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(Eds.)

Teaching Transformations: Trends in Sub-Saharan Africa

AISTHESIS VERLAG

AV

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Noise from behind – Background Noises

On the Output and Results of ‘Teaching Transformations’

Abstract. Delivering a sum-up of the summer school as well as a set of open question and challenges to be tackled in its wake, the considerations – or ‘noises from behind’ – of the event’s organizer pivot on the role of African languages in today’s Euro-lingua-centric academic and publishing world, the issue of ICT infrastructure in teaching modern languages in European and African classrooms, and the necessity to establish a comparative perspective on Sub-Saharan African and North-global cultural, economic and historical routines of transforming ‘Other’ knowledges into narratives.

Key words: Modern Languages, otherness/alterity, didactics, ICT, Sub-Saharan Africa.

This essay collection, *Teaching Transformations*, presents the results of a 2022 summer school staged in Cape Town, South Africa. The ten-day event was funded by VolkswagenStiftung, and hosted by the University of the Western Cape (UWC) and RWTH Aachen University, Germany. Kira Schmidt from UWC and I had the honor to guide through its program and emcee the lively discussions.

The following elaborations, subjectively filtered as they necessarily are, seek to summarize these discussions and identify the bottom line(s) of ongoing processes in the teaching *of* transformations and the transformations *of* teaching – the literal translations from one language to another, the decolonizing efforts at Sub-Saharan universities, the move toward an increased digitalization of Higher Education teaching – in Sub-Saharan Africa and Central Europe as representative of the global North. Expertise and input was provided by scholars and experts from practice (translators, publishers, book market experts) from Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Togo, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, South Africa, Poland and Germany.

The Sub-Sahara African and European academic realities of today can be identified as contested-because-differing benchmarks for each other. It was the aim of the summer school to contour these differences and anchor them in received Modern Languages discourses while not losing out of sight the

contemporary background, which in academic teaching as well as in other sectors is an increasingly global(ized) – and tendentially mainstreaming – one. Consequentially and expectably, this background peppered the discussion and brought in more than just a whiff of dissent. The background noise, to term it like that, was clearly audible in Cape Town; at the same time it led to fresh negotiations (and insights) of the disputers.

Three major insights can be filtered from the discussions. Not all of them are new, which is indicative of an unfinished business of earlier calls for action. A prime example is Kenyan thinker-writer's Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's programmatic essay series of 1986, *Decolonizing the Mind*, that engaged in a critical analysis of the state of literature(s) in African languages in (even) postcolonial settings. Nothing much seems to have changed since the mid-1980s, no recognition or use of and noteworthy publications in these languages as an accepted verbal medium next to the standard European ones (English employed by 'Anglophone' Africans, French by 'Francophones', Portuguese) can be observed in 2022, as the survey of the North-global book market undertaken by Kirsten Steffen or literary translator Thomas Brückner's admission that he relied on the same wa Thiong'o's own English version of his novel *Wizard of the Crow*¹ – and not the original Gikũyũ source text² – have in Cape Town demonstrated.

The three insights include (1) the disparity and a North-South divergence of modern languages in terms of representativeness in scientific and publicist discourse, teaching practice and as source or target languages in professional translation contexts; (2) a challenging infrastructural gap between Sub-Sahara African and European possibilities of technically implementing ICT-based alternatives to *in situ* classroom teaching, accompanied by a set of culture(s)-driven similarities regarding didactics and designs; (3) the desideratum to establish a comparative perspective on Sub-Saharan African and North-global cultural, economic and historical routines of transforming 'Other' knowledges past and present into narratives, Higher Education (HE) teaching scenarios and curricula, practices and marketable items. Each of these results and insights, triggered as they were by key notes and responses to these can be outlined in greater detail.

1 Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o. *Wizard of the Crow*. London: Vintage, 2007.

2 Cf. wa Thiong'o. *Wizard* (as note 1). Front matter.

Noise in the Channel.

Number and Notoriety of African Languages

The detrimental difference in numbers on the one hand, and representativeness on the other of African and North-global mostly European languages lingers on as a virulent issue in academic and other, e.g. literature system-related or policy-making arenas. In this regard, no development nor progress can be diagnosed since wa Thiong'o's dictum of 1986 that African countries "as colonies and even today as neo-colonies [...] came to be defined and define themselves in terms of the languages of Europe: English-speaking, French-speaking or Portuguese-speaking".³ While there are more than 1.250 languages in Africa (or more than that, viz. 2.000 depending on the method of differentiating them from dialects)⁴, only very few of them feature in interpreting or translating contexts with a North-global target language. Cases in point to substantiate this are today's European literary book market or, in Africa, supranational political institutions such as the African Union (AU).

A major selection criterion for African literati's fiction to be considered by European publishers for translation is their composition in what wa Thiong'o termed 'languages of Europe': the Francophone, African English, Portuguese. This diagnosis seems to be a result as well as a continuation of a publishing practice that has been observable since the first wave of African states which in the 1960s declared themselves independent from governance exerted from European metropolises. Even tendencies of a backlash can be seen. While in 1983, Heinemann's 'African Writers' Series' published Gakaara wa Wanjaũ's diary *Mwandiki wa Mau Mau Ithamĩrio-inĩ* in its original language Gĩkũyũ⁵, the publishing house and its foreign rights-takers have until the abandoning of the series in 2003 largely relied on texts either originally written in or translated to English. Among the overall 359 titles are books by renowned authors such as wa Thiong'o himself, Chinua Achebe and Wole Soyinka from Nigeria, the Senegalese Ousmane Sembène, South Africans such as Doris Lessing and Nelson Mandela as well as Zimbabwean Dambudzo Marechera's 1978 *House*

3 Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o. *Decolonizing the Mind. The Politics of Language in African Literature*. London: Boydell & Brewer Ltd., [1986] 2008. P. 5.

4 Cf. Bernd Heine/Derek Nurse (Ed.). *African Languages. An Introduction*. London: Cambridge UP, 2000.

5 Gakaara wa Wanjaũ. *Mwandiki wa Mau Mau Ithamĩrio-inĩ*. Nairobi/Lusaka/Ibandan/London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1983. Cf. also wa Thiong'o (as note 3). P. 24.

of *Hunger* (German translation at Suhrkamp), Namibian Neshani Andreas' *The Purple Violet of Oshaantu* (2001) or Angolan Pepetela's originally Portuguese *Mayombe. A Novel of the Angolan Struggle* of 1979 (East-German translation at Volk und Welt in 1983).⁶

The disregard for African languages continues to be an issue in the literary sector and beyond. A current curious absence of African languages was found during the summer school in a job description for interpreters and translators at African Union's Committee of Sustainable Development service. In that opening, requirements for applicants include the command of "any of the four working languages of the African Union (English, French, Arabic and Portuguese)"⁷, no mention is made of other languages including Africa's largest one in terms of range, Kiswahili.⁸

This underrepresentation of African languages in translational and international-discourse contexts contributes to a disregard and obliviousness of the smaller ones which, in turn, effects a diminishing presence in Sub-Saharan-Africa's language scape. Modes, means and methods of preserving them are an urgent desideratum for linguists, even though expert ethnographers may consider the idea of recording and saving idioms such as !Kung for later retrieval and display an outdated strategy of musealization.⁹

6 Dambudzo Marechera. *House of Hunger*. London: Heinemann, 1978. Neshani Andreas. *The Purple Violet of Oshaantu*. London: Heinemann, 2001. Pepetela. *Mayombe*. London: Heinemann, 1983.

7 African Union. "Advertisement. The CSD is in the process of creating a data base of freelance Revisers / Translators / Interpreters." au.int, retrieved February 13, 2023. <https://au.int/en/content/advertisement>.

8 AU declares elsewhere on its web pages that "the official languages of the Union and all its institutions shall be Arabic, English, French, Portuguese, Spanish, Kiswahili and any other African language" (African Union. "AU Languages." au.int, retrieved February 13, 2023. <https://au.int/en/about/languages>). There seems to be a difference that makes a difference between official languages and languages (best) usable for communications on sustainable development.

9 E.g. the short debate of this chapter's author with a referee of a paper submitted for publication at a Namibian Studies journal, both here replicated anonymously, at which s*he and the author are Editorial Board members. The reviewer, a cultural anthropologist, assessed the paper 'unfit for publication' due to 'major shortcomings includ[ing] the lack of theoretical framework'. 'I am not a specialist, but languages change', s*he states, 'the idea that languages need to be preserved dates from yesteryear' [sic]: 'The first two specific objectives (collect! preserve!) remind me of the ethnography as practiced before the 1960s; in 2022 such objectives are not tenable'. My [BAG's] response championed an approach of now-or-never(more)

On the whole and as a 2022 diagnosis, all too many African languages must be considered as disregarded in translational and (higher) educational (=HE) contexts; some of them – the smaller, the more – are downright ‘endangered’. At the summer school, this was addressed by key note speakers Dorothy Agyepong (with a case study from Ghana’s multilingual landscape), Bassey Antia (on South African HE language(s) use and acceptance), Haileleul Woldemariam (on the mentioned endangered languages and cultures in Namibia such as !Kung) or Anne Storch (who highlighted *linguistic hospitality* as an idea(l) of mutuality). Their impulses were picked up by Karolina Różycka with her reflections on simultaneous interpreting, Nadine Wiese on differences of languages in professional jargons, Linus Hafeni on Namibian-language-narratives of the Herero genocide, Helena M. Alles and Schusmeither Uaisiusa (‘Oshideutsch’), and Stefne Vries (multilingualism at Namibian secondary schools).

Technologies and Traditions of Teaching

The existing great divide between colonial European and African languages in terms of representativeness/repression and prominence/precariousness is mirrored by a disparity of technical infrastructure(s) for HE learning and teaching.

Blended-learning scenarios as well as exclusively online modes of academic knowledge acquisition are part of a transformation of teaching which affects students and teaching actors worldwide. Applied didactical as well as basic research started in the 2000s, e.g. with a research group ‘Feedback based Quality Management in E-Learning’ funded by the German Research Foundation.¹⁰ While these efforts were still largely domestic, i. e., bound to

over a disciplinary state-of-the-arts: ‘The alternative is – in my view – not ‘language change’, as you seem to suggest as a self-declared non-linguist. It’s a matter of recording and storing it now, or disappearance for good’. The reply on this, received in September 2022, sounds like an offer for truce between the disciplines, their differences in terms of state-of-the-arts and their mutual recognition of what the other prioritizes: ‘Point well taken this side. I did want to not imply, though, that preserving a language (through recording, education, whatever) is unnecessary. I did want to indicate that also then one must look at language as dynamic, a dimension I thought is lacking in the m[anuscript] (and combine this with some remnants of early 20-century evolutionism triggered my wrath)... but again, point well taken.’

10 Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft DFG. GRK 1223. [gepris.dfg.de](https://gepris.dfg.de/gepris/projekt/949791?language=en), retrieved February 16, 2023. <https://gepris.dfg.de/gepris/projekt/949791?language=en>.

local, regional or at best national academic (student and tutor-instructor) users, the recent Covid-19 pandemic not only boosted universities as hubs for virtual teaching without physical classrooms but discovered, in the field of Modern (foreign) Languages, the potentials of a realtime inclusion of other, and in the present case either European or Sub-Sahara African, student actors. The summer school collected a number of impressions of these either university-specific or local or in fact North-South-spanning setups of academic instruction.

Both the challenges of local online learning in Sub-Saharan Africa and that of exchanging across language boundaries with European (here primarily German, but also Polish) fellow student-actors were raised by the initiators of these formats. As a bottom line, all agreed that the effort was as laborious and often hampered by technical difficulties such as online access, airtime restrictions and limitations of WhatsApp groups (e.g. the maximum number of participants, resulting in the creating of fifteen simultaneous groups at the University of Zimbabwe in Harare) as it was worth the try. Thus, the transformation of teaching toward digitalization stood in the center of two case studies of recent European-African videoconference formats (Akila Ahouli, Bruno Arich-Gerz). Another interesting impulse was Isa Jahnke's elaboration on active learning and digital didactical designs as practiced at Nuremberg Technical University, a from-scratch university that is currently implementing its first study programs. Jahnke's impulse was checked by the limiting factor of onlineability brought forward by a Zimbabwean participant at the summer school. At the same time, Jahnke's idea of collaborative learning, which she outlined in her seminal *Digital Didactical Designs* of 2015¹¹, deserves not only a closer inspection, but also a thorough countercheck with *Ubuntu*, or 'humanness', which stands for an originally Sub-Sahara African concept of endorsing collectivity as a driver of individual education.¹²

Throughout the summer school, these impulses were constructively picked up and leveled against their own experiences as HE teachers by Tichoana Mupesa (who transposed the concept of digital didactics to Zimbabwean contexts), Cleopatra Gota (fusing the active learner-idea with the method of

11 Isa Jahnke. *Digital Didactical Designs. Teaching and Learning in CrossAction-Spaces*. London: Routledge, 2015.

12 Cf. Godsend T. Chimbi, Loyosi C. Jita. "Ubuntu: The Pursuit of an Indigenous Curriculum Reform Policy in Post-colonial Lesotho, Zimbabwe and South Africa." *Towards the Next Epoch of Education BCES Conference Books*. Volume 20. Sofia: Bulgarian Comparative Education Society, 2022. P. 137-143.

Critical Thinking prominent in her project) and Karen Groenewald (collaborative learning based on a universities-embracing Modern Language network including Cape Town, Stellenbosch, Port Elizabeth, Bloemfontein).

The Culturally (In-)Comparable. Received Knowledges and Current Standards of the Respective Other

Ever since the end of European colonialism, there has been a desideratum to establish a fair comparative perspective on Sub-Saharan African and North-global cultural, economic and historical routines of transforming the past, the recent past and present ‘Other’ knowledges. These include and continue to embrace HE teaching scenarios and curricula, practices and marketable items.

At the summer school, various participants have implicitly or outspokenly diagnosed memorization-specific differences, e.g. Katarzyna Lukas in relation to the Holocaust or, with a focus on the Zimbabwean Gukurahundi massacres of the early 1980s, Yemurai Gwatisa. Another few pointed out other inequalities: e.g. Kirsten Steffen, Jean-Claude Naba and Thomas Brückner with regard to the translation and publishing sector, which is – as mentioned – characterized by a strong inflow of African voices using colonial languages to Europe without any traffic in the other direction. Their input was critically mirrored in the responses by Andréa Bedi (who pinpointed the inequality of translation challenges in general, and the comparative scope in particular, in an ongoing project that focuses on recent Senegalese and current Austrian prose literature), Mahamadou Famanta (on Sharon Otoo, a British-German novelist with Ghanaian background), Basil Agu (in his comparative approach to post-1967 Nigerian/Biafra and post-1989 German expressions of nostalgia/*Ostalgie*), Félicité Doudou (as a go-between Ivorian *Sprachvermittlerin* in Germany), Linus Hafeni (from a linguistic perspective on contemporary Namibian fiction about the Herero genocide) or Mikael Assilkinga in his review of colonial and present-day semantics in the discourse on museum exhibits and their restitution (gift, donation, acquisition – theft: *Gabe, Schenkung, Kauf – Raub*).¹³

13 Bruno Arich-Gerz. “Provenienz der Wörter. Über die Sammlungsgeschichte deutscher Museen und semantische Minenfelder.” *Gasthörerschaften. Deutsch und afrikanisches Sprechen in Transformation*. Hamburg: Textem Campo, 2024. P. 29-32.

Arguably these interventions echo existing standpoints and differences, or noises, in the mutual perceptions and perspectives of Sub-Sahara African on mostly European standards of dealing with challenges, and vice versa. All of them point in one way or another to a process of transformation: to a process that re-shapes the modes of 'doing Higher Education' while preserving the respective ethnic cultural importance, the deep-rooted routines and inter-cultural obligations which have resulted more often than not from a violent colonial encounter.

The noises are of various kinds, and they may in their variety deserve a systematic separate analysis: (How) can, for instance, the notorious "noisy silence"¹⁴ about the Gukurahundi in Zimbabwe since the early 1980s fruitfully be contacted with post-1945 Germany's carefully cultivated memory concerns about the Holocaust?

Other noises stem from differences in book system- and thus mostly economically-driven lingual (translational) exchange or culturally motivated hesitations to welcome allegedly global-standard communication technologies. To the degree that these differences seem to be indicative of continuing discrepancies between former colonial countries and the North-global hemisphere at large, and Sub-Sahara African decolonized cultural settings, the noise from behind prevails and must be listened to accordingly. It must be heard as a disturbingly disturbing background noise, and not a mere disturbance of Europe's and Northern global frequencies.

14 Jocelyn Alexander. "The Noisy Silence of Gukurahundi. Truth, Recognition and Belonging." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 47 (5) (2021): p. 763-785.

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How to Design for Digital-Enhanced Learning at a New Institution

Abstract. The design of effective, efficient, and appealing learning experience designs for the digital age requires rigor in designing and evaluating such designs to understand what works, how, and why. At the newly founded University of Technology Nuremberg (UTN), we aim to borrow and apply methods from user and learning experience fields, such as usability or user experience studies and pre/posttests for knowledge growth and competencies development. The design of digital learning experiences rests on three dimensions, each of which focuses on how learners interact with a specific component of the learning experience: (a) the digital tool or space; (b) the pedagogical elements of goals, activities, and assessments; and (c) other peers or instructors. This paper provides useful insights for creating scientific-based learning designs and indicates the importance of data analysis related to the effectiveness, efficiency, and attractiveness of digitally enhanced learning experiences.

Key words: learning experiences, learning design, formative evaluation, active learning, sociotechnical-pedagogical usability

1. Introduction

Digital technologies have changed human interaction, affecting the way we communicate, network, connect, collaborate, and learn. As Marshall McLuhan (1967) stated, “First we shape the tools, and then the tools shape us.” This transformation has profound implications for higher education institutions as they navigate the challenges and opportunities presented by technology-enhanced teaching and learning – in short, digital learning. One of the major challenges is how to design for good digital learning, which begs the question of what makes a learning design good.

These questions are particularly important and relevant to me in my new role as Founding Vice President for Academic and International Affairs (digital learning) at a totally new university, the University of Technology Nuremberg (UTN), in Germany. Just a few years ago, in 2021, there was not even a campus building. The first two people at UTN started in January 2021

and were the Kanzler (head of nonacademic staff) and the President (head of academic staff and leader of the entire university). I started in January 2022. As one might imagine, there is a lot to create and develop as our growing staff prepares to open programs for students, hire professors, and plan physical buildings.

As both a researcher and a university co-leader responsible for academic affairs, such as learning design, study and doctoral programs, student well-being, and support for early career researchers, I have been examining how we at UTN can design for positive learning experiences to ensure a certain quality of education. How can this be done for all programs at a new university? How can we design and develop digitally enhanced learning experience designs that are effective, efficient, and appealing to students?¹

In this paper, I present an approach that has emerged in the field of learning experience design and research.² Learning experience design (LXD) has the goal to design *for* learning. Through that approach, I try to bring innovative teaching and learning designs, including new forms of exams and assessment, into the educational practice of the entire university. The iterative approach consists of several steps: create an idea of the learning design, test it in the real world, evaluate it, improve it, put it into action again, and apply continuous formative redesign, including formative evaluation. Such a design is “the key for providing efficient, effective, and enjoyable learning experiences”³.

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- 1 Charles M. Reigeluth (Ed.). *Instructional Design Theories and Models: An Overview of Their Current Status*. Hillsdale/London: Erlbaum, 1983. Peter C. Honebein/Charles M. Reigeluth. “To prove or improve, that is the question: The resurgence of comparative, confounded research between 2010 and 2019.” *Educational Technology Research and Development* 69 (2) (2021): p. 465-496. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-021-09988-1>.
 - 2 E.g., Matthew Schmidt/Andrew A. Tawfik/Isa Jahnke/Yvonne Earnshaw (Ed.). *Learner and User Experience Research: An Introduction for the Field of Learning Design & Technology*. 2020. <https://edtechbooks.org/ux>.
 - 3 Barbara Wasson/Paul A. Kirschner. “Learning Design: European Approaches.” *TechTrends* 64 (6) (2020): p. 815-827. Here p. 1815. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11528-020-00498-0>.

2. Theoretical, Scientific-Based Foundation

Designing for a positive learning experience requires a good learning design, which is effective, efficient, and appealing to students.⁴ Note that instructional or learning designers cannot design the experience itself. Instead, we create an environment or learning process, including assignments, rubrics for assessment, and social presence, that altogether provides students a positive experience so they can experience the learning process in a positive way.

At the core of such an understanding of LXD is the concept of active-guided learning. Called *active learning* in the United States and known as *active learning strategies* in Europe, the idea refers to a range of instructional strategies that engage learners in active interaction with course material (e. g., readings, videos, quizzes), fellow students, and knowledge of others. Emphasis is on students learning through their own activity and along with the instructor rather than experiencing the passive consumption of information without any meaning for the learners, as seen in traditional lecture-based approaches. Numerous studies have shown that active learning improves learning outcomes, student performance, and engagement compared to traditional methods.⁵ In recent years, Awaah et al.⁶ and Beyleveld et al.⁷ have

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- 4 Peter C. Honebein/Cass H. Honebein. "Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Appeal: Pick Any Two? The Influence of Learning Domains and Learning Outcomes on Designer Judgments of Useful Instructional Methods." *Educational Technology Research and Development* 63 (6) (2015): p. 937-955. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-015-9396-3>.
 - 5 Scott Freeman/Sarah Eddy/Miles McDonough/Mary Pat Wenderoth. "Active learning increases student performance in science, engineering, and mathematics." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 111 (23) (2014): p. 8410-8415. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1319030111>; Louis Deslauriers/Logan S. McCarthy/Kelly Miller. "Measuring actual learning versus feeling of learning in response to being actively engaged in the classroom." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 116 (39) (2019): p. 19251-19257. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1821936116>.
 - 6 Fred Awaah/Cosmas Lambini Kombat/Emmanuel Okyere Ekwam. "Perspective Chapter: New Active Learning Models in Africa." *IntechOpen* (2022). <http://dx.doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.105217>.
 - 7 Mia Beyleveld/J.J. Rian de Villiers/William J. Fraser. "The Use of Active Learning in a Private Higher Education Institution: The Lecturer's Perspective." *South African Journal of Higher Education* 33 (2) (2019): p. 16-28. <http://dx.doi.org/10.20853/33-2-2804>.

shown how the concept of active learning has been expanded and used in Sub-Saharan and South African communities.

Because of those scientific results, it became clear to me that the foundation of all new courses and programs at UTN should be active-guided learning experience designs. As such, at UTN, LXD is built on the concept of active learning through technology-supported applications.⁸ Further relevant research results can be read in *How Learning Happens* by Kirschner and Hendrick⁹ and *How Teaching Happens* by Kirschner, Hendrick and Heal¹⁰; they summarize important research studies of the learning sciences and describe implications of what that research means when designing for learning in practice.

2.1 Active learning: a guiding principle at UTN

Active learning is an umbrella term referring to a group of pedagogical strategies the instructor applies to help students engage and learn. Its premise is that learners do not learn because the instructor performs an activity; rather, learners learn through their own activity.¹¹ Active learning has many facets and can be applied in all disciplines. It facilitates the learner's interaction with the course material and with peers, instructors, and others. Examples of such strategies include online discussion boards, problem solving in Wikis, and project-based learning.¹² All students must be activated. It is not active

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- 8 Begüm Saçak/Aras Bozkurt/Ellen Wagner. "Down the rabbit hole: Revisiting etymology, epistemology, history and practice of instructional and learning design." E-learn Magazine (2022). <https://elearnmag.acm.org/archive.cfm?aid=3527485>.
 - 9 Paul A. Kirschner/Carl Hendrick. *How Learning Happens. Seminal Works in Educational Psychology and What They Mean in Practice*. London: Routledge, 2020.
 - 10 Paul A. Kirschner/Carl Hendrick/Jim Heal. *How Teaching Happens. Seminal Works in Teaching and Teacher Effectiveness and What They Mean in Practice*. London/New York: Routledge, 2022.
 - 11 David H. Jonassen/Jane Howland/Joi Moore/Rose M. Marra. *Learning to Solve Problems with Technology: A Constructivist Perspective*. London: Pearson, 2003.
 - 12 Michelene T.H. Chi. "Active-constructive-interactive: A conceptual framework for differentiating learning activities." *Topics in Cognitive Science* Vol. 1 No. 1 (2009): p. 73-105. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1756-8765.2008.01005.x>;

learning simply because some learners become active on their own and do something during the lecture (e. g., note taking), though it is good when students do that. However, not all students have learned how to do that. Active learning supports all students to learn.

Active learning is one of the most important concepts in digital learning. Research has shown that people learn more when they are actively engaged in the learning process than in passive lectures. Active learning increases positive learning outcomes and improves learning performance, grades, and higher order competencies. Extensive research supports active learning, particularly in STEM education.¹³

Active learning can be designed on a continuum from instructor-centered to learner-centered. An active, instructor-led design has characteristics of interaction; learners are encouraged to actively think or participate, but the instructor determines the time and pace of the interaction. Examples include Zoom lectures with Mentimeter, Miro, or chat function for questions. Such formats lend themselves to lower-order learning (e. g., understanding, memorizing, or getting an overview). On the other side of the continuum is the active, student-centered learning design. Here, learners use digital technologies to develop artifacts and show what they have learned, and, in so doing, they learn. They become prosumers, producers, or digital makers. Learners control the time and pace of the learning

Micheline T.H. Chi/Ruth Wylie. "The ICAP framework: Linking cognitive engagement to active learning outcomes." *Educational Psychologist* Vol. 49 No. 4 (2014): p. 219-243. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520.2014.965823>; Linda C. Hodges. "Contemporary Issues in Group Learning in Undergraduate Science Classrooms: A Perspective from Student Engagement." *CBE-Life Sciences Education* 17 (2) (2018), es3. <https://www.lifescied.org/doi/full/10.1187/cbe.17-11-0239>.

- 13 See e.g., Freeman et al. Active learning increases student performance (as note 5). Louis Deslauriers/Ellen Schelew/Carl Wieman. "Improved Learning in a Large-Enrollment Physics Class." *Science* 332 (6031) (2011): p. 862-864. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1201783>; James M Fraser/Anneke L Timan/Kelly Miller/Jason E Dowd/Laura Tucker/Eric Mazur. "Teaching and physics education research: bridging the gap." *Reports on Progress in Physics* 77 (3) (2014): 032401. <https://doi.org/10.1088/0034-4885/77/3/032401>; Richard R. Hake. "Interactive-Engagement vs. Traditional Methods: A Six-Thousand-Student Survey of Mechanics Test Data for Introductory Physics Courses." *American Journal of Physics* Vol. 66 (1998). <http://dx.doi.org/10.1119/1.18809>.

process, though there might be milestones or due dates. Examples include students applying new knowledge with Padlets or creating short videos, mind maps, or digital games.

2.2 Three dimensions of learning experience design (LXD): guiding principles at UTN

LXD emerged from the field of instructional design and educational technologies.¹⁴ It focuses on the idea that traditional or foundational instructional design or learning design lacks the focus for *enjoyable* or *memorable experiences*. A learning design is usually created with goals in mind along with constructively aligned activities and assessment.¹⁵ When adding the element of *experiences*, a meaningful learning design also ensures students experience something special, something they will not forget, or something that leaves an impression on them. This relates to a positive emotion and is what can be called a *memorable experience*.¹⁶ The emerging field of LXD is useful in designing for positive and memorable learning experiences and provides methods for design, development, and formative evaluation.

While online or digitally enhanced learning offers promising benefits, such as flexibility, time and location independence, and control of learning pace, students may encounter challenges with lack of engagement and drop out of the course.¹⁷ Therefore, it is important to ensure a positive or enjoyable learning experience, a *memorable learning experience*.

To enable positive and memorable learning experiences, methods from user experience (UX) can be used. The goal of UX is to evaluate ease of use, user-friendliness, and usability. UX studies focus on attractiveness, user satisfaction, and efficiency (i. e., how well the technology is designed for the user

14 Schmidt et al. Learner and User Experience Research (as note 2).

15 John Biggs/Catherine Tang. Teaching for Quality Learning at University: What the Student Does, 4th edition. Maidenhead, England/New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 2011.

16 For more on the important role of emotion in learning, read Reinhard Pekrun. Emotions and Learning. Belley, France: International Academy of Education, 2014. http://www.iaoed.org/downloads/edu-practices_24_eng.pdf

17 Shandell Houlden/George Veletsianos. "A posthumanist critique of flexible online learning and its anytime anyplace claims." British Journal of Educational Technology 50 (3) (2019): p. 1005-1018. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjet.12779>.

to interact with it to reach a certain goal in an appropriate time).¹⁸ However, UX has disadvantages in the context of learning systems, as it does not address learning. The learner interaction with the pedagogical design, the sociocultural dimension, and the diversity of learners are not sufficiently tackled by UX methods.¹⁹ Therefore, the design and development of digitally supported learning experiences requires an approach that considers the learner's interaction where learning occurs²⁰ and focuses on three dimensions of experiences²¹: technological, pedagogical, and social.

In summary, a useful design for learning experiences encompasses aspects of sociotechnical-pedagogical usability, such as the learner's engagement with the social dimension (e.g., peers and instructors), the learner's interaction with the digital technology or space, and the learner's interaction with the pedagogical elements. Figure 1 illustrates the three dimensions.

At UTN, we use these three dimensions when designing new learning experiences in our courses so they will be effective, efficient, and appealing.

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- 18 Harijanto Pangestu/Marisa Karsen. "Evaluation of usability in online learning." International Conference on Information Management and Technology (ICIMTech) (2016): p. 267-271. IEEE. Harry B. Santoso/Martin Schrepp/R. Yugo Kartono Isal/Andika Yudha Utomo/Bilih Priyogi. "Measuring user experience of the student-centered e-learning environment." *Journal of Educators Online* 13 (1) (2016): p. 58-79.
 - 19 Mazen El-Masri/Ali Tarhini. "Factors affecting the adoption of e-learning systems in Qatar and USA: Extending the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 (UTAUT2)." *Educational Technology Research and Development* 65 (3) (2017): p. 743-763. <https://doi.org/10/gbgzrg>; Chin Lay Gan/Vimala Balakrishnan. "An empirical study of factors affecting mobile wireless technology adoption for promoting interactive lectures in higher education." *International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning* 17 (1) (2016): p. 214-239. <https://doi.org/10/gg2jgq>; Isa Jahnke/Matthiew Schmidt/Minh Pham/Kanu Priya Singh. "Sociotechnical-pedagogical usability for designing and evaluating learner experience in technology-enhanced environments." *Learner and User Experience Research*. Ed. Schmidt et al. (as note 2). https://edtechbooks.org/ux/sociotechnical_pedagogical_usability.
 - 20 Schmidt et al. *Learner and User Experience Research* (as note 2).
 - 21 Jahnke et al. *Sociotechnical-pedagogical usability* (as note 19).

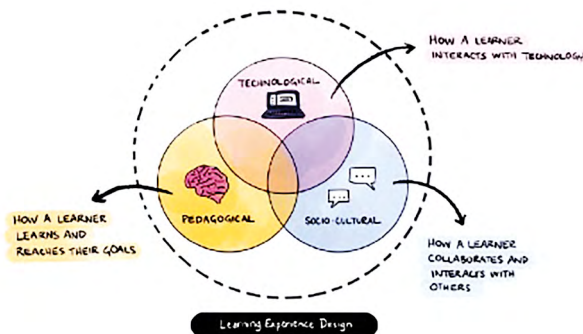


Figure 1. Three dimensions of LXD²²

2.3 Overview of the UTN guiding principles

The guiding principles of UTN's learning concept can be summarized using three concepts.

First, the course design facilitates positive learning experiences (which are effective, efficient, and appealing) for students at UTN through the foundational principles of active learning and LXD, including user-centered and user experience methods, including social, pedagogical, and technological dimensions. For example, the design for social and teacher presence, integration of active learning pedagogies, and use of digital technologies to support student learning will be incorporated. Each course design will be evaluated in terms of its appeal to students (if they like or dislike the instruction), the extent to which the design is effective (i. e., if students were able to achieve the competency-based intended learning outcomes), and to what extent the design was efficient in terms of time and cost (i. e., whether students had sufficient time or resources to do the coursework). Instead of focusing on just teaching, UTN focuses on the learning itself.

Second, an important aspect of UTN's approach to learning is the use of evidence-based research to continuously improve the learning environment. UTN actively links research and practice to optimize learning design. This

²² Yvonne Earnshaw/Isa Jahnke/Matthiew Schmidt/Andrew Tawfik. "Understanding the complexity of Learning Experience Design." UX of EdTech, 14 June 2021. <https://medium.com/ux-of-edtech/understanding-the-complexity-of-learning-experience-design-a5010086c6ee>.

involves not only evaluation of studies but also comprehensive triangulation of research findings to enhance the effectiveness of learning.

Third, UTN implements an agile approach. This means, UTN is flexible and adaptable to respond to new challenges and insights. The principles of an agile organization are also applied to the area of learning to enable continuous improvement. For example, at UTN, we apply iterative course designs, where an instructional designer works closely with the educator or instructor.

The combination of these three elements creates a unique approach to learning at UTN. It creates an environment that is conducive and positive to learning, and it enables evidence-based design of learning using best practices and approaches. At the same time, UTN's agile approach allows learning to continuously evolve to meet the needs of students. In this way, UTN creates an innovative learning environment characterized by high quality and adaptability.

3. Research-Informed Learning Experience Design Case Study

To design for effective learning experiences in the digital realm, research-informed approaches are crucial. As UTN was just founded, the first course prototype was put into practice in fall 2022 making it too new to report about. However, I here describe the guiding principles applied at UTN, which were developed for another course I helped create at the University of Missouri in 2020. This course for risk-based assessment of food when it is imported (RIFI) was foundational in my research in the U.S. and I built upon it for UTN. This section outlines what we do at UTN for all our courses by describing the RIFI course.²³

3.1 Case of RIFI

The RIFI program aimed to educate food inspectors, inspection officers, and competent authorities from different countries within a limited timeframe.

The design process involved iterative phases, including expert heuristics evaluation, usability/user experience testing, and assessment of learning outcomes.

23 Details of RIFI have been published by Shangman Li/Kanupriya Singh/Nathan Riedel/Fan Yu/Isa Jahnke. "Digital Learning Experience Design and Research of a Self-Paced Online Course for Risk-Based Inspection of Food Imports." *Food Control* Vol. 135 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodcont.2021.108698>.

The overall methodology falls under the label of design-based research, in which educational situations are analyzed, redesigned, and tested with the goal to improve. Honebein and Reigeluth²⁴ call it *research to improve*. Research to improve is an approach that uses design-based or educational design research methodologies.²⁵

It's important to note that all designs are based on the implicit assumptions of learning designers. At UTN, we try to make those assumptions visible by using the method of the Theory of Change as the starting point.²⁶ The Theory of Change requires one to first clarify one's own assumptions of the learning design. One must consider questions, such as the following. On what pedagogical or instructional theories is the learning design built? Why does the instructor or instructional designer design this but not that? On which research results is the design created? Once those assumptions are made clear, the learning experience design can be developed and continuously improved.²⁷ Various methods can be used to collect data and improve the design, such as UX methods, pre/posttests, simulation, or concept maps²⁸, to measure students' developed competencies. This is what we plan to do at UTN for *all* courses.

In the RIFI case, a research team developed a digital LXD together with the Department of Agriculture Food and Natural Resources. The project lasted four months and showed that a digital LXD can be developed, tested, and improved in a short time, even just one semester. Thus, it is doable for scaling this approach for instructors or learning centers.

24 Honebein/Reigeluth. To prove or improve (as note 1).

25 E.g., Susan McKenney/Thomas Reeves. *Conducting Educational Design Research*. New York: Routledge, 2018.

26 Paul Brest. "The power of theories of change." *Stanford Social Innovation Review* Vol. 8 No. 2 (2010): p. 47-51; California Department of Education. *Evidence-based interventions under the ESSA* (2019, July 10). <https://edtechbooks.org/-nibs>.

27 Read details in Keith Bowen/Karin S Forssell/Soren Rosier. "Theories of Change in Learning Experience (LX) Design." *Learner and User Experience Research*. Ed. Schmidt et al. (as note 2). https://edtechbooks.org/ux/lx_theories_of_change.

28 Maura Borrego/Chad Newswander/Lisa D. McNair/Sean Patrick McGinnis/Marie Paretti. "Using concept maps to assess interdisciplinary integration of green engineering knowledge." *Advances in Engineering Education* Vol. 2 No. 3 (2009): p. 1-26.

The case focused on a self-paced digital learning experience for risk-based inspection of food imports. Self-paced meant that the digital system was always available online. The goal of the design and research team was to develop an online experience for the risk-based control framework in the field of imported food, as described in the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Handbook (2016).²⁹ RIFI's digital content was focused on food, specifically, importing food safely and understanding the different import methods, which may also be potential issues for African learning experience designs. As such, not only the LXD design but also the content of RIFI might be an important approach with potential for transferability to African student and educator audiences as well as other African people interested in this topic (e.g., food inspectors at borders in Africa).

The digital learning system discussed here was developed on the Thinkific platform to provide information on food safety regulations and risk categorization. The target audience of RIFI included food inspectors, competent authorities, and risk-based inspection officials from different countries who could travel to the United States for in-person training.

As was done with RIFI, for the design and evaluation of our UTN prototype, we applied several methods and included content experts (professors). In the RIFI case, first, designers worked with content experts, to capture learning objectives and to create storyboards and paper prototypes. After the first prototype, a heuristic evaluation of the prototype (Study 1) was performed, and the results were used to improve the prototype. Then, UX and usability testing (Study 2) was conducted. The results were used to revise content, layout, activities, and material quality. After the prototype revision, a learning experience study (Study 3) was conducted that examined learning efficacy, defined as the effectiveness, efficiency, and attractiveness of the learning design.³⁰ While Study 2 focused on the feasibility and usability of RIFI's early prototype, Study 3 focused on learners' experience with the finished design and whether the design is effective for learning. Table 1 provides an overview of the specific data collection instruments.³¹

29 FAO/Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Risk-based imported food inspection manual. Rome: FAO, 2016. <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5381e.pdf>.

30 Honebein/Honebein. Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Appeal (as note 4).

31 Li et al. Digital Learning Experience Design (as note 23).

Table 1
Research metrics and methods³²

Phase	Metrics	Methods
Study #1: Usability	• Diversity • Organization • Ease of use • Consistency • Relevancy	Heuristics Evaluation ³³
Study #2: User experi- ence (UX)	• Efficiency • Effectiveness • Errors • User satisfaction • Appeal/subjective experience	Moderated usability test with think-aloud protocol ³⁴ including • Number of errors per task³⁵ • Task-level satisfaction via SEQ³⁶ • Session-level satisfaction via SUS³⁷ • System Usability Scale, SUS³⁸ • Follow-up interviews (e. g., likes/dislikes)
Study #3: Learner experi- ence (LX)	• Effectiveness • Efficiency • Learner satisfaction	Pre- and posttests including • Nine-item true/false questionnaire (before and after completing the course) • Qualifier scoring³⁹ • Missouri Department of Education's Setting Growth Targets for Student Learning Objective (2015)⁴⁰

32 Ibid.

33 Inspired by Jakob Nielsen. "10 Usability Heuristics for User Interface Design." Nielsen Norman Group (1994, April 24). <https://www.nngroup.com/articles/ten-usability-heuristics/>.

34 Maaike Van Den Haak/Menno De Jong/Peter Jan Schellens. "Retrospective vs. concurrent think-aloud protocols: testing the usability of an online library catalogue." *Behaviour & Information Technology* 22 (5) (2003): p. 339-351.

35 Jeff Sauro. "Measuring Errors in the User Experience." *MeasuringU* (2012, May 15). <https://measuringu.com/errors-ux/>.

36 Jeff Sauro. "Using Task Ease (SEQ) to Predict Completion Rates and Times." *MeasuringU* (2018, October 30). <https://measuringu.com/seq-prediction/>.

37 Jeff Sauro. "What is a Good Task Completion Rate?" *MeasuringU* (2011, March 21). <https://measuringu.com/task-completion/>.

38 Jeff Sauro. "5 Ways to Interpret A SUS Score." *MeasuringU* (2018, September 19). <https://measuringu.com/interpret-sus-score/>.

39 Greg La Barge. "Pre- and Post-Testing with More Impact." *Journal of Extension* Vol. 45 No. 6 (2007). <https://www.joe.org/joe/2007december/iw1.php>.

40 Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education. "Setting Growth Targets for Student Learning Objectives: Methods and Considerations." 2015, March 20. <https://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/Methods-and-Considerations.pdf>.

RIFI helps the reader understand how we plan to design for learning at UTN, although there are some differences. First, though we design online phases at UTN just as with RIFI, on-campus meetings are also included and equally important at UTN. We want to create a space where people can meet in courses and informally, where they have coffee chats, and where serendipity can occur. Second, while RIFI was self-paced, but UTN courses include an instructor who uses rubrics to give regular feedback to each student weekly, or at least after each assignment.

In the next sections, I describe the results of the three studies conducted in RIFI to demonstrate the guiding principles we applied for the UTN prototype course and that guide our overall course design at UTN.

3.1.1 RIFI: Usability results (Study 1)

In the first usability study, sociotechnical-pedagogical heuristics⁴¹ were used to evaluate the first RIFI prototype, producing recommendations to improve the prototype. The main problems with the LXD were categorized into five areas (Table 2).

Table 2
Usability (Study 1) findings

Heuristic	Positives	Challenges
Diversity of learning content	A variety of learning content is provided in the course, including text, videos, images, games, and a quiz.	- Accessibility features are not addressed for an inclusive design (e.g., no captions). - Monologue content in the videos is not engaging (e.g., only one instructor speaking in the video).
Organization of learning content	- Small chunks of learning content make it easy for the learners. - Content is logically arranged.	- Text and video content is not equally distributed in each sub-module (e.g., introduction pages have more videos). - Learners could not find explanations for the wrong answers on the quiz.

⁴¹ Isa Jahnke/Nathan Riedel/Kanupriya Singh/Joi Moore. “Advancing sociotechnical-pedagogical heuristics for the usability evaluation of online courses for adult learners.” *Online Learning* 25 (4) (2021): p. 416-439. <https://olj.online-learningconsortium.org/index.php/olj/article/view/2439>.

Ease of use	• Learning goals and objectives are clearly stated and provided on the first page of the module. • Main content is centralized on the page.	• Parts of the text in the videos are hard to read (e.g., the text in the background of the video).
Consistency	• Learning activities are aligned with the learning goals and objectives with a hierarchical structure.	• Some units are designed differently than others; make sure that it is consistent.
Relevancy	• The instructional materials are relevant and appropriate for the targeted audience. • Prior knowledge is activated and builds to the sequential lessons.	• Learners cannot have interactions with peers or instructors (e.g., no discussion or help tab). • Not many features can be manipulated.

3.1.2 RIFI: User experience results (Study 2)

For the user experience test (Study 2), researchers applied several methods with ten study participants (P), who reported a medium to high level of experience with online learning technologies and good computer skills.

Efficiency and effectiveness. Effectiveness was measured by the task completion rate, which varied between 80% and 100%. The average task completion rate was 91.4%, which is close to the top quartile (almost 92%) and well above average (>78%).⁴² The average time it took participants to complete each task was 5.11 minutes, which was considered acceptable. For example, the most time-consuming task was Task 7 (“Find and complete Activity 1 and Assessment 1 in Module 1.3”), for which participants took the longest average time to complete (8.49 minutes). Six out of ten participants rated Task 7 as easy (SEQ=5.9), and the observers found that 90% of participants completed Task 7 without difficulty, indicating that engagement with the content of the task, as opposed to the task mechanisms, was time-consuming.

Number of errors. The researchers recorded the number of mistakes the participants made when completing the tasks by comparing the participants’ actual route to the optimal route for completing the tasks. All tasks were completed with non-critical errors. A non-critical error is an error that does not prevent successful task completion. This data suggests that the instructions and guidelines for navigating the course need to be refined and made more intuitive.

42 Sauro. What is a Good Task Completion Rate? (as note 37).

User satisfaction. With an average System Usability Scale (SUS) rating of 77.25, or a B grade (on a scale of A-D, F), participants rated RIFI as good and acceptable⁴³, meaning that most participants were satisfied. However, RIFI also needed improvements to make it more user-friendly.

Attractiveness. The main issues (errors and dislikes) that emerged during the qualitative analysis of the semi-structured interviews, the think-aloud protocol, and the participants' experiences are grouped into five categories: layout, terminology, data entry, understandability, and feedback issues.⁴⁴ Each topic is described below.

- *Layout.* Participants failed to spot significant elements on a digital course page.
- *Terminology.* Participants did not understand terms used in the content or instructions.
- *Data entry.* Participants had difficulty filling information in fields (e.g., interactive gamified activities).
- *Comprehensiveness.* Situations existed where there was no effective instruction on the page to use the content effectively.
- *Feedback problems.* The module failed to give relevant feedback for learning growth.

The results and design recommendations were used to improve the digital learning experience accordingly.

3.1.3 RIFI: Learning experience results (Study 3)

Effectiveness. The pre/posttest results show that 43 of 46 participants (93.5%) improved their test results after completing the online course. Two participants' scores remained the same, while one achieved a lower posttest score. These results appear to be a good indication that almost all participants experienced an increase in knowledge. However, if one looks at the specifics of learning growth, a different picture emerges. A comparison between the results before and after the test was carried out based on guidelines from "Setting Growth Targets for Student Learning Objectives"⁴⁵. Twelve of

43 Aaron Bangor/Philip T. Kortum/James T. Miller. "An empirical evaluation of the System Usability Scale." *International Journal of Human-Computer Interaction* Vol. 24 (2008): p. 574-594. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10447310802205776>.

44 Van Den Haak et al. Retrospective vs. concurrent think-aloud protocols (as note 34).

45 Li et al. Digital Learning Experience Design (as note 23).

19 participants (64%) in Level 1 achieved the target posttest score of 27. In Level 2, only four of 25 participants (16%) achieved the desired posttest score. In Levels 3 and 4, no participant achieved the target number. Overall, only 16 of 46 participants (35%) achieved the desired number of points for learning growth. This means that RIFI is useful for beginners (Level 1) but does not support advanced learners who already have knowledge of risk-based inspection of food imports.

After the paired-sample t-test⁴⁶, $t(45) = -11.56$, $p < .001$, the posttest scores ($M = 26.5$, $SD = 3.80$) were statistically significantly higher than the pretest results ($M = 19$, $SD = 2.97$). This means that RIFI has a statistically significant effect on the participants' performance. The average posttest score increased by 7.5 points [95% CI: -8.807, -6.193]. While one participant's guess rate stayed the same, it decreased for 45 participants (97.8%) from an average of 74% in the pretest to 15% in the posttest, suggesting participants knew the answers in the posttest instead of just guessing. A Pearson correlation⁴⁷ was performed to measure the relationship between the guess-to-know ratio and test scores. There is a significant correlation between the pretest results of the participants and the guessing rate (guessing rate: $r = .37$, $n = 46$, $p = .01$) and between the posttest results of the participants and the guessing rate (guessing rate: $r = .35$, $n = 46$, $p = .02$). This indicates participants had more knowledge about risk-based control of food imports after the course and guessed less than in the pretest.

Efficiency. The study participants had seven days to complete the online course. It was assumed that the participants would need less than two hours, on average, to complete the online course. The time the participants needed for processing varied. Thirty-one of the 46 participants completed the study within the expected two-hour time frame. It took eight participants between two and eight hours to complete the study; seven participants needed more than eight hours for the study. The time span ranged from 40 minutes to 23 hours and 47 minutes spread over several days. The average duration of the course was 4 hours and 13 minutes, exceeding the expected time frame. This result could mean that the course should be shortened, or the introductory statement should be changed to say the course lasts about four hours.

46 Gregory J. Privitera. *Essential statistics for the behavioral sciences*. Sage, 2019. <https://edge.sagepub.com/privitera>.

47 Jacob Benesty/Jingdong Chen/Yiteng Huang/Israel Cohen. "Pearson Correlation Coefficient." *Noise Reduction in Speech Processing*. Ed. Israel Cohen/Yiteng Huang/Jingdong Chen/Jacob Benesty. Berlin/Heidelberg: Springer, 2009. P. 1-4. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-00296-0_5.

Learner satisfaction. Of the 46 participants, forty (86.96%) said they enjoyed the online learning process and agreed that RIFI helped them understand risk-based food control of imported food. In addition, 36 of 46 participants (78.26%) said they liked the content. The participants mentioned that RIFI is very flexible as it is self-paced and can be accessed online at any time without having to meet at a specific location. This is particularly important in times of crisis, such as the COVID-19 outbreak. Participants reported the instructions in the course were easy to follow and the graphics helpful in remembering the course content. Some reported liking the quizzes and other activities.

Conversely, participants pointed out some parts of RIFI that should be addressed and changed. Some participants indicated they were unable to finish watching the videos due to the monotonous interaction and video accessibility options for the participants. They felt the organization of the instructions could be improved.

3.2 Other cases

Like RIFI, we used very similar design and evaluation principles in other design cases, for example, mobile microlearning in journalism education. The goal was to teach the application of the 5C model of journalistic writing through short, mobile-friendly micro-courses.⁴⁸ The study evaluated the effectiveness, efficiency, and appeal of the micro-courses through educational design research methods, such as task-based think-alouds and pre/posttests. The results indicate relative learning growth and learner satisfaction, highlighting the potential of microlearning in online education.⁴⁹ Again, when reading Lee et al.⁵⁰, the guiding principles of the instructional design, the underlying pedagogy, the iterative approach, and the scientific methods will be evident and offer an idea of how we plan to apply such guiding design and evaluation principles for all courses at UTN to build effective, efficient, and appealing learning experience designs.

48 Yen-Mei Lee/Isa Jahnke/Linda Austin. "Mobile microlearning design and effects on learning efficacy and learner experience." *Educational Technology Research and Development* Vol. 69 (2021): p. 885-915. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-020-09931-w>.

49 Read Lee/Jahnke/Austin (ibid.) in detail to understand how we designed and developed the learning experience with the concept of mobile microlearning.

50 Ibid.

Additionally, when focusing on active learning in blended learning courses, so-called quick and dirty methods, such as heuristics are of great help. In Jahnke/Riedel/Singh/Moore⁵¹, we incorporated social, pedagogical, and technological heuristics, to enhance the learning experiences of students. Heuristic-based inspection of usability is a dominant method for evaluating digital learning systems. Prior to that study, literature showed a variety of heuristics to detect issues of technology-enhanced courses, leading us to identify an initial set of social, technical, and pedagogical related items (STP heuristics) based on literature. Next, we analyzed this set using empirical data from two digital-supported courses. In total, we analyzed 195 problems with the goal to substantiate a final set of 14 STP heuristics. This new set allows for efficiently evaluating learning experience design by supporting instructional designers in uncovering the most crucial issues and improving the learner experience. The final set of the 14 STP heuristics can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3
Refined and Final Set of 14 STP Heuristics

No.	Final set of STP heuristics	STP
1	Social Presence	S
2	(Group) Activities	S, P
3	Easy to Use	T
4	Page Layout	T
5	Ecosystem	T
6	Navigation	T
7	Functionality	T
8	Accessibility	T
9	Diverse Material/Quality	P
10	Material Delivery/Organization	P
11	Assessment	P
12	Syllabus	P
13	Teaching/Learning Goals	P
14	Guidance	P

Note. For a full list of items go to <https://sites.google.com/view/stp-heuristics/home>

⁵¹ Jahnke et al. Advancing sociotechnical-pedagogical heuristics (as note 41).

We are currently working on a list of questions to accompany the 14 STP heuristics and each of the items listed. This work has been done in the field of remote or virtual labs.⁵²

4. Conclusion

Designing for digital learning experience in higher education requires a deep understanding of the theoretical foundations of active learning and research informed LXD. Using case studies, this paper has demonstrated the importance of incorporating UTN's guiding principles, such as active learning strategies, iterative design processes, and user-centered approaches to create effective, efficient, and engaging digitally supported learning experiences for students. By embracing the potential of digital technologies and leveraging them to facilitate active and meaningful learning, institutions can adapt to the evolving landscape of higher education, the workforce, and the world, and empower learners in new and exciting ways. It is crucial for a new university, like UTN, to build teaching and learning concepts on scientific results. In such a way, we can put our design into practice, put our assumptions into questions, continuously acquire data from various methods, and use the data to improve the learning concept (learning experience design). After all, that is what all higher education institutions should be about: *learning* – student learning and organizational learning!

52 Dominik May/Isa Jahnke/Stephanie Moore. "Online laboratories and virtual experimentation in higher education from a sociotechnical-pedagogical design perspective." *Journal of Computing in Higher Education* Vol. 35 (2023): p. 203-222. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12528-023-09380-3>.

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Digital Teaching and Learning at Université de Lomé's Department of German Studies

State of the Art, Challenges and Visions

Abstract. In the process of modernising the University of Lomé, the institution's authorities have taken it upon themselves to introduce and promote the digitisation of teaching. This process, which began timidly, was boosted by the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic and continued even after the official end of the pandemic. This contribution is an empirical study of the current state of digital transformation at the University of Lomé, its strengths and weaknesses, and the challenges it must meet if it is to become a genuine tool for modernising teaching. The study carried out here, by way of illustration, focuses on the German Department of this university.

Key words: digitalisation, teaching, German studies, University of Lomé, COVID-19, learning platform, e-learning, didactic and technical challenges

1. Introduction

The Université de Lomé (abbreviated UL; in English: University of Lomé)¹ is the largest university in Togo. Located in the city of Lomé, it was founded in 1970 as University of Benin (Original name: Université du Bénin) and changed its name to the University of Lomé in 2001. This higher education institution is one of the two public universities of the country. The number of students at this institution is about 80.000. There are eight faculties, namely: Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Agronomic Sciences, Technological Sciences, Health Sciences, Education and Training Sciences, Economy and Management Sciences, Legal Sciences. This clearly shows that all education sectors are represented at the university of Lomé. The academic year is structured in two semesters: the Harmattan Semester which runs from the 1st of October to the 31st of March and the Monsoon Semester from the 1st of April to the 30th of September.

1 For reasons of linguistic conformity, the English name of this institution will be preferred in this contribution.

The Department of German Studies is one of the departments of the Faculty of Arts. It was created in 1967 at the so-called High Institute of Benin (ISB), which at the time was a university for both the Republic of Benin and the Republic of Togo. As a result, the Department of German Studies is older than the academic Institution in which it is actually located. Around a thousand registered students were expected for the academic year 2022-2023. Moreover, some five thousand students choose a teaching unit as an additional or free module yearly, in the German Department. The teaching staff is composed of six permanent teachers, one DAAD-Lector, one DAAD Language assistant and ten temporary teachers. This results in a ratio of 333 students for one teacher which is an imbalance in the students-teacher ratio. In comparison, the UNESCO recommends 25 students for one teacher. The overflow of students is in fact one of the most critical problems that the Department has to deal with. The areas of teaching in the three degrees programmes (Bachelor, Master and Doctorate) are German as foreign language, German literature and German civilisation.

The purpose of this paper is to present the state of digitalization at the University of Lomé, particularly the Department of German Studies (original name: *Département d'allemand*), the challenges facing this policy and the prospects for the future.

2. The digitalization policy at the University of Lomé before and after the outbreak of the pandemic

In the wake of the so-called LMD reform² applied since September 2009 at the University of Lomé and in accordance with the culture of excellence and the policy of modernization of the academic system pronounced by the university authorities, strategies of digitalization, among other methods of teaching, have been initiated at the University of Lomé. Thus, teachers have been encouraged to digitise their various lessons and make them available to students on a platform dedicated to this purpose. Even though the teachers

2 This reform is based on a structuring of studies in three degrees program, namely Bachelor (L), Master (M) and Doctorate (D). By the President of Togo's Decree No. 2008-006/PR of 21 July 2008, LMD was introduced into the country's higher education system. At the University of Lomé, the decree was progressively implemented from the 2009/2010 academic year. Cf. Note de service 03/UL/CP of 2 October 2009.

in the Department of German, with the collaboration of the DAAD and the Centre Numérique Francophone (CFN), were able to follow some training sessions on the use of the Moodle platform, the instruction to digitise the courses and make them available on a platform has been met with very little enthusiasm, overall. And the skills acquired at the training course have slowly dissipated due to lack of practice. The only significant step towards the digitalization of the system was undoubtedly the preparation of syllabi and the provision of course materials in printed or photocopied form. As for the didactic methods used, the lessons were more than ever largely dominated by frontal presentation.

From January 2018, students, teachers as well as administrative staff of the University of Lomé were able to benefit from a free Wi-Fi network on campus. In April, a software site called RESCOUL (Réseau Social et Collaboratif de l'Université de Lomé) was created and made available to the university community. This is a social and collaborative network intended to manage the exchange of information between the actors of the University of Lomé. In August, the Galileo-Project was launched under the slogan 'One student, one computer'. This project allows students, but also teachers and administrative staff, to acquire a computer at a significantly reduced price with the possibility of paying for it in instalments.

It is due to the COVID-19 pandemic, that the University of Lomé finally saw a very significant development in the digitization of lessons. Following the pandemic, the closure of schools and universities in Togo was decreed on 20 March 2020.³ Hence, it was recommended to teachers to use online services such as Telegram, WhatsApp, Google-Meet, Zoom etc. to continue their teaching during the semester.

In November 2020, the University of Lomé set up a new Moodle platform called "@learn" (<https://elearn.univ-lome.tg:8181/>) which is dedicated to educational activities. All teachers are now obliged to use only this platform for their courses. This constraint was a response to the concern to limit the costs of internet connection, especially for students, and to control the effectiveness and regularity of courses. Training workshops were therefore organised for teachers, but also for students, to show and explain the different

3 Cf. Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche, Ministère des Enseignements Primaire et Secondaire & Ministère de l'Enseignement Technique de la Formation et de l'Insertion Professionnelles (2020): "Communiqué interministériel." <https://univ-lome.tg/sites/default/files/2020-07/CommuniquéC3%A9-Interminist%C3%A9riel-2020.pdf> (accessed 5 October 2022).

functionalities of the platform.⁴ On this platform, online courses are given synchronously, mainly through chat, and/or asynchronously through tools such as forums, wikis, documents etc.

3. Implementation of the digitalization policy in the Department of German Studies: Achievements and Challenges

The University of Lomé's Department of German Studies has responded positively to the call for distance learning. From the very beginning, teachers in the department have used social networks such as Messenger, WhatsApp, Google-Meet, but also SMS and e-mail to deliver their courses. But immediately after adopting these new didactic tools, the difficulties linked to them became apparent. Since the university was still closed at the beginning of the implementation of this new development, access to the internet proved to be too expensive not only for the students, but also for the part-time colleagues who have less income. Very few students had a computer. Those who attended the courses used their smartphones. As a result, only two to ten percent of enrolled students attended the course regularly. Somehow the semester's programmes were completed.

The partial opening of the University of Lomé in November 2020 allowed better access to WIFI internet for those who could get there. The creation of the Moodle platform as the only authorised platform for courses at the university has made it possible to formalize distance learning. However, despite these advantages, the number of participants in the various courses has clearly decreased compared to the course sessions based on the use of social networks. The reason for this is that the courses are held mainly in asynchronous mode and, no doubt, due to a lack of motivation or resources, many students do not bother to download the courses made available to them or to complete the exercises linked to these courses. However, there is some evidence that many students photocopy lectures and exercises from their peers who often visit the platform. In any case, this has led the university authorities to arrange for face-to-face sessions to complement the asynchronous online courses. For the whole semester, the time spent on different

⁴ Cf. Candide A.A. Kouawo/Kokou Awokou/Kossi E. Senayah. "Transition numérique dans les universités togolaises: retours d'expérience sur la mise en place d'une plateforme de formation à distance à l'Université de Lomé." *Journal de la Recherche Scientifique de l'Université de Lomé (Togo)*, 23, 3 (2021): p. 169-179.

courses was drastically reduced. The results of the end-of-semester examinations were very poor. This poor performance is not only due to the online courses. It is mainly due to the abolition of homework, which used to count for fifty percent of the assessment of learning and which allowed students to have enough points to make up for any shortfall in the final exam. From now on, only the marks of the final exam are taken into account in determining the success or failure of the student in a course unit.

Due to the difficulties that were associated with international travel during the pandemic, doctoral thesis defences were held in hybrid mode. The local participants met face-to-face in a room and connected online with the external evaluator. Conferences, congresses, doctoral colloquia and training workshops were organised either in hybrid mode or solely in digital mode. Thus, in April 2022 and also from 28th November to 2nd December 2022, a workshop on the framework of the partnership between the German Studies' Departments of the Universities Bayreuth, Abomey-Calavi, Winneba and Lomé was held on zoom. A monthly doctoral colloquium involving the German Studies Departments of the Universities of Paderborn, Yaoundé and Lomé was also held on the same platform. Furthermore, colleagues of the department attended and still attend online training seminars in Dhocho3 organised by the DAAD.

4. Advantages and disadvantages of digital teaching and learning

In the Department of German Studies – and no doubt in several other training areas of the University of Lomé – digitalization has made it possible to:

- save some academic semesters,
- develop a spirit of initiation and adaptation among the actors involved,
- discover new teaching methods,
- solve the problem of shortage of classrooms,
- find a solution to the shortage of teachers,
- create greater flexibility in the timetable,
- organise and/or participate in international scientific meetings at a relatively low cost,
- facilitate the organisation of scientific events with many more international participants.

Despite these many advantages, digitalization has also had some negative consequences:

- increased workload for teachers,
- increased irregularity in student attendance,
- drop-out among some students,
- lower success rates in various examinations,
- an increase in the digital divide,
- reduced equity of access to knowledge⁵,
- dehumanization of the pedagogical interaction.

5. Visions for a rational digital transformation at the Department of German Studies

If it is true that it is the social distancing advocated in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic that has given a boost to the digitalization process at the University of Lomé, it is necessary that this process neither gets slowed down nor interrupted by the end of the pandemic. The experiences already made with this new pedagogical tool militate in any case for its continuation. Nevertheless, it would be very useful to create conditions for a better exploitation of this tool. To do this, measures should be taken in the short or medium term to minimize or even eliminate the negative effects of digitalization of teaching at the University of Lomé. This would include:

- raising awareness among teachers and students on the need for online courses,
- recruiting more teachers,

5 In a study on the subject, Nicolas Leube and Bissitena Sansan noted that, apart from the advantages, digital transformation at the University of Lomé is leading to a form of marginalisation and exclusion for financially disadvantaged students who cannot afford the appropriate technological tools: “Die Einführung digitaler Bildungstechnologien, für deren effektive Nutzung technische Kompetenzen und ausreichende finanzielle Mittel notwendig sind, hat an der Université de Lomé zu einer Marginalisierung besonders benachteiligter Studierendengruppen geführt.” Nicolas Leube/Bissitena Sansan. “Einsatz digitaler Bildungstechnologien im togoischen Hochschulwesen: Bericht über die Auswirkungen der COVID-19 Pandemie auf Bildungsteilhabe und Chancengerechtigkeit an der Université de Lomé.” Deutsch als Fremdsprache in der digitalen Welt. Zu aktuellen Entwicklungen in Lehre und Forschung. Ed. DAAD (February 2023). P. 178-182. Here p. 182.

- reviving the ‘One student, one computer’ project so that computers are available to all students and temporary colleagues,
- give students and teachers a monthly internet credit package so that they do not have to be on campus to have access to a good internet connection,
- offer, if necessary, free training sessions on the computer tool and the various functions of the University of Lomé’s Moodle platform,
- expand the platform’s functionalities,
- make greater use of the resources made available by DAAD in the Dhoch3 programme,
- provide for blended learning sessions (synchronous/asynchronous) alongside the face-to-face courses, for example out of the twelve semester course sessions: 50% face-to-face, 25% synchronous, and 25% asynchronous,
- set up a mechanism for effective online assessment of learning outcomes and for this assessment to be taken into account at 50% in the validation of course units.

All these measures would certainly have a positive impact on the digitalization at the Department of German Studies. It is not a question of replacing the traditional teaching method with the digital method, but of using digitalization to solve or avoid the problems associated with the traditional method.

6. Conclusion

As can be seen from this presentation, digitalization is underway at the University of Lomé in general and the German Department in particular. It presents many challenges, but also countless assets for resilient and efficient education. This is an irreversible process and has to be adapted to as part of the modernization of the academic system.

Despite its negative impacts, the COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly been the catalyst for the integration and systematic use of digital technology in the academic system. It is therefore necessary to maintain or even further encourage this process while taking into account the socio-economic factors of the actors involved in the system.

Far from replacing the analogue system of education, digitalisation should be able to help fill the shortcomings of this system. All actors should follow this logic and work towards modern and effective training.

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Fostering Critical Thinking Skills in German Culture Lessons at the University of Zimbabwe

Abstract. Critical thinking skills are an essential educational priority in the 21st century. In Africa calls have been made to promote critical thinking among learners and new curricula, encourages that educational practices move away from favouring memorisation over the promotion of higher order thinking skills. This change in policy, however, is yet to be realised in practice. One of the challenges leading to educators failing to implement the training of critical thinking skills could be the lack of clarity on how best to foster these skills in an African context. This paper presents a research carried out in an attempt to provide guidelines on how critical thinking can be fostered in the context of foreign language culture lessons at the University of Zimbabwe. The study outlines the formation of a new teaching model for fostering critical thinking skills amongst learners of German as a foreign language at the aforementioned institution. It also presents how this model was implemented and gives an overview of observations made during the implementation.

Key words: critical thinking, teaching model, German culture class, active learning

Introduction

In recent years critical thinking has become one of the most essential skills which students are expected to develop in higher education.¹ The ability to evaluate and analyse information before reaching a conclusion is a fundamental quality required in today's world. Seeing that information is now easily accessible as a result of technological advancements, the acquisition of skills on how to manage knowledge is now more essential than the acquisition of knowledge itself. For this reason, one finds that according to the World Economic Forum 2020, the most important competences for 2025 do not

1 Talha A. Sharadgah/Rami A. Sa'di/Hamdi H. Ahmad. "Promoting and Assessing EFL College Students' Critical Thinking Skills through Argumentative Essay Writing." *Arab World English Journal* Vol. 10 No. 4 (2019): p. 133-150. Here p. 147. <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol10no4.11>.

include the acquisition of knowledge.² Rather, the skills mentioned include analytical thinking and innovation, active learning and learning strategies, as well as complex problem solving and critical thinking. Thus, one can argue that the focus of education is shifting from that of dispensation of information to that of equipping learners with skills on how to process and work with the influx of information readily available on the internet. In Sub-Saharan Africa, critical thinking skills are seen “as a major educational priority to improve global economic competitiveness”³. Reforms in the educational sector in Zimbabwe also show critical thinking skills being given priority. In the strategic plan of the University of Zimbabwe (2019-2025), which is the leading University in the country, educators are encouraged to come up with teaching models that foster critical thinking skills.

Foreign language educators have also been emphasising on the need for critical thinking skills in this area. In the foreign language class, students are not only confronted with the task of having to learn language skills, an area that in itself would benefit from critical thinking abilities, they are also confronted with the culture of the people, where the target language is spoken. In the same space, their own culture is also at play, usually influencing how they view cultures that are different from their own. Learning to think critically in such a space, becomes a necessity, as it allows students to reflect on their own perceptions, belief systems and how they view others, as well as question information they are confronted with, before reaching conclusions. Learners of foreign languages are expected to become intercultural mediators, mediating between different languages and cultures, intercultural competence is therefore an important learning goal in the language classroom. Intercultural competence and critical thinking skills promote each other. Critical thinking in the foreign language class can be used against false or wrong beliefs⁴, which can hinder effective intercultural communication.

As has been mentioned before, information is now easily accessible, which has an impact on the traditional role of teachers, that of being information

2 World Economic Forum. *The Future of Jobs Report* (2020). https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Future_of_Jobs_2020.pdf.

3 Mauro Giacomazzi/Monica Fontana/Celia Camilli Trujillo. “Contextualization of critical thinking in sub-Saharan Africa: A systematic integrative review.” *Thinking Skills and Creativity* 43 (2022). P. 1. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1871187121001930>.

4 Metin Esen. “Critical thinking and intercultural competence: Review, use and classifications of the 21st century skills in intercultural EFL education.” *International Journal of English Language Teaching* 8, 1 (2021): p. 23-32. Here p. 24.

disseminators. Therefore, the role of the teacher is changing. Emphasis has to be on training learners to correctly process the information they are constantly confronted with. The foreign language class is no exception. Whereas before, in a German as a Foreign Language class, there was need to provide students with facts on how life in Germany is, today students can easily access that information with the click of a button. The internet is, however, a source of information that requires proper critical reflection. The role of critical thinking skills in such a space cannot be emphasised enough.

Even though there is a consensus on the importance of critical thinking skills and its role in the 21st education sector, there is usually an existing gap between policy and practice. Educational practices still promote rote learning and factual recall.⁵ Several researches have, however, looked into ways in which critical thinking can be integrated into the educational system and a number of recommendations have been made. In spite of this, studies show that learners are still lacking when it comes to this essential skill. There is, therefore, still need for further research in this regard.

A study carried out in 2016 among German as a Foreign Language students at the University of Zimbabwe revealed that the German image of these students reflected the North-South stereotypes, in which the global North is viewed as essentially better than the global South, presenting more of a paradise for those that find themselves in the global South. Such perspectives were most evident in the German culture classes, which were aimed at promoting the acquisition of German-Zimbabwean intercultural skills. Instead of acquiring skills of understanding and appreciating the differences and similarities between the two countries, however, students appeared to be forming or reinforcing a strongly romanticised perception of Germany, where comparisons between the two countries would always lead to Germany/Germans being perceived by the students as a model that Zimbabwe/Zimbabweans ought to follow. As a possible solution to this, a recommendation was made to foster critical thinking skills in this classroom, to ensure that students critically reflect on common stereotypes and on any learning content they are confronted with in this classroom. This paper presents a follow up study, in which a teaching model aimed at critical thinking skills in the German culture class at this institution was formulated and implemented. The paper outlines the formulation and implementation of the model as well as the successes and challenges faced during the implementation process.

5 Giacomazzi/Fontana/Trujillo. Contextualization of critical thinking (as note 3). P. 2.

Literature Review

A study of literature on critical thinking shows that a lot of research has been done in regards to this topic. However, there is yet to be a consensus on the definition of this term. One of the oldest definitions of critical thinking skills comes from John Dewey who in 1910 defined what he was then referring to as reflective thinking as “[a]ctive, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends”⁶. Other most used definitions of the term come from McPeck who defines the term as “the propensity and skill to engage in an activity with reflective skepticism”⁷, Ennis who defines it as “reasonable and reflective thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe and do”⁸ and Facione who believes critical thinking to be “judging in a reflective way what to do or what to believe”⁹. Duron et al. define critical thinking as “[...] the ability to analyze and evaluate information”¹⁰. A closer look at the different definitions of critical thinking, however, shows that most researchers have a similar understanding of what the term entails even though they use different terms to define it. Rear even argues that these different definitions are simply different ways of saying the same thing.¹¹ In my study I wanted to focus more on the analytical and evaluative nature of critical thinking. I, therefore, defined critical thinking as a reflective, analytical thinking process, in which one carefully analyses and evaluates (their)

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- 6 John Dewey. *Experience and education*. New York: Collier Books/Macmillan, 1938. P. 9. Cited in Carol Rodgers. “Defining Reflection: Another Look at John Dewey and Reflective Thinking.” *Columbia University Teaching College Record* 104 (4) (2002): p. 842-866. Here p. 850.
 - 7 John E. McPeck. *Critical Thinking and Education*. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1981. P. 8.
 - 8 Robert H. Ennis. “A logical basis of measuring critical thinking skills.” *Educational Leadership* 43 (2) (1985): p. 44-48. Here p. 45.
 - 9 Peter A. Facione. “The Disposition Toward Critical Thinking: Its Character, Measurement, and Relationship to Critical Thinking Skill.” *Informal Logic* 20 (1) (2000): p. 61-84. Here p. 61.
 - 10 Robert Duron/Barbara Limbach/Wendy Waugh. “Critical Thinking Framework for Any Discipline.” *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* 17 (2) (2006): p. 160-166. Here p. 160.
 - 11 David Rear. “Critical thinking, language and problem-solving: scaffolding thinking skills through debate.” *Essential Competencies for English-Medium University Teaching*. *Educational Linguistics* 27. Ed. Ruth Breeze/Carmen Guinda. Springer, 2016. P. 51-63. Here p. 54.

assumptions, belief systems or general forms of knowledge in an attempt to make sound judgement.

The definition of critical thinking is not the only thing that researchers are yet to form a consensus on, but also on the teaching of critical thinking skills. Halpern argues that there is enough evidence to show that the critical thinking ability of students can be improved through relevant instruction.¹² One of the questions that usually comes up when it comes to the teaching of critical thinking skills, is that of the relationship between culture and the practice of critical thinking. Akhter notes that the training of critical thinking skills in non-Western contexts can raise some concerns, because the concept is argued to be based on Western values and practices.¹³ Studies also show that there is a relationship between cultural practices and critical thinking.¹⁴ In Southern Africa there is a *Ubuntu*-Philosophy that appears to be against the principles of critical thinking. Critical thinking encourages questioning, independent thinking and individuality, whereas Ubuntu encourages respect, harmony and loyalty to the group. The aspect of 'respect' for example, usually translates to not questioning those in places of authority, which includes teachers. A study carried out at a teacher's college in Zimbabwe showed that one of the hindrances to the development of critical thinking skills among trainee teachers was that they believed in not questioning the perspectives and opinions of the people in authority, in this case, their educators.¹⁵ No study has, however, indicated that critical thinking training is not possible in this context. Researchers argue, that when planning to train for critical thinking, it is important to take the learning context into consideration.¹⁶ Taking the context into consideration will guide one on how to effectively train for these skills in a given context.

12 Diane F. Halpern. "Teaching critical thinking for transfer across domains: Dispositions, skills, structure training, and metacognitive monitoring." *American Psychologist* 53 (4) (1998): p. 449-455. Here p. 451.

13 Shahnaz Akhter. "Cultural Barriers to Critical Thinking Skills: A Case of Bangladeshi ESL Classrooms." *The Journal of Teachers Helping Teachers* 7 (2019): p. 130-149. Here p. 143.

14 Ibid. P. 131.

15 Davison Zireva/Moeketsi Letseka. "Obstacles to the Development of Critical Thinking Dispositions Among Student Teachers at Morgenster Teachers' College, Zimbabwe." *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* 4 (6) (2013): p. 671-680. Here p. 676-677.

16 Thushara Manouri Samarasinghe. *Developing critical thinking in EFL learners within the perspectives of CHAT: the case of Oman*. Doctor of Education Thesis, University of Sheffield, 2017. P. 59. <http://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/19477/>.

In reference to the methods used in nurturing critical thinking, the studies by Grosser and Lombard (2008) and Madondo (2018) highlight how the peculiarities of the traditional African cultures should be considered while designing for fostering critical thinking in the classroom. The findings describe how the western individualistic vision of life differs from the African communitarian and altruistic life style.¹⁷

In terms of training for critical thinking, there is a large debate among researchers and educators, on how best this can be done. Researchers fail to agree on whether critical thinking skills should be taught in a separate course focusing only on critical thinking skills or can only be trained within the context of a given subject. Ennis identified four different approaches that can be used when training for critical thinking, namely: the general approach, the infusion approach, the immersion approach and the mixed approach.¹⁸ The general approach suggests that critical thinking instruction could be done explicitly independent of subject content. In the infusion approach, however, critical thinking is trained explicitly but as part of a course and in the mixed approach, it is also taught as part of a given course but not explicitly. The mixed approach suggests combining the general and the infusion or immersion approach.

Literature on critical thinking instruction also shows that different methods and strategies have been suggested in terms of the teaching of these skills. A lot of emphasis is placed on the importance of creating a learning atmosphere that encourages students to freely speak their minds. Chawira argues that the training of critical thinking can only be successful if it is done in an atmosphere which allows its implementation.¹⁹ The learning atmosphere should motivate or challenge students to think critically.²⁰ Jahn names among other things the learning material, the attitude/

17 Giacomazzi/Fontana/Trujillo. Contextualization of critical thinking (as note 3). P. 11.

18 Robert H. Ennis. "Critical thinking and subject specificity: Clarification and needed research." *Educational Researcher* 18 (3) (1989): p. 4-10. Here p. 4-5.

19 Michael Chawira. Constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of the Free State, 2017. P. 113. <http://scholar.ufs.ac.za:8080/xmlui/bitstream/handle/11660/6854/>.

20 Marnice K. Emerson. *A Model For Teaching Critical Thinking*. 2013. P. 10. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED540588.pdf>.

behaviour of the teacher and trust as important aspects for effective critical thinking instruction.²¹

Methods that have been suggested for the development of critical thinking skills in class include modelling, Socratic questioning, collaborative learning methods and argumentative essays. Modelling entails that the teacher demonstrates how he thinks critically about a subject matter by speaking his thought processes out loud when engaging in critical thinking. Socratic questioning dates back to the Greek philosopher Socrates. This method requires that both teachers and students ask questions that prompt one to think deeply and to question some held beliefs or presented arguments. Paul and Binker define the goals of Socratic questioning as follows:

The discussion, the thinking, is structured to take student thought from the unclear to the clear, from the unreasoned to the reasoned, from the implicit to the explicit, from the unexamined to the examined, from the inconsistent to the consistent, from the unarticulated to the articulated.²²

Collaborative learning methods are those that encourage students to work together to solve a problem or to reach a conclusion. These include discussions and group discussions, which are known as effective methods of fostering critical thinking skills. Debates also work well when it comes to the fostering of critical thinking skills, due to their argumentative nature. Giacomazzi et al.²³ note that some studies on critical thinking practices in Africa, concluded the African communitarian life style encourages an approach to problem solving which avoids confrontation or arguing when discussing, which then results in less emphasis being placed on argumentation when fostering critical thinking skills. Methods that involve argumentation are, however, effective in fostering critical thinking skills. As such, there is need to implement such methods in a way that maintains mutual respect and understanding.

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- 21 Dirk Jahn. *Kritisches Denken fördern können: Entwicklung eines didaktischen Designs zur Qualifizierung pädagogischer Professionals*. Aachen: Shaker, 2012. P. 154.
 - 22 Richard W. Paul/A.J.A. Binker. *Socratic Questioning. Critical Thinking Handbook*. P. 361. <https://www.criticalthinking.org/data/pages/79/770a28b-6dfcc0886bbea1dd1195a2bf51363f3ba852e.pdf>.
 - 23 Giacomazzi/Fontana/Trujillo. *Contextualization of critical thinking (as note 3)*. P. 11.

Literature on the topic of critical thinking shows that a lot of attention has been placed on emphasising the importance of these skills in education. Researchers have also presented a number of strategies and approaches that can be used to enhance critical thinking skills among learners. Only a few researchers have tried to come up with models which provide clear guidelines on how to foster critical thinking alongside course content; none of these have focused on creating a model for the foreign language class in an African context. The study presented in this paper sought to cover this gap in literature by coming up with a model for fostering critical thinking skills amongst learners of German as a foreign language at the University of Zimbabwe.

Methodology – Formulation of the Teaching Model

The study was carried out between 2018 and 2020 with the aim of fostering students' critical thinking skills in the German culture class. A number of eleven students who were in their second year of study at the time of this research participated in the research. In the first phase of the study, the critical thinking performance of the students was investigated in order to inform the development of the teaching model, which had to be sensitive to the context in which it was to be implemented. Students wrote two essays and held two presentations. These were then evaluated using the holistic critical thinking rubric by Peter A. Facione and Noreen C. Facione.²⁴ The rubric allows for the evaluation of thinking skills in essays and presentations. It is based on six cognitive skills and therefore aids to the evaluation of these. These skills are interpretation, analysis, evaluation, conclusion, justification and self-regulation. In order to increase the validity of the results, two evaluators rated the essays and presentations. The number of works evaluated per participant were also a measure to increase validity. The holistic rubric has a scale of 1-4, where 1 represents significantly weak skills, 2-unacceptable, 3-acceptable and 4-strong. Results showed that 9 of the 11 participants scored between 1 and 2. A further look on the skills showed that students had difficulties presenting evidence or supporting their arguments, which meant that they mostly presented unwarranted claims and came to unjustified conclusions.

24 Peter A. Facione/Noreen C. Facione. *The Holistic Critical Thinking Scoring Rubric*. San Jose, CA: The California Academic Press/Insight Assessment, 2011.

Having established the critical thinking performance of students, the next step was the formulation of the teaching model. Apart from the results of the study, knowledge gained from the literature review was also essential in guiding the formulation of the model. With this teaching model the goal was to train students in critical thinking skills as they dealt with content on German culture. Critical thinking skills were therefore to be trained alongside this content.

In terms of methods of fostering critical thinking skills, the researcher opted for methods that are considered to be most effective such as Socratic questioning, modelling, debates and class discussions. Collaborative learning methods such as group work and class discussion were chosen because they also work well in the Zimbabwean context, in which working together for a common cause is the norm.

The teaching model was developed based on Jeremy Harmer's concept of the three phases of a lesson, which are: the introductory phase, the learning phase and the practise phase.²⁵

In the first phase is where the topic at hand is introduced. When fostering critical thinking, the goal here is to introduce the topic in a way that prompts the learners to think deeply about the subject matter. Students should be led into a cognitive conflict, which makes them question their presuppositions on the given topic. This can be done by presenting students with a text or video with content that is different from or rather, that contradicts their beliefs or perceptions on a given topic. After the topic has been introduced in this way, critical thinking can then be explicitly introduced. This can be done in a number of different ways. The goal is to ensure that students come to the understanding of what critical thinking is and why it is necessary for them to practise thinking critically.

After the introductory phase, students can delve deep into the new topic as they simultaneously get trained for critical thinking. At this stage the instructor can introduce the critical thinking skills in stages. This will ensure that students do not get cognitively overwhelmed and thereby discouraged to continue in the process. The first step could be to simply gather more information on the topic, so as to gain better understanding of it. The skill trained here is that of gathering of information, which is an important step that should be taken if one intends to come to a reasonable, well-informed conclusion. At this point, students can be trained on how to effectively

25 Jeremy Harmer. *How to Teach English*. London: Pearson Longman, 2007. P. 54-56.

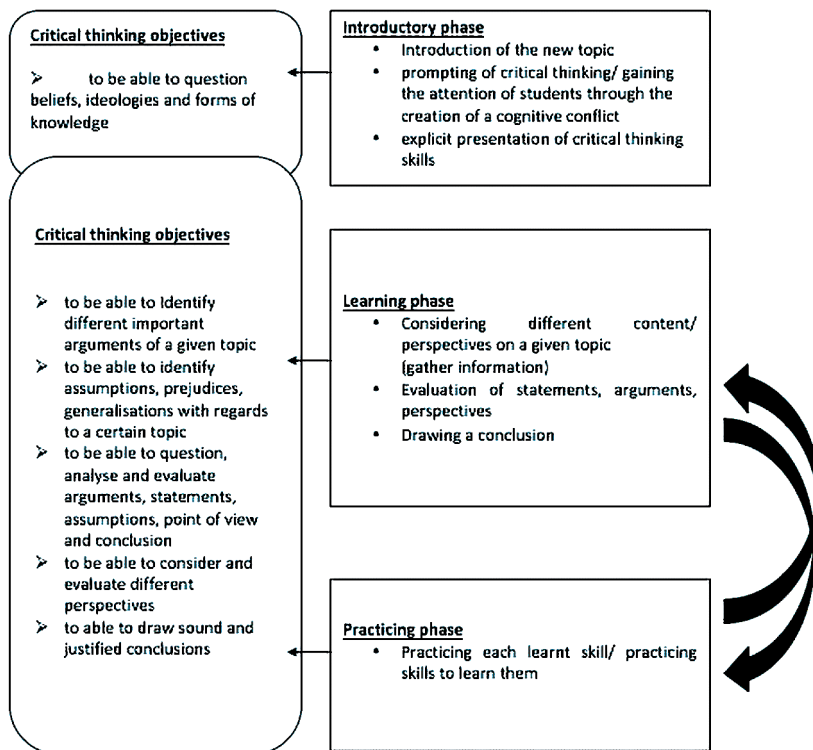


Fig 1: Teaching model for fostering critical thinking skills

navigate sources of information to pick out the necessary information on a given topic. The next step can be the evaluation and analysis of this information. Students can be taken through the process of how to effectively evaluate pieces of information to determine what is credible and what is not. At this point, it is important for them to learn ways through which this can be done. Hong, Sandaran and Fang²⁶ argue that students in a foreign language class are confronted with a lot of information on the internet, which is usually not

26 Li Hong/S.C. Sandaran/Wang Fang. "Intercultural Communication Competence with Critical Thinking on Foreign Language Teaching in Universities under Globalization." *Journal of Critical Reviews* 7 (11) (2020): p. 627-630. Here p. 629.

objective but rather exaggerated and unrealistic. For this reason there is need for them to learn how to properly evaluate this information. The process of evaluation of information should help to slowly guide students to come up with their own conclusions on a given subject matter. The instructor should avoid influencing the conclusions made by the students. His role rather is simply to guide them through the process of making logical conclusions on their own. Students should be able to justify their conclusions.

The last phase of practise is closely linked to the learning phase. Critical thinking is most effectively learnt by doing. The goal therefore is to make sure that every skill to be fostered is thoroughly practised.

Implementation of the Model

The model was implemented between March and June 2020 in the German culture class. The table below gives a summary of the implementation of the model.

Final Observations

The implementation of the model was mostly a success as students appeared to be engaged and to enjoy the topics discussed. Due to their low-level German language proficiency the discussions were in English, only a few reading materials were in German. This allowed them to express their ideas more articulately as English is the learning language in Zimbabwe.

During the implementation of the model, there were two essential factors that the instructor had to constantly be aware of. These were the course content which had to be worked on as well as the training of critical thinking skills. Keeping a balance on these two factors, in order to ensure that none of them was left behind, proved more challenging than expected. This was mainly because the aim was not to train critical thinking in an indirect way but to explicitly discuss the different skills fostered.

The proposed model suggests that the German culture class at the University of Zimbabwe be a platform which promotes students to actively process the knowledge they are confronted with rather than just be passive receivers of information. Balancing between active learning, which puts the learners at the centre stage and being effective in my role as the facilitator, proved to be more challenging in practice than it had appeared in theory. Giving up

Phase	Les.	Topic	Learning Objectives	Activity	Material
Introduction	1	Intercultural encounters (Critical incidents)	To uncover and confront stereotypes about Germany and Zimbabwe	- Students come up with possible intercultural encounters involving a Zimbabwean and a German. - Analyse the critical encounters to see what stereotypes of Germans and Zimbabweans influenced the intercultural encounters they came up with. The stereotypes are shared in plenum. - Discussion is held on these stereotypes. - Watch a video showing a homogeneous, stereotypical German image.	Questions and Instructions given by instructor Video: Lufthansa Werbung https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KwT0jdkW-uE. (Video shows typical positive German stereotypes and a homogeneous and typical German image.)
	2	Cultural / national identity: What is a German? What is a Zimbabwean?	- To cause a cognitive conflict and make students question their perspectives & preconceived notions on the topic. - To understand the need for practising critical thinking	- Watch a video presenting a heterogeneous definition of the German identity. - Discussion about the content of the video. (Discussion proved that students had a more homogeneous German image prior to watching the video. - Instructor introduces critical thinking, emphasising on the importance of suspending judgement.	Video: Was ist eine Deutsche / ein Deutscher (What is a German?) Youtube video (no longer available online) Video shows an untypical and heterogeneous German image of Germans from different backgrounds.
Learning phase	3	Cultural / national identity: Does cultural / national identity exist? What is the German identity?	To gather information on the topic	- Finding texts together on the internet on the topic and reading them in class; - Identifying the different perspectives and arguments on the topic and getting more understanding on the topic.	Some of the texts: - Deutsche Identität: Fremd im eigenen Land? Das verbindet! Malte Lehming 17.09.2018 - Spaltung der Gesellschaft? Wir brauchen neue Debatten zur Identitätspolitik. Paula-Irene Villa Braslavsky 14.01.2020 - François Jullien: „Es gibt keine kulturelle Identität“. Kluger Essay kritisiert den Kulturkampf. Catherine Newmark 09.11.2017
	4	National identity (Zimbabwe and German)	- To analyse arguments in a text, identifying unwarranted claims and well justified arguments in a text - To ask and respond to critical question that help to evaluate a texts - To further investigate and question factors that play a role in defining or attempting to define a national identity	- Read texts. - Analyse and evaluate arguments in the texts using questions provided by instructor.	Critical questions provided by instructor to guide students in evaluation and analysis of texts Texts: - Migration, Islam and National Identity. Götz Nordbruch (2011) - Becoming Zimbabwe or Becoming Zimbabwean: Identity, Nationalism and State-building, Alois S. Mlambo (2013)

Table 1a

Phase	Les.	Topic	Learning Objectives	Activity	Material
Learning phase	5	The new German identity	To revise the analysis and evaluation of texts	Revision of the evaluation and analysis of arguments in a text.	Text: The Newest New German Identity. Brandon Tensley 01.10.2015
	6	Immigration und national identity	- To critically reflect on the role of assimilation and migration in the German identity debate - To reflect on different perspectives - To practise presenting well supported arguments; identifying and pointing out, when arguments from others are not well supported	- Read provided texts in preparation of a debate and look for more texts on the topic. - Debate held – class divided in two groups.	Some of the texts: - Who Are We? Examining the State of German Identity. Sebastian Hammelehle (2018) - What's a German? The search for identity continues. Charles Hawley (2006) - Germany's identity crisis: As refugees keep coming, Germans ask 'Who are we?' Matthew Kamitschnig 10.12.2015 - The new Germans: On being and becoming German. Herfried Munkler and Martina Munkler 29.09.2016 - The long path to a "new German identity": Dr. Naika Foroutan 13.08.2014
	7	Demystifying being German (Afro-Germans)	To critically reflect on the issues addressed in the video	- Watch video. - Discussion held.	Video: Afro-Germany: Being black and German / DW Documentary; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pefPVj5qR1E
	8 & 9	Intercultural communication and integration policies in Germany	To reflect on the role of intercultural communication in the integration and assimilation of migrants	- Read texts and critically reflect on issues presented. - Discussion on assimilation, integration, integration policies in Germany, the role of intercultural communication.	Texts: - Lünemann, Ulrich. Interkulturelle Kommunikation. Kapitel 1: Notwendigkeit interkultureller Kommunikation. p. 5 6 Barriers to Intercultural Communication. Essay. https://ivypanda.com/essays/barriers-to-intercultural-communication/
	10	A unified national identity	To reflect on how perspectives on the topic had developed over the period of the course	Discussion – students share their new perspectives on the topic of national identity.	

Table 1b

the centre role as a teacher, however, is an effective way of dealing with some of the hindrances to critical thinking in a context where those in authority are revered. Creating an atmosphere of understanding and mutual respect helped in allowing students to feel free to pose critical questions both to the instructor and to the other students. During the discussion one could already see an improvement in terms of critical thinking performance. Students were becoming more inquisitive in dealing with information, perspectives and ideas presented in class. During discussion students had begun to pose Socratic questions, probing clarity or prompting the speaker to think more about what they would have said. More interestingly, they were developing a tendency to not simply passively accept everything said by the instructor, but would also pose probing questions to the instructor. Having controversial topics at the centre of this teaching model helped in encouraging students to critically reflect on their perceptions of Germany and Zimbabwe. It was clear during the implementation of the model that students were beginning to form a more realistic and balanced German image as a result of practising critical thinking.

Future research could look into implementing the model for a longer period of time with an experimental and a control group. Results of these two groups could then be compared after the implementation of the model in order to establish its effectiveness.

Appendix: Lesson material

Braslavsky, Paula-Irene Villa. Spaltung der Gesellschaft? Wir brauchen neue Debatten zur Identitätspolitik. 2020. <https://causa.tagesspiegel.de/gesellschaft/spaltet-identitaetspolitik-die-gesellschaft/wir-brauchen-neue-debatten-zur-identitaetspolitik.html>

Foroutan, Naika. The long path to a “new German identity”. Germany was late in accepting its role as an immigration country, writes Naika Foroutan. Today, diversity is perfectly normal. 2014. <https://www.deutschland.de/en/topic/life/society-integration/the-long-path-to-a-new-german-identity>

Hammehle, Sebastian. Who Are We? Examining the State of German Identity. 2018. <https://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/who-are-we-examining-the-state-of-german-identity-a-1225133.html>

Hawley, Charles. What’s a German? The Search for Identity Continues. 2006. <https://www.spiegel.de/international/what-s-a-german-the-search-for-identity-continues-a-415207.html>

- Karnitschnig, Matthew. Germany's identity crisis. As refugees keep coming, Germans ask 'Who are we?'. 2015. <https://www.politico.eu/article/german-identity-threat-refugees-migration-merkel/>
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- Newmark, Catherine. François Jullien: „Es gibt keine kulturelle Identität“. Kluger Essay kritisiert den Kulturkampf. 2017. https://www.deutschlandfunkkultur.de/francois-jullien-es-gibt-keine-kulturelle-identitaet-kluger.1270.de.html?dram:article_id=400193
- Nordbruch, Götz. Migration, Islam and National Identity. 2011. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265353277_Germany_Migration_Islam_and_National_Identity
- Tensley, Brandon. The Newest New German Identity. 2015. <https://www.newamerica.org/weekly/the-newest-new-german-identity/>
- 6 Barriers to Intercultural Communication. Essay. <https://ivypanda.com/essays/barriers-to-intercultural-communication/>
- Video: Afro-Germany: Being black and German/ DW Documentary; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pcfPVj5qR1E>

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Oshideutsch in Modern Language Classes

Abstract. Increasing globalization has led to increased language contacts and thus also to the transformation of languages. This essay explores the question of how this can be dealt with in the modern language classes. The aim is to enable students to use language in a diverse and reflective way. As an example of the result of a language transformation, the secret language Oshideutsch is used, which was created through contact between the languages Oshivambo and German. It is shown that Oshideutsch is suitable for understanding the structure and function of language, more precisely the German language. Subsequently, concrete suggestions for didacticization for first language classes as well as for foreign language classes are presented.

Key words: language contact, secret language, code switching, didacticization, structure of language, function of language, reflexive use of language, transformation of teaching, first language classes, foreign language classes

1. Introduction

In an increasingly globalized world, language contacts are increasing, leading to a transformation of languages and their use. Thus, new varieties or even new languages may emerge. In response to such transformation processes, attempts are sometimes made to separate languages from one another and to defend a linguistic norm against changes that are evaluated as deviations. The question that arises from this is how to deal with these transformation processes in school or in the language classroom.

In Germany, the teaching of German has been characterized by language reflection since the 1970s.¹ Instead of preserving language, the goal is to enable students to use language in a diverse but reflective way, the prerequisite

1 Cf. Angelika Steets. "Lernbereich Sprache in der Sekundarstufe I." Deutsch-Didaktik. Leitfaden für die Sekundarstufe I und II. Ed. Michael Kämper van den Boogaart. 3rd run. Berlin: Cornelsen Scriptor, 2006. P. 210-231. Here p. 210.

for which is a planned development of knowledge about language.² With this intention, the linguistic heterogeneity of the students is taken into account, which also refers to intra-linguistic varieties.³ There are new consequences not only for first language teaching, but also for teaching German as a foreign language, as is done in Namibia, for example. German can be taught as foreign language while preserving its language variations such as Oshideutsch, a variation that includes code-switching between German and the Namibian language Oshivambo, and Namdeutsch, which includes Afrikaans – another language spoken in Namibia.

How other languages or language varieties can contribute to the promotion of language competence and a reflexive language use will be shown exemplarily in the context of this work. As a versatile example, the secret language Oshideutsch can be used, which is a result of the language contact between Oshivambo and German. It is particularly well suited for linguistic-contrastive studies, since it is not only characterized by a sentence structure that differs from standard German, but also has its own, easily reconstructible language history. In the first part of this article, this secret language will be introduced. Afterwards, different possibilities of didactization in first language teaching in Germany and subsequently in foreign language teaching in Namibia will be presented.⁴

2. History of origins and linguistic characteristics

The emergence of Oshideutsch is closely related to political and historical events in the context of the decolonization of African states. The Namibian South African People Organization, SWAPO for short, had asked the GDR or the party cadres of the SED to take in the children because their parents were involved in the struggle against the South African apartheid

2 Cf. Eva Neuland. "Perspektiven sprachlicher Bildung heute." *Wozu Kultur? Zur Funktion von Sprache, Literatur und Unterricht*. Ed. Gerhard Rupp. Frankfurt a. M. (a. o.): Lang, 1997. P. 243-259. Here p. 249-255.

3 Cf. Matthias Granzow-Emden. *Deutsche Grammatik verstehen und unterrichten*. 2nd run. Tübingen: Narr, 2014. P. 8.

4 This article builds on a previously published article by one of the authors: Helena M. Stock. "Struktur und Funktion von Sprache verstehen mithilfe sprachkontrastiver Verfahren. Möglichkeiten der Didaktisierung von Oshideutsch." *Beiträge zur Fremdsprachenvermittlung* 29 (2021): p. 31-46. During the summer school, the content was taken up by the authors and developed further together.

regime.⁵ The GDR agreed to this, but less for humanitarian reasons than for political-strategic ones, according to Susanne Timm. The SED assumed that Namibia would soon become independent and hoped that cooperation would increase its influence in southern Africa. Finally, a joint agreement was reached in which training services and support in the education system were stipulated by the GDR. In addition to the admission of children, the agreement provided for the arrival of Namibian adults for the purpose of educational training.⁶ In 1979, 430 refugee children from Namibia were finally brought to the GDR, where they were housed in specially established children's homes in Bellin and Staßfurt.⁷ According to Susanne Timm's research, most of the children had grown up with Oshivambo. Furthermore, she assumes contact with the English language, since this was the administrative language in Namibia.⁸ However, it can also be assumed that the children had contact with other languages spoken in Namibia, such as Afrikaans.⁹ Consequently, the children were a heterogeneous language group.

But how was the multilingualism of the 'GDR children of Namibia' addressed? The Director of the home in Bellin formulated the intention to use German and Oshivambo in the 'correct' manner and to foster both as 'pure' languages to prevent the mix of languages also known as code-switching. Therefore, the Namibian educators who came along were initially required to communicate with the children in Oshivambo. In the interaction with the German educators, the children were to learn the German language in an unsystematic way during their everyday life. After the decision that the children should attend mainstream schools, they received additional German lessons; however, these were still inadequate. Although a return to

5 Cf. Birte Kellermeier-Rehbein. "Sprache in postkolonialen Kontexten II. Variationen der deutschen Sprache in Namibia." *Sprache und Kolonialismus. Eine interdisziplinäre Einführung zu Sprache und Kommunikation in kolonialen Kontexten*. Ed. Thomas Stolz/Ingo H. Warnke/Daniel Schmidt-Brücken. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2016. P. 213-234. Here p. 224.

6 Cf. Susanne Timm. *Parteiliche Bildungszusammenarbeit. Das Kinderheim Bellin für namibische Flüchtlingskinder in der DDR*. Münster: Waxmann, 2007. P. 285.

7 Cf. Bruno Arich-Gerz. "'Migratsprache' Oshi-Deutsch." *Sprache und (Post-)Kolonialismus: Linguistische und interdisziplinäre Aspekte*. Ed. Birte Kellermeier-Rehbein. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018. P. 163-175. Here p. 161.

8 Cf. Timm. *Parteiliche Bildungszusammenarbeit* (as note 6). P. 171.

9 Cf. Kellermeier-Rehbein. *Sprache in postkolonialen Kontexten II* (as note 5). P. 216.

their home country was envisaged, the children did not receive systematic instruction in their first language.¹⁰

Nevertheless, the children found their own way of dealing with the heterogeneous language environment: They developed their own secret language in order to hide communicative content from unwanted listeners.¹¹ This new language emerged as a result of self-identification of the refugee children, with the intention of excluding the rest – i.e., the teachers and educators and the foster parents. The term ‘Oshideutsch’ was created by the children to name their ‘own’ special language.¹² Oshideutsch is a genuine mixed-language variety whose main donating languages are Oshivambo and German. It can thus be regarded as a transformation of the two donor languages. The secret language is characterized by the fact that words are mixed and partly pronounced faster. The change between the languages (*switching*) happens on the syntactic basis, that means the switching occurs at the end of a word and not within a word. The mixed linguistic nature of the resulting variety is therefore manifested at the syntactic level, whereby the proportions of the donor languages are variable. Whole syntactical units can be in one language. In this case the grammar of this language is used. If the code switching happens in one syntactical unit, the grammar of Oshivambo is used. This can be seen in this example sentence: “Ich glaub Geingob okwa mischen nur kashona, aber Pendukeni ist noch Minister geblieben von Home Affairs. / Ich glaub [Staatspräsident] Geingob hat alle nur ein bisschen gemischt, aber Pendukeni ist noch Minister[in] geblieben von Home Affairs.”¹³ In the first syntactic unit, code-switching already takes place, so that the grammar of Oshivambo prevails and the German verb ‘mischen’ remains in the infinitive.

In 1990, SWAPO abruptly dissolved the children’s homes.¹⁴ The children returned to a country that had become foreign to them on August 26,

10 Cf. Timm. *Parteiliche Bildungszusammenarbeit* (as note 6). P. 172ff.

11 Cf. Arich-Gerz. ‘Migratsprache’ Oshi-Deutsch (as note 7). P. 164f.

12 Cf. Bruno Arich-Gerz. “‘The Show isn’t over until...’ ‘Oshi-Deutsch – Die DDR-Kinder von Namibia’: Eine Theater-Produktion, ihre Rezeption und dramendidaktische Adaption für Deutschlernende in Namibia.” *Literatur im Spannungsfeld zwischen Wissenschaft und Didaktik. Exemplarische Unterrichtsmodelle für die Hochschule*. Ed. Carmen Ulrich. München: iudicium, 2018. P.134-149. Here p. 136.

13 Arich-Gerz. ‘Migratsprache’ Oshi-Deutsch (as note 7). P. 168; cf. also *ibid.* p. 163-169.

14 Cf. Timm. *Parteiliche Bildungszusammenarbeit* (as note 6). P. 287.

1990.¹⁵ This changed the location and the function of the language: The function to create an own identity remained but there was no longer transmission. Oshideutsch lost its functional status as a secret language. Bruno Arich-Gerz attempts to classify the variety by referring back to various linguistic sub-disciplines and considers its categorization as a transnational generational or intervened pidgin.¹⁶ These attempts at classification highlight the uniqueness of the variety and point to the challenge of describing it using standard linguistic criteria and categories.

3. Understanding the function and the structure of the German language through Oshideutsch

In the following, possibilities of didactization of Oshideutsch in first language German lessons will be presented. The focus is on promoting the understanding of the function and structure of language. With the help of language contrastive methods, insights can be gained and language-related knowledge, which forms the basis of reflective language use, can be built up.

3.1 Suitability for the didactization in first language German classes

First, the suitability of the secret language Oshideutsch for understanding linguistic structure and function in the teaching of German must be justified.

The term 'structure' is used here to describe the grammatical, especially the syntactical structure of language. Since the 1980s, the German lessons concerning grammatical issues should not be educationally by itself but should also include semantical and pragmatical aspects of language.¹⁷ These concepts include the so-called functional grammar teaching, which focuses on the relationship between grammatical structure and function. In order to make the connection between structure and function evident, Wilhelm Köller formulates five guiding principles for functional grammar instruction: The principle of alienation of linguistic phenomena is intended to bring implicit linguistic knowledge to consciousness, while the principle of operational productivity provides for investigative actions, such as reshaping.

15 Cf. Arich-Gerz. 'The Show isn't over until...' (as note 12). Here p. 137.

16 Cf. Arich-Gerz. 'Migratsprache' Oshi-Deutsch (as note 7). P. 163-171.

17 Cf. Neuland. *Perspektiven sprachlicher Bildung heute* (as note 2). P. 255.

In doing so, grammatical categorizations are to be traced inductively according to the genetic principle. The functional principle provides for the investigation of grammatical phenomena in real texts and in this way to make their communicative function recognizable. This is followed by the integrative principle, which provides for the connection to further contents and questions.¹⁸ The function of language, which will also be the focus of consideration here, is understood to include communicative, but also sociocultural aspects. Since language serves the common comprehension of worldly phenomena, it represents a fundamental condition of human culture.¹⁹ Thus, it can also be identified as a means of demarcating social groups. At the same time, this also means that a common sense of belonging is created with the help of language.²⁰ Thus, it can be summarized that language functions as an identity-forming moment of social groups and their cultures.

The secret language Oshideutsch is suitable as a subject for the consideration of both the structure and the function of language. For the understanding of linguistic structure it is suitable, because the German language is used in an irritating way due to the mixed language, which benefits the principle of alienation. Comparisons to German can bring up characteristics of both languages in order to make the respective specific structures conscious and to examine them.²¹ Through the experimental use of language or autonomous analysis, the principle of operational productivity can be enforced in the classroom and active learning can be made possible. On the basis of the consideration of the context of origin, the conditions of language development as well as the communicative and group identity-creating function of language can be worked out, whereby the functional principle according to Köller is fulfilled. This is also how the connection between culture or identity and language can be shown. The integrative principle can be implemented through a thematic connection to other subject areas. For example,

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- 18 Cf. Hildegard Gornik. "Methoden des Grammatikunterrichts." *Didaktik der deutschen Sprache* 2. Ed. Ursula Bredel et. al. 2nd run. Stuttgart: utb, 2006. P. 814-829. Here p. 823f.; cf. also Wilhelm Köller. *Funktionaler Grammatikunterricht. Tempus, Genus, Modus: Wozu wurde was erfunden?* Baltmannsweiler: Schneider-Verlag Hohengehren, 1997. P. 29-31.
- 19 Cf. Siegfried Grosse. "Sprachpflege und Sprachkultur." *Wozu Kultur? Zur Funktion von Sprache, Literatur und Unterricht*. Ed. Gerhard Rupp. Frankfurt a.M. (a.o.): Lang, 1997. P. 233-242. Here p. 233.
- 20 Cf. Granzow-Emden. *Deutsche Grammatik verstehen* (as note 3). P. 5.
- 21 Cf. Christiane Hochstadt/Andreas Krafft/Ralph Olsen. *Deutschdidaktik. Konzeptionen für die Praxis*. Tübingen: utb, 2013. P. 236.

a connection to the treatment of plays would be conceivable, since there is a play entitled *Oshideutsch – Die DDR-Kinder von Namibia*²², whose text, however, has yet to be made accessible.

The possible didacticization of Oshideutsch is not only supported by the fact that it provides insights into the function and structure of language, but also that its use in teaching can be legitimized by the curriculum of the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia. With regard to the general tasks and goals of German as a subject, Oshideutsch can be used to promote the perception, design and reflection about the diversity of culture and reality of life. In addition, reflection on language, its structures, rules and peculiarities can be stimulated. The newly gained insights can further contribute to being able to speak and write in a standard and educationally appropriate way. With the help of confrontation of the students to the cultural differences of others, they can evolve the relation to themselves and to the world.²³ The curriculum distinguishes between the two competence areas of reception and production. The area of reception refers to the skills of listening and reading, while the area of production refers to speaking and writing. These competencies are to be developed in so-called content areas.²⁴ The choice of the secret language Oshideutsch as a subject can be assigned to content area one 'Language', because the structure of language as a system as well as the function of language are in the center. As aspects of reflection on language, the acquisition of linguistic knowledge as well as the development of language awareness are relevant here.²⁵ Since looking at the function and structure of language with the help of Oshideutsch can contribute to an improved understanding of one's own language, the following can be named as goals in the competence area of production: the use of language-relevant knowledge for autonomous writing and distinguishing of sentence structures.

22 Since the primary text cannot be determined, reference is made here to this review: cf. Bruno Laberthier. "Zwischen Deutschland und Namibia." <https://faustkultur.de/2683-0-Oshi-Deutsch-in-Osnabrueck.html> (20.08.2020).

23 Cf. Ministerium für Schule und Bildung des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen. Kernlehrplan für die Sekundarstufe I Gymnasium in Nordrhein-Westfalen. Deutsch. Düsseldorf 2019. P. 8f.

24 Cf. *ibid.* P. 11-13.

25 Cf. *ibid.* P. 14.

3.2 Proposals of didactization in first language German classes

The choice of the secret language Oshideutsch as a subject can be justified with current concepts of grammar teaching as well as with the core curriculum. How these explanations can be implemented in the classroom will be presented in the following using two suggestions as examples. It should be noted that although both proposals focus on understanding function or structure, both aspects go hand in hand. The suggestions refer to grade eight or nine.

3.2.1 Understanding the function of language

The choice of Oshideutsch as a subject enables the students to come into contact with a new language. However, this is also a problem because at first glance it does not allow a connection to real-life experiences. Nevertheless, this proposal is intended to create a connection through an approximate commonality with the refugee children.

At the beginning of the series of lessons, a group work assignment can be planned to design their own language in threes or fours. The task could be as follows:

1. Write a conversation (5-7 sentences) in your own created language about the previous weekend. Everybody should get the chance to speak. Record your results in the table. Write the sentences in your secret language in the left column and the German translation in the right column.
2. Remember the process of the creation of your own language. What was your approach? Write down your steps.

The group work is suitable because it requires organizational and methodological skills in addition to social and communication skills.²⁶ With reference to the core curriculum, the productive competencies in the area of speaking and writing can also be promoted. As a suggestion, envelopes can be placed on the teacher's desk with suggestions such as "Do you know other languages? Think about how you can bring them in!"

26 Cf. Tilmann von Brand. *Deutsch unterrichten. Einführung in die Planung, Durchführung und Auswertung in den Sekundarstufen*. 4th run. Seelze: Klett Kallmeyer, 2015. P. 135.

This introduction can be assigned to action- and production-oriented teaching: The work assignment leads from talking about a topic to a concrete linguistic action, since a text-productive procedure is aimed at here. The work assignment has the advantage that the students' own activity is stimulated and their individuality is in demand.²⁷ With this method, the principle of alienation of linguistic phenomena can be implemented through the creative activity of the students. It is important to raise awareness of the fact that language is produced by people²⁸ and their communicative intentions.

The elaboration should be followed by a class discussion. The method of contrastive comparison can be used for the exemplary presentation of results. The classmates can make assumptions about the content of the conversation and the characteristics of the new language, which can be compared on the basis of the documentation of the procedure. Possibilities of forming a new language can be compared on the blackboard. In this way, a sensitivity for linguistic structures can be created. In a subsequent plenary reflection on the function of these new languages, a connection can be made to secret languages and their intention to disguise content and to distinguish themselves from others as a group. At this point, a transition to the Namibian refugee children in the GDR suggests itself, which can be done, for example, via a short teacher lecture.

3.2.2 Understanding the structure of language

After the introduction, the irritating potential of Oshideutsch can be used to examine the grammar of the secret language in terms of the way in which it obscures conversational content.

Listening to the audio recording of a dialogue between two speakers of Oshideutsch opens up the possibility of students' contact with the secret language. The aim is to work with authentic language material.²⁹ The listening assignment could be as follows:

Listen to the audio of a conversation in Oshideutsch. Write down words or sentences you can understand. What could the conversation be about? Write down your presumption.

27 Cf. *ibid.* P. 126f.

28 Cf. *ibid.* P. 127.

29 Cf. Angelika Steets. *Lernbereich Sprache in der Sekundarstufe I* (as note 1). P. 224.

This assignment should be done by the students alone, in order to gain a first individual approach, but also because listening requires attention and concentration.³⁰ For this purpose, it is useful to play the audio recording repeatedly. In this way, the receptive competence of listening can be promoted.

This should be followed by a class discussion, as everyone's results are relevant and can be compared with the others.³¹ In the process, further questions can be developed, such as why the students arrived at their assumptions of the content of the conversation. The experiences from developing their own secret languages can be helpful for this. This helps to establish that not only words, but also their position in the sentence and their emphasis have an influence on effect and interpretation. To check the students' assumptions, the dialogue in Oshideutsch and its translation into German should be visualized for example via an electronic panel.

Through visibility, further irritating moments can be found that comply with the principle of alienation. A next task could be to ask the students to think together with the person sitting next to them about the ways in which Oshideutsch encodes the content of conversations. In partner work, the students are less inhibited to talk about their assumptions.³² In a subsequent joint class discussion, the results can be shared and noted on the board. The example sentence already mentioned at the beginning lends itself to a more detailed examination: "Ich glaub Geingob okwa mischen nur kashona aber Pendukeni ist noch Minister geblieben von Home Affairs. / Ich glaub [Staatspräsident] Geingob hat alle nur gemischt, aber Pendukeni ist noch Minister[in] geblieben von Home Affairs." Because of the infinitive form of 'mischen', the first part of the sentence in particular lends itself to investigation. For this purpose, it is recommended to visibly structure this part of the sentence in German translation on the basis of the field model. In this way, the meaning of the verb and its position for communicative understanding can be worked out.³³ It makes sense to work on the material in class, as this forms a common basis for subsequent lessons and allows the teacher to guide

30 Cf. Brand. Deutsch unterrichten (as note 26). P. 133.

31 Cf. *ibid.* P. 138f.

32 Cf. *ibid.* P. 134.

33 Cf. Granzow-Emden. Deutsche Grammatik verstehen (as note 3). P. 78. In case the students are not yet familiar with the field model, an inductive development is recommended. A suggestion for this can be found in the essay by Helena M. Stock on which this article is based.

the material in a targeted manner.³⁴ It is advisable to hand out a worksheet in which the students can transfer the board picture into a table. The result could look like this:

Vorfeld	linke Verbalklammer	Mittelfeld	rechte Verbalklammer	Nachfeld
Ich -----	glaub, -----			
Geingob	<i>Hat</i>	alle nur ein bisschen	<i>gemischt,</i>	aber...
Ich -----	Glaub -----			
Geingob	<i>okwa (?)</i>	alle nur ein bisschen	<i>mischen (?)</i>	...

The findings about the German grammar must then be related back to Oshideutsch. When trying to classify the example sentence in Oshideutsch into the field model as well, it becomes clear that the accusative object is not to be located in the middle field as in German. The questions regarding the sentence in Oshideutsch can possibly only be conclusively clarified through knowledge of Oshivambo. However, from a teaching point of view, it would be important to note as a result that German vocabulary is used here, but in contrast to the following subordinate clause, the grammatical rules of the German language do not apply here. Thus, a differentiation can be made between lexical units and their structural arrangement in the sentence. At the same time, the role of their interaction for the communicative understanding of the speakers among each other becomes recognizable.

To deepen the knowledge, the study of further types of sentences and their translation into German is recommended with the help of this task:

1. Read the sentence below and mark the verbs in red colour.
2. Analyse the structure of the sentence by categorizing it in the field model.
3. Go to the meeting point and compare your result with another student. Compare the structure with the sentence in Oshideutsch. What can you see concerning the verbs?
4. Repeat the process with the other three sentences.

34 Cf. Brand. Deutsch unterrichten (as note 26). P. 138f.

The following sentences with different syntactic structure can serve as material³⁵:

Am Wochenende <i>habe</i> ich einen Freund von mir <i>besucht</i> , weil wir uns seit einem Monat nicht <i>gesehen haben</i> .	Onda <i>besuchen</i> a Freund lange eli <i>inandimona</i> seit einem Monat am Wochenende.
<i>Wirst</i> du ein neues Buch für den Deutschunterricht <i>kaufen</i> oder <i>hast</i> du schon eines?	<i>Ouahala</i> ku <i>kaufen</i> a neue Buch fuer den Deutschunterricht ilo <i>ouna</i> nale limwe?
Ees <i>wird</i> morgen im Stadion <i>auftreten</i> .	Ees <i>otali performen</i> morgen mo Stadium.
Ich <i>habe</i> Hunger. <i>Kannst</i> du mir die Schokolade <i>reichen</i> ?	<i>Ondina</i> Hunger, <i>peinge</i> o Schokolade?

With the help of the contrastive juxtaposition, the position of the verb can be recognized as decisive for the type of sentence and thus also for the interpretation of the sentence, for example, as an interrogative or propositional sentence.

Through the possibilities of didacticization presented here, it is possible to understand the role of the verb and its position in the sentence, which in turn is important for understanding punctuation.³⁶ By experimentally reshaping sentences with the help of the field model, it is also possible to revise the style of one's own texts, thus promoting the productive competence area of writing.

4. Use for foreign language classes

4.1 Introduction of non-standard German

In both German as a foreign language and first language learners can be informed or exposed to non-standard German. The purposes will vary as per DaM (*Deutsch als Muttersprache*) which is German as a native language and DaF (*Deutsch als Fremdsprache*) which is German as a foreign language.

35 Many thanks to Onesmus Shimwafeni for translating the various sentences into Oshideutsch.

36 Cf. Granzow-Emden. Deutsche Grammatik verstehen (as note 3). P. 78.

For the purpose of this presentation let us look at the following two non-standard German variations:

1. Namdeutsch: This is a variation of German spoken and written in Namibia. The younger ones also call it 'NamSlang' and the older generations call it Namdeutsch. This is a variation influenced greatly by multilingualism (English, German and Afrikaans). It seems rather to relate to what is known as 'NamSlang', a jargon spoken by young Namibians around pop and rap singer Eric Sell (EES), which also includes frequent code-switching.

Examples: Ich hör nicht, redet bietjie lauter.

Geh net der Braune Hund tut dir fokol.

2. Oshideutsch: This is mentioned above, including examples.

These, among many others, are examples of non-standard German learners can be educated on.

4.2 How Oshideutsch can be used in a DaF class/lesson

Foreign language teachers can use this as an informative session or as a 'did you know?' lesson. Where firstly, teacher explains the origin and functions of Oshideutsch this is indicated and outlined earlier in this article. Secondly, teacher looks at examples of sentences written in Oshideutsch. This can include verbs, sentence structures and changes within the sentences which can be evaluated collectively in the class.

Thirdly, learners can then work in pairs and create their own Oshideutsch sentences. This is the aspect only suitable for learners who have basic knowledge of Oshivambo and preferably for more advanced level in German.

Fourthly, they can then share their sentences with the rest of the class and get feedback from their peers. This can be highly recommendable as peer feedback would help them with the two languages.

Lastly, the class could continue to create their own 'secret language'.

This is merely to inform learners of the variations of German outside the standard German taught in schools and not for assessment purposes. This exercise can also be used for other variations where fitting.

Furthermore, the use of these non-standard variations is to preserve language variations while developing creative language usage for learners and students.

5. Final remarks

The secret language Oshideutsch is suitable as a versatile teaching object both for use in first language German lessons and for teaching German as a foreign language. As a result of the transformation of the two donor languages Oshivambo and German, it offers the possibility to encounter the linguistic transformation processes in the increasingly globalized world in a teaching way and to use them for the understanding of language and its communicative use. This means a departure from the goal of keeping language pure, which often goes hand in hand with the devaluation of deviations from a linguistic norm. Thus, Oshideutsch as an object of instruction enables a transformation of teaching and learning about language. The listed possibilities of didacticization are suggestions that can only reflect a part of the didactic potential of the secret language. Another possibility would be to analyze the different flexion and position of the verbs and different use of tenses. In addition, one could analyze a speech by the director of Bellin in terms of the rhetorical devices employed and the underlying understanding of language and its function. Also, one could read parts of the autobiography of 'Kind Nr. 95', written by Lucia Engombe, or visit the stage play "Oshideutsch – Die DDR-Kinder von Namibia" to elaborate on the communicative function of language for children.

Nevertheless, it remains to be stated that a more exact scientific consideration of the secret language is necessary, as also Arich-Gerz demands it.³⁷ This could not only contribute to a better understanding of Oshideutsch, but also initiate a development of the common categorization methods of language. This discussion must take place on both a scientific and a language-didactic level. Since the language is no longer actively handed down, because it has largely lost its function of demarcation and secrecy, there would be the possibility of a survival or commemoration in the teaching debate.

37 Cf. Arich-Gerz. 'Migratsprache' Oshi-Deutsch (as note 7). P. 163.

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Schreibflüssigkeit in der Fremdsprache Deutsch bei südafrikanischen Lernenden

Ein reflexiver Beitrag

Abstract. Writing fluency in German as a foreign language among South African learners. A reflexive article. This article deals with the promotion of writing fluency in German as a foreign language for learners in South Africa. The focus of the article is on the question of what role the German language plays in South Africa and what strategies can be used to efficiently promote learners' writing fluency. Findings from a BMBF-funded project called KOFISCH (an acronym for the promotion of the competence in writing), which was carried out in North Rhine-Westphalia from 2020 to 2023, are utilized. The project in which the author was involved focused on promoting writing skills in young adults whose first or second language is German.

Key words: writing fluency, basic writing skills, KOFISCH, DaF, German as a foreign language, South Africa.

Im Rahmen der Summer-School-Vortragsreihe, die diesem Band zugrunde liegt, beschäftigte ich mich mit der Frage, inwieweit die Schreibflüssigkeit von südafrikanischen Deutsch-als-Fremdsprache-Lernenden gefördert werden kann und welche Strategien sich dafür eignen. Obwohl die deutsche Sprache in Südafrika von weniger als 1% der Bevölkerung gelernt und gesprochen wird, wird die Sprache in der südafrikanischen Verfassung als förderwürdig eingestuft. Schreibflüssigkeit gilt als eine zentrale Komponente der Schreibkompetenz und hat einen genauso hohen Stellenwert wie Schreibstrategien. Um die Ausgangsfrage zu beantworten, wird im Folgenden zunächst der Hintergrund des Themas dargestellt und erläutert, was unter Schreibflüssigkeit verstanden wird. Im Anschluss daran wird das südafrikanische Bildungssystem und die Rolle der deutschen Sprache in Südafrika näher beschrieben, um dann im letzten Teil des Beitrags darauf einzugehen, welche Strategien angewandt werden können, um die Schreibflüssigkeit von südafrikanischen DaF-Lernenden zu fördern.

Hintergrund des Themas

Als studentische Mitarbeiterin arbeitete ich am Lehrstuhl für die Deutsche Sprache der Gegenwart der RWTH Aachen unter anderem an einem vom BMBF-geförderten Projekt, das sich mit der *Kompetenzförderung im Schreiben* (KOFISCH¹) beschäftigt. Dem Projekt lag die Annahme zugrunde, dass Schreiben – eine der vier zentralen Kompetenzen des Sprachenlernens – die am schwierigsten zu erwerbende Fähigkeit ist.² Diese Schwierigkeit ergibt sich aus den spezifischen Merkmalen der kommunikativen Distanz nach Koch und Oesterreicher, wonach auf Grund der räumlichen und zeitlichen Distanzierung der Kommunikationspartner*innen der Text aus sich selbst heraus verstehbar sein muss, da die Rezipienten keine Rückfragemöglichkeit haben.³ Bourdin und Fayol haben in diesem Zusammenhang herausgefunden, dass die Qualität eines schriftlichen Textes auf Grund dieser spezifischen Anforderungen an die schriftsprachliche Textproduktion im Vergleich zur mündlichen Erzählung geringer ausfällt.⁴ Deshalb ist es wichtig, die Schreibkompetenz zu fördern. Neben der Lesekompetenz gehört sie zu den Schlüsselqualifikationen der beruflichen Teilhabe in literalen Gesellschaften.⁵

Das Thema der Förderung der Schreibkompetenz bildete den Ausgangspunkt für das KOFISCH-Projekt, das im Zeitraum von September

- 1 Förderkennzeichen W1473AFO. Vgl. dazu auch die zum Projekt entstandene Dissertation von Amir Abbas Kayal: *Eine Wirksamkeitsanalyse zur Förderung der berufsbezogenen Schreibkompetenz von jungen Erwachsenen im Übergangssystem*. Aachen: RWTH Aachen University, 2023.
- 2 Vgl. Ruth Eßer. „Übungen zum Schreiben“. *Handbuch Fremdsprachenunterricht*. Ed. Karl-Richard Bausch et al. Tübingen, Basel: Francke, 2003. S. 292.
- 3 Vgl. Peter Koch/Wulf Oesterreicher. „Sprache der Nähe – Sprache der Distanz. Mündlichkeit und Schriftlichkeit im Spannungsfeld von Sprachtheorie und Sprachgeschichte“. *Romanistisches Jahrbuch* 36. Ed. Olf Deutschmann et al. Berlin, New York: De Gruyter, 1986. Koch, Peter/Oesterreicher, Wulf. „Mündlichkeit und Schriftlichkeit von Texten“. *Textlinguistik*. 15 Einführungen und eine Diskussion. Ed. Nina Janich. Tübingen: Narr 2019. Eßer. *Übungen zum Schreiben* (wie Fußnote 2). S. 292.
- 4 Béatrice Bourdin/Michel Fayol. “Even in adults, written production is still more costly than oral production”. *International Journal of Psychology* 37 (4) 2002. S. 219-227. Doi: 10.1080/00207590244000070.
- 5 Vgl. Sabine Stephany et al. „Lese- und Schreibflüssigkeit diagnostizieren und fördern.“ *Sprach- und Schriftsprachförderung wirksam gestalten: innovative Konzepte und Forschungsimpulse* (Bildung durch Sprache und Schrift Bd. 3). Ed. Cora Titz et al. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2020.

2020 bis August 2023 in Nordrhein-Westfalen durchgeführt wurde. Die Proband*innen waren junge Erwachsene, für die Deutsch entweder Erst- oder Fremdsprache war und die im Rahmen einer berufsvorbereitenden Maßnahme des beruflichen Übergangssystems in den drei Gewerken: Hotel/Gastronomie, Garten- und Landschaftsbau und Holz/Metall tätig waren. Untersuchungsgegenstand war die Entwicklung der Schreibkompetenz der Teilnehmenden, die anhand ihrer Schreibprodukte (hauptsächlich Wochenberichte als die meistgeschriebene und meisteingereichte Textsorte) erfasst wurde. In der ersten Kohorte wurde auf Basis der Bewertungsergebnisse der Schreibprodukte und der Hospitationen ein Förderkonzept erstellt, das von Stollenwerk und Kayal näher beschrieben wird.⁶ In der zweiten Kohorte wurde das Förderkonzept sodann erprobt und auf der Grundlage der Textbewertungsergebnisse der Experimentalgruppe (der laufenden zweiten Kohorte) sowie des Feedbacks der Anleiter*innen und Teilnehmenden weiter verfeinert. Im Rahmen der Ergebnisse der Textbewertungen und teilnehmenden Beobachtungen wurde festgestellt, dass viele der Teilnehmenden bereits an den basalen Schreibfertigkeiten scheitern. Aus diesem Grund wurde in das Förderkonzept eine Fördereinheit zur Schreibflüssigkeit implementiert.

Schreibflüssigkeit

Zur Förderung der Schreibflüssigkeit wurden im KOFISCH-Projekt Aufgaben konzipiert⁷, die sich an dem international verbreiteten Begriff der *writing fluency* orientieren.⁸ Die Kompetenz der Schreibflüssigkeit setzt sich nach Stephany et al. zusammen aus der Fertigkeit, automatisiert flüssig, leserlich und grammatisch korrekt zu schreiben (*Transkriptionsflüssigkeit*) sowie der Fähigkeit, Texte kohärent zu formulieren (*Formulierungsflüssigkeit*)⁹ und umfasst damit die Bereiche der Rechtschreibung, der (leserlichen)

6 Vgl. Lara Stollenwerk/Amir Kayal. „Förderung der Schreibkompetenz“. Sprache im Beruf 5 (2) 2022. S. 237-245. Doi:10.25162/sprb-2022-0013.

7 Vgl. dazu auch Nadine Wiese/Amir Kayal. „Förderung der Schreibflüssigkeit von jungen Erwachsenen im beruflichen Übergangssystem (im KOFISCH-Projekt)“. Sprache im Beruf 6 (1) 2023. S. 83-91. Doi: 10.25162/sprb-2023-0006.

8 Vgl. Sabine Stephany et al. „Das Projekt Lese- und Schreibflüssigkeit – Konzeption, Diagnostik, Förderung (FluLeS)“. BiSS-Journal, Nov. 2019, 11. Ausgabe, 2019. S. 28. Stephany et al. Schreibflüssigkeit fördern (wie Fußnote 5).

9 Vgl. Stephany et al. FluLeS-Projekt (wie Fußnote 8). S. 28. Stephany et al. Schreibflüssigkeit fördern (wie Fußnote 5). S. 163.

Handschrift bzw. des Tastaturschreibens und des flüssigen Formulierens der Gedanken.¹⁰

Die Defizite in der Schreibflüssigkeit einiger Teilnehmenden im Projekt wurden sowohl bei den teilnehmenden Beobachtungen als auch bei den Textbewertungen deutlich. So konnte bei den teilnehmenden Beobachtungen festgestellt werden, dass der Schreibprozess bei einigen Proband*innen stockend verläuft und sie sehr viel Zeit benötigen, die Wörter zu schreiben oder zu tippen. Dies hat mitunter dazu geführt, dass der Schreibprozess gänzlich abgebrochen wurde. Ein automatisiertes und flüssiges Schreiben war bei diesen Teilnehmenden sogar bei gängigen Alltagswörtern nicht möglich. Durch den Abbruch des Schreibprozesses war außerdem die Kohärenz der Texte bei der Textbewertung nicht immer gegeben. Die Textbewertungen haben gezeigt, dass ein Großteil der Teilnehmenden Defizite in der Rechtschreibung und Grammatik hat. Einzelne Textteile, und von wenigen Teilnehmenden sogar ganze Texte, waren sowohl auf Grund der fehlerhaften Rechtschreibung als auch auf Grund der Handschrift nicht lesbar.

Bei genauerer Betrachtung der drei zu fördernden Bereiche: der Rechtschreibung, der (leserlichen) Handschrift bzw. des Tastaturschreibens und des flüssigen Formulierens der Gedanken wird klar, dass es sich hierbei um basale Kompetenzen handelt, die jeder trainieren muss – sowohl Deutschals-Fremdsprache-Lernende als auch deutsche Erstsprachler*innen.¹¹ Dies wurde auch im Laufe des Projekts deutlich, an dem Personen aus beiden Gruppen teilnahmen. Die Förderung der Schreibflüssigkeit ist wichtig, da eine Automatisierung der basalen Schreibfertigkeit das Arbeitsgedächtnis entlastet, sodass beim Schreiben mehr Kapazitäten für andere kognitive Prozesse, wie beispielsweise die Planung des weiteren Textes, zur Verfügung stehen.

Das südafrikanische Bildungssystem

In Südafrika gibt es eine Schulpflicht. Die Schulpflicht gilt für alle Kinder vom siebten bis zum 15. Lebensjahr. Sie beginnt mit einer siebenjährigen *Primary Education* (Grade 1 bis 7) und mündet in eine fünfjährige *Secondary Education* (Grade 8 bis 12). In der Regel schließen also alle Kinder die *Primary Education* im Alter von 13 Jahren ab. Die anschließende *Secondary*

10 Vgl. Stephany et al. FluLeS-Projekt (wie Fußnote 8). S. 6.

11 Vgl. Stephany et al. FluLeS-Projekt (wie Fußnote 8).

Education dauert mindestens zwei weitere Schuljahre. Hinsichtlich der Schulpflicht könnten die Schüler*innen damit ihre schulische Laufbahn nach der Absolvierung des neunten Schuljahres beenden.

Mit Hilfe der Impulsvorträge und der Gespräche mit den Teilnehmenden der Summer School habe ich gelernt, dass es eine große Diskrepanz zwischen der angestrebten Schulpolitik und der Wirklichkeit gibt. Um die lokalen Sprachen zu erhalten und den Schüler*innen den Übergang in die Schule zu erleichtern, sollen die Schüler*innen in den ersten drei Schuljahren in ihrer lokalen Sprache unterrichtet werden.¹² Ab der vierten Klassenstufe wird dann Englisch als *Language of Teaching and Learning* (kurz LOTL) und damit als Unterrichtssprache verwendet. Problematisch ist allerdings, dass alle Schüler*innen am Ende ihrer Schulzeit ihre Prüfungen in Englisch ablegen müssen. Aus diesem Grund versuchen Eltern, denen es finanziell möglich ist, ihre Kinder auf Privatschulen zu schicken, damit ihre Kinder bereits ab der ersten Klasse mit Englisch in Berührung kommen. Werden die Kinder in den ersten drei Schuljahren in ihrer lokalen Sprache unterrichtet, haben sie den Nachteil, dass sie drei Jahre weniger Spracherfahrung in Englisch haben als diejenigen Schüler*innen, die seit Beginn ihrer Schullaufbahn in Englisch unterrichtet werden. Hinzu kommt, dass Englisch als *lingua franca* einen Prestige-Status gegenüber den lokalen Sprachen genießt, sodass die Eltern häufig der Meinung sind, ihre Kinder seien mit Englisch wesentlich besser für die Zukunft gewappnet, und manche von ihnen möchten nicht, dass ihre Kinder die lokale Sprache erlernen. Dies führt wiederum dazu, dass immer weniger Menschen die südafrikanischen Lokalsprachen sprechen.

Die Rolle der deutschen Sprache in Südafrika

Obwohl die deutsche Sprache zur Zeit der Apartheid von 1948–1994 neben dem Englischen und Holländischen die dritt wichtigste Sprache in Südafrika war, hat sie heutzutage an Stellenwert verloren.¹³ Zwar wird die deutsche Sprache als förderwürdig angesehen und in der südafrikanischen Verfassung

12 Vgl. dazu auch Department of Education of the Republic of South Africa. Strengthening the utilisation of African Languages as the Language of Teaching and Learning (LOTL) in the Foundation Phase. www.education.gov.za/AfricanLanguagesasLOLT.aspx (14.04.2023).

13 Vgl. Rolf Annas. „Deutsch und Deutsche in Südafrika“. *Jahrbuch für internationale Germanistik* 54 (2), 2022. S. 93, 98. Doi: 10.3726/JIG542_91.

(Chapter 1, § 6) als solche bezeichnet, allerdings sieht die Realität anders aus.¹⁴ Einsparungsmaßnahmen und die damit einhergehenden Stellenstreichungen und Schließung von Deutschabteilungen, fehlende konkrete und gedruckte Lehrpläne, Unklarheiten über die Zuständigkeiten sowie unzureichende Kommunikation zwischen Erziehungsministerium, Prüfungsbehörden und Schulen führen dazu, dass Deutsch heute als eine Minderheitssprache angesehen wird, die von weniger als 1% der südafrikanischen Bevölkerung gesprochen und gerade einmal von 1.200 Studierenden im Jahr studiert wird.¹⁵ Von Maltzan (2009) geht sogar so weit zu konstatieren, dass europäische Sprachen auf Grund der curricularen Situation in den südafrikanischen Schulen zunehmend ausgegrenzt werden.¹⁶

Gemäß dem Curriculum müssen alle Schüler*innen zwei der elf Amtssprachen (Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa und isiZulu) lernen. Auf Grund der engen Fassung des Curriculums werden allerdings Schüler*innen, die eine dritte Fremdsprache lernen wollen, „mit Sicht auf langfristige Ausbildungsziele und derzeitige Zulassungsbedingungen zur Universität erheblich einschränkt“.¹⁷ Demnach ist es nicht verwunderlich, dass die Bedeutung der deutschen Sprache in Südafrika abnimmt.

Wenngleich die deutsche Sprache in Südafrika heutzutage eine marginale Rolle einnimmt, sollte auch die Minderheit von weniger als 1% optimal unterrichtet und, bei entsprechendem Bedarf, hinsichtlich der Schreibflüssigkeit gefördert werden.

Förderung der Schreibflüssigkeit südafrikanischer DaF-Lernenden

Wie bereits ausgeführt, ist es nicht nötig, die Förderung der Schreibflüssigkeit¹⁸ im südafrikanischen Lehr- und Lernkontext anders zu gestalten als bei anderen DaF-Lernenden oder sogar Erstsprache-Lernenden.

14 Carlotta von Maltzan. „Sprachenpolitik und die Rolle der Fremdsprachen (Deutsch) in Südafrika“. Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics Plus 38, 2009. S. 210-213. Doi: 10.5842/38-0-66.

15 Vgl. ebd. – Vgl. auch Annas. Deutsch in Südafrika (wie Fußnote 13). S. 95-97.

16 Vgl. von Maltzan. Sprachenpolitik (wie Fußnote 14). S. 209-210.

17 Ebd. S. 210.

18 Die nachfolgenden Möglichkeiten der Förderung der Schreibflüssigkeit basieren auf Stephany et al. FluLeS-Projekt (wie Fußnote 5).

Um die Schreibflüssigkeit zu trainieren, ist es wichtig, den Schüler*innen genügend Zeit und Übungsmöglichkeiten einzuräumen; denn ohne ein kontinuierliches Training erfolgt keine Automatisierung. Um die *Leserlichkeit* der Handschrift zu fördern, bietet es sich an, den Lernenden die Handbewegungen zum Schreiben der Buchstaben zu zeigen – evtl. deren Hand sogar selbst zu führen. Dies kann helfen, den Lernenden zu verdeutlichen, wie sie die Buchstaben leserlich schreiben können. Damit einher geht die Übung der sogenannten *Alphabet-Task*.¹⁹ Bei der Alphabet-Task sollen die Lernenden innerhalb einer Minute das Alphabet so oft und leserlich wie möglich schreiben. Damit wird die automatisierte Abrufung der Buchstaben trainiert. Dies hilft den Lernenden, ähnlich aussehende Buchstaben automatisiert zu unterscheiden, sodass sie keine zusätzlichen kognitiven Kapazitäten dafür benötigen, über den Unterschied beispielsweise zwischen und <d> oder <p> und <q> nachzudenken. Dasselbe kann auch auf der Wortebene erfolgen, indem Bildkarten gezeigt werden und die Lernenden so schnell wie möglich aufschreiben sollen, was gesehen wurde. Schließlich können Bildkarten ebenfalls genutzt werden, um die Automatisierung auf Satzebene zu trainieren. Hierfür könnten einzelne Sätze zu den Bildkarten formuliert werden. Dies trainiert zusätzlich die Rechtschreibung. Hilfreich ist außerdem, den Lernenden immer wieder ihre Texte zur Selbstkorrektur vorzulegen, damit diese nachvollziehen und überprüfen können, ob das, was sie geschrieben haben, auch wirklich leserlich ist.

Da Texte nicht immer Wort für Wort formuliert werden, ist es etwas schwieriger, die *Formulierungsflüssigkeit* zu trainieren. Hier bietet es sich an, den Lernenden zunächst Chunks und Phrasen zum Lernen zur Verfügung zu stellen. Weiterhin können den Lernenden Sätze vorgelegt werden, die sie mit Hilfe von Konnektoren verbinden sollen. Außerdem ist es hilfreich, die Lernenden kurze Texte schreiben zu lassen, in denen im Anschluss beispielsweise die Konnektoren geändert werden. Dabei sollen die Lernenden reflektieren, welchen Einfluss die unterschiedlichen Konnektoren auf den Satz bzw. den Text haben. Damit wird das bewusste Auswählen von passenden Formulierungsalternativen trainiert, was wiederum mit einem gewissen Training zur Automatisierung führen kann.

Prinzipiell ist bei der Förderung der Schreibflüssigkeit zu beachten, dass das Training stets praxisorientiert ist und mit „alltagstauglichen“ Textproduktionsaufgaben verknüpft wird.

19 Vgl. Stephany et al. FluLeS-Projekt (wie Fußnote 8). S. 164.

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A Study of the Level of Endangerment of !Kung as Spoken in Namibia

Abstract. This study investigated the level of endangerment of !Kung (San language variant) as spoken in Corridor 17, Aranos and Amenuis localities of Namibia. The aim of the study was to protect, preserve and promote !Kung as an indigenous Namibian language and the cultural practices of its users. The study team conducted in-depth interviews, focus groups and distributed questionnaires and collected and later digitized 39 cultural expressions at the Namibian University of Science and Technology (NUST) library. The study team managed to study 41 households in !Kung speaking settlement areas only. The study concluded that !Kung is vulnerable, meaning although most children speak the language, it has been restricted to home domains. Outside these localities, there are noticeable indicators that !Kung is endangered, meaning children no longer learn the language as a 'mother tongue' at school level and the number of its users has dwindled. In order to revitalise !Kung and the culture, this study recommends seven strategies: 1) revitalizing !Kung and the culture through teaching !Kung folklore, 2) training !Kung speaking research assistants and teachers to utilise the existing San research outcomes, 3) contextualising and teaching !Kung historical narratives in the context of primary instruction, 4) introducing and promoting !Kung indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) and herbal life in !Kung classes; 5) organising !Kung story telling events at Chief Sofia Jakobs Primary School, 6) integrating !Kung folk art, folk songs, and traditional games in the !Kung instruction; 7) transforming !Kung endangered cultural practices into theatrical productions. In line with these linguistic and ethnographic strategies, the study also strongly recommends that the Namibian Ministry of Education introduce !Kung as a medium of primary instruction and as a subject in Corridor 17, 18, Amenuis and Aranos localities of Namibia. The language can be accorded with the status of endangered Namibian language which can be preserved, protected, promoted and revitalized.

Key words: language endangerment, cultural subjugation, cultural expressions, preserving, promoting, and protecting endangered languages/cultures and !Kung coming of age ritual

1. Background of the study

The various studies reviewed thus far have indicated that there are approximately 27,000 San people living in Namibia. The San have inhabited Southern Africa for at least 30,000 years; proof of this habitation is the wealth of rock art which can be found in numerous locations throughout these countries. Estimations might vary, but there are probably around 17,000 speakers of !Kung (San variety) in Southern Africa. Counting is a difficult task because speakers are scattered on farms, interspersed with speakers of other languages, but Brenzinger¹ counts 9,000 in Namibia, 2,000 in Botswana, 3,700 in South Africa and 1,000 in Angola. Immediately after the Namibian independence in 1990, elders in Namibia told us that nearly 3000 !Kung people left Namibia with the South African army as some were taken to be defectors, conspirators, and envoys locally. Brenzinger assumes that in Namibia, up to 400 of !Kung people live in resettlement schemes, i. e., Ekoka (185), Onamatadiva (132), Oshana-Shiwa (85) and Eendobe (62).² The P3ICL team conducted focused group discussions with the San elders in Tsumkwe in 2019 in which elders listed the places where !Kung speaking people are living currently, including Eastern Otjozondjupa, Eastern Kavango, Gobabis district, Grootfontein, Tsintsabis, Omatako, Okongo, Ekoka, Mangetti Dune, Rundu, Tsumkwe, Mpungo, around Etosha park, including settlement areas such as Corridor 15, 17 and 18, Amenues and Aranos. The current study aimed at assessing the status of !Kung as spoken in Corridor 17 and 18, Aranos and Amenues localities of Namibia. With the objective to contribute ideas to the revitalisation of both !Kung language and culture, this article recommends seven strategies.

1.1 Problem Statement

The focused group discussions with the San elders in Tsumkwe and the review of related literature thereafter show that several previous studies

1 Matthias Brenzinger. "The Twelve Modern Khoisan Languages". Khoisan languages and linguistics. Proceedings of the 3rd international symposium, July 6-10, 2008, Riezlern/Kleinwalsertal. Ed. Alena Witzlack-Makarevich/Martina Ernszt. Cologne: Rüdiger Köppe, 2013. P. 139-161.

2 Ibid.

focused on either San languages or modern Khoisan languages in general. In several empirical studies, these studies of the San languages of Namibia presented the languages as Khoisan families. The debate about the classification of San languages as San or Khoisan is still fresh and boiling amongst the European Khoisanists. Locally in Namibia, however, these languages are treated differently as San and clearly separated from Nama and Damara studies (Khoekhoegowab studies). The untimely separation and the divorce between San and Khoe languages appear to be clear and complete now in the Namibian primary mother tongue instruction contexts as Khoekhoegowab (KKG) is the medium of primary instruction in areas like Keetmanshoop, Karasburge and Mareintal. Some of the instructional materials approved for the education of KKG as a medium of instruction cannot be used for the education of San children in Omaheke, Hardap or Otjozondjupa regions as !Kung is a language of its own. In Tsumkwe area, elders told us that Jul'hoasi has been raised to the level of primary instruction in Tsumkwe only. We also noticed that the grouping of these San languages as dialects or language clusters has not yet ended. This current study acknowledges the contribution of the previous Khoisan linguists and assumes that these previous studies can open doors for the education of San children and the revitalisation of San languages in Namibia. The language debate should continue and remain vibrant. However, the San languages as spoken in Namibia have not been studied as distinct language groups.

San elders interviewed in Tsumkwe consider the speakers of !Kung (!Xun), Jul'hoasi and Taa (!Xoo) as pure San due to the hunting, foraging, and herding culturally shared practices although the speakers of these languages are not mutually intelligible. What is shared among these San languages in Namibia is the cultural similarity and the clicks. Though these languages are not mutually intelligible, some academic resources and teaching materials developed for other San variants such as Jul'hoasi in Tsumkwe can be adapted and translated into !Kung and introduce !Kung as the medium of instruction for !Kung speakers of Namibia.

In few observations, the current cultural practices of the !Kung people have been ignored and detached from the linguistic mapping and classification of Khoisan studies. Are the !Kung people of Namibia still hunters-gatherers-foragers or have they joined cattle herding and farming under the protection of the Namibian government, the Ovambo and Ovaherero ethnic groups? Do the !Kung people now live a hybrid and blended tribal lifestyle in Namibia? Our observations in Amenues, Aranos and some areas of Corridors 17, 15 and 18 show that the !Kung people have become

even commercial vegetable farmers and farm assistants working with the rich Ovaherero and Ovambo cattle herders. Consequently, language shift with the San community is clearly observable. Leaving behind !Kung, people in these areas started shifting to Ovaherero and Oshiwambo for survival reasons. Counting the speakers of !Kung is a cumbersome exercise in Namibia because speakers are scattered on farms, interspersed with speakers of Oshiwambo, Otjiherero and Afrikaans and other minority languages in Namibia resulting in cultural loss and language shift. !Kung children are exposed to these languages as mother tongue instructions at various levels of schooling.

Although the speakers of minority languages in Namibia have a deep attachment to their cultural identity, root and history embedded in their languages, researchers argue that these marginalised and endangered languages themselves have proved to be unmaintainable for economic, political, and academic reasons. Literacy may not be best achieved through a first three-four years in the mother tongue, say for example, !Kung as a medium of primary instruction in Corridor 17, 18 and Amenues and Aranos in Omaheke, Hardap and Otjozondjupa regions. The problems that haunt African mother tongue instruction programmes are about the nature of institutional structures that work to disempower their clients, by reinforcing tendencies to marginality of minority languages and speakers already prevalent in outside society.³ The low population density can lead to the death of languages.⁴ The language shift that takes place because of economic factors and political decisions in Namibia and the emphasis given to English, Oshiwambo, Afrikaans and Otjiherero will endanger and marginalise all other San languages⁵ and other minority languages. This current study problematises that both !Kung as a San variant and the cultural practices of the people have been vulnerable

3 Christopher Stroud. "Mother-tongue Programmes and the Politics of Language: Linguistic Citizenship versus Linguistic Human Rights". *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 22 (4) (2001): p. 339-355. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434630108666440>.

4 Niklaas Fredericks. "Language Shift or Maintenance: Accounting for the Linguistic Vitality of Khoekhoegowab". *NAWA Journal of Language and Communication* Vol. 9 (2) (2016): p. 77-94.

5 James Suzman. *An Assessment of the Status of the San in Namibia (Regional Assessment of the Status of the San in Southern Africa. Report Series. Report No. 4 of 5)*. Windhoek: Legal Assistance Centre, 2001. <https://www.lac.org.na/projects/lead/Pdf/sannami.pdf>.

and marginalised and proposes linguistic and ethnographic strategies to revitalise both the culture and the language.

1.2 Objectives of !Kung P3ICL Research Project

This study aims at determining the level of endangerment of !Kung as spoken in Namibia. Therefore, the main objective is to ascertain both the level of endangerment of this variety and the ethnolinguistic vitality of the language and the culture. The study will also assist the preservation of the cultural expressions of the !Kung people by setting up a repository in the library with an open access for researchers and interested stakeholders, co-design contemporary theatrical productions and enhance policy awareness about the !Kung culture through the dissemination of information and advocacy with a view to promote cultural unity and diversity in Namibia. Therefore, in this study, the P3ICL refers to protecting, promoting and preserving !Kung culture and language in the Namibian context.

2.1 A Brief Review of Empirical Research and Policy Framework

UNESCO⁶ (2005) argues for the need to recognise linguistic diversity in society to promote cultural diversity, which is necessary for a full realisation of human rights and fundamental freedom. In this connection, Namibia adopted UNESCO's 2003 Convention⁷ for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and the UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. The Namibian Arts and Culture Policy is using these conventions as a framework for implementation. On the second note, it is worth mentioning that the Juba Language in Education Conference recommended three principles as follows:

- First, linguistic equity is needed so that all languages are protected, respected, and developed.
- Second, African languages to be used in partnership with international languages, and,

6 UNESCO. The 2005 Convention on The Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. Paris, 20 October 2005. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000142919>.

7 UNESCO. Language Vitality and Endangerment. Paris, 10-12 March 2003. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000183699>.

- Finally, effective teaching with a socially and culturally relevant curriculum as the most important element of quality education and therefore it should be implemented in all African countries.⁸

Several empirical, ethnographic, and linguistic studies have confirmed that many of the Khoisan languages in the Southern Africa have not been protected, respected, raised and developed to the level of primary instructions. Some are critically endangered; others are either moribund or dead and few are vibrant. In line with this observation, Chebanne⁹ presents that Khoisan languages are underresearched, and the existing publications are divergent, and not accessible to the Khoisan communities as many of the speakers of these minority languages are not educated. While some anthropologists, linguists, and a few community organizations have contributed to the development of language resources, as yet these efforts have not had the desired effect. The reasons are that the publications used to implement impractical linguistic writing conventions or that no supportive programmes exist to encourage more focused and purposeful research and language promotion through literacy classes. Similarly, Hitchcock et al.¹⁰ testified that while many San people still experience injustice and cultural loss, this is tempered by success stories, examples of political mobilization, and a new spirit of community resistance.

More persuasively, Chebanne¹¹ argues that the Khoisan marginalisation is historical, resulting in the Khoisan languages not featuring in education and language development. Chebanne further argues that since the name San has the marginalized communities' approval, it could be used advisedly to obviate the historical prejudices associated with it or with some of the communities. The term 'Khoisan' is now generally accepted as a common reference for the combined Khoe (those speaking Khoekhoe languages) and

8 Hamish McIlwraith (Ed.). *Multilingual Education in Africa: Lessons from the Juba Language-in-Education Conference*. London: British Council, 2013. P. 7. https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/sites/teacheng/files/C413%20Juba%20Publication_FINAL_WEB%20ONLY%20v3.pdf.

9 Andy Chebanne. "The Role of Dictionaries in the Documentation and Codification of African Languages: The Case of Khoisan". *Lexikos* 20 (AFRILEX-reeks/series 20: 2010): p. 92-108. <https://doi.org/10.5788/20-0-134>.

10 Robert K. Hitchcock/Kazunobu Ikeya/Megan Bieseke/Richard B. Lee. "Introduction: Updating the San, Image and Reality of an African People in the Twenty First Century". *Senri Ethnological Studies* Vol. 70 (2006): p. 1-42.

11 Chebanne. *The Role of Dictionaries* (as note 9). P. 92.

San (those speaking non-Khoekhoe languages).¹² As presented in the table 1 below, Heine and König¹³ show that !Kung is spoken in southern Angola, northern and north-eastern Namibia, and north-western Botswana. These researchers have persuasively justified that the speakers of the various dialects of !Kung at the extreme ends of the chain do not understand one another. They have identified between twelve and fifteen dialects. They have also argued that the !Xun speakers of central Angola do not understand !Xun speakers of eastern Namibia or north-western Botswana. Even the dialects presumed to be closely interrelated are not mutually intelligible. This argument has been substantiated with empirical data. These researchers reasoned that all !Xun varieties that have come to their notice thus far were linked by some chain of mutual intelligibility and they preferred to treat the various speech forms as a single, even if complex, language.¹⁴

<i>Dialect label</i>	<i>Own name</i>	<i>Where spoken</i>
N1	<i>!xuun</i> or <i>kúándò !xuun</i> ('Kwando !Xun')	Southeastern Angola
N2	<i>!o huy</i> ('Forest !Xun')	Eastern half of central Angola
W1	<i>!xúún</i> or <i>!álè !xòân</i> ('Valley !Xun')	Ecnhana District, northern Namibia
W2	<i>!xúún</i> or <i>!ákhòè !xòân</i> ('Kwanyama !Xun')	Ecnhana District, northern Namibia
W3	<i>!xúún</i>	Tsintsabis, Tsumeb District, northern Namibia
K	<i>!xúún</i> ⁶⁾	Western Rundu District, northern Namibia, and adjacent areas of Angola
C1		Tsumeb District, northern Namibia
C2		Grootfontein District, northern Namibia
E1	<i>ju-/hoan(-si)</i>	Tsumkwc District, northeastern Namibia, and adjacent parts of Botswana
E2	<i>!xun, ju-/hoa(sí)</i>	Around Dikundu ⁹⁾ , western Caprivi Strip, northeastern Namibia
E3	<i>ju-/hoan(-si)</i> or <i>!xun</i> or <i>+x'áo-//àèn</i> ('northern people')	Gobabis District, eastern Namibia

Table 1. The Dialects of !Xun

12 Ibid. P. 93.

13 Bernd Heine/Christa König. The !Xun Language: A Dialect Grammar of Northern Khoisan. Köln: Rüdiger Köppe, 2015.

14 Ibid. P. 7.

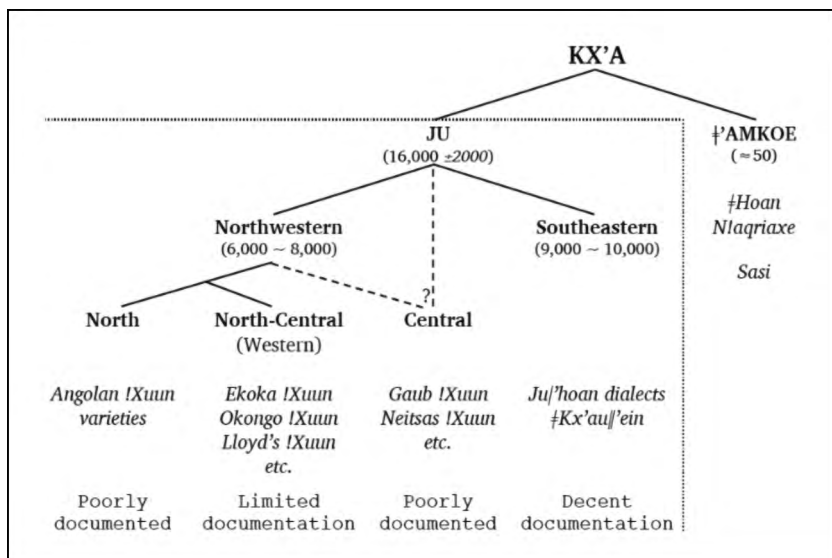


Fig 1: Cumulative Summary of the Number of Speakers¹⁵

In line with the empirical evidence as presented in the table and figures above, this study has also assumed that !Kung belongs to the Kxá family and is more related to the Jul'hoasi as spoken in Tsumkwe. As Jul'hoasi has reached the level of the medium of instruction in Tsumkwe localities, similar practices can be shared through translations and exchange of experts. All in all, the brief review of empirical studies above and policy frameworks, as well as the consultations with experts in the field revealed that !Kung language is vulnerable and marginalised in Namibia. This study also assumes that !Kung is not a dialect.

15 Bernd Heine/Henry Honken. "The Kx'a Family: A New Khoisan Genealogy". *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 79 (2010): p. 5-36. Here p. 8.

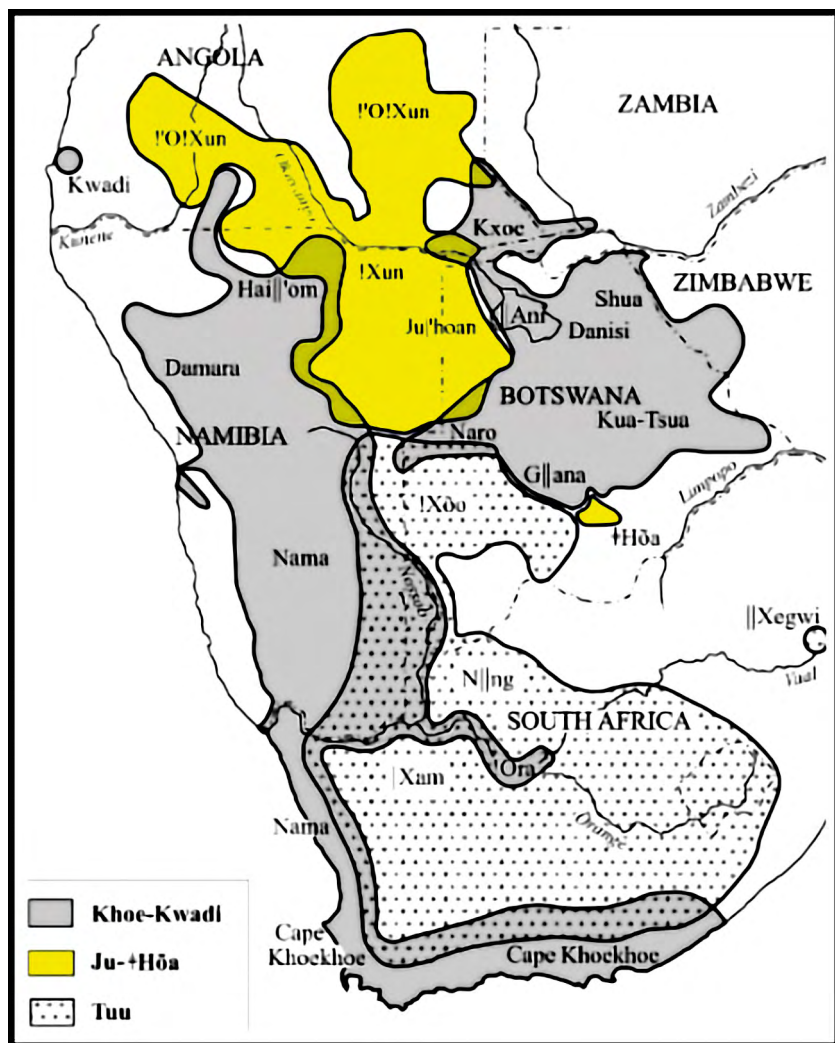


Fig 2. The Distribution of !Kung in SADC¹⁶

¹⁶ Ibid.

2.2 A Conceptual Framework

This current study followed UNESCO's Language Vitality and Endangerment Questionnaire (2003)¹⁷ as the main research instrument and assessed the level of the endangerment of !Kung. This task was very important. Secondly, in line with the Ethnolinguistic Vitality Theory (EVT) of Giles, Bourhis and Taylor¹⁸, the study team consulted !Kung elders and proposed strategies of the revitalization of !Kung language and culture. EVT tenets which can be summarised as "perceived strength differential, intergroup distance, utilitarianism and intergroup discordance"¹⁹ can be followed to revitalise !Kung culture and language. Giles, Bourhis and Taylor²⁰ developed a three-level structural analysis to investigate the vitality of a variety and its speakers: status, demography, and institutional support. These three variables allow an ethnolinguistic group to survive and behave as an active, collective, and distinctive group in intergroup situations and ensure the survival of a variety.

Thirdly, the other focus of the study was not only meant to describe the level of endangerment but to come up with strategies of advocacy for the status and the inclusion of !Kung as the medium of instruction and as a subject at primary level in Namibia. Therefore, in addition to the Ethnolinguistic Vitality Theory, this study also followed Linguistics Citizenship (LC) Theory in order to promote and protect !Kung language and culture in the Namibian context. LC guided the advocacy and inclusivity argument of the P3ICL project.

In line with Heine and Honken's classification²¹ of !Kung as a !Kxá language family, the current study has followed Linguistic Citizenship (LC) theoretical framework as the theory that offered the research team both the sociopolitical and theoretical rationales for an integrative view of language policy and planning in the context of education, combining an academic and social analysis of language political issues that can support a transformative approach to issues of language and democracy in the Namibian educational

17 <https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/00120-EN.pdf>.

18 Howard Giles/Richard Y. Bourhis/D.M. Taylor. "Towards a Theory of Language in Ethnic Group Relations". *Language, Ethnicity, and Intergroup Relations*. Ed. Howard Giles. London: Academic Press, 1977. P. 307-348.

19 Ibid.

20 Ibid.

21 Heine/Honken. *The Kx'a Family* (as note 15).

context. Basically, the theory addresses the very real materiality of language in minority politics by attending to the fact that linguistic minorities suffer from both structural and valuatinal discrimination.²² LC has given us the following guiding principles:

- Marginal language communities participate in the design and the implementation of their own language provisions.
- The sociopolitical rights and obligations should in fact follow from, and be defined by, the representations, practices and ideologies of language and society that circumscribe communities of speakers in their everyday associational networks, or 'sites of mediation.'
- The legitimacy of main-stream, majority speaking, official-language society to delimit and characterize language practices solely in terms of formal and public spheres has been criticized.
- The notion of linguistic citizenship links language, subject position, and issues of redistribution by looking at language as a political and social concept firmly into discourses of welfare and equity.
- The term 'linguistic citizenship' captures the idea that representations of citizens as speakers and members of speech communities also carry political implications.
- Linguistic citizenship denotes the situation where speakers themselves exercise control over their language, deciding what languages are, and what they may mean, and where language issues (especially in educational sites) are discursively tied to a range of social issues – policy issues and questions of equity.²³

In line with these guiding tenets from the two theories, the research team designed the research tools and conducted the study. Following the tenets of the theories, the team assessed the living situation of !Kung speakers, evaluated their power and control over their language, investigated their roles in the preservation of their own language, and what !Kung may mean, and where language issues are. Both LT and ERT theories guided the research team to advocate the revitalization of !Kung as an endangered indigenous Namibian language and its inclusion in the primary school contexts of the Namibian schools.

22 Stroud. Mother-tongue Programmes (as note 3). P. 350.

23 Ibid. P. 339-355.

3. Research Methods and Procedures

Following a participatory research design below, the P3ICL team made the first trip to Tsumkwe San settlement area in Otjozondjupa region on 24 May 2019 and conducted focused group discussions (FGD). The aim of the first FGD conducted in Tsumkwe was to find out the most endangered San language and culture in Namibia. San elders who joined us for the FGD recommended !Kung as one of the less studied San languages and advised the team to visit !Kung homesteads in Corridor 17, 18, Amenues and Aranós. The second trip to Corridor 17 and 18 of the Omaheke Region of Namibia was made in the last week of May 2019. Accompanied by an EU delegation, the study team decided on a third trip to Amenues and Aranós between 22-26 November 2019. The team conducted twelve FGDs and identified critically endangered cultural practice of the people: !Kung Ritual for Womanhood. During the same trip, the team followed UNESCO's Language Vitality and Endangerment Questionnaire (UNESCO 2003) to determine the status of the language.

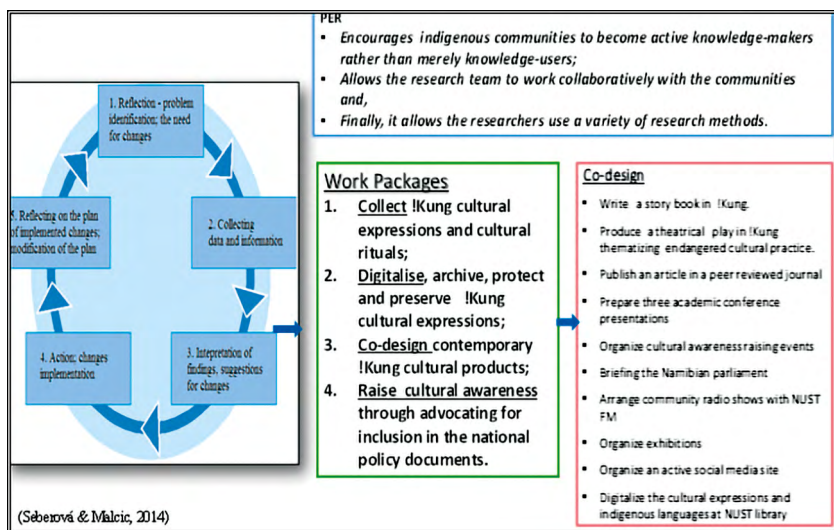


Fig 3: Participatory Ethnographic Research (PER) Design

Trip four was made on 26 March 2020 for the first theatrical production of !Kung ritual for womanhood. The team concluded the entire field work in July 2021. During these four trips and consultations, thereafter in 2022, the team managed to study 41 households and collected 37 cultural expressions such as folktales, proverbs, legends, fable, folk songs, jokes, myths, riddle, and stories of superstition following a participatory ethnographic research (PER) design²⁴ conceptualised in Fig. 3.

In line with a multi-method approach above, !Kung community members participated actively in storytelling events, identified the most endangered cultural practices, performed and recorded folk dances and took the lion's share in the production of the first theatrical play *Womanhood in !Kung Culture*. The team observed interactions, collected instructional materials, interviewed elders, and distributed questionnaire to find out the level of !Kung endangerment. !Kung elders were interviewed on the revitalisation strategies of their own language.

4. Major Findings and Discussions

4.1 Level of Endangerment

The P3ICL study team was tasked to determine the status of !Kung as spoken in corridors 17 and 18, Aranos and Amenues in Namibia. The team framed a few questions to guide the basic stream of the field work. Is !Kung endangered or vulnerable in the Namibian context? How should we revive the language if it is endangered or vulnerable? Which !Kung cultural practice is the most endangered in the country? How should we revive an endangered cultural practice? The team also considered UNESCO's classification system which shows how 'in trouble' the language is:

1. Vulnerable – most children speak the language, but it may be restricted to certain domains (e.g., home).
2. Definitely endangered – children no longer learn the language as a 'mother tongue' at home.
3. Severely endangered – the language is spoken by grandparents and older generations; while the parent generation may understand it, they do not speak it to children or among themselves.

24 Alena Seberová/Martin Malčík. "Information System 'Diagnostic' as a Tool of Action Research". *ICTE journal* 3 (1) (2014): p. 57-65. <https://periodicals.osu.eu/ictjournal/dokumenty/2014-01/ictjournal-2014-1-article-5.pdf>.

4. Critically endangered – the youngest speakers are grandparents and older, and they speak the language partially and infrequently.
5. Extinct – there are no speakers left.²⁵

In line with these guiding principles, it can be concluded that !Kung is in danger as its speakers might cease to use it. An observable language shift exists which requires further investigation. Several speakers of !Kung have been shifting to speaking Otjiherero, Oshiwambo, Afrikaans and English, even using these languages as their mother tongues and not just as medium of instruction. Due to extreme poverty and lack of access to native language instructions, !Kung people will continue to live marginalized. Within the context of Corridor 17 and 18, Amenues and Aranós localities of Namibia, !Kung is vulnerable²⁶ – most children speak the language, but it may be restricted to certain domains (e.g., home). Outside these localities, there are visible indications that the language is endangered which means children no longer learn the language as a ‘mother tongue’ at home. The P3CL team managed to study only 41 households in !Kung settlement areas. A large sample size might be needed to make a conclusive generalization. The !Kung people use their language in an increasingly reduced number of communicative domains and might cease to pass it on from one generation to the next though there are new speakers. The extinction of !Kung might result in loss of !Kung cultural identities, !Kung knowledge systems, and the variety of data needed to understand the structure of !Kung in the mind. More broadly, the intangible heritage of the !Kung community in Namibia might be diminished when the language disappears. Since language is closely linked to culture, loss of language almost always is accompanied by social and cultural disruptions. There exists negligible support from NGOs to upgrade !Kung language and cherish cultural practices as compared to other indigenous languages in Namibia. Children are not taught !Kung in schools, and many do not know how to write and read it. (As in 2019, there were only two Namibian teachers and one German linguist who could write in !Kung.) San people are not serious with the language and parents do not teach the children. !Kung people are highly scattered.

In the section below, data collected through the questionnaire have been summarised and presented.

25 <https://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2011/apr/15/language-extinct-endangered>.

26 The Guardian. (2021). Endangered Languages: the Full List <https://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2011/apr/15/language-extinct-endangered>.

4.1.2 Age, Gender and Qualification

As presented in the graphs below, 21 male and 19 female respondents completed the survey questionnaire and over 70% of the respondents aged above 40 years. Purposively, we targeted the elderly community members with the assumption that they were the repositories of the culture and language.

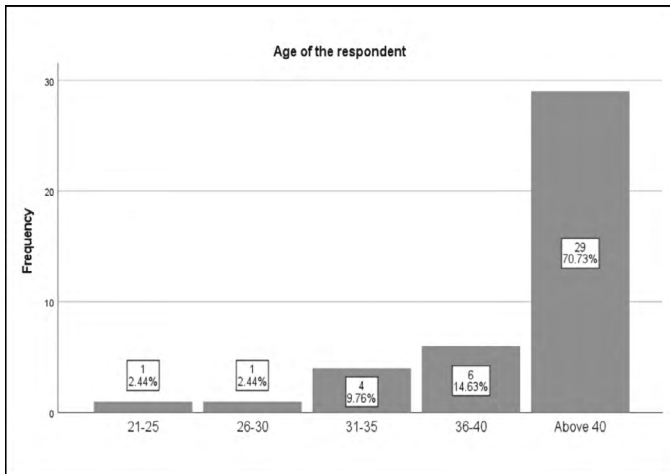


Fig 4: Age of the Respondents

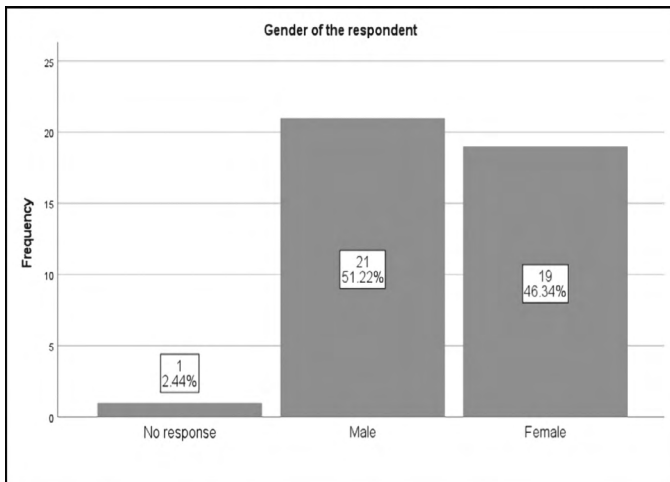


Fig 5: Gender Distribution

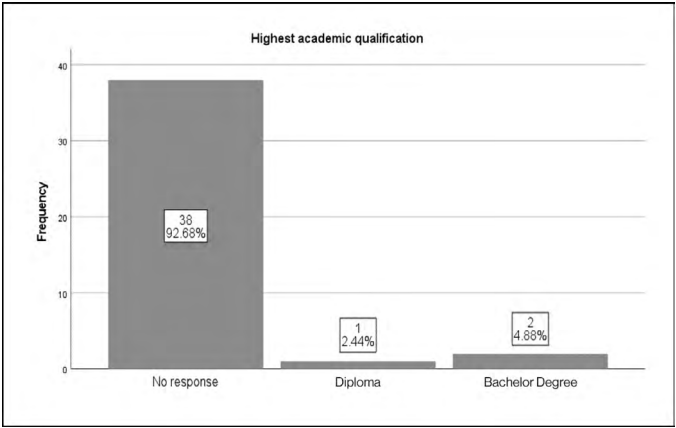


Fig 6: Academic Qualifications of Respondents

4.1.3 Level of Endangerment

As the figure 7 shows, !Kung elders assume that their own language is critically at huge risk. Specifically, 29.3% (twelve) of the respondents think that !Kung has already vanished, 7.3% (three) assume the language is critically endangered, 12.2% (five) severely endangered, 9.8% (four) definitely endangered, 17.1% (seven) unsafe, 17.1% (seven) safe and only 7.3% (three) remained silent.

4.1.4 Domestic Use of !Kung

Five !Kung speaking research assistants unpacked the status of the language at home level and translated the cultural expressions we collected from !Kung into English. The language is at home domains and for many functions, but the dominant languages including Oshiwambo, Otjiherero, Afrikaans and English begin to penetrate even home domains. As presented in the figure 8, 12.2% (five) !Kung speaking respondents assume that the language is highly limited to home use, 4.9% (two) formal domain, 9.8% (four) dwindling domain, 19.5% (eight) multilingual parity, 51.2% (twenty-one) universal use and 2.4% (one) gave no response to this question.

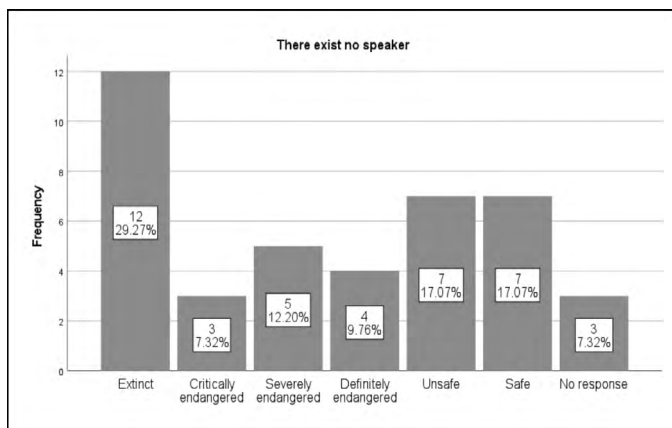


Fig 7: Endangerment

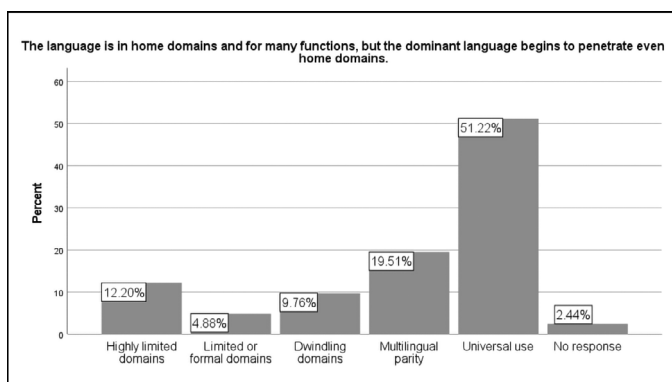


Fig 8: !Kung at Home Domains

4.1.5 !Kung Education at Primary School Level

The study team visited Chief Sofia Primary School in Corridor 17 of the Omaheke Region of Namibia and found out a total of 142 ethnically !Kung speaking learners who are exposed to either Oshiwambo or Otjiherero as the medium of instruction. With the assistance from a German professor of linguistics, the !Kung community managed to design a dictionary, mathematics and science teaching materials. However, the community does not have any

mandate to benefit from these materials yet. The dictionary is meant for business. Therefore, as the graph 9 briefly presents, literacy education in !Kung is not part of the school's primary curriculum yet. !Kung is not the medium of mother tongue instruction even where !Kung population is relatively high. In order to revitalise both the language and culture, formal institutional support is needed.

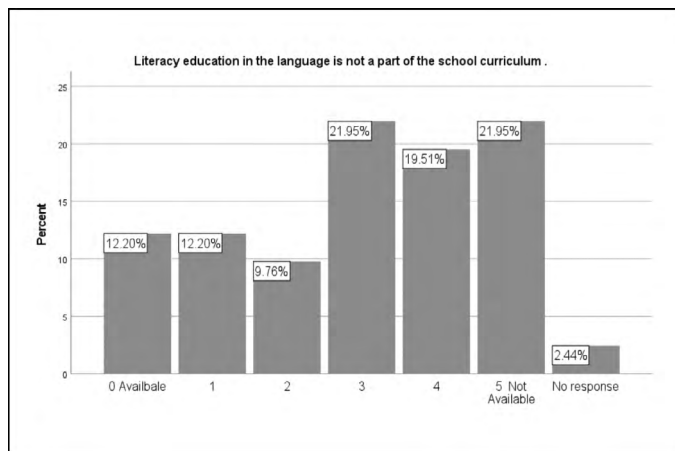


Fig 9: Literacy Education in !Kung

4.1.6 Orthography Accessible to !Kung Community

As indicated in the previous section, the German professor of linguistics developed a dictionary with a research support from five !Kung speaking teachers, three teaching materials exist in Corridor 17 and 18 areas of the Omaheke Region. With a formal support from the Government of Namibia and the Regional Council, the dictionary and teaching materials should be availed to the community. However, as expressed in the two charts below, many members of the community do not have access to the orthography yet.

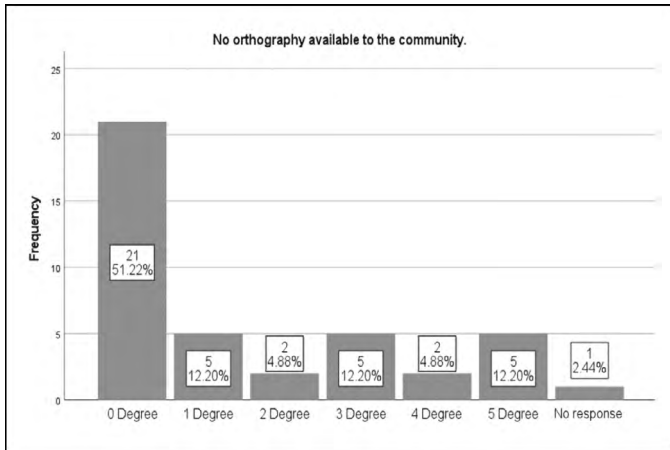


Fig 10: !Kung Orthography

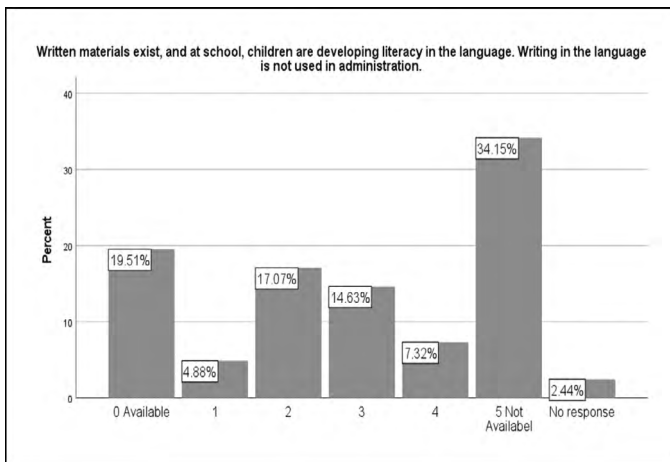


Fig 11: Written Material in !Kung

4.1.7 Challenges Facing !Kung in Namibia

When asked (through translators) to describe the challenges facing !Kung as a language, elders stated the following problems:

- We are afraid of losing our language, culture, and identity. The language has not been monitored and evaluated for its academic and official relevance yet.
- The relationship between each dialect/variety of the San languages has not been determined yet. Some San language practices are common and transferable for the purpose of teaching the San languages in Namibia. There is no support from NGOs to upgrade the language nor the tradition.
- Our children have not been taught in schools their own language and how to write and read it. You will find very few San students in the University these days. San people are not serious with the language and parents stopped teaching their kids.
- San people do not teach nor talk to their kids about their old tradition and culture. San people are copying other traditions due to survival reasons. Both the language and the people are highly scattered.
- There is no support to upgrade any language and tradition. That is why San languages are fast dying natural death. There are only two teachers who can write in !Kung. Almost all !Kung speaking people do not know how to write it.

4.2 Strategies to Revitalise !Kung Language and Culture

4.2.1 Teaching !Kung Folklore through Formal Institutional Support

The P3ICL research team collected 39 cultural expressions of the !Kung people and published a story book in July 2021 in !Kung with a strong plan to create opportunities for developing learning materials, for instance, enabling parents of !Kung speaking learners and/or schools to teach their children !Kung folktales from their traditional culture through story books, teach them proverbs and finally, introduce them to traditional songs and folk dance. Some of the cultural expressions narrated to us for recording and publishing in the story book include *how the !Xoo were created by God, the story of late legendary Chief Sofia, the elephant and jackal, the weak lion, the ostrich and the eland, the chameleon's story, hunting, healing, foraging, the past, burial*

ceremony, the first menstruation and giving birth. Some of these stories are endemic to the !Kung culture. During the study, elders were also asked to narrate other traditional folklore inclusive of proverbs, folktales, folk songs, jokes, legends, myths, riddles, and superstitions and other cultural expressions including their meanings. The cultural products and the expressions can be available in the community libraries and schools in the localities where !Kung is widely spoken. In some cases, focused group discussions were conducted to enhance attitudes, practices, policies, and structures concerning the protection, preservation, and promotion of the cultural expressions of the people. Reviving !Kung through teaching folklore can be one main strategy.

4.2.2 Training !Kung speaking research assistants to utilise the existing San research

With the plan to revitalise !Kung culture and language, the P3ICL team assessed the existing materials and research resources for !Kung education and literacy in Corridor 17 and 18 of the Omaheke region in May 2019. In many situations, the research publications or products are not accessible to the rural community and must have been shelved or sold somewhere. We raised two questions: Is there an established !Kung orthography, literacy tradition with grammar, dictionaries, texts, literature, and everyday media in these localities? Is writing in the language used in administration and education? We were informed that the dictionaries and textbooks in !Kung have not been made accessible to the community in these localities. Draft teaching materials were given to few teachers. The community established a Committee for Language Development (CLD) in Corridor 17. The committee submitted a proposal asking the Omaheke Regional Governor to sanction !Kung primary instruction in Corridor 17. The second method of reviving !Kung, therefore, can be exposing !Kung speaking research assistants and teachers to benefit from the existing San research and publication through government support.

4.2.3 Contextualising !Kung historical narratives in the primary instruction curriculum

During an interview with !Kung speaking chief in Corridor 15, our team raised the following questions: Within the !Kung community in Corridor 17/18/15, do social, political, and economic factors threaten the plurality of identities and cultural expressions? For !Kung people, are identities and cultural expressions strongly being reshaped by globalisation and the information and technology revolution? Do you think the impact of globalisation and information technologies could lead to the possible extinction or impairment to the cultural expressions of the !Kung people in these Corridors? Are there best practices to preserve, protect and promote the cultural expressions of your own people? How can we enhance the cultural awareness of !Kung in Namibia and Southern Africa? Are !Kung locally endangered or threatened? If yes, how? What kind of moral and economic support should be provided to individuals and institutions promoting !Kung folklore? How do we bring positive changes of knowledge and attitude of other Namibians towards !Kung cultural expressions and language? How do we increase institutional capacity on indigenous cultures and languages of the San people in general? Are you San or Khoi? Are you related to Namas and Damaras culturally? How do we ensure San cultures and languages are an integral part of the developmental agenda of the government of Namibia? What do you suggest protecting and promoting !Kung cultural expressions, identities and subsequently, human rights in Namibia adequately?

In many of his answers, the !Kung Chief argued that both the !Kung culture and language are marginalised and now endangered. Due to the hunting law in Namibia, they cannot hunt certain animals to feed their families. The only option for the !Kung people in these localities is to work as cattle herders for Ovaherero and Ovambo tribes. Many of his folks keep on foraging, and many survive on Government subsidies on seasonal basis. Historically, he argued that the !Kung people have been genetically linked to Naro, Nama and Haillom though they are not mutually intelligible. Due to the internal fights for greener pastures, fertile land and colonialism, they practice different cultures and speak different languages. Due to the fear of victimization and marginalization locally, many !Kung people followed the South African army in 1989 and migrated to SA. The most fertile land has always been grabbed and the people are pushed to the forests and the Kalahari deserts still today. Our research team suggests a further study of the !Kung culture and history to revive both the language and the culture.

4.2.4 Promoting !Kung indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) and herbal life in !Kung classes

The traditional healers interviewed at Corridor 15 indicated that the !Kung people have been well known for curing sexual impotence, stomach-ache, malaria, coughs, diarrhoea, vomiting, snakebites, chest pains and flu.²⁷ There are also some 'success' stories of herbs for treating HIV/AIDS (yet to be proven) in this Corridor. Medicinal plants such as the devil's claw, buffalo thorn, zebra aloe, camelthorn, mangetti and leadwood can be collected or foraged by women from the bushes for treating various types of sicknesses/illnesses. These stories of plants and healing can be collected for language teaching and reviving the !Kung culture as part of !Kung Indigenous Knowledge System. The study team has recommended the incorporation, mainstreaming, validation, acknowledgement of !Kung IKS in higher education in the Faculty of Health Sciences and Medicines, Agriculture and Nutrition and Vet Science.

4.2.5 Organising !Kung storytelling events at Chief Sofia Jakobs Primary School

After visiting Chief Sofia School in Corrido 17, the team recommended supporting !Kung elders storytelling events at the school. Through assistance from media, local radio stations can play the stories in !Kung. Elders can be invited to recount !Kung stories.

4.2.6 Integrating !Kung folk art, folk songs, and traditional games in the !Kung curriculum

Ostrich mating dance implying courtship in ostriches is a spectacular affair in San culture and folk dance. The males acquire scarlet colorings on their beaks, foreheads, necks, and shins. They chase each other around frantically in competition and dance alluringly for the females to achieve dominance. Similarly, the !Kung people form circles and perform ostrich dance holding

27 Vicky Dan/Kingo Mchombu/Alfons Mosimane. "Indigenous Medicinal Knowledge of the San People: The Case of Farm Six, Northern Namibia". Information Development Vol. 26 Issue 2 (2010): p. 129-140. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0266666910367479>.

ostrich egg and passing over the egg to the next performer. The dance form and painting can be part of the primary school curriculum in the reminiscent of folk culture.

4.2.7 Transforming !Kung endangered cultural practices into theatrical productions

In the current literature, the !Kung people have been traditionally portrayed as interdependent, seminomadic, foraging and hunting bands always moving from place to place in search of water, game animals, medicinal plants and edible fruits. With the objective of introducing the people to modern life, the Government of Namibia has planned to switch them to modern farming, herding cattle and sheep, and the children to formal education. Due to extreme cases of poverty, some joined the rich farmers and cattle herders. As a result, folks lost the culture and language. In some cases, the children are also exposed to modern city lives and modern education systems elsewhere. Many dropped out of schools as the education system has not incorporated the !Kung ways of life. Due to various factors, the !Kung culture has been endangered. During the FGDs, we often tabled seemingly common questions: Why are your cultures endangered? Which cultural practice is more at the risk? Many reported the loss of many of their cultural practices which might require further research. Emerging as a thematic issue, the P3ICL team decided to deeply study the *!Kung Female Coming of Age Ritual*, more specially how the !Kung girls handle their first menstrual cycle. Then, a play was conceptualised and written by Keamoetsi Joseph Molapong about “The Last Dance at DUSK” in June 2021 as the first theatrical production in !Kung language. During her first menstrual period, the girl is kept away from the daily routines of the family in the nearby bush nearly for a month. The play is about a story of a young !Kung speaking girl who just experienced her first menstruation and the ritual for womanhood. The story talks of the events taking place around while the ritual is being observed. It deals with a suitor’s love and a promise made at the death bed of a mother. It’s a !Kung story filled with love, passion, confrontations and eventually ends happily ever after. For the education of !Kung children and the revival of the culture and language, more cultural practices can be studied and re-produced as theatrical productions in !Kung.

5. Brief Discussions

This study agrees with Chebanne²⁸ who argued that the Khoisan marginalisation is historical, resulting in the Khoisan languages not featuring in education and language development. Chebanne further argues that since the name San has the marginalised communities' approval, it could be used advisedly to obviate the historical prejudices associated with it or with some of the communities. However, this article does not agree with the assertion that the term Khoisan is now generally accepted as a common reference for the combined Khoe (those speaking Khoekhoe languages) and San (those speaking non-Khoekhoe languages).²⁹

The current study confirms the conclusions made by Heine and König³⁰ who presented that !Kung is spoken in southern Angola, northern and north-eastern Namibia, and north-western Botswana. These researchers have persuasively justified that the speakers of the various dialects of !Kung at the extreme ends of the chain do not understand one another. This current study agrees with the recommendations made by Brown and Haihambo: "It is of cardinal importance that San people are included in critical dialogue of educational design and development with the construction of knowledge that inclusively depicts Namibia as a country with good policies and democratic and inclusive value."³¹

In congruence with the strategies recommended by other researchers, this study agrees with the following strategies for reviving !Kung language and culture as spoken in Namibia:

- A. !Kung Documentation: As strongly recommended by Austin and Sallabank, !Kung must be digitalised and can exist in writing and audio-visual forms: the recording of grammar, vocabulary, and oral traditions (e.g., stories, songs, religious texts). It entails producing descriptive grammars, writing textbooks and a dictionary of the language, and it requires the establishment of a secure archive where the material can be stored once it

28 Chebanne. *The Role of Dictionaries* (as note 9). P. 92.

29 Ibid. P. 93.

30 Heine/König. *The !Xun Language* (as note 13).

31 Anthony Brown/Cynthy K. Haihambo. "Developmental Issues Facing the San People of Namibia: Road to De-Marginalization in Formal Education". Kazhila C. Chinsebu/Ahmad Cheikhoussef/Davis Mumbengegwi/Martha Kanda-wa-Schulz/Choshi D. Kasanda/Lawrence Kazembe (Ed.). *Indigenous Knowledge of Namibia*. Windhoek: UNAM Press, 2015. P. 311-330. Here p. 327.

is produced so that it can be accessed by future generations of speakers or scientists.³²

- B. !Kung Revitalisation: It is the process by which !Kung community, through political and educational means, attempts to increase the number of active speakers of the language. This process is also sometimes referred to as language revival or reversing language shift. Vocabulary and courses in !Kung should be available online.³³
- C. !Kung Maintenance: In congruence with UNESCO's strategy for reviving endangered languages, this study agrees with the assumption that all government support must be availed to !Kung people for the survival to be protected from outsiders who can ultimately affect the number of speakers of a language. UNESCO strides towards preventing language extinction involves promoting and supporting the language in aspects such as education, culture, communication and information and science.³⁴

6. Conclusions

Within the context of Corridor 17 and 18, Amenues and Aranos in Namibia, !Kung is vulnerable though a small number of children speak the language at home, and it is restricted to home contexts. Outside these localities, there are obvious indicators that the language is definitely endangered as children no longer speak the language as a 'mother tongue' at home. The P3CL team managed to study 41 households in !Kung settlement areas only. A large sample size might be needed. !Kung is in danger as its speakers might cease to use it. An observable language shift exists which requires further investigation. The !Kung people use their language in an increasingly reduced number of communicative domains and might cease to pass it on from one generation to the next. The extinction of !Kung might result in loss of !Kung cultural identities, !Kung knowledge systems, and the variety of data needed to understand the structure of !Kung in the mind. More broadly, the intangible heritage of the !Kung community in Namibia might be diminished when the language disappears. Since language is closely linked to culture, loss of language almost always is accompanied by social and cultural disruptions.

32 Peter K. Austin/Julia Sallabank (Ed.). *The Cambridge Handbook of Endangered Languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

33 Ibid.

34 United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation. 2017.

The study team observed some formal support from NGOs and the local Government to upgrade !Kung language and cherish cultural practices. However, children are not taught in !Kung at schools, and many do not know how to read and write it. (As in 2019, there were only two Namibian teachers and a German linguist who could write in !Kung.) San people are not serious with the language and parents do not teach the kids due to their dire economic context. !Kung people are highly scattered due to hunting, farming for others, gathering and in some cases scavenging purposes.

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Translation as a Tool for Migrant Integration

A Good (and Very Personal) Practice Example

Abstract. The following (good) practice examples focus on the author's extensive activities and personal experiences in the field of German-as-Second Language acquisition, the role of translation to and from German and, going along with it, integration effects by that acquisition in the city of Aachen's migrant integration agency (*Integrationsagentur*); a second example pivots on the author's current work in Tunisia. The findings presented here may invite more in-depth scientific research by psychologists such as, for Aachen, the psychosocial center with whom the author has collaborated in interpreter supervision.

Key words: translation, interpreting, migrant integration, German as Foreign Language

In Germany as in the majority of European countries, cultural diversity is part of everyday life. At the same time, numerous studies indicate that a lack of communication skills negatively affects professionals, migrant clients and foreign-born patients alike. Or to put it bluntly: people with no or only insufficient command of the German have difficulties to orientate in – even access – the country's education, health and social system. Language and cultural barriers prevent people with a migration background from receiving equal care. Mutual mistrust, frustration, and the rejection of help offers are consequences which, in their turn, contribute to the failure of migrants' social integration regardless of the efforts undertaken by intermediaries such as social workers. The institution of a translator or interpreter may help, in the social work scenario outlined here, lessen these consequences.

At the center of translation are languages as well as, centrally, the cultures 'behind' these languages. This transition from one language to another poses a problem if the translator is not familiar with both cultures, e.g., that of an Aachen (German) employer or vocational trainer and that of the (non-Aachen) client. Apart from the interlingual translation, the transformation of words, sentences and text from a source to a target language, the translator

must also communicate the ideas understood and the feelings felt: a basic element in, e. g., the interpretative theory or the theory of meaning. If mediation is thus required between cultural differences, another indispensable factor is trust in the interpreter's duty of confidentiality, and a transparent interpreting process that allows both sides to communicate at eye level.

A special impersonation of translators and interpreters are language and integration mediators who, for instance in the city of Aachen's *Integrationsagentur*, build bridges between people with a migration background and professionals in education, health, and social services. Their work breaks down barriers to understanding and enables problem-free and effective cooperation; their own cultural background is usually identical with that of the client: both are not native Germans, but original and first- or later-generation immigrants.

In the translation-intensive and culture-sensitive scenario, we have thus three persons in distinct roles and functions, two different countries and two cultures: (1) the professional, employer or vocational trainer from the host country, (2) the translator and (3) the client.

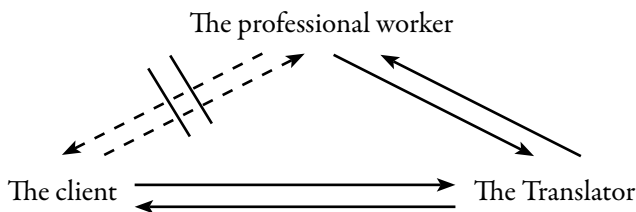


Fig. 1. The triangle communication

An example, set in Tunisia, demonstrates how the difference of culture(s) has an impact on a communication. The result are misunderstandings despite a flawless literal translation. The conversation genre is a job interview between a Tunisian candidate and a German employer. An interpreter is indispensable because the German employer can only express himself/herself in German while the candidate speaks only French and Arabic. The interpreter is Tunisian, s/he studied in Germany, lived there for a long time and therefore knows German culture.

German employer: "What can we do for you so that you can be happy and stay long in our company?"

Job candidate: "I can adapt myself."

Translator: "Express your wish."

The translator tries to get the candidate to say what *s/he* wants, knowing that the candidate will always say that he/she will adapt. Here we are faced with a cultural case: while the job applicant expresses flexibility because *s/he* knows that *s/he* is not the one to decide on the walks of life (but God and his will) and will adapt because of that, the employer seems to assume that the candidate needs to be won over by the company. The answer “I can adapt myself,” for the employer, must sound like a statement of an all-too-soon contended, uncritical and labor-rights-unaware applicant.

The example is a case-in-point for another difference: that of a superficially easy, yet in its ‘depths’ intricate and difficult translation from one language to another. The tip of the iceberg, the purely linguistic translation from language A of language B and vice versa, rests on the shoulder of immense differences of worldview and belief (systems), epistemology and others. Each culture possesses a surface and a cultural body, with great depth and more abundant, below the waterline.

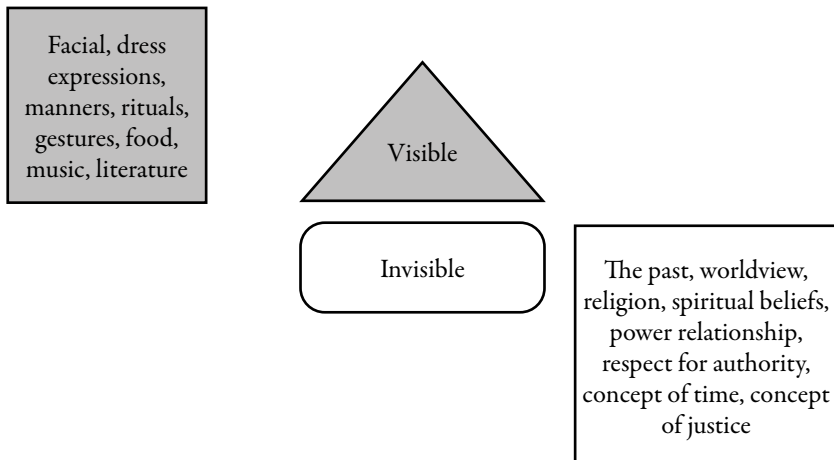


Fig. 2. The cultural iceberg

In the visible part (grey) are the cultural elements that one perceives. The invisible part (white) charts the behaviors of the individual directed by certain influences that a person who does not belong to the same culture will not understand. In translation, the translator experts both: the visible and invisible part. At the same time, the applicant and the employer are in the same situation: both ignore the invisible part of each other. In fact, they know little about each other.

The knowledge of the culture helps to translate and render non-verbal communication because the translator understands the gestures – i.e., the body language not only of the job applicant (or for that matter the client) but also of the employer (or the professional, the seller etc.). The translator can best render the indirect and direct communication of the two parties for which he is translating.

The Aachen *Integrationsagentur* experience displayed (me) the following poles, or extremes, observed in conversations:

- Say directly what you think – or: do not get straight to the point
- Express yourself in a structured – or: in a fuzzy way
- Do not gesticulate too much; instead, tone is important: strong, acute, fast etc. – or: speak with a lot of gesture that may hide the nervousness.

Obviously, a proper and adequate translation is at the heart of best practice in communication.

Failure of translation can lead to serious (and sometimes tragic) results in no matter what conversation, profession-related and others. Translation (or interpreting) is a social interaction that aims at strengthening relations between more than two people. It is about sharing and exchanging not only information, but also presumptions and feelings in order to achieve a better understanding within the respective context. Meaning making by an intervening – translating – agency: the translator/interpreter includes more than a dictionary-like word-by-word transposition.

An important aspect of generating, translating and receiving meaning is, in the context of present-day migration from Africa to Europe, Germany and exemplarily Aachen, the vital form of expressing feelings associated with traumatic experiences. It is a particular challenge for the translator who needs to grasp it in its dimension – it is clearly more than a word, often outside a sentence, an iceberg of its own – and has to transpose a meaningful understanding of hers/his in the cross-lingual passing-on.

For this, the translator is ideally schooled in human psychology, at the same time s/he needs to develop empathy. It is important to know the rules and ethics of communication. The understanding of the rules and structures of communication can help to formulate sensitive and appropriate professional interactions with the client.¹

1 Pamela Trevithick/Sally Richards/Gillian Ruch/Bernard Moss. Teaching and learning communication skills in social work education. London: Social Care Institute for Excellence, 2004. P. 33.

The translator decodes the message by the recipient by hearing, seeing, and translates based on the interpretation. Therefore, he/she is:

- enabler,
- facilitator,
- mediator,
- (and why not, too) a social activist.

The translator follows a professional ethic and sees himself/herself as professional migration-specific specialist. Neutrality, transparency, professional distance, and confidentiality are self-evident guidelines for action.

In the usual scenarios that are of relevance here, where a newly arrived migrant depends on a German-fit interpreter with a history of her or his own – oftentimes a former migrant, too, with knowledges of his own culture as well as an individual story of immigration –, the expectations to engage in a successful communication across and crossing languages are high.

States of mind such as being sad, nostalgic, curious, hopeful or traumatized are integral parts of any conversation's partner: for an interpreter of migrants coming to Germany with (recent) memories and experiences that shape these mind states, it is of key importance to identify them accordingly, and heed them as another level of translation, apart from the interlingual and the cultural.

The range of concurrent emotions – feelings and states of mind that frame a speaker's utterance – is wide. Emoticons and emojis can help (as in Aachen) to pinpoint them. It is an invitation as well as a challenge to both the arriving migrant and the translator to answer the exercise: How to translate those four emojis depending on context and geographical location?

Happiness, sadness, surprise, fatigue, astonishment



Fig. 3. The different interpretation of non-verbal translation

At the same time, the translator may be dealing with a client and a case that resembles his or her own, especially if it is a traumatic one. There can be a boomerang effect. Bad memories can reappear. In this case the translator must be backed up, e.g. in instruction seminars. For Aachen, these include:

(1) professional Code of Conduct. Translators regularly attend training courses enabling them to acquire new translation techniques in the field of social work. This training includes not only legal aspects but also psychology; they find themselves in front of some social cases that require knowledge on the rights of the citizen and the politics of migration, and the communication of this to the migrants.

(2) Exchange among the translators, collegial advice. The translators meet regularly to discuss their work. Through this exchange, they learn from each other how to react in certain situations.

(3) Supervision with a psychologist, usually administered in a group and pivoting on questions such as ‘how can I reflect professional, safe, and qualitative values?’ Or, if it is not about the translator but about the others meaning the professional and the client: ‘how can the translator help others in a professional way?’

To sum up: In Aachen and elsewhere, translators and interpreters as integration mediators provide a high-quality needs-based service for intercultural communication in all services (clinics, schools, or offices). They create understanding by interpreting and mediating interculturally. By making linguistic and cultural understanding possible, they can save situations and prevent tragic mistakes. In general, they bring about processes of meaningful interaction among different people. The complex or sensitive topics, such as treatment at the doctor’s, counselling at the youth welfare office, hearings at a foreigner’s authority and others require interpreters who are equipped with special expertise in the fields of health, social services and education.

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Figures

Fig. 1. The triangle communication, Félicité Doudou

Fig. 2. The cultural iceberg, Félicité Doudou

Fig. 3. The different interpretation of non-verbal translation, Félicité Doudou

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Publishing Conditions of Belletristic in Burkina Faso

Abstract. When dealing with “books,” attention is almost unanimously directed toward the Belles-lettres, giving pride of place to classic genres such as the novel, poetry, the short story, and, increasingly, theatre. Before considering the availability of books, a whole complex environment often ignored by the general public must be taken into consideration: coexistence of languages, language and educational policies, reading taste, habits and practices, conditions of publication and circulation of books. In the great universal market of books and knowledge, attention should be paid to the conditions in which literary works are conceived, produced, and circulated in so-called “postcolonial” countries characterized as much by the need to remain linked to the former metropolises as by the need to take into account the sociological and sociolinguistic realities of their environment. Burkina Faso will serve as an illustration here: a landlocked country in West Africa, with French as the official language alongside around sixty languages, most of which have almost no weight in the editorial balance, and with a low school enrolment rate.

Key words: African languages, belletristic, book circulation, language policy, literature, publishing, reading, school enrolment

Even though Burkina Faso contributes to the repertoire of internationally known writers with some well-known authors¹, the country is not exactly known for its literary production. The explanation of this scarcity requires that two closely interwoven areas be taken into account: the conditions of intellectual creation and the conversion of these immaterial goods into tangible, readable, purchasable and marketable fabrics, i. e., books....

1 See, among others, Jacques Prosper Bazié, Nazi Boni, Augustin-Sondé Coulibaly, Bernadette Dao, Jean-Pierre Guingané, Ansomwin Ignace Hien, Monique Ilboudo, Patrick Ilboudo, Sophie Heidi Kam, Gaël Koné, Roger Nikiéma, Suzy Nikiéma, Kollin Noaga, Étienne Sawadogo, Marie-Ange Somdah, Norbert Zongo...

The context of intellectual activity: Learning to read, reading, writing

Burkina Faso has been independent from French colonial rule since 1960. This Francophone country largely resembles its Francophone neighbours in terms of population structure and demography and differs partly from them in educational policy and – if one call it such – educational economy: the total population is about twenty million people, which are spread over a few relatively large cities and a multitude of small and smaller villages. The number of languages spoken in the country is estimated around sixty, three of which have the status of national languages² but they hardly compete with French, which almost exclusively fulfills the function of the official language medium: such areas as administration, politics, diplomacy, education and, of course, culture are largely influenced by the use of the French language, written and spoken.

The decision has been made to keep French as an official language because it is supposed to be a unifying language given the multitude of local languages, many of them being unwritten. This politically motivated choice has far-reaching consequences, from the first years of school – where you learn to read and write – to the habits of reading in its various forms and writing in its numerous functions, by the adult, educated, responsible citizens.

In the context of Burkina Faso, learning to read and write remains a challenge of a spiritual and cultural nature: the majority of children are taught the language, as they – and their parents – generally do not speak and understand French. But this language is not taught to them as a foreign language but like a mother tongue. Overcrowded classrooms, poor supply of learning and reading material – starting with school books –, the widespread absence of the educational language in the immediate environment of children (the family), and the lack of libraries in most schools are just some of the factors which lead to a kind of unnatural selection, both in terms of future readership and the availability of promising writers.

It is therefore not surprising that the supply of interesting manuscripts or book projects is rather small. This “intellectual bottleneck” is aggravated by infrastructural weaknesses.

2 Each of these languages representing a language family: Fulfulde (West Atlantic), Jula (Mande), Moore (Gur).

The context of the materialization of spiritual good: Publishing

It is a long way from the thoughts of a person willing to write, to the book that one will find on the shelf in a bookstore, a library or in the hands of any reader. Unfortunately, the complexity of the process leading to the book is either unknown to almost everyone (including those who should know it *ex officio*), or trivialized for various reasons, especially when it comes to cost issues. Important steps such as proofreading, printing, translation, are usually devalued, so that applications for funding are processed accordingly.

In general, the question of financing a book is *the* central problem because some publishers are often willing to forego certain revenues so that a book can be produced at all.³

Distinction must be made between the publishing houses, which are structured according to the commercial and technical international standards, and the publishing structures which can be called “independent publishers”.

The first category is thin on the ground in Burkina. This is partly due to the fact that the book – apart from the textbook – has long been regarded as a luxury: the parent who was able to procure the textbooks of his/her children every year was happy enough and therefore no longer spoke of any other printed products. Thus, reading could hardly develop and be established as a pastime, as reading out of pleasure. Logically, the book – apart from the textbook – was not considered economically attractive. The result is that we find many printers on the technical side, but rarely *book* printers.

The second category of publishers, whom I named “the independent publishers”, are for the most part self-publishers: authors who are tired of searching and waiting for a publisher and then decide to publish for themselves, with all the accompanying consequences, namely the prevention of the development or establishment of the so-called *chaîne du livre*, the chain which links stick together or work sequentially to turn images, thoughts, dreams that were born in the mind of a creator, into a product that can be sold, given away, read, loved.

Therefore, the author becomes a publisher (among others: reviewer and proofreader, sometimes typesetter) – “consultant” of the printer – head of the

3 Over almost thirty years of teaching at the university, I have repeatedly had the experience that the colleagues who were involved in organizing colloquia which files should be published, generally put the item “Publication” at the last place of their financing needs with also very low estimated costs.

advertising campaign – organizer of book presentations – book seller – supplier of bookstores, and other possible customers, etc.

The logical consequence of this is that the author gets in competition with all the mentioned branches of book conception, book production, and book circulation.

State policy on the promotion of the book does not help to make the landscape clearer: even if the book's affiliation to several areas (culture, general and school education, education, economy, industry, etc.) is acknowledged, the Ministry of Culture is considered to be the main sponsor, the mentor of the book. The book is therefore in strong and grueling competition with other cultural sectors (cinema, music, theatre, etc.).

Diversity in Unity

But the situation should not be seen as desperate: despite all the difficulties mentioned, it is a fact that the actors are organizing and mobilizing themselves to plead their cause, but above all to help people to help themselves as far as possible. Thus, authors' associations are being created⁴, a publisher's association has emerged⁵, and an attempt is being made to organize the printers into an association. Furthermore, an umbrella organization was born to gather the different links of the *chaîne du livre*. Unfortunately, the need for concerted action is still not recognized, so that each association stands up for and promotes its own cause, without considering that it would be more economic to come together with other actors. Here and there one recognizes tendencies towards convergence, when, for example, the world of theatre entrusts the publishing of plays to publishers, instead of doing it through self-publishing.⁶ Maybe due to the proximity of theatre and traditional African oral literature, playwriting in African languages is slowly, but steadily developing, with the need of writing down the dramatic creations.⁷

4 Such as the SAGES, Société des auteurs, des gens de l'écrit et des savoirs.

5 ASSEDEF: Association des éditeurs du Burkina Faso.

6 My own publishing house, Sankofa & Gurli Editions, published in 2021 a collection of plays from the well-known dramatic playwrights Ildevert Méda (*L'Éléphant du roi*, suivi de *La Révolte de Tiraogo*; *Kubidu Abanda* suivi de *Tunka*; *Demain il fera jour* suivi de *Mirages et perditions*) and Sophie Heidi Kam (*Du Caviar pour un lapin*).

7 See the RITLAMES (Rencontres internationales de théâtre en langues maternelles), <https://ritlames.com/>.

Publishing of Belletristic Literature

Starting from this case of theatre approaching the publishing world, I would now like to point out some positions regarding the life and development of belletristic literature.

The question is no longer whether manuscripts of various genres are published and brought to the readership by whatever means and in whatever form. Above all, the question arises of the *quality* of the texts (the “publishability”) and the *reception* of the published works.

More and more, authors’ associations go hand in hand with readers’ associations, however to a modest extent. They then tend to self-publish and that makes the situation more complicated.

The Covid challenge has prompted the government to create various funds to support cultural projects and programs, and this initiative has in turn prompted many culture lovers and actors to join the plan. The number of publishers has risen, but at this time any prediction of their lifetime would be speculative.

Of course, the school and education system brings a decisive contribution to the reception of (domestic and foreign) literature. The literature programs of secondary schools and university literature departments recommend certain titles, which range from the classics of African literature in French to current Burkinabe works – mainly poetry and novels.

The challenge for the publishers – but also for the writers who have become aware of it – now consists in bringing such texts to the market and into the consciousness of the literature consumer that there is a hope that these titles find a place in the officially recommended lists.

Hardly present in this description is the literature in African languages.

Oral literature (sometimes called Orature) exists without any doubt and remains an important source of inspiration for modern and contemporary writers, regardless of the literary genre.

But like a raw material that is not valued for itself, the exploitation of oral literature is mainly noted through the use that is made of it in French written literature (narrative structures or patterns specific to proverbs, tales, and legends). We can therefore say that literature in African languages lives... But it lives in the shade and the darkness of the so called ‘informal sector’. The reasons for this underground existence are obvious: being rarely written or transcribed, rarely taught, rarely used in public space, they hardly attract or hold the attention of the publishers, first of all, because of the apparent lack of a readership that would be large enough to serve as an economic argument.

In the past, contests of poetry, tales, and plays in national languages have been initiated, but the experience has been unsuccessful, before being re-registered this year in the catalogue of literary activities and competitions of the FILO (Foire internationale du livre de Ouagadougou – International Book Fair of Ouagadougou). The initiative is certainly commendable, but one is entitled to question the canons of appreciation of the works that will be submitted and the profile of the jury members who will evaluate the texts in competition.

Translation: The Future of Publishing and Belletristic Literature

The evolution and expansion of the production, publishing, circulation, and consumption of Belletristic Literature in Burkina Faso and in the French-speaking world in general are confronted with both infrastructural and superstructural problems whose resolution is not for tomorrow: Publishing must have, upstream, a pool of authors linguistically, culturally and intellectually up to the heavy task of writing the memory, knowledge, present, future, and imagination of their societies. This pool is drastically reduced because of the “linguistic selection” that takes place through the anchoring of the education system in the Francophonie. That automatically excludes the majority of citizens who are *de facto* non-francophones. The configuration of the landscape downstream is no more promising: the audience of readers who are supposed to “consume” this literary production is, like the breeding ground of authors, determined by the linguistic choice that models the educational system. In more than sixty years of independence and with the assumed choice to maintain French as an official language – thus as a medium of education and training – Burkina Faso has not even managed to educate half of its population.⁸ The persistence in this choice will probably worsen the situation in terms of dropping out of school and returning to illiteracy. All these conditions would be a blow to the book industry, in all its links.

The gradual shift towards national languages, intended to be integrated into the “classical” education system, raises well-founded hopes. The translation of literary works from national languages into European languages⁹ and vice versa would give a new dynamic to belletristic writing.

8 https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syst%C3%A8me_%C3%A9ducatif_au_Burkina_Faso; https://www.unil.ch/files/live/sites/cepco/files/decent_work/publications/RAPPORT_Systeme_Educatif_BF_UJKZ%20-%20R4D.pdf.

9 English and German are respectively first and second foreign languages in the formal education system of Burkina Faso. Arabic is gaining its reputation, Mandarin is making a hesitant entry.

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Representation and Memorialisation of the Gukurahundi Genocide in Zimbabwe

Abstract. There exists a growing body of literary texts: novels, poems and stories that represent Gukurahundi, a genocide that took place in Zimbabwe soon after the attainment of independence (1983-1987). These texts offer graphic representations of a period that the late founding president of Zimbabwe Robert Mugabe defined merely as “a moment of madness”. This article forms part of a larger ongoing study that focuses on how German emigrants experienced this genocide. Through in-depth interviews with German nationals, a textual analysis of the autobiography by Johanne Davis *Mission Accomplished: Dr. Davis' Life Work in Zimbabwe* and engagement with archives in both Germany and Zimbabwe, I am interested in the concept of *Zeitzeugen* (witnesses of a certain period) and how witnesses remember and memorialise Gukurahundi. Drawing on Assmann's theory of *Erinnerungskultur* (memory culture), I examine how in Zimbabwe, Gukurahundi remains largely unspeakable and undiscussed, especially in the public sphere as well as educational institutions where learners are not taught about it. I thread together the witness narratives of German nationals in an attempt to fill the yawning gap in representations and memorialisations of this period of Zimbabwe's history.

Key words: genocide, Gukurahundi, Zimbabwe, emigrants, *Zeitzeugen*, memory culture, Germans, narratives

Introduction

Societies memorialise common and shared pasts and they do this in different ways. It becomes a problem when parts of a society are denied the right to remember certain events of the past. Such people find different ways to memorialise repressed memories through different cultural productions such as novels, music and plays. This article is part of research which I carried out to examine the question of memory and remembering in the aftermath of Gukurahundi. This study focused on German nationals who emigrated to Zimbabwe at various points in time, during different historical or socio-political periods.

I was especially interested in Germans who had grown up hearing about the Holocaust and had also experienced Gukurahundi. This, in my opinion, provided a new point of view of understanding the remembering of multiple forms of trauma.

I undertook in-depth interviews with seventeen German nationals, consulted largely unexplored memoir material and an unpublished typescript of A.J. (Joe) Behrends' biography: *3 Countries, 2 Continents, and my life*¹, the autobiography of Johanne F. Davis (*Mission Accomplished: Dr Davis' Life Work in Zimbabwe*)², and engaged with local archives in both Germany and Zimbabwe. This project drew on the concept of what in German is called *Zeitzeugen* (witnesses of a certain period of time) and how this topic fits well into the research areas established by Aleida Assmann, for example *Erinnerungskultur*³ (memory culture) in her book *Der lange Schatten der Vergangenheit* (2006) (The long shadow of the past) where she captures the historically significant and traumatic past of the Germans and how the Germans try to come to terms with it (*Vergangenheitsbewältigung*) or work through the past (*Aufarbeitung der Vergangenheit*). These two key concepts are important when analysing the memory culture, especially in a post-genocidal society. We, in Zimbabwe, also have a "long shadow of the past" through our colonial history as well as Gukurahundi. Efforts are being made to "come to terms" with Gukurahundi both by (i) trying to confront the past by encouraging the government to acknowledge and address the wrongs of Gukurahundi and foster justice and reconciliation, (ii) working through the traumatic past by conducting historical research, engaging the public and carrying out various activities that are educational as well as the production of art.

This study investigated an othered or detached perspective of the emigrants. The study collected narratives of how Germans remember this genocide and the emotions that it evokes and evoked in them, especially because they had themselves heard the narratives of the Holocaust through relatives and friends but they never lived through and experienced the Holocaust in Germany.

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- 1 A.J. (Joe) Behrends. *3 Countries, 2 Continents, and my life* (unpublished typescript), 2020.
 - 2 Johanne Davis. *Mission Accomplished: Dr. Davis' Life Work in Zimbabwe*. Bulawayo: Ilizwi Publication, 2013.
 - 3 Aleida Assmann. "Schnittstellen zwischen Erfahrungsgedächtnis und kulturellem Gedächtnis." *Der lange Schatten der Vergangenheit: Erinnerungskultur und Geschichtspolitik*. München: C. H. Beck, 2006. P. 205-216.

Background

Those in academia know more but the general public knows little or nothing about this whole field of *Erinnerungskultur* und *Zeitzeugen* in Zimbabwe, especially when referring to the Gukurahundi saga. Gukurahundi is a name given to the atrocities that were committed by the Fifth Brigade in the Matabeleland provinces and parts of the Midlands in the 1980s in Zimbabwe. An estimated 20 000 civilians were killed in the said provinces, many more were physically, psychologically and emotionally tortured, thousands were left without homes, women were raped, and many children were orphaned.⁴

These atrocities were committed by the Fifth Brigade, an army that received training in North Korea specifically for dealing with post-war conflicts. In this case, their task was to address the dissident problem that had emerged in parts of Midlands and Matabeleland provinces.⁵ The dissident problem arose from the ongoing conflicts between ZANLA (Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army) and ZAPU (Zimbabwe African People's Union), which persisted even after independence. The situation worsened during the integration process of the three armies, which were affiliated with different political parties.⁶ ZANLA belonged to Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), while ZIPRA (Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army) belonged to ZAPU. Smith's Rhodesian Front also joined forces with these armies to form the Zimbabwe People's Army (ZIPA).

The integration process is one of the many factors that caused a lot of soldiers to flee from the army, others resigned because they felt they were being mistreated. Others, as reported in the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe report, did not support the way ZAPU leaders were being treated; they decided to leave the army and were labelled dissidents.⁷ Johanne Davis described the massacre of people in Matabeleland as an effort of the

4 Gibson Ncube. "Gukurahundi revisited in the Second Republic. Trauma, memory and violence in Novuyo Rosa Tshuma's *House of Stone*". *Cultures of Change in Contemporary Zimbabwe. Socio-Political Transition from Mugabe to Mnangagwa*. Ed. Oliver Nyambi/Tendai Mangena/Gibson Ncube. London: Routledge, 2021. P. 140-155.

5 Blessing Miles Tendi. *The Army and Politics in Zimbabwe: Mujuru, the liberation fighter and Kingmaker*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020.

6 Ibid.

7 CCJP (Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace) and LRF (Legal Resources Foundation). *Gukurahundi in Zimbabwe: A report on the disturbances in Matabeleland and the Midlands, 1980–1988*. CCJP and LRF, 1997.

government to gain absolute power after the 1980 elections: “a plan was devised by the new government to root out every perceivable dissident voice, even if the information was just based on rumours.”⁸ Dissidents in the context of Gukurahundi genocide in Zimbabwe refer, according to Mpofu (2021)⁹, to a small group of armed insurgents who were opposing Mugabe’s government in the early to mid-1980s. The faction of dissidents was associated with ex-ZIPRA (Zimbabwe People’s Revolutionary Army) fighters who were part and parcel of the army of ZAPU (Zimbabwe African People’s Union) and were based in Matabeleland and Midlands provinces in Zimbabwe.

A considerable body of books, articles, literary texts: novels, poems, biographies and stories have been written on the Zimbabwean genocide. The authors include Miles Tendi¹⁰, Fidelis Mukonori¹¹, Johanne Davis¹², Yvonne Vera¹³, Christopher Mlalazi¹⁴, Crispin Ndlovu¹⁵, James Kilgore¹⁶ and the poetry of John Eppel.¹⁷ There are also academic articles by Alexander/McGregor/Ranger¹⁸ and many other scholars. These texts offer graphic representations of Gukurahundi. This study, however, focuses on the memory and remembrance of Germans who emigrated to Zimbabwe and lived through the dark moments of Zimbabwe’s early history.

As previously mentioned, considerable research has been done that investigated the atrocities committed by dissidents and the Fifth Brigade. Survivors of the Gukurahundi genocide gave their reports to various organizations, for example, the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe (CCJP), Lawyers Committee for Human Rights (LCFHR),

8 Cf. Davis. *Mission Accomplished* (as note 2). P. 61.

9 William J. Mpofu. “Gukurahundi in Zimbabwe: An Epistemicide and Genocide.” *Journal of Literary Studies* Vol. 37 (2021), Issue 2: Representations and Rhetoric of Genocide in African Popular Cultures. P. 40-55.

10 Cf. Tendi. *The Army and Politics in Zimbabwe* (as note 5).

11 Fidelis Mukonori. *Man in the Middle. A Memoir*. Harare: House of Books, 2017.

12 Cf. Davis. *Mission Accomplished* (as note 2).

13 Yvonne Vera. *The Stone Virgins*. Harare: Weaver Press, 2002.

14 Christopher Mlalazi. *Running with Mother*. Harare: Weaver Press, 2012.

15 Crispin Ndlovu. *Guveya*. Media Plus, 2013.

16 James Kilgore. *We are all Zimbabweans now*. Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2011.

17 John Eppel. *Together: Stories and Poems*. Bulawayo: amaBooks, 2011.

18 Jocelyn Alexander/Jo Ann McGregor/Terrence Ranger. *Violence and memory: one hundred years in the ‘dark forests’ of Matabeleland*. Oxford: James Curry, 2000.

Bulawayo Legal Projects Centre (BLPC).¹⁹ They have vividly described the tortures, killings, detentions and burning of houses. Most of the gruesome acts were recorded with the aim of convincing the Government to stop the horrors that were happening in Matabeleland and parts of the Midlands. *The Herald* newspaper (based in Harare), *The Chronicle* newspaper (based in Bulawayo) only reported dissident activities. This research, therefore, has tried to collect information from witnesses that were in Zimbabwe, in Matabeleland, or Midlands during this time to validate the atrocities as well as to draw information on how the witnesses think about Gukurahundi.

Definition of terms

In this study, I use the German term *Zeitzeuge*, which, as the Duden²⁰ defines, refers to an individual who witnessed an event or one who witnesses and gives testimony of an event. According to the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers²¹, a witness is any person who possesses information relevant to criminal proceedings about which he/she has given and/or is able to give testimony (irrespective of his/her status and of the direct or indirect, oral or written form of the testimony, in accordance with the national law).

According to Felman and Laub²², witnesses are the people who take it upon themselves to speak out against injustice as well as make the suffering of the victims known. LaCapra at the same time argues that witnessing is a complex issue because witnesses themselves may grapple with the difficulties of them playing their role as witnesses to a horrible event and how they can fully convey the experiences of the victims.²³

19 Cf. CCJP. Gukurahundi in Zimbabwe (as note 7).

20 Duden. <https://www.duden.de/rechtschreibung/Zeitzeuge>

21 Council of Europe Committees of Ministers. Recommendation Rec(2005)9 of the Committees of Ministers to member states on the protection of witnesses and collaborators of justice. (Adopted by the Committees of Ministers on 20 April 2005 at the 924th Meeting of the Ministers' Deputies). P. 3. https://www.coe.int/t/dg1/legalcooperation/economiccrime/organisedcrime/rec%20_2005_9.pdf

22 Shoshana Felman/Dori Laub. *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History*. New York/London: Routledge, 1992. P. 7.

23 Dominick LaCapra. "Traumatopisms: From Trauma via Witnessing to the Sublime?" *History and its Limits: Human, Animal, Violence*. Ithaca/New York: Cornell University Press, 2011. P. 59-89.

Jan Assmann²⁴ defines memory culture as a way in which societies remember their past and pass the memory to generations to come. He distinguishes between two categories of memory: (i) communicative memory (this involves transmitting memories from one person to another mainly through oral communication), (ii) cultural memory (it involves a formal way of transmitting memory of writings, monuments and performing rituals).

Theoretical Framework

Aleida Assmann asks relevant questions about memory regarding the Second World War and the Holocaust. She asks if there are going to be any changes when the memory of experience (or 'living memory': experiences shared by people who were alive during the Holocaust) is inevitably lost with the dwindling number of survivors and contemporary witnesses.²⁵ My research therefore addressed this question by interviewing the *Zeitzeugen* and documenting their stories, so that if we lose them, Zimbabwe and Germany will have something that they can refer to. Although a significant amount of research and documentation pertaining Gukurahundi have been done, as mentioned earlier, it is important to also document the experiences made by non-Zimbabweans who were in Zimbabwe during Gukurahundi for various reasons. I would like to call them 'witnesses' of the Zimbabwean genocide.

The research recognizes the importance of collective memory in the field of memory culture, tracing it back to Maurice Halbwachs who argues that people remember certain events in their lives in relation to a social group that they belong to and it is through this social remembering that memories are constructed and negotiated.²⁶ While Jan Assmann deals with memory culture as communicative and cultural²⁷, Aleida Assmann explores how memory can be used to foster reconciliation and forgetting.²⁸

24 Jan Assmann. *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization: Writing, Remembrance, and Political Imagination*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

25 Cf. Aleida Assmann. *Schnittstellen* (as note 3).

26 Maurice Halbwachs. *On Collective Memory*. Edited and translated by Lewis A. Coser. Chicago/London: Chicago University Press, 1992. P. 43.

27 Jan Assmann. *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization* (as note 24).

28 Aleida Assmann. *Der lange Schatten* (as note 3).

It is important at this point to mention Michael Rothberg's book *The Implicated Subject: Beyond Victims and Perpetrators* where he defines the implicated subjects as neither victims nor perpetrators but rather people who were just there to witness a historical event without any power to fuel or stop the happenings. According to Rothberg:

Implicated subjects occupy positions aligned with power and privilege without being themselves direct agents of harm; they contribute to, inhabit, inherit, or benefit from regimes of domination but do not originate or control such regimes. An implicated subject is neither a victim nor a perpetrator, but rather a participant in histories and social formations that generate the positions of victim and perpetrator, and yet in which most people do not occupy such clear-cut roles. Less "actively" involved than perpetrators, implicated subjects do not fit the mold of the "passive" bystander, either.²⁹

In this research, the German emigrants I interviewed can be considered the implicated subjects who, whether they witnessed Gukurahundi or not, are seen as subjects who help construct and reconstruct the positions of victims and perpetrators and help communicate the legacies of violence caused by Gukurahundi.

Due to the nature of my study, it is also important to include Rothberg's multidirectional memory theory³⁰ as it challenges the framework of memory, as is certainly the case with the notion of Halbwachs that memory is not static, it is a dynamic phenomenon that changes depending on how societies are evolving and relating to the past. Rothberg further argues that memory is not nationally bound; instead, it is intertextual, intergenerational, transnational, and transcultural and also involves the intersectionality of identities.³¹ In my study, I interviewed German nationals who were secondary witnesses of the Holocaust in Germany and also first-hand or secondary witnesses of a genocide in Zimbabwe. Multidirectional memory transcends national and cultural boundaries. According to Rothberg, people may have different or multiple identities but their memories can intersect along the lines of race, ethnicity and nationality among others.³² Rothberg's theory

29 Michael Rothberg. *The Implicated Subject: Beyond Victims and Perpetrators*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2019. P. 1.

30 Michael Rothberg. *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009.

31 Ibid. P. 3.

32 Ibid. P. 4.

enables the researcher to have a critical look at the narratives of the German nationals about Gukurahundi in Zimbabwe and the Holocaust in Germany in multidirectional ways, how these memories and testimonies intertwine and at the same time bear witness of the happenings of Gukurahundi in Zimbabwe. Witnesses of a genocide, therefore, have connections to the Zimbabwean cultural context hence their memories are also influenced by the memories that they experienced in Germany.

Methodology

Gukurahundi remains a sensitive, traumatic and traumatising subject in Zimbabwe and the victims and survivors have for many decades been trying to come to terms with it. Efforts have been made to push the government to publicly acknowledge Gukurahundi and lead to some sort of reparative form of justice for the victims and survivors.

This present study was qualitative in nature. In order to collect data, I conducted interviews with German or German-speaking contemporary witnesses of Gukurahundi who have now gone back to Germany and some who are still in Zimbabwe. I prepared semi-structured questions so as to allow the interviewees to share their feelings and views about this sensitive issue. These interviews were conducted both in Zimbabwe and in Germany. I used random sampling by asking Germans who were in Zimbabwe during the Gukurahundi to participate in the interviews. Those who contacted me voluntarily did so and ethical issues were explained to them. To ascertain the reliability of the interviews, I used a semi-structured interview to guide and all participants were asked the same questions to avoid variations during the interviews. I also used triangulation to corroborate my findings whereby participants were not only interviewed via Zoom, Emails, and telephone due to the restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic, but only three participated face-to-face. For data analysis, I used thematic coding and content analysis which is then presented in graphs. The research was carried out over a period of six months. It was not easy to get participants for this study and I had to approach different organizations to help me publicize my research. The challenge was mainly due to the nature of my research topic which is still a sensitive issue in Zimbabwe to date. Although my research had aimed at interviewing survivors of the Holocaust and witnesses of Gukurahundi, the participants I ended up interviewing had experienced neither Holocaust nor

Gukurahundi. Most of the participants worked in or close to Matabeleland and Midlands provinces but did not experience first-hand Gukurahundi.

Preliminary Results

Numerous German nationals reported that although they were in Zimbabwe during the time of Gukurahundi, they knew little to nothing about it and they had never experienced it.

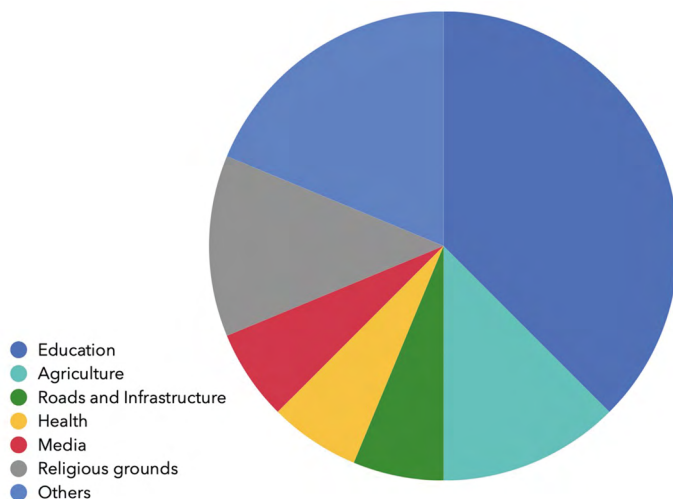
For me to be able to compile and analyse the interviews, I used codes to label the interviewees because of the agreement of anonymity that the interviewees and myself had. All the interviews have the abbreviation INT for interviewee then the number according to the order in which I interviewed them. None among the interviewees knew if they were the first or second or third. INT+E stands for the interviewees who also sent me e-mails and the number in front is the order in which I received the e-mails. For those I interviewed via telephone they are coded as TEL, then a number according to who called or whom I called first. If they also sent me an e-mail about Gukurahundi, they are labelled with TEL+E. Those whom we had face-to-face interviews with are labelled as F2F and a number according to the order they were interviewed. If the interviewees sent e-mails, they are labelled F2F+E. Some people sent e-mails only explaining these experiences and what they know about Gukurahundi. These are labeled as E, then a number according to how I received the e-mails.

Question 1: Tell me about yourself. How did you end up being/living in Zimbabwe?

Most Germans (as illustrated in diagram 1 attached) came to help in education, agriculture, roads and infrastructure, health, media, and religion; the interviewees labeled others are experts on Zimbabwean history.

When Zimbabwe had its independence in 1980, the East-German Government supported Zimbabwe tremendously. It sent many people to help in various sectors for the development of the country as is illustrated in the diagram below.

President Mugabe was very popular during this time for his advocacy of peace and nation-building: “He was an icon for peaceful change of government”, said F2FIII. He was well-known the world over for his speech when he said he would focus more on the future than in the past hence many organizations were willing to work with his government.



Question 1: Diagram 1

Fig. 1. Sectors supported by the East-German Government.

Question 2: Did you personally experience the Holocaust? If yes, can you tell me what memories you have of this time?

None of the interviewees experienced the Holocaust, their parents did but it was not something that they talked about in their families. INTI only got to know about the Holocaust when she went to England as an au pair in 1964 and she watched a film there where the Holocaust was being shown and she said: “Das war kein Thema, das man die Eltern fragen konnte” (It was not a topic that one could ask the parents about).³³ TELI + E only read about the Holocaust. F2FIII said that his father was a soldier but always talked about the wars in Hungary but never about the Holocaust.

Question 4: Where in Zimbabwe were you when Gukurahundi began and took place?

Most of the interviewees were in some parts of the Midlands, in Nkululeko, Mberengwa, Zvishavane, and in Mashonaland such as in Mutare and

³³ This and other translations were done by me, Y. G.

Harare during the time of Gukurahundi. See also the map of Zimbabwe attached.



Fig. 2. Map of Zimbabwe (2020) showing the cities where the interviewees stayed (ontheworldmap.com).

Question 5: What did you experience during Gukurahundi?

None of the interviewees personally experienced anything. Some of them only heard about the conflict and the dissidents and only a few heard about the Fifth Brigade. Some nuns received information from their fellow nuns in Bulawayo about the violence.

Some interviewees, as they were being prepared for their stay in Zimbabwe, were told that there was a conflict in Matabeleland and they were told to be careful: “Es wurde uns auch so dargestellt, dass die Ndebele im Verhältnis zu dem Shona eher eine unterdrückte Minderheit sind” (It was also presented to us that the Ndebele are more of an oppressed minority in relation to the Shona).

Question 10: Is there anything else that you would want to share?

Most of the interviewees talked about the warnings and the news that they heard about the dissidents and their activities. For example:

- a. They were told not to visit Victoria Falls or Hwange because the dissidents were killing people in those areas. German and other tourists were kidnapped and then murdered in this area. (INTIII)
- b. Farms in these areas were being attacked by dissidents. (F2FIII)

The closest some of the interviewees came into contact with the instabilities in parts of Midlands and Matabeleland was to walk around while guarded by soldiers. For them, they felt protected and they never knew the depth of the instabilities. One interviewee reported that they visited a friend at a farm in Plumtree and they had to walk around the farm guarded by armed soldiers.

INTIII reported that there were Fifth Brigade soldiers at Connemara, a place in Gweru, Midlands province. INTIII stated that “Ich hatte ein positives Bild von diesen Soldaten (Fifth Brigade). Ein naiver Gedanke ...” (I had a positive image of these soldiers (Fifth brigade). A naive thought ...).

INTIII also said that:

Ich frage mich seit langem, warum ich das Schreckliche von Gukurahundi in der Zeit dort vor Ort nicht mitbekommen habe, nicht wahrgenommen habe oder nicht wahrnehmen wollte, mich nicht damit auseinandergesetzt habe, wie und warum ich bestimmte Dinge (z. B. “dissidents”) eingeordnet habe... (I’ve been wondering for a long time why I didn’t notice, didn’t perceive, or didn’t want to perceive the awfulness of Gukurahundi during my time there on the ground, I failed to grapple with how and why I classified certain things, e. g. “dissidents”).

INTIV worked for an organization that had schools in Matabeleland, but they did not hear anything about Gukurahundi. He also knew people in the power structure, especially in the Ministry of Education, and had a lot to do with politics but they never said anything about it.

EI reported that:

Einer der kanadischen Lehrer sagte, diese Soldaten wären von der presidential guard und nicht von der Fifth Brigade von Nordkoreanern ausgebildet worden und hatten dementsprechend keinen guten Ruf.

(One of the Canadian instructors said these soldiers had been trained by the presidential guard and not by the Fifth Brigade of North Koreans and accordingly did not have a good reputation.)

EIII described that:

We did sometimes receive from our sisters information of atrocities in Bulawayo and mission stations in Matabeleland, but it was unwise, if not dangerous, to talk about them in the heartland of Mugabe.

EIV reported that:

Allerdings wurde nie in Fakten und Zahlen deutlich, wie weit diese Unterdrückung ging. Ich erinnere mich aber an die Information, dass die Versorgung mit Grundnahrungsmitteln im Ndebeleland (Matabeleland) deutlich schlechter organisiert war als im Shonaland (Mashonaland). Und es wurde kommuniziert, dass dies staatlich organisiert war.

(However, it was never made clear in facts and figures how far this suppression went. But I remember being informed that the supply of basic foodstuffs in Ndebeleland (Matabeleland) was much worse organized than in Shonaland (Mashonaland). And it was communicated that this was organized by the state.)

F2FIII, after reporting how he came to Zimbabwe, also reported that he saw the Fifth Brigade in the areas they trained, in the eastern part of Zimbabwe, in Inyanga, and later on he heard about the atrocities this army caused in Matabeleland: „I can only confirm that it happened“ because he saw the soldiers and he heard a lot about what they were doing there although he was in Manicaland.

Other interviewees went further and commented about the memory culture in Zimbabwe and Germany. INTIII found the research very important and explained that it was essential for the people of Zimbabwe to remember and talk about this part of the history of Zimbabwe. In Germany, the government changed and it was another generation that advocated for the memory culture instead of the culture of forgetting and not talking about the past. Here in Zimbabwe, she said, it is still the same government that committed the crimes in Matabeleland that is still in power, and the same people who were managing the atrocities at that time are still in power. She further said that acknowledgment must come from the top and not from the people forcing the government to talk about it.

Discussion

Information from witnesses of genocide can be helpful, especially in cases where victims and survivors are trying to heal. Having the same or different perspectives from people from different countries and cultural backgrounds can help validate the genocide and uncover the hidden crimes. According to Rothberg³⁴, the testimonies of witnesses are part of multiple memory tracks where witnesses can include memories of other traumatic events they have experienced in recounting what they witnessed.

Although this research focused more on the interviews, I also made use of published and unpublished biographies that provide a comprehensive life story of A.J. (Joe) Behrends³⁵ and Johanne Davis³⁶ who experienced genocide in Germany and Zimbabwe respectively. These two offer a more comprehensive exploration of their lives that is structured, and these explorations offer one a deeper understanding of their life experiences and how these have shaped them over time. Their biographies become more interesting because they both migrated to Southern Africa during the Holocaust. Behrends and Davis helped in my research because their biographies help to understand questions 2, 5, 6 and 7 of my study and these questions were not applicable to the interviews I conducted. Davis also explained what was happening in Lupane:

[...] during the week from 6th to 13th February 1983, we admitted 68 assault cases from the surrounding area covering a 20-kilometer radius. They had been beaten up, some severely, and most of them suffered from broken limbs and burns; 34 of them had gunshot wounds, amongst them a baby of 6 months. The dead included many young children, women and old men. The following month, on 5th March, 62 young people were massacred on the banks of the Cewale River in Lupane.³⁷

This narrative conveys information that bears witness to Gukurahundi events and contributes to the body of knowledge about Gukurahundi in Zimbabwe.

34 Cf. Rothberg. *Multidirectional Memory* (as note 30). P. 4.

35 Cf. Behrends. *3 Countries, 2 Continents* (as note 1).

36 Cf. Davis. *Mission Accomplished* (as note 2).

37 *Ibid.* P. 63.

Question 2: Did you personally experience the Holocaust? If yes, can you tell me what memories you have of this time?

Only A.J. (Joe) Behrends, a Jew, the son of a Jewish businessman of the time, was born and grew up in Germany and had to flee from Germany to Zambia because of the Jewish persecutions in the 1930s when Hitler took power. Through his autobiography, we get to know how Jews were treated in Germany during Hitler's reign. Jews in Germany during the 1930s were not allowed to go to school; in history classes, teachers "followed and taught the Nazi racial theories"³⁸. His father was sent to the concentration camp Sachsenhausen, in 1939 he was made to surrender his license as a driving instructor because "Jews were considered too unreliable to drive in Hitler's Third Reich"³⁹.

As political developments started to deteriorate for the Jews, Behrends had to flee to Northern Rhodesia because in the USA and South America, where he had relatives, visas were no longer issued to go to those countries for political reasons.

Question 6: Do you think your experience was different because you were a foreigner?

Davis mentioned that she experienced Gukurahundi and approached the Fifth Brigade, its commanders and the police and even Prime Minister Mugabe when he visited Lupane in 1984 and informed them about violence in Matabeleland.

Question 7: Do you often think of your experiences during the Holocaust and Gukurahundi?

Davis left Germany during the time of the Holocaust and her experience was different in that in Zimbabwe she was helping the victims of Gukurahundi, whereas, in Germany, she never reported in her autobiography that she helped those persecuted. She confronted the perpetrators and some authorities about the violence.

Question 8: Do you speak, or have you spoken, of these experiences?

In her autobiography, she also mentions that she knows about the atrocities that Germany committed against Jews and she does not wish anyone such experience.

³⁸ Behrends. 3 Countries, 2 Continents (as note 1). P. 15.

³⁹ Ibid. P. 9.

Question 9: Did the fact that you left Zimbabwe change how you relate to the Holocaust and to Gukurahundi?

From what she writes in her autobiography, she regrets that she knew about the Holocaust very late and for her Gukurahundi was something that she condemned, the same way she condemned the Holocaust in Germany.

Two of the interviewees reported that they had heard that tourists were being kidnapped and murdered, and farmers were being robbed especially in Matabeleland. These activities were also reported in newspapers. The Fifth Brigade came at a time when the crime rate in Matabeleland and parts of the Midlands was increasing and they started to look for dissidents, killing some civilians, ex-ZIPRA soldiers and ZAPU supporters because they were labelled sympathizers of dissidents. The villagers suffered during this time because both the Fifth Brigade and the dissidents were killing and torturing them. The Fifth Brigade tortured the civilians because they thought they were helping the dissidents and the dissidents were harassing, torturing or even killing some villagers because they accused them of being sellouts. All this happened, but none of the interviewees in this research knew about it.

It should be pointed out that 13% of the interviewees only saw the Fifth Brigade soldiers but never knew why they were there, they thought that they were ordinary soldiers who were there to protect them. From their viewpoint, one could say that they were there for peacekeeping in some parts of Midlands and Matabeleland but in some, as reported in Davis' autobiography, the Fifth Brigade was ruthless and was killing and injuring innocent civilians whom she and her driver picked from villages in Lupane. She reports:

The people of Lupane district had suffered greatly for so many years during the war of Independence. They had been caught between the white-led Security Forces and the Freedom Fighters. Now the people of Lupane were being killed by the National Army of the country that they had helped to liberate. To call this a just war, one would expect that there would be two armies fighting each other. But here there was no opposing army, no dissidents and no bandits, just a population of innocent men, women and children. These people were being systematically massacred by a group of government soldiers.⁴⁰

The German government did a lot in providing different expertise in various sectors in the country, including in parts of Midlands and Matabeleland. But what is surprising is that 73% of the interviewees did not know what was going on in those places. This shows how the Zimbabwean government

40 Davis. *Mission Accomplished* (as note 2). P. 63.

suppressed information about how the dissidents were dealt with, unfortunately in this case, also the civilians. We get to know of the killings, tortures and injuries of people through Davis who, together with an ambulance driver, could go with an ambulance to rescue those who were still alive and were badly injured. One of the interviewees commented that people liked Mugabe and the new government and that they ignored these conflicts simply because they thought they were part of the politics of the day and they were only there to help develop the country and not to mingle themselves with the politics of the day. The way the dissidents were presented in the newspapers and the activities they were engaged in, then hearing the government saying they were dealing with it, it was easy to just think it was being done correctly. What the Fifth Brigade did in Matabeleland was never published in the news like how the activities of the dissidents were.

INTIII+E postulated that he/she has been pondering for quite some time why he/she failed to detect, acknowledge, or perhaps deliberately chose not to acknowledge the severity of Gukurahundi while he/she was present in that location. He/she did not confront the factors that influenced his/her categorization of certain events, such as labeling individuals as 'dissidents.'

Although I feel a sense of regret in her statement, I think, as one of the interviewees said, the Germans were on a mission, they were sent to do certain work for the development of the country and their eyes were only set on that and nothing else. From this, one can also include an argument according to Felman's work on testimony as bearing witness and the ethical dimension of testimony. She argues that bearing witness is a deeply ethical act that involves acknowledging the suffering of others and giving voice to their experiences. Some of my interviewees could not do so because of the work they were mandated to do and could not perceive the events of Gukurahundi to take on the responsibility of speaking out against injustice and making the suffering of victims known.

Multidirectional memory transcends national and cultural boundaries. Witnesses of genocide may be part of diasporic communities or have connections to multiple cultural contexts. As a result, their memories often cross borders and influence or are influenced by memories from other parts of the world. Davis, a German medical doctor, together with a Catholic Bishop Karlen of Bulawayo, also a German, asked for the audience of the Prime Minister, Robert Mugabe in March 1983 but he was not available, and they had to speak with the Vice President Muzenda:

Our motivation in going for this meeting was to ensure that the top leaders of the country would have no future excuse to claim that they knew nothing of what was going on in our district. I also wanted to clear my conscience by reporting all these crimes to the authorities – as my training as a doctor had taught me to do.⁴¹

The German doctor went further and confronted the Prime Minister himself when he visited Lupane in 1984:

I want to talk about the terrible events which have happened around Lupane and St Luke's Hospital. I am a German and heard very late about the cruelties in Hitler's concentration camps. No one in the future is going to say that I knew about the cruelties that have happened here in Zimbabwe and I held silence about them. Mr. Prime Minister, in this region, your soldiers have committed many brutal murders and these were planned. May I have an explanation?⁴²

The Prime Minister wanted to know if Dr. Davis had evidence and names of the victims, but she only had numbers of the dead and the wounded and no names to avoid reprisals, so her allegations were not considered. Rothberg's theory of multidirectional memory is, therefore, relevant especially where he stresses the intertextual and intergenerational nature when dealing with issues of memory and remembering. Davis relates her memory with the memories she heard about Hitler and the events and injustices that were happening during Gukurahundi. This intertextuality influenced how she framed and articulated her testimony about Gukurahundi.

Besides the atrocities of the Fifth Brigade, it is interesting to note that the food embargo that was targeted at the people of Matabeleland was noticed. One interviewee said that:

However, it was never made clear in facts and figures how far this suppression went. But I remember being informed that the supply of basic foodstuffs in Ndebeleland (Matabeleland) was much worse organized than in Shonaland (Mashonaland). And it was communicated that this was organized by the state: "Getting such information informally and about something that was being done by the 'state' and still the Gukurahundi issue remained a mystery" (INTVII).

41 Ibid. P. 65.

42 Ibid. P. 66.

As one also reads in Davis's autobiography, it seems mostly those in the medical field knew what was happening, but it was dangerous to talk about it. One of the interviewees posited that:

We did sometimes receive from our sisters, information of atrocities in Bulawayo and mission stations in Matabeleland, but it was unwise, if not dangerous, to talk about them in the heartland of Mugabe.⁴³

From this information, it is evident that civilians were killed during this time, although little to nothing could be done to stop the Fifth Brigade from doing this, even reporting to the responsible authorities. Cathy Caruth explains in this regard that the traumatic nature of witnessing and trauma itself affects the way witnesses articulate their experiences.⁴⁴ Gukurahundi, as read from different sources, is a traumatic event to the victims and survivors and this trauma can also be extended to the witnesses of Gukurahundi or those who knew Gukurahundi was happening and had no power to stop it. For these people, like the one quoted above, it is evident that they struggle to convey their testimonies due to the overwhelming impact of trauma on memory of Gukurahundi.

Conclusion

The innovativeness of this study lies in the fact that it is the only research that has weaved the narratives of how Germans remember this period, what they remember and especially elicit from them the kinds of emotions that Zimbabwe's "moment of madness"⁴⁵ evoked and still evokes in them, especially considering that they had themselves have the memories of the Holocaust in Germany. From the interviews, the research managed to draw important information about Gukurahundi and how the state was successful in hiding the atrocities that were committed by the North Korean-trained Fifth Brigade between 1982 and 1987. The research managed to confirm that Gukurahundi happened and innocent civilians were killed during the

⁴³ Ibid. P. 67.

⁴⁴ Cathy Caruth. "Recapturing the Past: Introduction." *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*. Ed. Cathy Caruth. Baltimore/London: John Hopkins University Press, 1995. P. 151-157.

⁴⁵ Ellis Robb. *Without Honour*. Seattle: CreateSpace, 2006. P. 40.

process. Through the interviews, it is important to note how the Germans I interviewed understood and learned from their past the consequences of conflicts and genocides in a country. It is important that the Zimbabwean society, no matter the ethnical boundaries, come together and talk about the dark history of Zimbabwe as one people to solve tribal conflicts that are rising now and to avoid Gukurahundi happening in the future.

By acknowledging and learning from the past, perspectives from Germans who lived in Zimbabwe during the Gukurahundi genocide have shown that addressing historical injustices and promoting reconciliation can contribute to a more peaceful society. This approach can serve as a valuable lesson for Zimbabweans, urging them to confront their own history and foster unity among different ethnic groups to prevent future atrocities like Gukurahundi. It is crucial for the nation to engage in open dialogue, promote understanding, and work towards lasting peace and harmony.

Abbreviations

INT	Interviewee
INT+E	Interviewee + e-mail
TEL	Telephone
TEL+E	Telephone + e-mail
F2F	Face to Face
F2F+E	Face to Face + E-Mail
E	E-Mail
QN	Question

Appendix: Questionnaire

Ice-breaker

1. Tell me about yourself. How did you end up being/living in Zimbabwe?

Talking about the genocide

2. Did you personally experience the Holocaust? If yes, can you tell me what memories you have of this time?

3. What effect did the Holocaust have on your life?
4. Where in Zimbabwe were you when Gukurahundi began or took place?
5. What did you experience during Gukurahundi?
6. Do you think your experience was different because you were a foreigner?

Talking about trauma and post-genocide

7. Do you often think of your experiences during the Holocaust and Gukurahundi?
8. Do you speak, or have you spoken, of these experiences?
9. Did the fact that you left Zimbabwe change how you relate to the Holocaust and to Gukurahundi?

General

10. Is there anything else that you would want to share?

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An Analysis of Cognitive Metaphors in Contemporary Namibian Literature on the Nama-Herero Genocide of 1904-1908

Abstract. The study sought to undertake a cognitive analysis of the Nama-Herero genocide in Jasper David Utley's *The Lie of the Land* (2017) through the theoretical explications of cognitive metaphor. Through examining a Namibian fictional imaginary from a cognitive metaphor perspective (Sperber & Wilson, 1986), the themes and styles of the text were explored to understand how cognitive tools and processes influence linguistic choices in the construction of collective memory and collective experience. The study analyses the selected text using the cognitive stylistics framework. The selected novel was chosen because it presents the Nama-Herero genocide which took place from 1904 to 1908 where over 65,000 Ovaherero and 10,000 Nama people died in what is known as the first genocide of the twentieth century. The study promotes new discourses on cognitive stylistics studies of Namibian literary works. The study is significant to researchers and readers as it is a useful reference tool for students, politicians and researchers conducting studies in the field of cognitive stylistics. Cognitive linguistics argues that a particular situation in a literary text can be interpreted in different ways. Observations from nuanced readings of the text indicated that theme in the selected text largely centres on the natives' experiences of the genocide during this period of colonial occupation and encounter. This was achieved through the examination of literary creativity through the use of cognitive metaphor referring to genocidal trauma as well as to mental and physical oppression. It was concluded that reading, analysing and schematising genocidal fictional work can reflect a negative past for current world citizens to understand and adopt ways that can be used to prevent genocide.

Key words: cognitive metaphor, cognitive metaphor theory (CMT), cognitive stylistics, fictional narrative, genocide, Nama-Herero genocide

1. Background

One of the critical components in understanding the meaning of texts is context.¹ Hamilton² observes that there is a contextual line, which is concerned with historical or political issues that form the context in which a literary text is produced and consumed. In this case, critique operates from the outside in, through adopting the modern historicist viewpoint that meaning is just as critical as text, and that these are also contemporary novels which intertextually re-image a metanarrative that focalises historical atrocities or genocide achieving interpretive goals. In light of this, a selected historical fictional text by Jaspas David Utley, *The Lie of the Land*, was analysed through the explications of cognitive stylistics, especially with regard to its re/constructions and re/presentations of the Herero-Nama genocide. Straus and Waldorf define genocide as violence that is extensive, group-selective and group-destructive.³ Nandenga on the other hand describes genocide as an act of brutality towards a targeted group which is designed to destroy groups in specific territories under the perpetrators' control.⁴ Germany committed what is widely thought to be the first twentieth-century genocide in Namibia during its colonial rule: the genocide of the people of Herero and Nama.⁵ While the genocide was perpetrated more than one hundred years ago, its profound effects are still important today. In the years following Namibia's end of German colonial rule, the colonial amnesia of Germany towards the Herero and Nama

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- 1 Elena Semino/Jonathan Culpeper (Ed.). *Cognitive stylistics: Language and cognition in text analysis*. Vol. 1. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2002.
 - 2 Craig A. Hamilton. "Conceptual integration in Christine de Pizan's 'City of Ladies.'" *Cognitive stylistics*. Ed. Semino/Culpeper (as note 1). P. 1-22.
 - 3 Scott Straus/Lars Waldorf (Ed.). *Remaking Rwanda: State Building and Human Rights after Mass Violence*. Madison/London: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2011.
 - 4 Anna Ndishakena Nandenga. *Reconstruction of atrocities through fiction in Namibia: an evaluation of Mari Serebrov's "Mama Namibia" and Lauri Kubuitsile's "The Scattering"* (Master's thesis, University of Namibia 2019). P. 1. <http://hdl.handle.net/11070/2586>
 - 5 Henning Melber. "Genocide Matters – Negotiating a Namibian-German Past in the Present." *Wiener Zeitschrift für kritische Afrikastudien* 33 (17) (2017): p. 1-24. Here p. 2.

population has been noticed and their narratives have remained on the edge of the nation's grand story.⁶

1.1 Problem Statement

The Herero and Nama genocide remains a problem in Namibia, even though Germany committed it over one hundred years ago. The German colonial rule in Namibia, and in particular Germany's engagement in war with the Herero and Nama people, is a contentious period of Namibian history that is still "simmering under the surface"⁷ and "demands for reparation intensified over the years while calls for the expropriation of land and claims over ancestral land have also dominated land discourses in the country"⁸. The relationship between the former colonial power and the Namibian communities who were affected by its brutal colonial policies remains problematic, and interpretations of the past are still contested.

The individual and collective genocidal memories and trauma of what transpired during the 1904-1908 mass killings still exist in the minds of the Namibian people, after the end of German colonial rule in Namibia, especially the affected ethnic group, namely the Herero and Nama. It is for this reason that the genocide aspects such as genocidal trauma, genocidal anger, genocidal memory, genocidal remembrance, genocidal communication, genocidal imagery, genocidal metaphor, and genocidal hatred are problems which need to be thoroughly studied. These problems have not been studied from a cognitive perspective. Thus far, the historical account of genocide might have been conducted but the psychological impact of the genocide and trauma has been given very little attention.

It should be acknowledged that various studies have been conducted on literary analysis and criticism of different literary works such as novels, short stories, poems, and drama. However, the main challenge has been that very

6 Festus Uugwanga Abiatar. Herero-Nama genocide as historical fiction: A new historical analysis of "Mama Namibia," "The Scattering," and "The Lie of the Land" (Master's Thesis, Namibia University of Science and Technology 2020). Ounongo Repository.

7 Sarala Krishnamurthy. "Cognitive stylistics and Petit Recit: An examination of the narrative consciousness in 'The God of Small Things.'" *NAWA Journal of Language and Communication* 6 (1) (2012): p. 65-84.

8 Abiatar. Herero-Nama genocide as historical fiction (as note 6). P. 2.

little or no research has been conducted on the cognitive analysis of depictions of the Herero and Nama genocide. The problem investigated in this study relates to how cognitive stylistics influences our understanding of the manners in which the Herero and Nama genocide is framed in the selected fictional imaginaries.

The ongoing debates on genocide, conflicts, the consequences of German colonial rule, its impact on the descendants of victims of the 1904-1908 genocide, Germany's historical responsibility, and ways in which post-colonial reconciliation might be achieved and confrontations over the past need to be examined. "The consequences for the colonised communities of the Ovaherero and Nama were considered to be the first genocide of the 20th century"⁹. In this regard, the present study sought to examine how genocide is represented in the selected text by interpreting it using the cognitive stylistics framework. This study therefore investigates how cognitive metaphors contribute to understanding of genocidal memory in the selected novel using Cognitive Metaphor Theory (CMT).

1.2. Research Question

The study was guided by the following specific research question: To what extent does cognitive metaphor contribute to the understanding of genocidal memory in the selected novel?

2. Literature Review

A literature review provides a framework for establishing the importance of the study as well as a benchmark for comparing the results with other findings.¹⁰ This part of the study, therefore, presents a review of literature conducted within the broad area of cognitive stylistics. The literature review is sectioned and formulated in line with the research question of the study, which is concerned with cognitive metaphors re/presentation of genocide in the selected texts. The chapter also explains the major explications and underpinnings of the theoretical frameworks within which the current study is couched – i. e., Cognitive Stylistics and Schema Theory.

9 Melber. *Genocide Matters* (as note 5). P. 2.

10 John W. Creswell. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2014. P. 60.

Stockwell defines cognitive stylistics as “a sub-discipline that is found in the field of applied linguistics and that it offers a novel method of thinking about literature that involves the application of psychology as well as cognitive linguistics”.¹¹ Cognitive stylistics is mainly developed from the works of Sperber and Wilson¹², Gavins and Steen¹³ and Burke.¹⁴ Affected by other fields of studies such as psychology, cognitive psychology and cognitive linguistics, cognitive stylistics adapted many different theories developed by these disciplines.¹⁵ It mainly focuses on cognitive elements and concepts such as verbal irony, cognitive metaphor, image-schema, figure and ground, implicature, contextual effects and relevance. Krishnamurthy¹⁶ argues that such theories provide a set of frameworks in literature analysis and emphasise reading and understanding.

West¹⁷ states that cognitive stylistics is a branch in stylistics which itself is a branch of cognitive linguistics that is related to cognitive poetics. Cognitive stylistics started in the 1970s and developed from earlier structural and generative approaches to language description.¹⁸ Ijam and Haider Kazem affirm that “Cognitive Stylistics deals with the cognitive theory of linguistics and cognitive psychology of reading”¹⁹. Stockwell²⁰ asserts that cognitive stylistics looks at people as cognitive human beings who rely on their

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- 11 Peter Stockwell. *Cognitive Poetics. An Introduction*. London/New York: Routledge, 2002. P. 4-6.
 - 12 Dan Sperber/Deirdre Wilson. *Relevance Theory, Communication and Cognition*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1986.
 - 13 Joanna Gavins/Gerard Steen (Ed.). *Cognitive Poetics in Practice*. London/New York: Routledge, 2003.
 - 14 Michael Burke. “How cognition can augment stylistic analysis.” *European Journal of English Studies* 9 (2) (2005): p. 185-195.
 - 15 Behbood Mohammadzadeh/Hatice Kayhan/Çelen Dimililer. “Enhancing disability awareness and empathy through children’s literature about characters with disabilities: a cognitive stylistic analysis of Rodman Philbrick’s ‘Freak the Mighty.’” *Quality & Quantity* 52 (1) (2018): p. 583-597.
 - 16 Krishnamurthy. *Cognitive stylistics and Petit Recit* (as note 7).
 - 17 David West. *I.A. Richards and the Rise of Cognitive Stylistics*. London: Bloomsbury, 2013.
 - 18 Diane Ponterotto. *Text, Context and Cognitive Metaphor*. London/New York: Routledge, 2014.
 - 19 Dunya Muhammed Miqdad Ijam/Inas Haider Kazem. “Image schemata in Allen Ginsberg’s poems: A cognitive stylistic study.” *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change* 9 (2) (2019): p. 41-59. Here p. 41.
 - 20 Stockwell. *Cognitive Poetics* (as note 11).

background knowledge and experience to understand literary texts. It offers a means for the reader to have a clear view of the text, context, circumstances, uses, knowledge, and beliefs.²¹

Gavins and Steen²² submit that cognitive stylistics affords a new approach of thinking about literature that involves the application of cognitive linguistics and psychology to the storybook texts. Furthermore, Stewart-Shaw states that “cognitive stylistics is a discipline that draws from cognitive science, cognitive linguistics, and literary studies to analyse texts.”²³ In the same vein, Canning emphasises that cognitive stylistics “offers a range of frameworks for understanding [...] what producers of literary texts ‘do’ with language and how they ‘do’ it. Less prevalent, however, is an understanding of the ways in which these same frameworks offer insights into what *readers* ‘do’ (and how they ‘do’ it).”²⁴

There have been a number of studies conducted by different researchers and scholars²⁵ in efforts to analyse different aspects of language and genres of literature using a cognitive stylistics approach. Among those aspects is metaphor. Metaphor, also known as conceptual metaphor in cognitive linguistics, has been considered part of figurative language that contrasts with literal, non-figurative language. In this view, metaphor is seen not as a literary form or as a deviation from some supposedly literal language, but rather as one of the building blocks of our thinking at both the level of language acquisition

21 Ijam/Haider Kazem. Image schemata (as note 19). P. 41.

22 Gavins/Steen (Ed.). *Cognitive Poetics in Practice* (as note 13).

23 Lizzie Stewart-Shaw. “A Cognitive-Stylistic Response to Contradictions.” *Language under Discussion* Vol. 3, Issue 1 (August 2015): p. 24-27. Here p. 24.

24 Patricia Canning. “Text World Theory and real world readers: From literature to life in a Belfast prison.” *Language and Literature* 26 (2) (2017): p. 172-187. Here p. 172. Emphasis in original.

25 Habeeb Al-Saeedi. “A cognitive stylistic analysis of Simon’s lyric ‘The Sound of Silence.’” *Journal of Al Qadisiya in arts and educational sciences* 16 (1) (2016): p. 15-33. Lazarus Gawazah. “Unlocking the mental space image through cognitive stylistics: Delineating the Namibian autobiographical texts.” *East Asian Journal of Multidisciplinary Research* 1 (2) (2022): p. 165-174. Krishnamurthy. *Cognitive stylistics and Petit Recit* (as note 7). Haileleul Zeleke Woldemariam. “The teaching and learning of poetry at postgraduate level: A cognitive stylistics approach.” *NAWA Journal of Language and Communication* 8 (2) (2014): p. 16-35.

and language use.²⁶ Al-Ali et al.²⁷ submit that metaphor has been traditionally studied and analysed within the framework of rhetoric, literary works and literary studies but it is also studied in cognitive linguistics. Considering the high value of lexical items, special attention is given to how the use of figurative language in general and metaphor, in particular, contributes to the projection and explication of fictional mind style²⁸ in narrating literary works.

In Lakoff's and Johnson's words, "the meaning a metaphor will have for me will be partly culturally determined and partly tied to my past experiences"²⁹. On the other hand, Burmakova and Marugina³⁰ observe that cognitive theorists identify metaphor as a process of mapping between two different conceptual domains: the target domain (the concept to be described by the metaphor), and the source domain (the concept drawn upon, or used to create the metaphorical construction). Fadaee cites the opinion that "a metaphor is an implied analogy which imaginatively identifies one thing with another. A metaphor is one of the tropes, a device by which an author turns, or twists, the meaning of a word"³¹. The meaning of the author comprises imagination and indirect ways of saying things. Metaphors act as confusion when the reader's knowledge of the statement is overlooked. In addition, Izzyenda states that in cognitive linguistics, a metaphor is not merely a figure

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- 26 Maria D. López-Maestre. "The business of cognitive stylistics: a survey of conceptual metaphors in business English." *Atlantis* 22 (1) (2000): p. 47-69. Here p. 48.
- 27 Ali Al-Ali/Ahmad El-Sharif/Mohamad Sayel Alzyoud. "The functions and linguistic analysis of metaphor in the Holy Qur'an." *European Scientific Journal* 12 (14) (2016): p. 167-174.
- 28 Elena Glotova. "The suffering minds: Cognitive stylistic approach to characterization in 'The Child-Who-Was-Tired' by Katherine Mansfield and 'Sleepy' by Anton Chekhov." *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 4 (12) (2014): p. 2445-2454. Here p. 2446.
- 29 George Lakoff/Mark Johnson. *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1980. P. 142.
- 30 Elena A. Burmakova/Nadezda I. Marugina. "Cognitive approach to metaphor translation in literary discourse." *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences* 154 (2014): p. 527-533.
- 31 Elaheh Fadaee. "Symbols, metaphors and similes in literature: A case study of 'Animal Farm.'" *Journal of English and Literature* 2 (2) (2011): p. 19-27. Here p. 21.

of speech.³² It is defined as the understanding of one conceptual domain in terms of another conceptual domain, “rather than [...] an individual metaphorical usage or a linguistic convention.”³³ Metaphors deal with the way the language has been indirectly used to convey the meaning. For instance, the author of the aforementioned novel representing genocide used a word such as ‘bushman’ in reference to the Nama people. Similarly, in *The Lie of the Land* novel, General von Trotha is described as Thomas, meaning that he does not listen and that his orders concerning Herero and Nama people were final. Military words such as ‘brute battalion,’ ‘infantry brigade,’ ‘cadet,’ ‘star medallion,’ ‘insurgents,’ ‘battle,’ ‘war’ and ‘gun’ were used in the selected novel to indicate that a genocide has been analysed in terms of a cognitive framework whereby metaphors are of vital importance. Nørgaard et al. affirm that:

in cognitive linguistic terms, a conceptual metaphor is not a mere trope. A very pedestrian attempt at a definition would be ‘an understanding of concept A in terms of concept B’. This understanding, however, is not realised at the level of the utterance, sentence or word, but at a cognitive level. It is more accurate to define conceptual metaphors as the understanding of some conceptual domain in terms of another conceptual domain. Defining what constitutes a conceptual domain, nonetheless, is not free from controversy either.³⁴

Müller et al.³⁵ utilised the cognitive stylistics approach, specifically Rudolf Schmitt’s metaphor analysis³⁶, to study and analyse texts. They described metaphors as linguistically dense images that transfer terms from their original usage to a different context and describe actions and objects beyond their literal meaning. Müller et al.³⁷ state that “language is replete with metaphors.

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- 32 Naitikile Ndegaiko Iizyenda. Metaphors and meaning in the editorials of the ‘New Era’ newspaper, 2016: A linguistic exploration. (Master’s thesis, University of Namibia 2018). P. 6. <http://hdl.handle.net/11070/2335>.
 - 33 Joseph E. Grady. “Metaphor.” *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics*. Ed. Dirk Geeraerts/Hubert Cuyckens. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007. P. 188-213. Here p. 188.
 - 34 Nina Nørgaard/Rocío Montoro/Beatrix Busse. *Key Terms in Stylistics*. London: Continuum, 2010. P. 60.
 - 35 Karin Müller/Yvonne Nickrenz/Caroline Schmitt/Sarala Krishnamurthy/Matthias D. Witte. “An analysis of metaphors in the biographies of the ‘GDR children of Namibia.’” *African Studies* 79 (2) (2020): p. 173-191.
 - 36 Rudolf Schmitt. *Systematische Metaphernanalyse als Methode der qualitativen Sozialforschung*. Wiesbaden: Springer, 2017.
 - 37 Müller et al. *An analysis of metaphors* (as note 35). P. 1.

If we examine metaphors more closely, they provide us with an insight into the ways in which people experience the world and how they think and act.” They further note that metaphor analysis reconstructs metaphors and images, and metaphor analysis is applied to explore a variety of research fields, such as people’s experience with depression and psychotherapy³⁸ and the analysis of political speeches³⁹ or postcolonial novels.⁴⁰

3. Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by the Cognitive Metaphor Theory (CMT).

Iizyenda states that the cognitive or conceptual metaphor theory (CMT) has its origins in Lakoff’s and Johnson’s seminal publication *Metaphors we live by*,⁴¹ and is one of the central areas of research in cognitive linguistics.⁴² CMT simply explains a metaphor as something that is expressed in terms of another for rhetorical effect. CMT is accordingly “positioning itself as ‘contemporary’, ‘conceptual’, and a major pillar of the cognitive linguistics paradigm and proceeds to argue for the relationship between linguistic metaphors and human cognition”⁴³ and for that it best suits this study. The main principle of conceptual metaphor theory is that metaphor functions at the level of thinking.⁴⁴

Metaphor, also known as conceptual metaphor in cognitive linguistics, has been considered part of figurative language that contrasts with literal, non-figurative language. In this view, metaphor is seen not as a literary form or as a deviation from some supposedly literal language, but rather as one

38 E. g., Heidi Levitt/Yifaht Korman/Lynne Angus. “A metaphor analysis in treatments of depression: metaphor as a marker of change.” *Counselling Psychology Quarterly* Vol. 13 No. 1 (2000): p. 23-35.

39 E. g., Terrell Carver/Jernej Pikalo (Ed.). *Political language and metaphor: interpreting and changing the world*. London: Routledge, 2008.

40 E. g., Elleke Boehmer. *Colonial and postcolonial literature: migrant metaphors*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

41 Iizyenda. *Metaphors and meaning* (as note 32). P. 5.

42 Grady. *Metaphor* (as note 33).

43 Dennis Tay. “Lakoff and the Theory of Conceptual Metaphor.” John R. Taylor/Jeanette Littlemore (Ed.). *Bloomsbury Companion to Cognitive Linguistics*. London/New Delhi/New York/Sydney: Bloomsbury, 2014. P. 49-60. Here p. 52.

44 Iizyenda. *Metaphors and meaning* (as note 32). P. 35.

of the building blocks of our thinking at both the level of language acquisition and language use.⁴⁵ “The concept that becomes understood (the more abstract or unfamiliar concept) is the TARGET domain. The other concept, which somehow facilitates understanding or discussion of the target is the SOURCE domain (the more concrete or familiar concept).”⁴⁶ Thus, one conceptual domain, the target, is understood in terms of another (the source) by mapping conceptual elements within the two domains.⁴⁷

Most of the statements used by the author of the selected novel on the genocide utilise genocidal metaphors and that makes it easy for the readers to pinpoint such metaphors for easier management of the cognitive stylistics analysis. The author of the genocide narrative utilised cognitive stylistics to analyse cognitive metaphors. The genocide study is an attempt in the field of cognitive stylistics approach to explore the metaphors employed by the author to convey their meanings in understanding the genocide towards interpretations of the text. The study, which intended to expose how the author of the selected novel creatively used metaphors, notes that the writer used metaphors in their literary works. This framework provides the most appropriate answers to the question raised by this study.

4. Methodology

The study adopted the qualitative research design in order to gain a deeper understanding of the Nama-Herero genocide as presented in Jasper David Utley’s *Lie of the Land*. No respondents were used and no fieldwork was conducted during the study. Instead, the study concentrated on a literary analysis of the selected text. The content analysis instrument was used to collect the data.

The researcher selected the novel for the study using purposive sampling method. Therefore, the novel was selected based on the fact that it is narrating about 1904-1908 Nama-Herero genocide. The qualitative content analysis data was interpreted through the theoretical framework of Cognitive

45 López-Maestre. The business of cognitive stylistics (as note 26). P. 48.

46 Assunta Caruso. “A corpus-based metaphor analysis of news reports on the Middle East Road Map peace process.” Proceedings of the Corpus Linguistics 2011 conference, University of Birmingham, 2011. P. 1. www.birmingham.ac.uk/documents/collegeartslaw/corpus/.../2011/Paper-116.pdf.

47 Cf. Iizyenda. Metaphors and meaning (as note 32). P. 35.

Metaphor Theory (CMT)⁴⁸ for easy management of data. Findings were then extracted from the interpretation to formulate discussions, conclusions and make recommendations.

5. Findings

This section presents and analyses the data collected from the text under this study. The data is analysed in line with the objective of the study and guided by Cognitive Metaphor Theory as a framework for analysis. The purpose of a cognitive stylistic analysis is to decode the meaning that is embedded in a text. This accords readers the opportunity to extract meaning from the printed matter if they understand it letter by letter and word by word.⁴⁹

5.1 Synopsis of *The Lie of the Land* (Jaspar David Utley, 2017)

This text is set during the German-South West Africa (now Namibia) war of invasion between 1904 and 1908. The main character of the story named Sam embarks on a spying journey to South West Africa where he is disguised as a linguist while his real identity was that of a British undercover investigator. He witnesses German soldiers on their mission to exterminate the Ova-herero population at the order of General Adrian Dietrich Lothar von Trotha. Von Trotha was sent to German-South West Africa at the instigation of the German Kaiser after having massacred thousands of black African natives in German East Africa (present-day Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania and part of Mozambique). Sam arrives shortly after the extermination order was issued, just as several prisoners of war are rounded up by German soldiers preparing to execute them. He recognises and rescues one of the prisoners as not Herero and thus unfit for extinction. Sam later deserts the army and flees with the prisoners into the wilderness where they benefit from survival skills because they must protect themselves. Sam knows it will not last long, but life is better and more comfortable this way. However, they are ambushed and forced to part ways: the prisoners are taken to the death camp and Sam re-joins the German army. He unexpectedly allows his army to chase away the prisoners

48 Lakoff/Johnson. *Metaphors We Live By* (as note 29).

49 Glyn White. *Reading the Graphic Surface. The Presence of the Book in Prose Fiction*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018. P. 5-23.

as if the military commander had read his mind. The commander does not want Sam to accept the offer because of the difficult terrain. Sam leaves the camp in search of the prisoners and ends up on the Orange River, which borders both South West Africa and South Africa to the north and south. Sam meets a man who magically shows him the way to the death camp. Due to the appearance and condition of the slaves, the death camp is poorly displayed. Sam looks for and finds prisoners, makes plans, packs them into wooden boxes, and smuggles them out of death camps. The prisoners were malnourished and had arrived too late for medical attention. While recuperating in an African village, Sam experiences a power outage and learns of the death of a pregnant prisoner. He returns to England to mourn the prisoner's death.

5.2 Conceptual metaphors from *The Lie of the Land*

This part of the study responds to the research question which sought to examine how cognitive metaphors contribute to the literary recreation of the manner in which the genocide is projected in the novel. The cognitive metaphor is analysed to fully examine and interpret how cognitive metaphor contributes to creativity in a text.

The term 'cognitive metaphor' can also be used to mean the same as 'conceptual metaphor.' Conceptual metaphors are used to make texts more engaging. They convey meaning in a way that simple words cannot express. They make a piece of text more concise and shortened to the point. It is important to give a contextual meaning for the two terms: 'conceptual' and 'metaphor' for clarity purposes. 'Conceptual' means relating to how the reader of texts dealing with genocide processes the ideas and concepts as they are formed in the mind.⁵⁰ This has to do with how the brain forms and perceives ideas and concepts that are related to the devastating effects of the genocide. The second point is to define the word 'metaphor.' Mac Cormac⁵¹ describes metaphor as a figure of speech that expresses similarity between something relatively well known or concretely known (the semantic vehicle) and something which, although of greater worth or importance, is less well known or more obscurely known (the semantic tenor), and it must make its point by

50 Ian L. Donnachie/George Hewitt. Collins Dictionary of Scottish History. London: Collins, 2014.

51 Earl R. Mac Cormac. A Cognitive Theory of Metaphor. Cambridge, Mass./ London: MIT Press, 1985.

means of words. In the context of this study, it has to do with comparisons of words such as idolising the head of a 'Hottentot' that is compared to an animal trophy.⁵² After contextualising these two words, we can now define the concept. A conceptual metaphor, also known as a generative metaphor, is a figure that compares or describes one term (or conceptual domain) in relation to another. The source domain is a conceptual domain that elicits the figurative expressions needed to understand another conceptual domain of cognitive linguistics. The target domain is a conceptual domain understood in this way. As a result, the starting point of a journey is often used to describe the destination of life. These are analysed below with relevant examples from the text.

There are many metaphors in Utley's *The Lie of the Land* that can be analysed as conceptual metaphors. For a piece of text to qualify as a conceptual metaphor in this study, it must have the characteristics of comparing two unlike entities, objects and ideas, to refer to human or non-human qualities. Another characteristic is that of using words to produce concise and vivid statements that are clear enough to convey a large amount of information in a creative way. They are also characterised as useful language tools for transferring knowledge among a group of language speakers and are used in everyday language.

The "bull-necked man"⁵³ is a cognitive metaphor that compares qualities of an animal and a human being. This metaphor describes the appearance of a German *Reichskommissar* named Göring during his interview with a British agent named Sam as in the following short narrative:

A large curved pipe made of meerschaum shared a side table with a photograph of what I assumed were his Bavarian wife and children. [...] An empty cup and saucer next to a brandy bottle showed he had already had his coffee. [...] He was a portly, bull-necked man in his sixties with a huge grey moustache and a pair of piercing grey eyes. The deep sagging bags under his eyes made him look older than he was. I had the feeling that he didn't smile very often. Except, possibly, when saving Africa from its wildlife. He made no attempt to offer me a drink and went straight to the business at hand.⁵⁴

52 Jasper David Utley. *The Lie of the Land*. Windhoek: University of Namibia Press, 2017. P. 4.

53 Ibid.

54 Ibid. P. 4-5.

The cognitive representation begins when a bull is compared to the qualities of man. A bull is an adult male ox that is commonly known for arrogance and for being dominant. It does not cooperate because of its stubbornness. When it comes to control, it is the figure of authority of a herd and it feels that all the female members of a herd belong to him. The physical composition of a bull symbolises masculine strength. In short, a bull has been metaphorically compared to a man. On the other hand, a man who has a neck that is compared to that of a bull is regarded as tough and misunderstanding. Similar characters have now been accorded to a man who is portrayed as a bully, stubborn, arrogant and does not listen to what other people say but only to himself. The conceptual metaphor 'bull-necked man' completes the characteristics that were stated in this discussion, that a metaphor communicates a message that is concise and clear, and at the same time transferring knowledge without saying too many words.

In the same description, Sam mentions another quality that would make Göring smile, "saving Africa from its wildlife". Göring's house is full of a variety of wildlife trophies that he gathered during his colonial tenure of exploitation in Africa. In literal terms, this metaphor sounds like a compliment that compares Göring's interest in Africa with destroying its wildlife, but in fact, it discredits him as a greedy imperialist. The phrase conveys deep irony and cynicism on the part of the narrator. The metaphorical meaning implies that Göring hunted and killed wildlife in Africa yet claimed to be protecting Africans from the dangers posed by wildlife. In reality, he was actually looting and destroying Africa's natural resources. It is a bad sign for the colonial past to be read and remembered from Göring's image because killing forms the basis of the genocidal mass killings of the Ovaherero and the Nama people of Namibia. Many Namibians perished as a result of the actions of men like Göring who came to Africa to dispossess local people of their natural resources. As it were during the colonial occupation period of Göring, Africans were still living in forests with wildlife and other domestic animals as their source of food and wealth. For Göring to be famous for harvesting a large collection of wildlife artefacts, this suggests that Africans suffered during the process.

In a next paragraph, Göring is described as "a total failure, leaving the country with his tail between his legs"⁵⁵ which is a metaphor that compares the *Reichskommissar* with the same character of a dog. The metaphor explains the role of Göring in his colonial duties to oppress the people of

55 Ibid. P. 5.

South West Africa at the time. The metaphor in its literal meaning says that Göring had his tail between his legs. This is a sign of fear and submission to defeat. The deeper meaning is that he left South West Africa with a feeling of embarrassment or shame, especially because he had been defeated by the Ovaherero, the Nama and other local Namibian tribes. This was said by Göring during his colonial experience lecture to Sam. Sam identifies many weaknesses in Göring's character, one of which is his "fruitless attempts to buy off the local chiefs."⁵⁶ The belief that Göring had was that African chiefs at the time could easily be bought in exchange for their people's freedom and that of their great-grandchildren yet to be born. The expression insists on the "fruitless attempts" efforts made by Göring to bribe African chiefs into colonisation. Despite having failed, Göring maintains his narcissistic utterances by saying that only he was the best cruel person who knew how to punish "the tribes of savages"⁵⁷ in South West Africa.

The Lie of the Land is the title of the text examined in this section of the study. The 'lie of the land' is a British metaphoric expression that refers to the existing condition of affairs, or how something is arranged. The literal meaning is how the land is laid out in terms of physical features that can be physically observed. In the context of this study, it describes the topography of the land or an assessment of the area of land before planning out, which implies the political terrain. There are two parties in conversation in this text, the Germans and the South West Africans. When Sam went to visit *Reichskommissar* Göring, he was not sure about what he was going to be told by Göring. He would soon discover that Göring highly regarded himself as the conqueror of the 'savage tribes' in Africa. Politically speaking, 'the lie of the land' would further be characterised by German colonial forces descending on the Namibian shores to amass farmland, cattle and mineral wealth from the hands of the Ovaherero and Nama indigenous Namibian. They set up political laws and most of the time used force to acquire wealth. After the Ovaherero resisted occupation, von Trotha went on to issue a proclamation of extermination.

56 Ibid.

57 Ibid.

5.3 Discussion. Contribution of cognitive metaphor to literary creativity

Literary creativity is an attribute that is associated with imaginative writing of fictionalised literary texts.⁵⁸ The present study determined that the text that was mentioned explored literary creativity through the use of cognitive metaphors referring to genocidal trauma, and mental and physical oppression. The findings revealed that creative writing resources were used to project genocidal narratives in the telling of genocidal fictionalised stories. This is in agreement with Oguche and Omojuyigbe⁵⁹ that conceptual metaphor can be used to express an idea or event that would not normally be discussed openly because of the emotions attached to the genocide.

The study established that *The Lie of the Land* uses metaphors. All these are conceptual metaphors that give the readers an overall idea and make them curious to know more details about the contents of the text. In agreement with Al-Ali et al.⁶⁰ that a cognitive metaphor is a figurative language that contrasts with literal, non-figurative language. In this view, a metaphor is seen not as a literary form but as a deviation from some supposedly literal language. Furthermore, in agreement with Glotova⁶¹, the study revealed that cognitive metaphor was used in the literary text to project and expose the extent of the genocide killings that were committed by the Germans.

Ordinary human beings do not take pleasure in killing fellow humans unless it is evil-spirited and coupled with extreme hatred towards people belonging to other races or who differ in opinion. One of the observations

58 James Cetkovski. Creative writing, cosmopolitanism, and contemporary American literature (Doctoral dissertation, University of Oxford, 2017). <https://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid:25195a4a-ffbc-4580-afa8-2b7173e19cff>. Iizyenda. Metaphors and meaning (as note 32). Yukari Yoshihara. "Cultural diplomacy, literature(s) in English and creative writing in cold war Asia." Asian English. Histories, Texts, Institutions. Ed. Myles Chilton/Steve Clark/Yukari Yoshihara. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021. P. 107-125. Graeme Harper. Creative Writing Analysis. New York: Routledge, 2023. Rhema F.E. Oguche/Abosede Omolara Omojuyigbe. "A Paradigmatic Shift in Literature in Northern Nigeria: A Reading of 'Waiting for an Angel,' 'Destinies of Life' and 'Secrets of Silence (Poetic Thoughts).'" Dutsin-Ma Journal of English and Literature 5 (1) (2022): p. 343-358.

59 Oguche/Omojuyigbe. A Paradigmatic Shift (as note 58).

60 Al-Ali et al. The functions and linguistic analysis of metaphor (as note 27).

61 Glotova. The suffering minds (as note 28).

made in the study may have been the mental challenges of the person who instructed his soldiers to carry out the killings. As such, the military only kills at the instruction of their commander, who was General von Trotha in the case at hand. Some of the actions of the Germans may be considered mental problems⁶² because of the manner in which the Germans killed Namibians. A German commander issued orders to hand the Herero people, "A soldier whipped the horses and the cart drove off, leaving the Ova-herero dangling"⁶³. This type of action can only be carried out by people who hate other humans, hence that can also be associated with mental problems.

6. Conclusions

This study examined a fictional text which reflects and narrates events of the Nama-Herero genocide that happened in the then-German South West Africa between 1904 and 1908. Although fictionalised, some of the events may reflect a true reality of what transpired during the genocide period. The purpose of this study was to evaluate themes and the literary style of language used in fictional texts. The text examined in this study was Utley's *The Lie of the Land* through the theoretical explications of cognitive stylistics.

The research question asked about the ways in which cognitive metaphor contributes to the literary creativity of the manner in which the genocide is projected in the novel. This was achieved by the examination of literary creativity through the use of cognitive metaphor conveying genocidal trauma, and mental and physical oppression. A number of creative writing resources were used to project genocidal narratives in the telling of genocidal fictionalised stories. In addition to that, conceptual metaphors were used to establish a connection between the reader and the text. This made the readers curious to know more details about the contents of the text. This is a technique that is used by writers to keep readers glued to the text. Cognitive metaphor is a figurative language that contrasts with literal, non-figurative language. In this view, metaphor is seen not as a literary form but as a deviation from some

62 Linus N. Hafeni. A cognitive stylistics study of "The Other Presence" and "The Hopeless Hopes." (Master's thesis, Namibia University of Science and Technology 2019). Ounongo Repository.

63 Utley. *The Lie of the Land* (as note 52). P. 46.

supposedly literal language. The study concluded that cognitive metaphor is a creative literary technique that is used to project and expose the extent of the genocide killings that were committed by the Germans and are depicted in the selected literary text.

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The Anomaly in Postcolonial Nostalgias

Ken Saro-Wiwa's *Sozaboy* and Thomas Brussig's *Helden wie wir* in Sociohistorical Comparison and Perspective

Abstract. The paper is a spin-off of an ongoing doctoral research which is focusing on the literary memories of Biafra (the former Eastern Region of Nigeria) and the GDR (the former German Democratic Republic or East Region). Although the two literary traditions are not directly connected, David Walder's idea of postcolonial nostalgias forms the first basis of this comparative study. And by bringing the two sociohistorical experiences together, the research explores how different groups or individuals remember their pasts and how these memory attitudes impact on the identities and subjectivities of the groups or individuals who own those memories. Thus, whereas the broader project will read eight texts, four from each side of the comparison, this paper focuses on two of these texts – Ken Saro-Wiwa's *Sozaboy: A Novel in Rotten English* and Thomas Brussig's *Helden wie wir* – with the sole aim of trying out the viability of the comparative analysis. By reading these two novels together, the paper evaluates the two authors' memory attitudes in relation to the respective sociohistorical backgrounds of the two texts. And in doing so, the paper aims to challenge the authors of literary memories on how to articulate collective memories of different groups as well as to advance the expert opinion that memory generally is malleable and depends on what members of any group chose to remember rather than on actual historical facts.

Key words: postcolonial nostalgia, Biafra, the GDR, literary memory, collective memory, ethics

The idea of 'Postcolonial Nostalgia' is Dennis Walder's creative interweaving of the study of memory and nostalgia into the field of postcolonial scholarship. By that term, Walder draws attention to the unique overlap between the two fields of study. Drawing heavily from Svetlana Boym's understanding of nostalgia as "a longing for a home that no longer exists or has never existed [and/or] a sentiment of loss and displacement"¹, Walder identifies the phe-

1 Svetlana Boym. *The Future of Nostalgia*. New York: Basic books, 2001. P. xiii.

nomenon of nostalgia as a regular and common pattern that runs through most of the twentieth century writings across different geographical locations and historical experiences. And since the publication of Walder's study, his concept has been reckoned to be a timely intervention in the two fields of study, especially now in this era of memory boom and global postcoloniality. In a kind of summary of his thoughts, Walder succinctly states that:

[n]ostalgia in a curious way connects people across historical as well as national and personal boundaries. I call it curious because I cannot think of a better word for describing that strange, even uncanny mix of individual and social desires that prompts the search for remembered times and places that constitutes it, and which seems to become prominent at certain critical periods of human history, including our own.²

The 'Ostalgie' phenomenon in cultural and literary memorialization of the defunct state of German Democratic Republic (the GDR or former East Germany) since after the German unification of 1989, and a very similar trend of cultural and literary memories of Biafra, the former Eastern Nigeria, since the end of the Nigeria-Biafran War in 1970, perfectly instantiate Walder's concept. And it is in this connection that this paper finds very strong grounds of comparison between Ken Saro-Wiwa's *Sozaboy: A Novel in Rotten English*³ published in 1985 and Thomas Brussig's *Helden wie wir* published in 1995.

By way of brief contextualization, Ostalgie is a neologism coined from two German words, namely: 'Ost' meaning East and 'Nostalgie' which means nostalgia. According to Paul Cooke, a Dresden cabaret artist Uwe Steimle first coined the word in the 1990s to refer to the phenomenon of sentimental longing for the life and system in the defunct state of German Democratic Republic expressed by its former citizens in the years following the German unification.⁴ Such feelings came about after the euphoric unification of the two German states on 9.11.1989, after about forty years of separate and different cultural, political, social, and economic existence. Expressing his joy and hope for a better future for a united Germany within

2 Dennis Walder. *Postcolonial Nostalgias: Writing, Representation, and Memory*. New York: Routledge, 2011. P. 1.

3 Ken Saro-Wiwa. *Sozaboy: A Novel in Rotten English*. London: Longman, 1985. All quotations from this text are taken from this Longman edition.

4 Paul Cooke. *Representing East Germany since Unification: From Colonization to Nostalgia*. Oxford: Berg, 2005. P. 8.

Europe, the former Chancellor, Willy Brandt proclaimed at the Brandenburg Gate on 10.11.1989, a day after the fall of the wall saying that “[j]etzt wächst zusammen, was zusammengehört”, meaning that now, what belongs together will grow together.⁵ By that expression, Brandt succinctly captures the high hopes of the German people as they live on both sides of the border so far separating them in the historic homecoming. However, the euphoria waned quickly and was replaced by disillusionment and resentments among most Germans, especially the former citizens of the defunct GDR state, when the realities of the unification began to correspond with Wolfgang Schäuble’s reunification speech that “what is taking place here is the accession of the GDR to the Federal Republic, and not the other way round. [...] But this is not a unification of two equal states.”⁶ This is because while the everyday lifestyle remained unchanged in the West, normal life in the East Germany was completely destabilized which brought about unprecedented socio-economic and identity crisis for the East Germans. In addition to these developments, the East Germans equally experienced stigmatization and negative stereotyping from their Western compatriots who saw them as an exotic, inferior ‘Other’ or, in the words of Thomas Ahbe⁷, reported by Ingrid Miethe and Hee-Young Yi, “as a species which is politically incapable of democracy, trusting in authority, and xenophobic; culturally provincial, stuffy, tacky and dependent, and aesthetically completely backward.”⁸ As a result, they started

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- 5 Michael Lysander Fremuth. “Wächst zusammen, was zusammengehört? Das Trennungsgebot zwischen Polizeibehörden und Nachrichtendiensten im Lichte der Reform der deutschen Sicherheitsarchitektur.” *Archiv des öffentlichen Rechts* (2014): p. 32-79.
 - 6 Peter Bender. “Willkommen in Deutschland.” *Zehn Jahre Deutsche Einheit: Eine Bilanz*. Ed. Wolfgang Thierse/Ilse Spittmann-Rühle/Johannes L. Kuppe. Opladen: Leske + Budrich, 2000. P. 13-21. Here p. 13. In German original: “[es] handelt sich um einen Beitritt der DDR zur Bundesrepublik, nicht um die umgekehrte Veranstaltung. [...] Aber hier findet nicht die Vereinigung zweier gleicher Staaten statt.”
 - 7 Thomas Ahbe. “Die Ost-Diskurse als Strukturen der Nobilitierung und Marginalisierung von Wissen: Eine Diskursanalyse zur Konstruktion der Ostdeutschen in den westdeutschen Medien-Diskursen 1989/90 und 1995.” *Die Ostdeutschen in den Medien: Das Bild von den Anderen nach 1990*. Ed. Thomas Ahbe/Rainer Gries/Wolfgang Schmale. Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2009. P. 59-112. Here p. 59.
 - 8 Ingrid Miethe/Hee-Young Yi. “The German Unification as a Process of Dominance Culture and its Implications for the Situation in South Korean Society.” *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 21/3 (2020): p. 440-451. Here p. 443.

feeling like second-class citizens forced to conform to the West German ideals, hence their nostalgia for their lost state.⁹

Although the term ‘Ostalgie’ is a German concept, coined for a peculiar German experience in its former eastern front, its application to the Eastern Nigerian experience post-Biafran War follows a growing number of new scholarly approaches that have in recent times been engaging with memory issues across national or cultural borders. The proponents of these different approaches all share the common belief that memories generally exist in dialogic relationships both within and across cultures. In other words, these scholars agree that historical and/or cultural experiences are either expressly interlinked or can be adapted notionally to shed light on experiences of other groups in different sociocultural milieus.¹⁰ It is on these notions that the nostalgia for the former East Germany and nostalgia for the former Eastern Nigeria are considered as a transnational memory constellation that could and should be studied together.

The Biafran case is unarguably a postcolonial condition which began to manifest when the political imbalance, purposefully orchestrated by the British colonial Government – both as a compensation to the North for their docile tolerance for colonial administration of what came to be the Nigerian state unlike the radically rebellious nationalist South¹¹ and to perpetu-

9 Michael Minkenberg. “The Wall after the Wall: On the Continuing Division of Germany and the Remaking of Political Culture.” *Comparative Politics* 26/1 (1993): p. 53-68. Jill E. Twark also notes that the Western Germans “turned GDR citizens into denigrated and disadvantaged Others; being the economically and politically smaller and weaker of the two Germanies, East Germany was not able to assert itself during the unification process.” Jill E. Twark. *Humor, Satire, and Identity: Eastern German Literature in the 1990s*. Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 2007. P. 5.

10 Among these new approaches, scholars often refer to such striking ideas as “Transnational Memory” by Siobhan Brownlie (in her *Mapping Memory in Translation*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2016); Michael Rothberg’s “Multidirectional Memory” (in his *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009); Daniel Levy’s and Natan Sznaider’s concept of “Cosmopolitan Memory” (in *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age*. Ed. Daniel Levy/Natan Sznaider. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006); Rick Crownshaw’s “Transcultural Memory” (in his edited volume titled *Transcultural Memory*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2014).

11 Chinua Achebe. *There was a Country: A Personal History of Biafra*. New York: Penguin Group, 2012.

ate its control of the Nigerian economy¹² – started to prove unmanageable and counterproductive for the political landscape of the new country within three years of its independence. Things got out of hand when some officers of the Nigerian army staged a coup d'état on 15.1.1966, to oust a notoriously ineffectual and corrupt government produced by that imbalance. That coup begot a counter coup by another group of the Nigerian army on 29.7.1966. And in a matrix of political and economic calculations and miscalculations, superintended by the British colonial Government and its allies¹³, the war degenerated and eventually culminated into a very devastating civil war which lasted from 6.7.1967 to 15.1.1970, between the Biafrans (in Eastern Nigeria) and the rest of the country.

Despite the promise of the “Three Rs” (Reconciliation, Reconstruction and Rehabilitation) by the Major General Yakubu Gowon led Federal Government at the end of the war, the former Biafran citizens, especially the Igbo group from where the Biafran leader hails, have continued to feel the impacts of the war marginalization and exclusion even until this present day. This is given to the domineering posture and exclusionary politics of the (Muslim-dominated) Hausa-Fulani in the North who seem bent on actualizing the instructions of their foremost leader, Ahmadu Bello who told them that: “The new nation called Nigeria should be an estate from our great-grand father Othoman Dan Fodio. We must *ruthlessly* prevent a change of power. We must use the minorities of the North as willing tools, and the South as conquered territories and never allow them to have control of their future.”¹⁴ As it is often said, they believe that “they were born to rule and therefore should hold on to political power.”¹⁵ And up until this day, the Hausa-Fulani from the North, in connivance with their willing allies in the South, have maintained this position at all costs to the point that “hatred for the Biafrans (mainly Igbos) and a wish to exterminate them was a foremost motivational factor [of all political and economic policies in Nigeria to date]. The Igbo were not and continue not to be reintegrated into Nigeria.”¹⁶

12 Emefiena Ezeani. In *Biafra Africa Died: The Diplomatic Plot*. United Kingdom: Veritas Lumen, 2013.

13 Ibid. P. 58.

14 Ibid. P. 109.

15 Olufayo Olu-Olu. “Ethnic Identity and the Crises of development in Nigeria.” *European Scientific Journal* 10/2 (2014): p. 216-229. Here p. 222.

16 Cf. Achebe. *There was a Country* (as note 12). P. 230-235ff.

Even though the states of Biafra and the GDR, as well as what they represent(ed) in some cases, are said to belong to history, they continue to live on in different ways in the memories of those who witnessed the respective traumatic historic events as well as in the postmemory¹⁷ of their respective progenies who were born after the events. This is because traces of the malaise or the hangover of the socio-political crisis that, in the first place, led to these traumatic experiences have remained and continue to translate into a crisis of memory, where writers through their literary characters continue to struggle over what, when, why, and how the past should be remembered while (re)negotiating both personal and collective cultural identities. Of central importance here are less the historical accuracies of the two experiences than the general consciousness and memory patterns of the two groups and how they relate with their respective historical pasts while (re)negotiating new identities. It is within this context that the two selected authors, Ken Saro-Wiwa and Thomas Brussig, and their texts are going to be examined.

Bringing the sociohistorical experiences of the defunct states of Biafra and the GDR under the lens of anything postcolonial sounds somewhat odd and needs proper contextualization for clearer understanding. Whereas Walder, in his contextualization, further states that the set of individuals he is referring to are “those whose pasts have been shaped by empire and/or colonization”¹⁸, the historical backgrounds and cultural experiences of the two authors and their literary works under focus here do not appear uniformly postcolonial. Yet, the analytical optic of postcolonial theory has been extended far beyond its traditional boundaries ever since Ella Shohat challenged its limited scope with her 1992 rabble-rousing questions: “[w]hen exactly [...] does the ‘post-colonial’ begin? Which region is privileged in such a beginning?”¹⁹ Efforts to satisfactorily provide answers to her questions have forced the field open to limitless reconceptualization and redefinitions to

17 Marianne Hirsch. *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture After the Holocaust*. Columbia University Press, 2012. Hirsch, quoting Eva Hoffmann, used it to describe the memory struggles of a second generation of survivors of powerful and often traumatic experiences and how these experiences condition their sense of what they owe the previous generations or how such “received, transferred knowledge of events is being transmuted into history, or into myth” (p. 1).

18 Cf. Walder. *Postcolonial Nostalgia* (as note 2). P. 3ff.

19 Ella Shohat. “Notes on the ‘Post-Colonial.’” *Contemporary Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*. Ed. Padmini Mongia. New York: Arnold, 1996. P. 321-334. Here p. 325.

capture the totality of what scholars now refer to as 'global coloniality' which Madina Tlostanova describes as a global structure that:

affects not only the colonized and the subaltern but also, increasingly, the people in the Global North and in the semi-periphery, who used to think that colonialism was not their problem and now discover that their lives are becoming increasingly dispensable within the architecture of the global coloniality.²⁰

In short, particularly scholars from the regions formerly under the Soviet Union have been following in the footsteps of David Chioni Moore's argument that the 'post-' in 'postcolonial' reflects or involves the 'post-' in 'post-Soviet' since "the West has often colonized itself"²¹ to making claims of post-Soviet postcoloniality. Citing Chioni Moore, Neil Lazarus, for instance, has observed that

the tyranny and brutality of Soviet overlordship, coupled with its Russo-centrism and its consistent suppression of national aspirations for autonomy, meant that most of those who found themselves subject to its domination experienced the USSR precisely as a colonial order [which justifies agitations for] expansion of the category of the postcolonial to include the enormous post-Soviet sphere is not merely arguable [...] but intellectually warranted.²²

Likewise, some GDR intellectuals have equally adopted the postcolonial framework to make sense of the general processes of German unification and its impact on the cultural identities and socioeconomic lives of the former citizens of the state post-1989. Wolfgang Dümcke and Fritz Vilmar contend that:

Wenn man aber Kolonialisierung nicht mit dem Einmarsch von Kolonialtruppen [...], mit Massakern an 'Eingeborenen' etc. gleichsetzt, sondern das

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- 20 Madina Tlostanova. "The Postcolonial Condition, the Decolonial Option, and the Post-Socialist Intervention." *Postcolonialism Cross-Examined: Multidirectional Perspectives on Imperial and Colonial Pasts and the Neocolonial Present*. Ed. Monika Albrecht. New York: Routledge, 2020. P. 165-178. Here p. 174.
- 21 David Chioni Moore. "Is the Post- in Postcolonial the Post- in Post-Soviet? Toward a Global Postcolonial Critique." *Modern Language Association: PMLA* 116/1, Special Topic: Globalizing Literary Studies (2001): P. 111-128. Here p. 114.
- 22 Neil Lazarus. "Spectres Haunting: Postcommunism and Postcolonialism." *Journal of Postcolonial Writing* 48/2, (2012): P. 117-29. Here p. 119.

Entscheidende ins Auge faßt: die Zerstörung einer 'einheimischen' Wirtschaftsstruktur, die Ausbeutung der vorhandenen ökonomischen Ressourcen, die soziale Liquidation nicht nur der politischen Elite, sondern auch der Intelligenz eines Landes sowie die Zerstörung der gewachsenen Identität einer Bevölkerung, so hat sich in der Tat in der ehemaligen DDR im präzisen Sinne des Begriffs ein Kolonialisierungsprozeß vollzogen.²³

It is around these connections that one finds a ground of comparison for post-Biafran and post-GDR writings.

Ken Saro-Wiwa's *Sozaboy: A Novel in Rotten English* and Thomas Brussig's *Helden wie wir* are important representative works of the memory attitudes in Biafran and GDR literatures respectively. They both present alternative or oppositional memories of their respective historical backgrounds in ways that obviously reflect the public perspectives of their authors on history. For instance, Ken Saro-Wiwa is one prominent name that will forever be associated with how the Biafran War was fought and lost because of his dire strategic and game-changing position in the war. Though a Biafran himself at the outbreak of the war, he willfully switched camp to fight on the Nigerian side against Biafra and contributed immensely to the defeat of Biafra. On the side of Brussig, the GDR scenario was not an open war of firearms but of an intellectual type. John Pizer notes that at the onset,

German reunification was not a certainty. There was a deep divide among German intellectuals on both sides of the border as to whether a complete fusion of the two discrete political entities, the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic, should be embraced or resisted.²⁴

23 Wolfgang Dümcke/Fritz Vilmar. "Was heißt hier Kolonialisierung? Eine theoretische Vorklärung." *Kolonialisierung der DDR: Kritische Analysen und Alternativen des Einigungsprozesses*. Ed. Wolfgang Dümcke/Fritz Vilmar. Münster: Agenda Verlag, 2006. P. 12-21. Here p. 13. [If one does not equate colonization with the invasion of colonial troops however [...], with the massacres of 'natives' etc., but rather pays attention to the decisive factors such as the destruction of a 'native' economic structure, the exploitation of the existing economic resources, the social liquidation not only of the political elite, but also of the intelligentsia of a country as well as the destruction of the cultivated identity of a population, then a process of colonization in the precise sense of the term has indeed taken place in the former GDR.] (Translation mine, B. A.).

24 John Pizer. "Nonsimultaneity and its Corrective: Thomas Brussig's Ambiguous Engagement with Reunification." *German Studies Review* 42/1 (2019): p. 123-139. Here p. 123.

Having been described as the most ambivalent of all GDR reunification writers²⁵, Brussig's perspective on the reunification, which is very prominently in *Helden wie wir*, more or less aligns with those of the Western Germans. Cooke has described the novel as an act "'writing back' against western received views [of the reunification] as a wholesale colonial take-over."²⁶ But his kind of writing back, like Saro-Wiwa's war writings, tends to gravitate towards the historical, cultural, and most importantly economic interest of his oppressor or 'colonizer'. Bill Ashcroft et al. seem to have captured such curious mode of identification and sociality when they argued that one of the worst challenges of our age seems to be the issue of "place and displacement [a] post-colonial crisis of identity [that hinders] an effective identifying relationship between self and place [and has engendered a sense of] alienation of vision and the crisis in self-image."²⁷ And true to Ashcroft et al., the historical and situational perspectives and tones of Saro-Wiwa's and Brussig's protagonists, as will be discussed going forward, do not seem to reflect the core sensibilities and expectations of their respective larger groups. They each tend to show that their concerns in the whole sociohistorical developments are quite removed from the general concerns of their respective groups. And it is such conscious and curious tendencies of writing against one's cultural affiliation – which invariably threatens or harms one's overall interest in several ways – that this paper considers an anomalous mode of subjectivity in postcolonial nostalgias. The protagonists of the two novels in focus here abundantly embody such mode of subjectivity as this paper will show going forward.

Both Saro-Wiwa and Brussig adopt the satirical mode by presenting, each in his turn, a protagonist who is immature, subversive, or simply anomalous. They are each cast in a manner that easily makes their personalities and actions defy common reasoning and their respective societal expectations. In fact, if one views them through the lenses of Iris Vidmar's notion of fictional characters as a mass or embodiment of signs that "can be used as a vehicle of

25 Ibid. Pizer also remarks that regarding the reunification, "[n]o other author who has reflected on pre-Wende GDR life, and on the Wende itself, has displayed so many disparate attitudes toward this subject than Brussig, and, concomitantly, no other author has employed such a wide range of narrative tones and techniques in engaging with late GDR life and politics, as well as their post-1989 aftermath." (P. 125)

26 Cooke. *Representing East Germany Since Unification* (as note 5). P. 79ff.

27 Bill Ashcroft et al. *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Postcolonial Literatures*. New York: Routledge, 1989. P. 8-9.

author's irony, satire, symbolism, or mockery"²⁸, one will immediately perceive these protagonists as part of literary devices deployed by the authors to register their own oppositional memory of their respective sociohistorical experiences. From the time these protagonists are introduced and throughout their development in their respective narratives, they appear to be disrupting or subverting hegemonic discourse of history in their respective societies such that compel alternative ways of imagining the past.

Brussig's *Helden wie wir*²⁹ features a male adolescent protagonist called Klaus Uhltscht. Just as complex and enigmatic as his last name is, Klaus' personality and character issuing from his dysfunctional family upbringing and socialization processes is a very complex and enigmatic one. He was born into a very staunch socialist family with a Stasi father and a hyper-hygienic and Stasi-like mother, exactly on August 20, 1968, induced by the rumblings of Soviet tanks. Right from the moment of his birth, according to him, "[a]n evil stench filled the trembling air, and the world into which I emerged was a political world."³⁰ So, early indoctrination into very strict socialist ideals and steady Stasi surveillance condition him to grow up with skewed or dysfunctional socialization processes which impact very negatively on his psychological and emotional development. Beginning from his immediate family which functions as a microcosm of the state, Brussig completely denies Klaus the decorum and self-respect in revealing that his pathological guilt complexes and attitudes basically originate from there. Though the only child and a male, he has no paternal bonding with his father, a man who never mentions the son's name throughout the narrative and only speaks to him when he issues angry commands. In fact, Klaus suffers a perpetual trauma of his inability to win his father's love and attention. He describes him as

a father who thought so little of me that he couldn't even muster the energy to complete a scathing sentence like 'Pah, that boy will never amount to anything!' He merely made a dismissive gesture whenever he got to 'Pah, that

28 Iris Vidmar. "Fictional Characters." Perspectives on the Self. Ed. Boran Berčić. University of Rijeka Press, 2017. P. 303-330. Here p. 305.

29 All quotations from this novel will be taken from John Maxwell Brownjohn's English translation: *Heros Like Us*. London: The Harvill Press, 1997, but will be supported with German originals taken from: Thomas Brussig. *Helden wie wir*. Berlin: Volk und Welt, 1996.

30 Brussig. *Heros Like Us* (as note 29). P. 3. "Die Luft stank und zitterte böse, und die Welt, auf die ich kam, war eine politische Welt." Brussig. *Helden wie wir* (as note 30). P. 5.

boy...’, and never uttered my name aloud. It’s a fact: I never once heard my name on his lips!³¹

By contrast, his mother loves and cares for him rather excessively. As a municipal hygiene inspector, she is eternally obsessed with her profession which she carries out with excessive devotion even at home. She cautions and monitors her son regularly on all issues of his health, socialization, safety, and even in his language use. Introducing her mother, Klaus says that she “didn’t want me going anywhere where I could get my fingers crushed or pierced by splinters”³². And because of that Klaus makes a confession saying that: “I was well aware that wounds inflicted by splinters could result in blood-poisoning, amputation – even death. It was routine procedure at home to fear the worst and issue solicitous warnings about it, and my mother was never more profoundly solicitous than when telling me something for my own good.”³³ Like the ubiquitous Stasi ever presence, she checkmates and rules over Klaus’ psyche to the point that there is no more difference between her presence and her absence in the way he carries out his affairs with utmost caution. All these made Klaus develop inferiority complexes and a paranoia for everything, including the use of toilet for fear of getting infected. And in the course of the interview, we hear him lament, wondering: “[h]ow could any boy attain true manhood if doomed to feel ashamed even of his very own, self-generated excrement?”³⁴ But as he matures physically and begins

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- 31 Brussig, *Heros Like Us* (as note 29). P. 7. “Ein Vater, der so wenig an mich glaubte, daß er sich nicht mal der Anstrengung unterzog, einen vernichtenden Satz wie ‘Ach, aus dem Jungen wird doch nichts!’ zu Ende zu bringen; er winkte nach den Worten ‘Ach, aus dem Jungen...’ immer nur resignierend ab. Er sagte nicht meinen Namen! Niemals habe ich aus seinem Munde meinen Namen gehört!” Brussig, *Helden wie wir* (as note 29). P. 10.
- 32 Brussig, *Heros Like Us* (as note 29). P. 6. “[M]eine Mutter wollte nicht, daß ich irgendwo bin, wo man sich die Finger einklemmen kann.” Brussig, *Helden wie wir* (as note 29). P. 9.
- 33 Brussig, *Heros Like Us* (as note 29). P. 6. “‘Ich weiß doch, welche Zustände auf Segelbooten herrschen!’[...] Daß Holzsplitterverletzungen zu Blutvergiftung, Amputation und Tod führen, war mir durchaus bewußt; immer das Schlimmste zu erwarten und sich gegenseitig auch tiefbesorgt darin einzuweihen war bei uns gang und gäbe.” Brussig, *Helden wie wir* (as note 29). P. 9.
- 34 Brussig, *Heros Like Us* (as note 29). P. 32. “Wie soll man ein Mann werden, wenn man sich sogar seiner selbstgeackten Scheiße schämen muß?” Brussig, *Helden wie wir* (as note 29). P. 44.

to socialize more with other psychologically balanced children, the gap in his developmental processes eventually catches up with him. Upon discovery not only of his difference from the others³⁵ and that “[o]ther people were always privy to information of which I knew absolutely nothing about”³⁶, he develops a deep sense of inferiority complex while his stunted emotional and psychological self degenerates into uncontrollable eruption of sexual desires that lead him into all sorts of perverse sex practices like masturbation and even bestialities. As a result, Klaus could not help himself being dragged deeper and deeper into perversions to the point that he wonders repeatedly if he is actually in the real Stasi or not. And speaking to Mr. Kitzelstein after a moment of self-examination as a Stasi officer and strong believer in socialist ideals, he confesses that “the relationship between socialism and perversion had never been clarified. Socialism needs perversion; perversion needs socialism.”³⁷ Yet, he continues leading his life in it until fate and his perversion led him to his self-acclaimed role of bringing down the Berlin Wall with his accidentally enlarged penis on 9 November 1989, hence his claim in his biography, presented as a taped interview with Mr. Kitzelstein of the *New York Times*, to be “recent German history’s *missing link*”³⁸ for his unparalleled historical deed.

On the other hand, Ken Saro-Wiwa’s *Sozaboy: A novel in rotten English*, a fictional narrative of the Nigeria-Biafran War, presents us with Mene, a very naïve young apprentice in the transportation sector as the protagonist. Prior to the outbreak of the war, Mene’s highest ambition was to obtain a license and become a lorry driver in his rural community of Dukana. His aspiration is motivated by the fact that “Dukana people have one lorry which they call ‘Progress’. But they have no driver and they have to go and get driver from another country to drive the lorry”³⁹. So, having dropped out after his elementary school given his mother’s inability to continue paying for his further education, his sole ambition is to grab this lorry business opportunity.

35 Cf. Brussig, *Heros Like Us* (as note 29). P. 47-50.

36 Ibid. P. 59. “[dass] die anderen immer alles wußten und ich nie die geringste Ahnung hatte!” Brussig, *Helden wie wir* (as note 29). P. 78.

37 Brussig, *Heros Like Us* (as note 29). P. 191. “[...] das Verhältnis von Sozialismus und Perversion [wurde] nirgends geklärt. Sozialismus braucht Perversion, [und] Perversion braucht Sozialismus.” Brussig, *Helden wie wir* (as note 29). P. 247.

38 Brussig, *Heros Like Us* (as note 29). P. 250. “[...] das Missing link der jüngsten deutschen Geschichte!” Brussig, *Helden wie wir* (as note 29). P. 323.

39 Saro-Wiwa, *Sozaboy* (as note 3). P. 11.

However, the event of the war brutally shatters his plans. In the build-up to the war, Mene is seen to be completely ignorant of the prevailing situation and why talks of war have been making the rounds; and so is only interested in making more money from transporting the large number of returning refugees. And in so far as his work is paying off now, the war is not at all a matter of concern to him or his extremely remote village of Dukana. For this reason, Mene abhors anything that will disrupt the status quo or interrupt the steady flow of his business. A nightmare in which the authorities came for mass mobilization of new recruits to join the war reveals how Mene is inwardly averse to joining the army. On hearing the officer in his dream say “that all those who can fight will join army [...] my heart begin to cut. [...] No. No. I cannot be soza”⁴⁰. However, the moment Mene encounters Agnes, a war fugitive and his would-be-wife who has returned from Lagos following the outbreak of the war in that city, he changes his mind. He agrees to join the army just to impress her and win her heart as well as to prove his manhood to his community who look down on him as a mere apprentice-driver. To make sure that nothing stops him, Mene goes to the extent of naively bribing his way into the Biafran army for the singular purpose of donning the army uniform.⁴¹ It is not until he gets into the camp and later to the war front that he is jolted into the harsh realities of war which he has willfully signed up for. He came to realize that “khaki no be soza”⁴²; that there is a world of difference between the beautifully starched and ironed army uniform and the actual soldiering. This is why Mene spends his entire days as a soldier without firing even a single shot. Instead, he continues hiding and dodging enemy attacks all through, only to desert the war front at the slightest opportunity that presents itself to him.

By creating such characters like Klaus and Mene, Brussig and Saro-Wiwa do not only leave traces of what and how they remember their respective pasts, they also try to influence how their readers remember or relate with these pasts. By weaving their narratives around not only adolescent protagonists but also very naïve and eternal noninitiates, the intentions of the two authors tend to mimic each other in satirizing the tensed and serious moments of their respective sociohistorical pasts. This is true if one considers Paul Cooke and Andrew Plowman’s observation that literary characters [such as Mene and Klaus] offer readers indubitable access into “the individual writer’s

40 Ibid. P. 47.

41 Cf. Ibidem. P. 53.

42 Ibid. P. 73.

relation to the state [and a means] through which the role and identity of the writer is called into question and the armoury of rhetorical devices at his/her disposal challenged."⁴³ Anyone who has followed the foregoing discussions and has truly appreciated how traumatic and tensed the two fictionalized historical moments were for their citizens, does not need to wonder again why Brüssig and Saro-Wiwa have chosen to represent them in ways that very obviously trivialize and mock the memories of those who experienced them. Pundits believe that "whatever men do is the subject of satire."⁴⁴ Yet, focusing not necessarily on the general issue of whether satire or even comedy should be an appropriate medium of writing for traumatic experiences, rather on the propriety of its application to such traumatic experiences of Biafra and post-1989 GDR as well as the intentions of the authors who apply it in these two cases, invariably raises some critical or ethical concerns. This is because while satire is general believed to be committed to social responsibly and moral action, "its playful, unruly form and reliance on ridicule call this moral commitment into question. [For while it] can be used for both just and unjust ends [one must always ask:] under what circumstances does ridicule burn down what it should illuminate, and thus become amoral or unethical?"⁴⁵ If this assertion is true, there is no gainsaying that satire in *Sozaboy* and *Helden wie wir* is ethically and morally ill-conceived especially considering the positioning of their respective authors and why they adopted the satirical mode.

In his critical study of *Sozaboy*, Austin Tam-George describes Mene as an anomalous literary character and the novel an anomalous narrative. Elaborating further on what he means by this term, Tam-George remarks that anomalous narratives are "those narrative and representational aberrations which upset our rational orthodoxies and conventions by introducing an irregular and quaint twist to the representation of social experience."⁴⁶ In all intent and purposes, both Mene and Klaus, viewed in that light, are roundly anomalous characters. They are intentional literary devices purposely created

43 Paul Cooke/Andrew Plowman. "Introduction." *German Writers and the Politics of Culture: Dealing with the Stasi*. Ed. Paul Cooke/Andrew Plowman. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003. P. xx.

44 Northrop Frye. "The Nature of Satire." *University of Toronto Quarterly* 14: 1 (1944): p. 75-89.

45 Jonathan Rossing. "An Ethics of Complicit Criticism for Postmodern Satire." *Studies in American Humor* 5: 1 (2019): p. 13-30.

46 Austin Tam-George. "Ken Saro-Wiwa's 'Sozaboy' and the Gamble of Anomaly." *Transnationalism and African Literature*, special issue of *Scrutiny* 2: Issues in English Studies in Southern Africa 10/2 (2005): p. 24-34. Here p. 25.

and deployed by Saro-Wiwa and Brussig in their respective works to project oppositional memories of their respective pasts in a bid to subvert hegemonic discourses. However, while their representational modes and fictional devices are very similar, their memory attitudes and relationships towards their respective historical and cultural pasts pursue quite different goals.

Scholars have noted that a protagonist like Klaus is Brussig's multi-pronged satire of the German unification directed against different representative groups in both East and West. Twark, for instance, argues that such a character questions Eastern Germans for their complicity and passivity throughout the life of the repressive GDR system as well as those who now want to claim undue heroism at its end.⁴⁷ The height of Klaus's discontent with his fellow Easterners came after witnessing the 4.11.1989, demonstration speech by Christa Wolf asking the demonstrators to "[i]magine if this were socialism and no one was leaving!"⁴⁸ Reminding Mr. Kitzelstein that "[t]hose border guards weren't toy soldiers, after all,"⁴⁹ he asks him rhetorically: "look at the East Germans today: as passive now as they always were. How could they have demolished the Wall?"⁵⁰ For others, it is Brussig's attempt to set the unification records straight in a matter-of-fact manner by apportioning blames wherever necessary. Just like he does not spare his fellow Eastern German, the novel is also deployed as an attack against Western dominated misrepresentation of the former GDR and the unification process. In what is supposed to be an interview, Brussig assigns the entire roles of posing the questions and providing the answers to Klaus. Readers get to remember that Mr. Kitzelstein is still in the interview only when Klaus calls him to draw his attention. Apart from those occasions, Klaus dominates or drowns the western voices in the unification discourse in a way that confirms Cooke's argument of pushing back against western received views of the reunification. Such views are also self-evident in Klaus's mood when he tells Mr. Kitzelstein that when the Eastern Germans join him to shout 'Deutschland' which he first said subconsciously after the wall was opened, "[t]he

47 Cf. Twark. *Humor, Satire, and Identity* (as note 10). P. 82-85ff.

48 Brussig. *Heros Like Us* (as note 29). P. 221. "Stell dir vor, es ist Sozialismus und keiner geht weg!" Brussig. *Helden wie wir* (as note 29). P. 285.

49 Brussig. *Heros Like Us* (as note 29). P. 247. "Wir wurden doch nicht von Pappsoldaten bewacht." Brussig. *Helden wie wir* (as note 29). P. 319.

50 Brussig. *Heros Like Us* (as note 29). P. 248. "Sehen Sie sich die Ostdeutschen an, vor und nach dem Fall der Mauer. Vorher passiv, nachher passiv – wie sollen die je die Mauer umgeschmissen haben?" Brussig. *Helden wie wir* (as note 29). P. 319-320.

West Germans took it literally, of course, though they subjected it to a small but vital distortion: they behaved as if all who said 'Germany' meant 'the Federal Republic'. How unimaginative!"⁵¹ With this statement, Klaus tries to ridicule the Western Germans who thought that having lived in repression and poverty for many years, all the Easterners are head over heels out of the East in embrace of everything Western. As Klaus continues, that is not the case because "[w]hat's so good about the Federal Republic, aside from the fact that it produces the best BMWs in the world?"⁵² Going from the foregoing, it is logical to argue that Brussig's multipronged attacks could be summed up as one.⁵³ And that is to write the former GDR citizens back into history by vehemently reclaiming their authentic East German identity and reassigning agency to them in the historic moment of German unification. All this seems to indicate that while Brussig is pro-unification, he does not deny nor reject his cultural identity.

Unlike Brussig, Saro-Wiwa's ultimate intention is practically to cast the whole Biafran struggle in a very bad light and, in short, to undermine its foundations or *raison d'être*. By weaving his narrative of such a genocidal war against his own people around a very naïve and badly motivated soldier like Mene, he does not only project his public disdain and open aversion to the

51 Brussig, *Heros Like Us* (as note 29). P. 249. "Die Westdeutschen nahmen es natürlich wörtlich, allerdings, indem sie es um eine entscheidende Nuance entstellten: Sie taten so, als ob alle, die Deutschland sagten, Bundesrepublik meinten. Wie phantasielos!" Brussig, *Helden wie wir* (as note 29). P. 322.

52 Brussig, *Heros Like Us* (as note 29). P. 249-250. "Was ist denn dran an dieser Bundesrepublik, außer daß dort die besten BMW's der Welt gebaut werden?" Brussig, *Helden wie wir* (as note 29). P. 322.

53 This is exactly why Roberto Simanowski has since cautioned that "[w]er ernsthaft versucht, über die Kunstfigur Klaus Uhltscht einen Zugang zum Inneren des Ostdeutschen zu finden, ist in Brussigs Falle gelaufen. Denn wer Übertreibungen, Absurditäten und Wortspielereien als Erklärungsansatz für Realität benützt, ist von Klaus Uhltscht, der auf die unglaublichsten Sprüche der DDR-Ideologen hereinfiel, kaum noch zu unterscheiden." (Roberto Simanowski. "Die DDR als Dauerwitz: Thomas Brussig's 'Helden wie wir'" *Neue Deutsche Literatur* 2 (1996): p. 156-163. Here p. 161. [Anyone who truly seeks to gain access into the inner workings of the former East Germany through the eyes of a fictional character like Klaus Uhltscht has cheaply fallen into the trap set by Brussig. This is because whoever takes hyperboles, absurdities, and wordplays as literal explanation of reality can hardly be distinguished from Klaus Uhltscht himself who fell for the most unbelievable rhetorics of the GDR ideologies. Translation mine, B. A.]

war but also tends to woo his readers to equally view it as ill-conceived and senseless. Ezenwa-Ohaeto, one of his biographers, affirms that in some of his literary works, Saro-Wiwa frontally “indicts the politicians who encourage the ravaging of vanquished towns [and] blames the war and its consequences on all those who played significant roles in the events that led to it.”⁵⁴ Matthew Lecznar also notes that “Saro-Wiwa roundly condemns [the Biafran warlord and Head of State, General Chukwuemeka Odumegwu] Ojukwu for leading the Biafran secession and for causing the war as a result.”⁵⁵ And unmistakably, one will notice that Mene’s hiding in the trenches and his desertion of the war when the slightest opportunity presents itself mocks Ojukwu’s fleeing of the country at a very tough moment in the war to avoid being captured by the Nigerian forces shortly before the war ended. Expressing his disgust for the plights of his people during the war, Mene says, in reference to the Biafran Head of State:

[t]he foolish man Chief Commander General have told lie about enemy and no enemy. But was it not the enemy that saved my life? And all those Dukana people who have already dead, is it enemy that killed them? Is it not that foolish Chief Commander General who told his sozas to remove these Dukana people from their village?”⁵⁶

Already in the title, Saro-Wiwa’s virulent criticism of the war is easily observable in his choice of narrating the events in ‘rotten English.’⁵⁷ He takes a clear distance from popular view of the war within the Biafran enclave by weaving up oppositional memory and counter-narrative that tends to deconstruct established canons or to challenge dominant system of knowledge on the war. In fact, in his other war texts, Saro-Wiwa makes his war position and the memory perspectives they pursue very clear.

54 Ezenwa-Ohaeto. “Ken(ule) (Beeson) Saro-Wiwa.” *Twentieth Century Caribbean and Black African Writers: Third Series*. Ed. Bernth Lindfors/Reinhard Sander. *Dictionary of Literary Biography* 157 (1996) Gale Literature Resource Center, link.gale.com/apps/doc/H1200004381/LitRC?u=uiuc_uc&sid=-bookmark-LitRC&xid=a81ce665.

55 Matthew Lecznar. “‘We all stand before history’: (Re)Locating Saro-Wiwa in the Biafran War Canon.” *Research in African Literatures* 48 (4) (2017): p. 21-38. Here p. 23.

56 Saro-Wiwa. Sozaboy (as note 3). P. 153.

57 See for instance Michael North’s essay titled “Ken Saro-Wiwa’s Sozaboy: The Politics of ‘Rotten English.’” *Public Culture* 13/1: P. 97-112. Here p. 100-102.

In thinking about cultural identity reconstruction and representation in general, Stuart Hall seems to have offered the best interpretive prognosis that sufficiently sheds some light on the issues. According to Hall,

[t]here are at least two different ways of thinking about 'cultural identity'. The first position defines 'cultural identity' in terms of one, shared culture, a sort of collective 'one true self', hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed 'selves', which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common [and] a second, related but different view of cultural identity [which recognizes] points of deep and significant difference which constitute 'what we really are'; or rather – since history has intervened – 'what we have become'.⁵⁸

The takeaway from Hall's opinion here is a better understanding of the different modes of sociocultural belonging in this modern age which lends insight into how Brussig and Saro-Wiwa each remember their respective pasts. As already stated, Brussig's authorial intention with a multidirectional satire of the unification processes is geared towards a reconstruction of authentic East German identity that includes all. His ultimate goal, by so doing, is to reclaim agency for the East Germans – through the personality and unparalleled contribution of Klaus – in the historic moment of the triumph of capitalism. In short, he is not in any way different from the generality of the "east [sic] German population keen to register their ownership of western culture, while at the same time carving out a space for eastern distinctiveness within this framework."⁵⁹ And by representing the former East Germany through the perspectives of such a character like Klaus, Brussig himself tends to leave traces of his own position in the whole discourse. And thus, his overarching commitment in this novel perfectly reflects Hall's first category which he further says is "grounded in the archaeology."⁶⁰ According to Hall, "our cultural identities reflect the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provide us, as 'one people,' with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning, beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of our actual history."⁶¹ By making Klaus's perversion to can-

58 Stuart Hall. "Cultural Identity and Diaspora." *Contemporary Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*. Ed. Padmini Mongia. New York: Arnold, 1996. P. 110-121. Here p. 111-112.

59 Cooke. *Representing East Germany Since Unification* (as note 5). P. 104ff.

60 Hall. *Cultural Identity and Diaspora* (as note 57). P. 111ff.

61 *Ibid.* P. 111-112.

cel out the perversion of socialism in the GDR, Brussig makes him the true embodiment of 'die Negation der Negation' – the negation of the negated in a bid to re-register or restore the prelapsarian Germanness of the former East Germany as Cooke has argued.

Contrarily, the type of cultural identity which Saro-Wiwa seeks to reconstruct after the Biafran War reflects more of Hall's second category which is not a rediscovery but simply an invention of new identity that has not been there before. In his own words, Hall elaborates that cultural identity of this type "is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture."⁶² Thus, it is more of something that is invented to serve the present as imagined by those who wish to break from their original or archaeological roots. And that is arguably a logical way to think of the form of memory Saro-Wiwa seems to espouse in his Biafran War writings. This is because Saro-Wiwa identified himself as an Eastern Nigeria citizen prior to the outbreak of the Biafran War. Following a nationwide pogrom against the Easterner in other parts of the country in the build up to the war, survivors were forced to return to the Eastern Region. Ken Saro-Wiwa was among the Eastern refugees who returned from Lagos, the then capital of Nigeria. And just upon his return, he was appointed a graduate assistant at the University of Nigeria at Nsukka, at the only university in Eastern Region then.⁶³ But following the Nigerian government's moves to break Biafran unity and resistance level by creating new states in the build up to the war, he chose to resign his position at the university and declared support for the Nigerian side. In so doing, Saro-Wiwa barefacedly opted to join the Nigerian side in playing the role of those "stooges of imperialism' [...] fighting against African brothers of theirs who had resolved to fight for the liberation of their countries."⁶⁴ And as proof that he did not act out of ignorance the details of the issues that led to the war, in his autobiographical account titled *On a Darkling Plain: An Account of the Nigerian Civil War*, Saro-Wiwa states:

I abhorred the senseless killings in the North; I detested the perpetrators of these acts. But I perceived that these were but the result of the struggle for power between the three major ethnic groups, a struggle in which the minorities were mere pawns. The true interest of these minorities lay in a more

62 Ibid. P. 112.

63 Cf. Ezenwa-Ohaeto. Ken(ule) (Beeson) Saro-Wiwa (as note 53). P. 2ff.

64 Frantz Fanon, "The Stooges of Imperialism". *Alienation and Freedom*. Ed. Jean Khalfa and Robert J. C. Young. London: Bloomsbury, 2018. P. 661-666.

equitable country where all groups would be fairly treated, where all groups had self-determination. Biafra was not that country.⁶⁵

As one can see here, it is not only Saro-Wiwa's support of the Nigerian side during the war that is at issue but more significantly, his pro-Nigerian writings after the war which reflects more of Hall's idea of a new invention than 'archaeological' identity reconstruction. It is a purposeful invention of new cultural identity that is disconnected from one's natural root. From his statement above, one will easily perceive that what matters to him more is who and what he becomes in 'becoming' a Nigerian instead of a Biafran.

To conclude this discussion, it suffices to restate that Saro-Wiwa and Brussig, in the two works under our focus here, are engaged in the same task of reinventing and redefining their respective sociocultural identities and sense of belonging but obviously do not share similar attitude to history. Even though the historical and social experiences which both authors have fictionalized in their respective works are quite different – one a post-colonial war; and the other, a peaceful sociopolitical, socioeconomic, and sociocultural change in the metropolis – both, undeniably, have produced relatable feelings of displacement, dispossession, and disruption, if not total loss, of identity. Yet, in the two authors' efforts to engage and articulate their respective group memories of these experiences, we see both authors adopting very similar approaches but leading to differentiated outcomes. For while there has been palpable evidence of steady progress in Germany's efforts to come to terms with the memory of its pasts, not least the post-1989 disillusionments that led to the Ostalgie phenomenon, Edlyne Anugwom aptly observes that even "[t]hough Biafra is past, it is a past that never passes away."⁶⁶ In fact, the end of the war simply turned out to be the beginning of a new and more insidious war given unworked-through memories of both groups and individuals. Unfortunately, Ken Saro-Wiwa became one of the first casualties of this second war when he was executed in 1995 by the

65 Ken Saro-Wiwa. *On a Darkling Plain: An Account of the Nigerian Civil War*. Port Harcourt [etc.]: Saros International, 1989. P. 88. Even in his collection of poems titled *Songs in a Time of War*, Saro-Wiwa states that while "They speak of war/Of bows and arrows ... / I sing my love / For Maria." (p. 13)

66 Edlyne Anugwom. "Memory as Social Burden: Collective Remembrance of the Biafran War and Imaginations of Socio-Political Marginalization in Contemporary Nigeria." *Postcolonial Conflict and the Question of Genocide: The Nigeria-Biafra War, 1967–1970*. Ed. A. Dirk Moses/Lasse Heerten. New York: Routledge, 2018. P. 387–411. Here p. 387.

same Nigerian government under General Sani Abacha on account of fighting against same injustice which he initially supported during the Biafran War.⁶⁷ And while in prison, Femi Ojo-Ade quoted him to have confessed that “[m]any of the issues raised by Ojukwu [the Biafran Leader] and which led to the war are still valid today as they were then. [This is why] towards the end of his life, Saro-Wiwa was prepared to make peace with the Igbo.”⁶⁸ Whereas Saro-Wiwa never had the opportunity to make amends, his case, compared with Brussig, does not only cast another layer of anomaly on the modern modes of subjectivity and belonging but also calls to mind the African proverb which cautions that it is “only a foolish child [who] points to his father’s house with the left hand.”⁶⁹ For although Brussig, being a younger generation Easter German, does not entirely subscribe to everything east, his oppositional memory of the former GDR does not make him denounce or deny his true identity and culture. His artistic ingenuity is put into use in successfully registering his opposition while at the same time affirming his true identity in the reunited Germany. But on the contrary, Saro-Wiwa goes all out to deploy his ‘rotten English’ against Biafra in search of something new or modern but that did not end well for him.

67 While he was in prison, it was rumored that the Biafran Warlord, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu, paid him a visit one evening and said to him “Good morning, my brother”, signaling to him that his imprisonment was actually just the morning or beginning of what he should expect. Eventually true to Ojukwu’s predictions, he was executed by a firing squad ordered by General Sani Abacha. Cf. Ezeani. In *Biafra Africa Died* (as note 13). P. 83.

68 Femi Ojo-Ade. *Ken Saro-Wiwa: A Bio-Critical Study*. Oxford: Africana Legacy Press, 1999. P. 14-15.

69 “Africa’s proverb of the day.” BBC News. 1 January 2013. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-20884831>.

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Alien(ated) Memories, Foreign Languages: Interconnections and Transformations

Examples from North-global Literatures

Abstract. The paper illustrates the reading of selected (literary) texts on the basis of three central categories of contemporary cultural studies: 'alienness,' 'memory,' and 'translation.' The methodological and interpretive potential of these concepts is most easily demonstrated by treating them as cultural metaphors and bringing them together in various configurations. The starting point is the assumption that 'translation' and 'memory' do not mean a mimetic reproduction of a given 'original' (in case of translation: a text; in case of memory: a past event) but its transformation in the sense of reconstruction from the here-and-now-position. Both processes: translating and recollecting consist in making the 'absent' or 'estranged' original present. As the common denominator of 'translation' and 'memory,' the formula of 'repetition with difference' is suggested, bringing the notion of alienation or 'the Other' to the fore. The cultural practice of memorization is viewed as a series of transformations: translation between different languages, transforming individual traumas into narrative patterns of collective memory, transmuting non-literary discourses into poetic images, and literary texts into visual art. This approach makes it possible to perceive intertextual connections between such different authors of North-global literatures as Thomas Mann, Bruno Schulz, W.G. Sebald and J.S. Foer. It can be assumed that the model of analysis demonstrated in this paper is applicable to comparable cases of memory-transforming literary works from South-global and Sub-Saharan African literatures.

Key words: memory, translation, alienness, alterity, Bruno Schulz, Thomas Mann, J.S. Foer, W.G. Sebald

1. Memory, translation, alien(ation): metaphorical meanings, configurations, transformations

In this paper, I would like to present my readings of a few selected, seemingly unrelated texts from North-global literatures of the 20th and 21st century which may shed some light on the cultural practice of memorization viewed as a series of *transformations*: translation between different languages – a key

issue in a summer school concerned with Modern Languages –, transforming individual traumas into narrative patterns of collective memory, transmuting non-literary discourses into poetic images, and literary texts into visual art. ‘Memorization’ means that a certain ‘source text’ is being preserved and at the same time *transformed* – ‘translated’ into another language, discourse, or medium.¹

The following interpretations are based on some concepts which contemporary humanities have declared to be central categories of cultural studies: ‘alienness’, ‘memory’ and ‘translation’ (the last one not mentioned in the title but quite obvious when we focus on ‘foreign languages’ and authors writing in Polish, American English, and German). The notions of ‘memory’, ‘alienness’ and ‘translation’ are not new. They have been employed in intercultural and postcolonial or ethnographic studies² and literary theory, but usually separately. I attempt to integrate them and prove that ‘memory’, ‘alienness’ and ‘translation’, brought together in various configurations, may become both an important *subject* of literary analysis and a useful *interpretation key*: a model to construe cultural phenomena, literary texts in particular. I would like to prove the applicability of this model on the example of texts created in various languages, media and systems of signs – texts which employ the poetics of both the modern classic literature before the World War II. (Thomas Mann, Bruno Schulz) and of the ‘global’ postmodernism (W. G. Sebald, J. S. Foer).

My approach is conditioned by a broad, metaphorical understanding of ‘memory’ and ‘translation’. The ability to remember and to forget, in its basic meaning restricted to individuals, has been more and more frequently attributed to communities: families, generations, nations. Therefore, the

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- 1 The present paper pivots on my book: Katarzyna Lukas. *Fremdheit – Gedächtnis – Translation: Interpretationskategorien einer kulturorientierten Literaturwissenschaft* [Alienness – Memory – Translation: Interpretation Categories of a Culture-Oriented Literary Studies]. Berlin: Peter Lang, 2018. The literary texts discussed in this monograph, illustrating such preservings-cum-transformings, are taken from North-global literatures. For the Zimbabwean context of the past Gukurahundi and its re-presentation today, Yemurai Gwatirisa has, in this anthology, contributed a valuable example of the feasibility, but also the challenges of ‘memorization’ as it is understood both in my book and in the present paper.
 - 2 E. g., in Africa-related research in the case of alterity, a neighboring concept of alienness. See, e. g., Elvis Imafidon. *Alterity, African Modernity, and the Critique of Change. Handbook of African Philosophy of Difference*. Ed. Elvis Imafidon. Cham: Springer, 2019. P. 171-189.

terms 'cultural memory,' 'social memory' or 'communicative memory' have been coined. Similarly, 'translation' goes far beyond a transfer between different natural languages (interlingual translation) or between different variants of the same language (intralingual translation). It encompasses intersemiotic translation (transformation into sign systems other than verbal language): remediations and rewritings in which the original remains recognizable. Metaphorically and *sensu largo*, 'translation' covers different forms of interpersonal communication, dialogue and negotiation, sharing of one's own experience with other people, an intercultural transfer. In these cases, the 'original' that flows, e.g., into a literary text, may be a fragment of discourse, an individual-psychic or collective-psychic process, thus being diffuse, 'dispersed,' difficult to recognize or to access.

The concepts of 'memory' and 'translation' have undergone a similar evolution within the discourse of cultural studies. As a result of the cultural turn in the 1980s, both terms, deriving from different fields of humanities, have been reinterpreted as metaphors and/or metonymies, and their semantic fields have become closely connected to each other. Analogies and intersections of both categories may be explained as follows: 'translation' and 'memory' do not mean a mimetic reproduction of a given 'original' (in case of translation: a text; in case of memory: a past event) but its *transformation* in the sense of reconstruction from the here-and-now-position. Both processes: translating and recollecting consist in making the 'absent' or 'estranged' original present. As the common denominator of 'translation' and 'memory,' I suggest the formula of '*repetition with difference*' which brings the notion of *alienation* or '*the Other*' to the fore.

Alienness belongs to a different order than 'translation' and 'memory'. It indicates a certain relation rather than a process or a result. 'Alienness' brings 'translation' and 'memory' together in the following way: all memory phenomena emerge as a result of developments similar to translation, such as 'translating' individual memory into the communicative one, or transforming personal memories into a literary work which enriches the cultural memory. The driving force of these 'translational' activities is *confronting the 'Other'*: a foreign language and culture, an individual or collective trauma, family phantoms, historical taboos etc. Similarly, translating literary works from one language into another may be regarded as shaping the cultural memory, making the target readers familiar with the 'strangeness' of a foreign literature. Facing a 'foreign object', both individual and collective memory may absorb it or reject it – just as unfamiliar traits of an original literary work are subject to the translator's strategy of domestication or foreignization.

Having outlined this theoretical framework, let me apply some configurations of literal and metaphorical meaning of memory and translation to reading the following authors: Bruno Schulz (1892-1942), a Polish-Jewish text and visual artist; J. S. Foer (born 1977), an American novelist of Jewish origins; Thomas Mann (1875-1955) and W. G. Sebald (1944-2001), both writing in German while living in an English speaking country. What ties them together are documented or presumed contacts between the authors and the more or less influential reception of the earlier texts by the younger writers. These connections, however, cannot be fully explicated within the scope of this paper.

2. Bruno Schulz, Thomas Mann and their concepts of (collective) memory

My first case study is the prose of the Polish writer, literary critic, graphic artist and painter Bruno Schulz, the author of two collections of stories: *Sklepy cynamonowe* (*The Cinnamon Shops*) (1933) and *Sanatorium pod Klepsydrą* (*Sanatorium under the Sign of the Hourglass*) (1937). Schulz is considered one of the most important representatives of 20th-century Polish literature and is assigned to the 'critical modernism' of the interwar period. The son of a Jewish textile merchant, he was born in Drohobych – a small town in the region of Galicia which is now part of Ukraine but used to be the north-eastern borderland of the Austro-Hungarian Empire at the turn of the 19th and 20th century. Drohobych was inhabited equally by Poles, Jews and Ukrainians. Schulz spent almost his entire life there, working as a drawing teacher at a high school. Forced to move to the ghetto in 1941, he was shot on the open street by an SS officer in 1942. In his autobiographically tinged, phantasmagorical prose, he conveys the atmosphere of the Galician provincial town at the turn of the century, mainly from the perspective of a childlike first-person narrator.

Schulz was equally at home in Polish, Jewish and German cultures. Despite his decision to write in Polish, his prose is much closer to the German-language than to the Polish literature. Thomas Mann, Franz Kafka, Joseph Roth, Alfred Kubin, or Rainer Maria Rilke are repeatedly mentioned as the authors who proved formative for Schulz's own work, even if concrete inspirations are sparse and difficult to point out. His affinity with the literature of the Habsburg monarchy is perceptible in the atmosphere of the Galician province evoked in his stories – with their tendency towards the ghostly

uncanny, the grotesque, the mystical, irony and whimsical humour.³ Polish, however, was a reception barrier that alienated his prose from potential German-speaking readers. At home in a multinational and multicultural milieu, Schulz rejected unambiguous ascriptions of identity. Due to his bilingualism, his double talent as a word and image artist, his ambivalent attitude toward religion, and his position between literary traditions, Schulz hovered his entire life between the 'familiar' and the 'foreign.' Typical of his life and work are a transitional state: a permanent in-betweenness, marginality, otherness, alterity or alienation.

In my opinion, the notion of 'interdiscursive translation' is highly relevant to Schulz's prose as he 'translates' into his own poetic language the psychoanalytic discourse of his era (Carl Gustav Jung's concepts of the archetypes and the collective unconscious) and Thomas Mann's reflection on memory with its key image of myth. Through metaphors, Schulz creates his own vision of individual and collective memory combining motifs, i. a., from C. G. Jung and Sigmund Freud. In the following, I will try to show some 'translations' that Schulz performs to turn the familiar and consciously experienced into the unfamiliar and 'buried'.

A significant example of how Schulz transforms the psychoanalytic concept of the unconscious can be found in his metaphorical images of the human psyche. It is conceptualized as a complex layered structure with many hidden, inaccessible corners, where inner forces that are not controlled by the ego struggle for dominance. Schulz compares the psyche to a house – as in the following depiction of the dreaming servant girl Adela:

[H]ardly has [Adela] closed her eyes when the race on all floors and all apartments of the house begins. Only for the uninitiated is the summer night a time of rest and forgetfulness. Once the activities of the day have finished and the tired brains long for sleep, the confused to-ing and fro-ing, the enormous tangled hubbub of a July night begins. All the apartments of the house, all rooms and alcoves, are full of noise, of wanderings, enterings and leavings. In all windows lamps with milky shades can be seen, even passages are brightly lit and doors never stop being opened and shut. A great, disorderly, half-ironic conversation is conducted with constant misunderstandings in all the chambers of the human hive. On the second floor people misunderstand what those

3 Cf. Jadwiga Kita-Huber. "Künstlerische Außenseiter in der polnischen Literaturgeschichtsschreibung. Der Casus Bruno Schulz." *Kanon und Literaturgeschichte. Beiträge zu den Jahrestagungen 2005 und 2006 der ehemaligen Werfel-StipendiatInnen*. Ed. Arnulf Knafl. Wien: Praesens, 2010. P. 289-308. Here p. 291.

from the first floor have said and send emissaries with urgent instructions. Couriers run through all the apartments, upstairs and downstairs, forget their instructions on their way and are repeatedly called back. And there is always something to add, nothing is ever fully explained, and all that bustle among the laughter and the jokes leads to nothing.⁴

In this 'translation' into a poetic image, we can easily recognize Sigmund Freud's structural model of the psyche with its three instances: the Ego, the Id and the Superego, each one placed on a different 'floor' of the house. In dreams, barriers between the individual levels of the psyche no longer exist. Instead, there are only chaotic, uncontrolled movements of conscious and unconscious contents being distorted by the inner censorship.

As for C. G. Jung, it is not clear whether Schulz was familiar with his writings. The views of Jung may have found their way into the Polish writer's work through the concept of myth, which in many points coincides with the ideas of Thomas Mann whom Schulz deeply admired. Mann laid out his concept in the prologue to his novel cycle *Joseph and His Brothers*, well known to Schulz. For the Polish writer, myth means mythology: a bundle of themes, plots, stories, and characters constantly recurring in art and literature in manifold incarnations. For Mann, too, myth is a universal *narrative pattern*, realized in various 'stories' (handed down orally or written down). The heroes of myth are model characters, playing certain predetermined roles. What they make present is "the typical, the eternally-human, eternally-recurring, timeless, in short: the mythical."⁵ Both writers place the narrative in a mythical time, described by Mann as the timeless, eternal present ("zeitlose Immer-Gegenwart"⁶), while by Schulz as a "peripheral" time, or "branchlines of time."⁷

4 Bruno Schulz. *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*. Translated by Celina Wieniewska. New York: Penguin, 2008. P. 283.

5 Thomas Mann. "The Theme of the Joseph Novels." An address delivered by Thomas Mann in the Coolidge auditorium in the Library of Congress on the evening of November 17, 1942. https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Theme_of_the_Joseph_Novels. In German original: Thomas Mann. "Joseph und seine Brüder. Ein Vortrag." *Reden und Aufsätze* (1) (*Gesammelte Werke in dreizehn Bänden*, Bd. 9). Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer, 1990. P. 654-669. Here p. 665.

6 Thomas Mann. "Ein Wort zuvor: Mein 'Joseph und seine Brüder'." *Reden und Aufsätze* (1) (*Gesammelte Werke in dreizehn Bänden*, Bd. 9). Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer, 1990. P. 626-629. Here p. 628.

7 Schulz. *Street of Crocodiles* (as note 4). P. 129.

The source of the mythical 'masks' and 'roles' that make up the myth in the narrative sense is, in Schulz's case, his image of the "Underworld" (see below), while in Mann it is "the well of the past"⁸. Both of these metaphors can be identified with Jung's collective unconscious, while the myth itself coincides with the archetype rooted in it. These images refer directly to depth psychology, which both writers considered an extremely important context for literature.

In both Mann and Schulz, the image of the collective unconscious is always connected with myth. According to Mann, a pre-historic human who had not yet developed a sense of their own individuality, was ready to identify with the group and accept the mythical role imposed on them. In Mann's work, the mythical is always linked to the collective: his novel about Joseph recounts "the birth of the Ego out of the mythical collective"⁹. In the emancipation of the self, resulting in the anthropocentric worldview, the German writer sees the condition for the development of culture and civilization. In doing so, he points to analogies between the history of mankind and the psychogenesis of a child.¹⁰ This line of thinking also echoes the reading of the founders of psychoanalysis. At the same time, this social dimension of Mann's myth allows Jan Assmann to explain it as a form of "organization of cultural memory"¹¹: *Joseph and His Brothers* convey the idea that the identity and memory of an individual are shaped, on one hand, by the unconscious, 'mythical' forces of the group, on the other hand – by taking part in social communication: religious rituals, rites, and festivals. An important role in this process plays formalized, oral intergenerational transmission: the stories

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- 8 Thomas Mann. *Joseph and His Brothers*, translated by John E. Woods. Vol. 1: *The Stories of Jacob*. New York/London/Toronto: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005. P. 3. In German original: "Brunnen der Vergangenheit", Thomas Mann. *Joseph und seine Brüder*. Der erste Roman: *Die Geschichten Jaakobs*. Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer, 2008. P. 11.
 - 9 Mann. *The Theme of the Joseph Novels* (as note 5).
 - 10 See Thomas Mann. "Freud and the Future." *Essays of Three Decades*. Translated from the German by Helen T. Lowe-Porter. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948. P. 411-428. Here p. 422. In German: Thomas Mann. "Freud und die Zukunft." *Reden und Aufsätze* (1) (= *Gesammelte Werke in 13 Bänden*, Bd. IX). Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer, 1990. P. 478-501. Here p. 493.
 - 11 See Jan Assmann. "A Life in Quotation: Thomas Mann and the Phenomenology of Cultural Memory." *Religion and Cultural Memory. Ten Studies*, translated by Rodney Livingstone. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006. P. 155-177. Here p. 161.

of the elders ("fine discourse" – "schönes Gespräch"¹²). In the way Mann represents the intertwining of individual and collective (communicative) memory, Assmann recognizes elements of Maurice Halbwachs' social frameworks of memory¹³ – one of the key concepts in today's memory studies.¹⁴

In Schulz, a kind of 'theory of memory' informed by psychoanalysis can be reconstructed, too. His 'memory discourse' that unites myth, childhood and the collective unconscious appears as a poetological program, expressed most fully in his story *Spring*:

We are beginning to be at a loss for words: they become confused, meandering, and raving. And yet it is beyond these words that the description of that unbelievable, immense spring must begin. The miracle of dusk! Again, the power of our magic has failed and the dark element that cannot be embraced is roaring somewhere beyond it. Words are split into their components and dissolved, they return to their etymology, reenter their depths and distant obscure roots. [...] This is how total regressions occur, retreats into self, journeys to the roots. This is how we branch out into anamnesis and are shaken by underground subcutaneous shivers. [...] [you are] on the other side; you are in the Deep, in the Underworld. [...] There is a lot of movement and traffic, pulp and rot, tribes and generations, a brood of Bibles and *Iliads* multiplied a thousand times! Wanderings and tumult, the tangle and hubbub of history! That road leads no farther. We are here at the very bottom, in the dark foundations, among the Mothers.¹⁵

All people possess a certain psychic energy, flowing from the common pre-history of humanity. It is externalized in images and 'stories,' involuntarily coming to the individual. The fullest access to images, ideas and concepts stored in the "Underworld," in the collective memory, is available to the child and the artist. For this reason, Schulz describes childhood as "the age

12 In the German original written in capital letters to emphasise its ritualistic, festive character – see Mann. *Joseph und seine Brüder* (as note 8). P. 119. In English: Mann. *Joseph and His Brothers* (as note 8). P. 89.

13 These "social frameworks" ("cadres sociaux") are: family, religious community, social class, and profession; see Maurice Halbwachs. "The Social Frameworks of Memory." *On Collective Memory*. Edited and translated by Lewis A. Coser. Chicago/London: Chicago University Press, 1992. P. 37-167.

14 See Astrid Erll. "Cultural Memory Studies: An Introduction." *A Companion to Cultural Memory Studies*. Ed. Astrid Erll/Ansgar Nünning. Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 2010. P. 1-15. Here p. 1-2.

15 Schulz. *Street of Crocodiles* (as note 4). P. 160-162.

of genius”¹⁶. What distinguishes the child from the artist, however, is the latter’s awareness of his own role as a medium of the collective unconscious. Humanity’s common ‘storehouse of archetypes’ provides a foothold for the imagination of the poet or painter, who draws from it usually without intention:

Oh, those luminous drawings, made as if by a foreign hand. [...] From the very start I had some doubts whether it was really I who made them. Sometimes they seem to me unintentional plagiarism, something that has been suggested to me or remembered... As if something outside me had used my inspiration for an unknown purpose.¹⁷

Thus, Schulz’s stories can be read as an interdiscursive translation of Jung’s concept that says that in every brilliant, visionary work of art the collective unconscious comes to the fore, while the artist himself is a “‘collective man’, a vehicle and moulder of the unconscious psychic life of mankind”¹⁸. This is how Schulz understands the artist’s task: he is to revive myths, that is, to bring to the surface the archetypes slumbering in the collective unconscious, to give artistic shape to what is so ‘alienated’ that it cannot be verbalized but felt only intuitively.

3. J. S. Foer’s ‘transmedial translation’ of Bruno Schulz; translation as commemoration

Since the 1980s, Schulz has become an object of fascination for researchers, writers, filmmakers, and graphic artists worldwide who have adapted motifs from his life and work into their own texts. Today, Schulz keeps attracting his readers for both literary and biographical reasons. On one hand, there is the cliché of Schulz as a ‘Polish Kafka’, an outdated and not really accurate label based on motivic similarities between the prose of the two authors. Schulz’s

16 This is also the title of one of his stories, see Schulz. *Street of Crocodiles* (as note 4). P. 129.

17 *Ibid.* P. 132 and 138.

18 C. G. Jung. “Psychology and Literature.” *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*. Complete digital edition. Vol. 15: *Spirit in Man, Art, and Literature*. Edited and translated by Gerhard Adler and R. F. C. Hull. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971. P. 97-119. Here p. 115. <https://jungiancenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/vol-15-the-spirit-in-man-art-and-0literature.pdf>.

phantasmagorical, autobiographically tinged stories and drawings revolve around the powerful figure of the Father and his grotesque transformations, including transmutations into a cockroach. On the other hand, Schulz' biography contains two powerful symbolic motifs. One of them is the artistic forced labour which the writer performed to pay for the last months of his life: he was supposed to paint some fairy-tale characters on the wall of the children's room in a villa seized by an SS officer in Drohobych. Schulz dragged out this work for an obvious reason: as long as he was busy with the frescoes, he remained protected from death. The frescoes, fragments of which were discovered as late as in 2001, bear harrowing witness to his failed struggle for survival. The other symbolic motif concerns a lost manuscript: Schulz's last, unpublished novel *Mesjasz* ('The Messiah'). It was supposedly among the manuscripts the artist had given to his friends for safekeeping, most of which were lost. Today, this legendary manuscript stands metonymically for what Schulz could still have accomplished with his literary talent if he had survived.

The two biographical motifs are connected by the feature of the fragmentary and incomplete. The interrupted work on the frescoes and the likewise unfinished *Messiah*-manuscript refer, as it were, to a larger, intact whole, a unity of life and work. The biographical facts have their literary counterpart in the myth of "The Book" central to Schulz, depicted in his story with the same title.¹⁹ This 'Book of the world', conceived as the general principle of the universe, remains only a vague inkling: a whole that experiences fragmentary, inadequate embodiments in the material world. Even the Bible is an incomplete apocrypha which can but hint at 'the original'.²⁰ Fragments of "the authentic Book, the holy original"²¹ are most likely to be found in the remains of an old newspaper which becomes the source of enlightenment for the protagonist. Accordingly, today's artists trace this motif in Schulz' prose, graphics and biography, regarding his life and work together as kind of 'cultural text'. They create intertextual references to the voids and the experiences of loss immanent in this 'cultural text Bruno Schulz'. A frequent point of reference is the ethnic and social exclusion implied in the 'gaps' – alienation to which Schulz fell victim.

19 See Schulz. *Street of Crocodiles* (as note 4). P. 115.

20 The protagonist makes reproaches to his Father who comes up with the Bible which he supposes to be "The Book" demanded by his son: "Why do you give me that fake copy, that reproduction, a clumsy falsification? What have you done with The Book?" (ibid. P. 117).

21 Ibid. P. 124.

This particular line of reception is taken up by the American author Jonathan Safran Foer. Since his Jewish grandparents came from Galicia, he represents the third generation of Holocaust survivors and tries out various artistic means to transform the collective memory of historical trauma into artistic forms comprehensible for his own generation. So is the aim of his work *Tree of Codes* (2010).²² With the so-called die-cut technique, he transforms the English translation of the two volumes of Schulz's prose, known in Celina Wieniewska's version as *The Street of Crocodiles*, into a three-dimensional artefact. He cuts out single words, phrases, and sentences from the English edition and discovers sort of a hidden text under the surface of Schulz's 'palimpsest'. This method results from Foer's intuition to have found in Schulz's stories his "Original", "The Book" which reflects, in a tiny fraction, the universal meaning. Foer himself writes about his feeling "that there must have existed some yet larger book from which *The Street of Crocodiles* was taken."²³ Therefore, in his interpretation, he needn't look for any sense beyond this text because everything is already there, just waiting for exhumation. Foer's *Tree of Codes* is thus a hybrid work of art: the originally two-dimensional literary text has been literally transformed into a spatial object. Its materiality comes to the fore: the perception of *Tree of Codes* begins with haptic contact, with touching and leafing through the book, and looking through its 'windows' (Fig. 1).

The usual, linear reading process gives way to a spatial experience and demands a creative, engaged reading.²⁴ Thus, Foer's artefact is situated in an interstice between literature and the visual arts, where the verbal language is as much important as its material carrier. The cutting up of the original has a symbolic meaning: in the physical mutilation of the original, in the 'wounds' inflicted on the book, we can see a metaphor for the destruction of much of Schulz's work.²⁵

22 J. S. Foer. *Tree of Codes*. London: Visual Editions, 2010.

23 Ibid. P. 139.

24 See Matt Rager. []Tree[] of C[]od[]es [on J.S. Foer's *Tree of Codes*]. Post45 (24.05.2012). https://post45.org/2012/05/_tree_-of-c__od__es/. Berit Michel. "'PlastiCity': Foer's *Tree of Codes* as (Visual) Multilayered Urban Topography – Performing Space and Time in a Twenty-First-Century Adaptation of Bruno Schulz's Textual Labyrinths." *Critique* 55 (2014): p. 166-186. Here p. 170.

25 Cf. Kris van Heuckelom. "(S)Tree(t) of (Cro)cod(il)es. Jonathan Safran Foer 'okalecza' Brunona Schulza" [(S)Tree(t) of (Cro)cod(il)es. Jonathan Safran Foer 'mutilates' Bruno Schulz]. *Literatura polska w świecie*. Vol. IV: *Oblicza światowości*. Ed. Romuald Cudak. Katowice: UŚ, Wyd. Gnome, 2012. P. 15-29. Here p. 20.

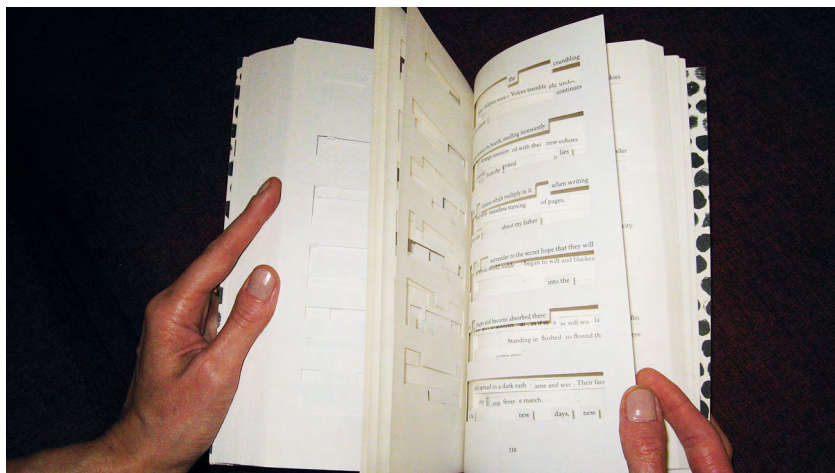


Fig. 1: J. S. Foer *Tree of Codes* (own archive)

In terms of content, *Tree of Codes* contains nothing that goes beyond the original story. Foer draws from the already existing material. Schulz centres on the figure of the Father, who takes on the features of a demiurge and symbolizes the male creative element. The Father engages in a struggle with the servant girl Adela, who embodies the prosaic and profane, but at the same time exudes a destructive erotic force of the ‘eternal feminine’. The sadistic-masochistic struggle between the masculine and the feminine is watched by the childlike first-person narrator who gives ordinary everyday events the range of a magical, sacred reality. Foer reduces the amount of Schulz’s text by about 90%, omitting a number of episodic yet important characters and motifs. The first-person narrator and his parents do participate in the action of *Tree of Codes*, but the Father does not exhibit any supernatural traits: he performs no heretical experiments, undergoes no metamorphoses; compared to the original, he turns out to be an average, ordinary person.²⁶ Altogether, Foer’s creative principle does not open up a reinterpretation of Schulz’s prose on the mere textual level. Rather, the innovations appear on

26 Ibid. P. 25. See also Irena Chawrińska’s attempt to read *Tree of Codes* in linear and nonlinear modes: Irena Chawrińska. “Rzeźba czy ruina? O Schulzu Foera” [A Sculpture or a Ruin? On Foer’s Schulz]. *Schulz Forum* Vol. 17-18 (2021): p. 87-99. Here p. 90-91. <https://doi.org/10.26881/sf.2021.17-18.05>.

the meta-level of discourse. *Tree of Codes* proves that Schulz acquires the status of a (North-global) *lieu de mémoire* in today's discourse on cultural memory. Pierre Nora's metaphor of "sites of memory"²⁷ refers to symbolic figures from the past, icons that have become 'crystallization points' of collective memory and identity²⁸ and reverberate with their "lasting, normative, and formative power"²⁹ in the present. Sites of memory include real places, works of art, concepts, institutions, and people. Bruno Schulz, the paradigmatic victim of the Holocaust, a 'mutilated' artist who was forgotten for a long time, becomes such a symbolic figure of a North-global community of memory. Postmodern artists belonging to this community transcend linguistic and cultural borders to commemorate the culture of Central European Jewry that perished in the Holocaust. In their own works, they refer to Schulz's biography and the motifs from his work. They are inspired both by Schulz's metaphors of memory and by his tragic fate, and view him as a symbolic sign of the outlawed Other, annihilated because of his otherness. Artists such as Foer try to preserve Schulz as an 'alienated site of memory' by 'translating' it into a discourse understandable to contemporaries. Although they inscribe Schulz in contexts sometimes very distant from his work, they seem to be guided by one common goal: translation as commemoration.

4. Alienated memory and foreign languages as subject to transformations in W.G. Sebald

My last example aims at elucidating some transformations concerning memory and language, depicted and performed in W.G. Sebald's prose. In his works, the intersections between memory, alienness, and translation could be stated as follows: Sebald simulates the forming processes of individual,

27 Pierre Nora. "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire." Translated by Marc Roudebush. *Representations* No. 26, Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory (Spring 1989): p. 7-24. Here p. 7. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2928520>.

28 Cf. Etienne François/Hagen Schulze. "Einleitung." In: *Deutsche Erinnerungs-orte*. Ed. Etienne François/Hagen Schulze. München: Beck, 2009. P. 9-24. Here p. 18.

29 Jan Assmann. *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization. Writing, Remembrance, and Political Imagination*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012. P. 38.

communicative, and cultural memory³⁰ and illustrates these mechanisms in protagonists mostly of Jewish origin who, as a result of historical trauma, have become foreigners and social outsiders. Deprived of their homeland and autobiographical memory, literally transferred to a foreign land, they perform memory work and reconstruct their buried biographies through various transformations, including interlingual translation.

In the following, I would like to trace the 'alienated memory' in the title protagonist of *Austerlitz* (2001), the most famous prose work by Sebald. The frame story covers about thirty years, during which the first-person narrator meets the main protagonist Jacques Austerlitz several times and listens to his life story; the narrator's account merges into the monologues of his interlocutor. Austerlitz is an art historian of Jewish origin, a Czech by birth who was separated from his parents in the summer of 1939 at the age of five and shipped from his native Prague to England on one of the so-called Kinder-transports. His mother eventually perished in an extermination camp, his father is missing. In Wales, Austerlitz is placed with foster parents who erase from the boy all knowledge of his identity. Austerlitz himself also banishes his origins, his mother tongue, and even the experience of the traumatic loss of his parents from his consciousness – for many years. It is only in his later years that the past returns to haunt him, makes him explore his roots and visit the places where he had spent his earliest childhood.

It is not without reason that Austerlitz makes the architecture of modernity, especially railway stations, the focus of his research on the history of architecture. Buildings and architectural forms in his studies are also the starting point for metaphors of memory that can be assigned to the model of 'alien places': hermetic, closed spaces, also of displacement and dislocation.³¹ They are consistent with the state of uprootedness, homelessness, and emigration in which the character finds himself.

Significantly, the protagonist's first encounter with the first-person narrator takes place at Centraal Station in Antwerp. This train station creates space for cultural, communicative and individual memory where the identity of Austerlitz is (re)constituted. Even before discovering his true identity, the protagonist is plagued by the uncanny feeling that his biography is tied to the

30 Nicolas Pethes. *Kulturwissenschaftliche Gedächtnistheorien zur Einführung*. Hamburg: Junius, 2008. P. 159.

31 Cf. Wim Peeters. "Architektur." *W.G. Sebald Handbuch. Leben – Werk – Wirkung*. Ed. Claudia Öhlschläger/Michael Niehaus. Stuttgart: Metzler, 2017. P. 193-198. Here p. 196.

history encoded in station buildings – that is why they exert a strange attraction on him. At the same time, these buildings make him anxious because they point him to the repressed parts of his life story that have become alien to him. In fact, all of the key biographical events that Austerlitz expels into his unconscious, as well as the fate of his parents, are connected with trains and railway stations. His mother was deported by train to the Theresienstadt ghetto and later on to a concentration camp. The boy himself could escape death only by the well-organized Kindertransport. His father may have been deported or saved: his last trace disappears at the Gare d'Austerlitz in Paris. From the protagonist's point of view, the architecture of the Centraal Station in Antwerp epitomises the process of modernization which has led to the catastrophes of the 20th century: to the rational, organized extermination of entire nations. The deportation of the Jews during World War II. was only possible because of the well-developed railroad network, along with the clever logistics of the train connections.

Nevertheless, the station in Antwerp stimulates communicative memory in the sense of direct, oral dialogue in which memory is mediated – in this case: between Austerlitz and the first-person narrator. Although the protagonists start their conversation with talking about history of architecture, Austerlitz soon feels that “he must find someone to whom he could relate his own story which he had learned only in the last few years”³². His foster family is not the place to cultivate communicative memory because the foster parents do not talk to the boy about his past: “And just as cold reigned in the house in Bala, so did silence.”³³ The lack of communication leads to breaks in communicative memory and alienates the family members from one another.

In the ‘alienated memory’ of Austerlitz, confrontation with foreign languages plays a significant role. In many situations in the book, interlingual translations are suggested, frequently happening only in the protagonist's mind. They are related to the multilingualism of Jacques Austerlitz whose linguistic biography is marked by ruptures, experiences of loss, and separation traumas. In his Prague childhood, the boy grows up bilingually. With his nanny Věra, he speaks French and Czech. The bond with Czech is then lost in exile; that with French remains latent, encouraged at school and later on in Paris where Austerlitz studies at the university. He feels strong

32 W. G. Sebald. *Austerlitz*. Translated from the German by Anthea Bell. London: Hamish Hamilton, 2010. P. 60.

33 Ibid. P. 63.

affection for French which he unconsciously associates with the first happy years of his life. It is the language to which he instinctively turns in conversation with strangers (such as the first-person narrator) and in which he feels secure. At the same time, he develops a completely different attitude toward English: his second mother tongue and language of education. This idiom, forced upon him, remains alien to him throughout his life; he never grows into it emotionally, nor seems to have really mastered it. The narrator notices his preference for French and his unconscious aversion to English during his first conversation with Austerlitz:

we had always spoken in French since our first conversation in Antwerp, I with lamentable awkwardness, but Austerlitz with such natural perfection that for a long time I thought he had been brought up in France. When we switched to English, in which I was better versed, I was strangely touched to notice in him an insecurity which had been entirely concealed from me before, expressing itself in a slight speech impediment and occasional fits of stammering [...].³⁴

Another indication of Austerlitz' insufficient native language competence is the fact that he cannot solve any English crossword puzzle. At a key point in his biography, a crossword is solved, and the protagonist states that he had "never been able to solve even the simplest clues in these tortuous English puzzles"³⁵. In a psycholinguistic sense, it is the confession of the inability to make unusual associations between words and to recognize polysemy, which requires not only language-independent mental flexibility but also profound familiarity with the language.

That feeling of anxiety, triggered by the use of English, points to the oppressive character of this language, with which the 'false' identity of Dafydd Elias was once imposed on little Jacques Austerlitz. English appears as a means of violence and a source of secondary traumatization. The early change of language and identity, inseparable from the loss of parents, inflicts almost physical pain on the boy. As Julia Kristeva notes, a stranger who is no longer allowed to speak his mother tongue is cut off from his "body's memory"³⁶.

A translation process explicitly carried out in *Austerlitz* concerns the German language that embodies trauma for the main character – even if he himself does not understand for a long time why he instinctively avoids

34 Ibid. P. 42.

35 Ibid. P. 201.

36 Julia Kristeva. *Strangers to Ourselves*. Translated by Leon S. Roudiez. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991. P. 15.

any contact with Germany and its language. While reading Hans Günther Adler's book about Theresienstadt, Austerlitz struggles with German:

Reading this book [...] was a painstaking business because of my poor knowledge of German, [...] it was almost as difficult for me as deciphering an Egyptian or Babylonian text in hieroglyphic or cuneiform script. The long compounds, not listed in my dictionary, which were obviously being spawned the whole time by the pseudo-technical jargon governing everything in Theresienstadt had to be unravelled syllable by syllable. When I had finally discovered the meaning of such terms and concepts as *Barackenbestandteiler*, *Zusatzkostenberechnungsschein*, *Bagatellreparaturwerkstätte*, *Menagetransportkolonnen*, *Küchenbeschwerdeorgane*, *Reinlichkeitsreihenuntersuchung*, and *Entwesungsübersiedlung* – to my surprise, Austerlitz articulated these heterogeneous German compounds unhesitatingly and without the slightest trace of an accent – when I had worked out what they meant, he continued, I had to make just as much of an effort to fit the presumptive sense of my reconstructions into the sentences and the wider context, which kept threatening to elude me.³⁷

In this account, reflections on the *Lingua Tertii Imperii* elicit the discourse on the limits of mimetic capacities of language and translation. Through interlingual translation, Austerlitz attempts to reconstruct the meaning of the foreign words and the reality behind them. However, the original resists translation because it defies any sense-making: for linguistic reasons (the compounds are not in the dictionary, Austerlitz has to assemble them from the single components – just as he reconstructs his 'alienated' past from fragments of knowledge) and because the text deals with atrocities, in the face of which linguistic representation fails. The interlingual translation performed by Austerlitz coincides here with memory work: by arduously making sense of the reality encoded in the German original, he can (at least somewhat) comprehend a part of his own family history – i.e., the fate of his mother who perished in Theresienstadt.

Sebald illustrates interactions between individual, communicative, and cultural memory in people who suffer from disturbed, 'alienated' memory as a result of traumatic experiences and the loss of spatial belonging. His protagonist embodies the foreign: Austerlitz is a figure of a displaced, uprooted person, who has lost his identity and memory together with his homeland.

37 Sebald. Austerlitz (as note 32). P. 327-330.

He is a victim of a forced spatial 'translation' which does not root him in more languages and cultures, but leads to alienation and isolation.

5. Final remarks: Schulz's and Sebald's 'translation' of contemporary discourse on memory. Implications for Intercultural German Studies (in African context and beyond)

Finally, I would like to point out a significant common feature of both Sebald and Schulz. They both perform interdiscursive translations by transforming the memory discourse of their time into their own literary works. In Schulz's case, it was Freud and Jung, but Sebald's *Austerlitz* also 'translates' quite accurately Maurice Halbwachs's concept of the social frameworks of individual memory: one of the central concepts that today's cultural memory studies draws on. Indeed, the story of little Jacques Austerlitz is already contained in essence in Halbwachs's study *On Collective Memory*. In the preface, the French sociologist mentions the story of a young girl who was supposedly found alone in France in the 18th century and could not give any information about her origins; only later, with recourse to external memory media and conversations with adults, did she gradually recover her memory.³⁸ The same applies to Austerlitz, whose foster family fail in the role of the basic social framework of individual memory. Remarkably enough, Sebald's reading of Halbwachs is reflected in the vocabulary he adopts from the French sociologist's study³⁹ – or, more precisely: from its German translation – in his *Austerlitz*. Thus, what we read in both Schulz and Sebald are interdiscursive translations across language borders: German – Polish in Schulz, French – German in Sebald.

I am sure the notions of 'alienated memory', translation and foreign languages, as well as different transformations taking place between them can be put together in various other constellations that will stand the test of further readings – not only in the North-global context.

38 See Halbwachs. *The Social Frameworks of Memory* (as note 13). P. 37.

39 Marcel Atze. "Die Gesetze von der Wiederkunft der Vergangenheit. W.G. Sebalds Lektüre des Gedächtnistheoretikers Maurice Halbwachs." Sebald. *Lektüren*. Ed. Marcel Atze/Franz Loquai. Eggingen: Isele, 2005. P. 195-211. Here p. 211.

A number of comparable, formal as well as event-based, similarities with South Global and, more specifically, Sub-Saharan African literatures come to mind which could equally be approached with the concepts that were central here. They include the quasi-mythical invocations of an orally transposed past, articulated by ancestors and crucial for the restitution of a collective memory (and identity) of the Herero people after the genocidal 1904 events at Waterberg and in the Omaheke desert, as they come to be depicted in oratures such as the *omihiva* and *omatjina*.⁴⁰ Similarly, the quasi-genocidal Gukurahundi in the early 1980s in Zimbabwe has triggered a set of memory-transforming literary works with traits of intertextual⁴¹, but also interdiscursive transformations where literalisation becomes an instrument for counter-memory and remembrance.

Interpretation of literary texts focused on the notions of alienness, memory and translation, as demonstrated above, can also be well integrated into an updated concept of Intercultural German Studies – ‘interkulturelle Germanistik’ which aims at teaching German as a foreign language and conveying the image of Germany in Africa, among others. However, as Bruno Arich-Gerz advocates, Intercultural German Studies should be reconceived and transformed in the sense of a “decolonized and de-canonized academic mediation”.⁴² This highly desirable approach includes teaching German in African classrooms in such a way that teachers and students meet on an equal footing, without educators (representatives of ‘Bildung’) mentally following in the footsteps of former German colonizers. Reading literary texts, being part of German courses at African universities, could draw on the *École de Hanovre* with its concept and teaching method of “double look”

40 Dag Henrichsen. “Ehi rOvaherero.’ Mündliche Überlieferungen von Herero zu ihrer Geschichte im vorkolonialen Namibia.” Werkstatt*Geschichte* 9, Hamburg: Ergebnisse-Verlag, 1994. P. 15-24. Here p. 18. https://werkstattgeschichte.de/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/WG9_015-024_HENRICHSEN_HERERO.pdf.

41 E. g., references to Yvonne Vera’s *The Stone Virgins* (2002), a novel dealing with the historical trauma of Gukurahundi, in later prose such as *House of Stones* (2018) by Novuyo Rosa Tshuma; the invocation of George Orwell’s *Animal Farm* in NoViolet Bulawayo’s *Glory* (2022), a political satire on tyranny in Zimbabwe. I am grateful to Bruno Arich-Gerz for bringing these examples to my attention.

42 Cf. Bruno Arich-Gerz. *Gasthörerschaften. Deutsch und afrikanisches Sprechen in Transformation*. Hamburg: Textem Campo, 2024. Back cover.

(“Doppeltblicken” in German, “regard croisé” in French).⁴³ As scholar and university teacher Yemurai Gwatorisa puts it,

the concept and technique of ‘Doppeltblicken’ affirms that during the process of intercultural comparison of literary texts from the German-speaking countries and Africa, one can view his/her culture in light of him-/herself as well as, simultaneously, that of the other, foreign, target language. As a result, one might see the strangeness, or alterity, of the respective other culture. On a second look however, that strangeness disappears such that one’s own culture should appear in a foreign culture (in literary texts) and at the same time the foreign culture also appear[s] in the light of one’s own culture.⁴⁴

She proves the advantages of a teaching strategy based on the “double look” concept, using the example of Wolfgang Borchert’s short story *Das Brot* and Dambudzo Marechera’s prose text *The House of Hunger*, analysed and compared by her Zimbabwean students with regard to the motif of hunger. Gwatorisa’s study shows that students developed better intercultural understanding and empathy for the ‘other’ after being introduced to the ‘Doppeltblicken’-informed teaching and reading strategy. As Bruno Arich-Gerz argues, a reconceived, ‘decolonised’ intercultural dialogue between Germany and Africa via literature in academic context could take into account, on one hand, the reading of (not only) canonical literary texts with the “double look” focused on certain topoi and motivic similarities between German and African literatures (as in the aforementioned study by Gwatorisa). On the other hand, collective memory of the shared German-African past, as transformed into literature, could be considered as well. Suggested reading material (syllabus) may include texts or documents of the Namibian genocide written

43 Leo Kreutzer uses this term to describe an intercultural juxtaposition of texts of German-language and African literature, see Leo Kreutzer. *Goethe in Afrika. Die interkulturelle Literaturwissenschaft der ‘École de Hanovre’ in der afrikanischen Germanistik*. Hannover: Wehrhahn, 2009. P. 58. See also Norbert Ndong. *Entwicklung, Interkulturalität und Literatur. Überlegungen zu afrikanischer Germanistik als interkultureller Literaturwissenschaft*. München: iudicium, 1993.

44 Yemurai Chikwangura Gwatorisa et al. “‘Doppeltblicken’ as a method of teaching German as a foreign language (GFL) through literary texts. An empirical and statistically enhanced study at the University of Zimbabwe.” *eDUSA 15* (2020): p. 32-57. Here p. 33. https://www.sagv.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/eDUSA-gesamt-2020_Final.pdf.

not only by German colonizers, but also by the colonized Africans who used German as a language imposed on them.⁴⁵

The project of rethinking and transforming Intercultural German Studies (in the African context) could, in my opinion, substantially benefit from the methodological impetus of alienness-memory-translation-nexus which yields a viable proposition on how to study literatures – especially those reflecting different, if not opposite, cultural backgrounds, worldviews, collective memories, value and belief systems, not only in German-African configuration.

45 Cf. Arich-Gerz. *Gasthörerschaften* (as note 42). P. 61-62.

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This collection of essays presents discussions that were part of a summer school held in Cape Town, South Africa in 2022. The contributions are on the subject of teaching of transformations and transformations of teaching, which refer to translations of languages, transformation of one's own cultural framework into one that opens up for the mindsets, collective memories, value and belief systems etc. of the Other, and digitalization and decolonization of Higher Education. The book commences with a synopsis and reflection of the discussions held at the summer school. The first group of essays covers presentations on efforts towards digitalization of Higher Education and decolonization of foreign language education in Sub-Saharan Africa. The second part presents contributions on languages and translation, reflecting on the role of African languages in a Euro-lingua-centric world, the role of German as Foreign Language in an African context and the use of translation in bridging the gap between unfamiliar languages and cultures. The third part covers contributions on the cultural practices of memorization and memory transforming literary works.

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