealed South African languages are rich and can add to the SA wine experience
- Bridge between winemaker, consumer and wine industry
- Developing South African lexicon
- Incorporating languages and cultural references into existing aroma wheels

Acknowledgements

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Thank you
Enkosi
Dankie

Photo by Stefan Els