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From the Editor' s Desk

This is our Second Volume, third issue, which contains language and culture issues. We wish to thank all those who contributed with articles, peer reviewing and in all the other ways, directly and indirectly.

Editor in Chief ZIJLC

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The Impact of the New Western Life on Folklore: Dehumanization and Fragmentation of the Genre amongst the Karanga People

William Zivenge and Tyanai Charamba

Abstract

The paper explores the impact of the western life and the subsequent modernization of the folklore tradition among the Karanga people. Since folklore is not unique to societies in Masvingo and Midlands Provinces, this discussion therefore throws some light on the situation in other Shona communities. The paper bemoans an important but dying Karanga tradition. If the grandmothers (folklorists) of our traditional past, who have joined the ancestral world, are to be given a second lease of life amongst us, the living, they will be most disappointed to realize that the story-telling heritage, which they thrived to hand down to us is no more and where it had survived winds of change, it has taken a new direction (Dundes 1972). The Karanga 'fire place' tradition has been thrown to the dust bin. It is sad to learn that in some Karanga pockets, folklore lies unnoticed under the nose of the modern folklorist. The winds of change have blown away the evening tale and make it unpalatable for the modern African. On the other hand, the elite have harnessed it to advance Marxist propaganda and machinations. The paper therefore discusses the problems of urbanization and modernization and their impact on folklore, as forces of Marxist life.

Key Terms

FOLKLORE, MODERNIZATION, URBANIZATION, MARXIST LIFE, ANCESTORS, FRAGMENTATION

Background

The term 'Karanga' refers to the Shona communities that occupy the Southern quarter of Zimbabwe. They occupy the greater part of Masvingo Province. According to Fortune (2004:1), the Karanga communities in the traditional context comprise the Jena (Masvingo district), the Duma (Bikita and Zaka), the Govera (Gutu and Chirumhanzu) and the Mhari (Chivi and Mberengwa). The Culture Policy of Zimbabwe (2004: 48) asserts that Zimbabwe's life is largely governed by cultural institutions which in turn govern the lives of the people. Among the Karanga, folklore assumes the quasi-metaphysical element that is part and parcel of oral tradition. In the Karanga history, the people used to value the folklore institution since it was both a source of entertainment and information, thus an existential institution. The folklore tradition used to be of great significance and has been playing a significant role in the building of ancient Karanga kingdoms and clans.

The problems of urbanization and modernization, as facets of a Marxist philosophy of life have attracted serious attention in Africa, in the current folklore dispensation (Mohammed 1981). This is because the traditional heritage of folklore or the 'round the fire place' tradition is suffering subjugation when juxtaposed to modernity. Folklore is an important aspect of Karanga oral tradition used to be capable of sorting and sifting mythical elements from the people's experiences. Folklore is regarded as fictitious but recognized by the Karanga clans as most ideal for moral socialization. Modern Folklore projects, themes, perspectives and motifs, enjoy academic appealing in the greater parts of Africa other than the Sub-Saharan, where they have explored extensively the dynamisms associated with the trends in folklore studies. The Karanga tales used to inform, direct and evaluate social imperatives expected to be upheld by each member of the community. Since folklore is an entity of oral tradition, Karanga folklore assists in the reconstruction of their history, since it provides mythical but verified factual oral data, captured and contained in their oral tale. The major responsibility of the Karanga folklorist lies in moralizing and the one moralizing is not distinguishable from a modern historian, who is a moving library. However, since folklore is characterized by mythical elements, it has been relatively sidelined in the modern, Marxist, life because of the scientific approach to life. Custodians of the Karanga tradition discarded it in favour of new essentials that are 'better' related to contemporary discourse on cosmic forces.

Methodology

The study of the Karanga folklore is more of exploring a fictitious tradition, firmly grounded in the African traditional philosophy and is never sensible or meaningful if studied outside its cultural and ideological parameters. It is not anthropologically possible to get to informed conclusions should this current exploration be divorced from the African and communal nature of this ethnic-centred tradition. The logic, aesthetic value, dynamism and relevance of African folklore lie within the confinement of African philosophy and thought. The paper discusses the Karanga folklore within the conceptual framework of the Africans, in particular the *Hunhu* 'humanhood' tradition. The term 'folklore' is closely linked to the world view of the custodians of the tradition in context. This means that any folklore is understood best when examined within the frameworks of the culture where it is rooted. This makes this study adopt the African Centered approach to 'social logic' and 'philosophical thought'. This paradigm shift from formalism and stylistics, which are western oriented frameworks, is intended to come up with an African epistemological sensation to the Karanga folklore, in the face of modernization. A people's anthropological undertakings are only understood in the context of the appropriate methodology. This discussion is therefore largely informed by the African 'Philosophy and Thought' or what the authors of this paper refer to as 'African Social

Reason' or the 'African Ontology' so as not distort the tradition under investigation.

The Emergence of a Marxist way of Life among the Karanga People

Colonialism and the subsequent conquest of Zimbabwe (1900-1979) brought with it a new Marxist life endowed in the British cultural practices. The British conquest of this Southern African country, Zimbabwe, saw an alarming influx of Europeans as tourists, industrialists, traders and invaders. These British brought, among other things, existential philosophies such as urbanization and modernization. The first half of the nineteenth century witnessed drastic processes of urbanization and the subsequent modernization of the African race. The establishment of urban zones, characterized by industrialization, result in abundant employment opportunities, which attracted commoners to migrate, from the village milieu, to the city, which is the centre of new life. In Masvingo Province, Fort Victoria, the first ever urban centre in Zimbabwe, was built in the first quarter of the 19th century. The small town was named after queen Victoria. However, that name changed to Masvingo (stone walls) at the attainment of independence. The business mall, industries and residential suburbs were constructed to house business transactions, factories and factory workers, respectively.

These infrastructures created job opportunities for the local people living in Zimuto, Gutu, Chivi, Zaka, Bikita, Mwenezi, and Chiredzi, who were traditionally subsistence farmers. Roads were also constructed linking these communities, thereby increasing mobility of the inhabitants and accessibility of the industrial zone. Communication systems (telegraphic wiring) were erected to boost communication. The new infrastructure then attracted the rural based Africans and they were lured by social and economic betterment in Fort Victoria, thereby flocking into the city to embrace the new civilization. This saw, particularly, the movement of the indigenous rural people into Fort Victoria. The major attraction was the industrial zone. This rural-urban migration disrupted the Karanga traditional life to the extent of subjecting them to intense modernization. Urbanization had a considerable input on the Karanga traditional life and existential frameworks. The Gutu, Jena, Govera, Mhari and Duma communities who were leading a highly mixed subsistence life, evidenced by their folklore which was overloaded with the growing of cereal crops and animal rearing themes, found themselves in the city. Large numbers comprising men from the Karanga traditions were attracted from the country side to Fort Victoria. They were attracted to explore the new monetary society. Young and old migrants, some of which were folklore apprentices, migrated to the city with the quest to get jobs.

They first lived in shanty shelters along the Mucheke River. The first ever high density suburb, in Zimbabwe, called Mucheke was later constructed closer to the

industrial zone, just across Mucheke river for easy accessibility by these shift workers. From subsistence life, these migrants became unskilled factory workers. This new Marxist life propagated a new cultural experience, which alienated the migrant worker from his tradition. Urbanization facilitated the dislocation between the African worker and his extended family, endowed with a folkloric tradition. The new way of life influenced their ideological orientations on issues to do with family, dress, food, eating habits and taste of music, social relations and likewise their folklore. According to Ahmed (1977), the division of the time of the day changed from grazing rounds and storytelling to industrial shifts and watching cinemas. Storytelling, around the fire place declined. Tales became associated with the village milieu. After evening meals, cinemas, beer and tea parties became major recreations (Dorson 1987). Sometimes recreational facilities were provided, by the industrial owners, to make sure that the migrant worker is entertained so as not to be frustrated with the urban life. Evening schools were also opened to prepare an elite that appreciates the new life, academically. The migrant workers embrace the new education to prepare themselves for promotion or to ensure grasping and mastery of the English language, a requisite for any industrial labourer.

All the discussed issues affected the communal nature of the factory worker, which is conducive for folklore. Church conferences, tourism and weddings ceremonies became major alternatives of folklore. Storytelling became an occasional practice in Fort Victoria. In some corners of Fort Victoria, folklore was perpetuated but with new genres. Such folklore was performed during work breaks such as the lunch hours or when off from duty. With time the Fort Victoria urban culture became polarized, hence a heterogeneous community (Deif 1972). Some workers were coming from Bulawayo (Ndebele), Chiredzi (Shangani), Mberengwa (Venda/Ndebele) and Chipinge (Ndau Tonga). This means that folklore repertoires of different ethnic groups emerged, addressing assumed injustices and pressures brought about by the new economic conditions of the monetary society. Deif (1972) notes that urbanization and industrialization provided a new framework of life divorced from the African tradition.

Urbanizing the Rural folk

Whilst the active population was drifting into Fort Victoria, the elderly and the young remained in the rural areas. This rural-urban migration was rampant in areas that lie in the peri-urban zones. In areas that were inaccessible and far away from the industrial zones, mobility was low and the social fabric remained intact. Areas such Chilonga, Checheche and Mahenye remained intact and connected to their tradition. However, development projects were launched in these areas. The life styles of the people in these semi-marginalized 'remote' areas changed slowly in the direction of modernity. New projects such gardening, cattle fattening, carpentry and tailoring occupied the rural people throughout the day, thus trying to raise money to support this cash oriented Marxist life.

In the rural areas, new forms of entertainment such as that of the urban area were introduced. Holidays to celebrate western legends were diarized. Indigenous performances were completely surrendered to the traditional past. These are performances such as folklore that coincided with beer parties and church services which were new activities, thus coincided with the evening storytelling. The evening 'fire place' was substituted with beer halls, cinema halls, night clubs and lounge rooms with TV and radio gargets.

The new Marxist wave nurtured a utility-based African and money became a symbol of wealth and prosperity. Working as individuals to raise children became evident in the discourse of the day and occasional folklore. New genres of folklore and poetry were composed to articulate details of the new modern life. District Business Centres were set-up as trajectories of the Marxist life. Rural areas were partially modernized by the mid 19th century and this marked the deterioration and fragmentation of the African traditions, in particular the folklore genre. In both the urban and rural areas, there was extensive importation of numerous electric goods by the Karanga people. Dorson (1971) asserts that importing western goods is also viewed as an indirect way of importing the Marxist culture. This was also followed by the introduction of the Marxist education and mass media. These had serious effects on the traditional life. Highly traditional communities such as Zaka and Bikita became passive listeners and viewers of the mass media rather than remaining performers.

The Perception of the Urban and Rural Elite on Folklore

The elite cultures emerged in most parts of Fort Victoria due to the introduction of the new western education. This was a new social class that emerged subsequent to the introduction of western education. The basis for this new social class was western education. Those who were formally schooled in primary, secondary and vocational centres were afforded employment in white collared jobs and because of their ability to converse in English; it elevated them to the elite class. The elite could be accommodated in the neighbourhood, sharing space with the white colonizers. The elite were of two categories, there were those who were assistants to the white government officials, serving the colonial government. The second group comprises those who were elevated to become government officials. These were the ones that were afforded neighbourhood with the whites. These were completely assimilated, losing the folklore genres completely. This group was more than ready to accept foreign influence and traditions. This elite category championed the rejection of the African traditions such as languages, folklore and history. The elite class was characterized by gross alienation from African values and were rather active emulators of the colonial culture, a total relegation of their identity. With the advent of western education, African folklore was marginalized from scholarship and was subsequently relegated to a minor position and the relevance of the tale to 'state building' was undermined and ignored.

The Impact of Modernization on folklore

One of the major impacts of modernization was the discarding of storytelling in both the urban and the rural areas. This means that there was absence of folklore in Fort Victoria, thus the urbanized zones. The reason for the absence of folklore was that only the youth were migrating into the urban areas and as such, the grandmothers who were folklorists remained in the rural areas. Since they were too old to work in the industrial areas, they remained in the villages. Storytelling declined because urbanization detached the folklore audience (youths) from the folklorists (grandmothers). The introduction of nuclear families, in urban areas, in which grandmothers were absent, disrupted storytelling. In Mucheke high density suburbs, most of the factory workers, living there, were not staying with their families. Sayyid (2006), notes that it was even difficult for these factory workers to visit their families so often. They could only do so during the public holidays. They were occupied throughout the year since most of them were unskilled and were not entitled to leave days. This means that they spent the bulky of their time, in the year, too far away from the folklorists. They were detached completely from their Karanga tradition. The traditionally trained and experienced storytellers were hard to come by. The grinding stone song, the evening lullaby, riddles and folklore disappeared totally from the modern African society (Dorson 1987). In the urban area, the availability of the readymade mealie-meal from millers, mass media for entertainment and recorded music discarded the grinding stone song, folklore and the evening lullaby respectively (Dorson 1972). These aspects of the Shona culture were rendered outdated and consequently thrown into the dust bin.

In contrast to the urban situation, the rural areas still have the folklorist and enough audience. After the daily routines (grazing rounds, fetching firewood, drawing water etc) the rural people devoted much of their time to the new entertainment, over the radio and television. Programs such as *Chakafukidza dzimba Matenga*, *madirativhange*, and *Kuverengwa kwemabhuku* took center stage. Most entertainment of the time resembles, closely, some sections of the folklore, riddles and the evening lullaby. Sometimes, people join literacy programs, organized by rural schools and district councils as part of the colonial government's adult literacy project. This was an effort to prepare rural elite that was capacitated to support the colonial government officials in the rural areas. Such a Black elite had to ideologically surrender its professionalism and intellect for the manipulation of colonial agency, such as donors and missionaries. The evening fire was put off completely and the tales of sunrise disappeared. The folklore tradition had been robbed of its space in the lives of the people. There were few patches of the Karanga that remained linked to tradition and folklore remained an aspect of evening entertainment and moral harbour. This was a characteristic of the less developed rural areas. Some of these were Chivi, Mwenwzi and Bikita. Patches of Karanga societies in

these areas remained traditional and intact. Areas such as Chivi, some parts of Bikita, Zaka and Zimuto were transformed into pseudo English societies. However, the fact that there was a slow rate of development in the rural areas (low industrialization) meant that modern African entertainment was a mixture of tradition and modernity.

Whilst this was the case with the rural areas, the urban people came up with new folklore genres and new tales emerged (Thompson 1964). Since creation of tales is largely influenced by environment, the traditional themes and settings became irrelevant. The jungles, animals, mountains and forests that were part and parcel of the African traditional past were replaced by industries, the horn and drum replaced by the guitar, animals have been domesticated in national parks and forests have been turned into the urban and commercial areas. The remnant forests were replaced by orchards and plantations such that themes and perspectives of the new era were informed by the new environment.

Ideally, tales reflect thoughts and existential philosophies drawn from a people's environment which is dynamic. This also meant that the new industrial life and the conflict between the rural (cultured) and the urban (assimilated) were the new themes. The place settings were supposed to be the rural, the urban or switching from the rural to the urban and or from the urban to the rural. This is a process of adaptation that Asante refers to as *harmosij-as-mode*. Most of the newly created narratives, in Muccheke, belonged to the legendary category. The factories, football pitch, night clubs and other recreational places became new place settings quite realistic and identifiable. This is a sharp contrast with traditional settings that project settings of the jungle, the fierce shrines and herds of wild animals. This made the new genres more real and less fictitious (Mohammed 1987). Themes centred on the 'migrant worker' and his expeditions, exploring the modern world, emerged. Two kinds of tales emerged in Muccheke. On one hand, there were the Afro-centred ones that ridiculed industrial life, cherishing and upholding the African tradition. Their heroes were the 'cultured' whilst the westernized were presented as social villains. On the other hand, there were those informed by modernism. These are characterized by the over glorification of western legends and values. The new tales celebrated western legends and existential frameworks (Sayyid 2006). They presented colonialism as an agent of black emancipation from a tyrant tradition. There is over celebration of alienation and acculturation.

In the formalist sense, form also changed such that the first episodes were devoted to the temptation, posed by urban life to the African villager, to undertake the journey to a glamorous city so as to run away from the village milieu. The second episode was characterized by the humiliation of the new comer (into the urban) on approaching the urban area, Fort Victoria. There is

ridiculing of the migrant worker's adventures as he journeyed to the glamorous city. The new comer's approach to the modern world lacked the proper cordial and he was presented as a nuisance. At first, the city life became incompatible with tradition and acclimatization was through a very harsh orientation. Miscomprehension of the modern city life is one major characteristic of the second episode and the migrant worker's exploratory strategies are compatible with the rural area and the adopted existential frameworks were unfounded and misplaced.

In the third episode, the migrant worker is very innocent but vulnerable because of embracing tradition. Tradition is presented as the 'evil' that exposes the 'new arrival' to the manipulation of those who have already acclimatized to the city life. They are often tricked and robbed of their possessions. However, this is presented as the first test of courage. Those who are not courageous enough return to the village and the courageous travail and agonize but endure to the end. Those who endure become legends and celebrities in the new urban tales. The fourth episode presents the migrant worker gaining control of the new situation, thus slowly being able to cope up with the challenging city life. This meant losing traditional values and embracing the modern ones. The episode celebrates acculturation and this marks the beginning of shunning the African culture by the migrant worker. To him, enlightenment slowly encroaches and African culture turns to be pagan and restrictive as compared to modernity which is explorative. The new western civilization is celebrated, thus it is viewed as the one that vindicates Africans from an adversary tradition. In the last episode, the loneliness and frustrations are gone with the forgotten African culture. The injuries of the early days are healed, the enemies have turned into friends and unfamiliar features of the city have become markers of familiar events, unfamiliar directions become daily routes and the strange city activities become daily routine. In this episode the migrant worker is successful. These migrant workers were usually associated with social and economic betterment. The celebrities are the migrant workers in the new genre and the urban man is presented as a saviour, financially, to his kinsfolk in the rural areas.

The new wealth, civilization and world-view distinguished the rural and urban men. The new urban men are presented as having developed the new intellectual rigor, evidenced by their ability to speak the colonial language. The episode presents African Intellectuals becoming more privileged to live in the neighbourhood with whites (medium density suburbs). In contrast to the urban experience, the rural folklore constantly calls back the urban elite to their roots. The new urban tales celebrate the new elite's declining the call to return to the African roots. The episode equates English to the modern civilization, which is rendered a serious challenge to the cultured Africans. The ability by the migrant worker to grasp some of the realities of the urban

environment is celebrated as acclimatization to the metaphysical world. The role, functions and powers of the ancestors and the underworld are forgotten and are often ridiculed by the modernized migrant worker.

The folklore ceases to stand out as a model for social and moral behaviour patterns. The tale ceases to influence the African child's social development and, it ceases to cultivate a sense of social responsibility. Whilst listening to the new world tale, the African child identifies himself with the new hero, the migrant worker (Deif 1972). Their perception of making the 'right' choice is nothing other than going to the city. The new folklore audience is forced to develop quest for the city glamour. The adventures of the migrant worker become a precious heritage that is ready to be passed down generations. The new folklore genres unveil the route to the attainment of western civilization, glamour and acquisition of wealth. The new urban folklore nurtures new aesthetic values and existential philosophies. Through these new tales, identities and unity are lost, African ness is lost, values are rejected and a new world order is embraced.

Conclusion

The discussion has established that folklore, that embeds the African intelligence ceases to claim premises in the new African life, following a century of modernization. The paper bemoans the lost glory embodied in the traditional folklore. However, in Mucheke area, folklore has been manipulated to advance the new life portrayed in the new folklore genre. This new genre is characterized by new philosophies of life and logic, registered from the Marxist life. The African world-view is buried together with the discarded traditional folklore. The new tale is dominated by cultural victimhood. The Oral tradition that had direct bearing on African civilization receives an unelaborated treatment from its custodians. The inculcation of African values and oral recording of the glorious aspects of our experiences is thrown into the dust bin. This made us remain unidentifiable as occupying legitimate space in the global village. We tend to occupy the European space as second class human beings and our only purpose is defined as that of serving the European blood. We are reduced to a people without an agenda of life. We are creatures of divinity, an embodiment of Satanism, custodians of evil and propagators of the dehumanization of the theological world.

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Structural or Communicative Approach: A case study of English Language Teaching in Masvingo Urban and Peri-Urban Secondary Schools.

Shumirai Nyota and Rugare Mareva

Abstract

This paper investigates the teaching of English as a Second Language (ESL) in Zimbabwe, using Masvingo urban and peri-urban secondary schools as a case study. The study employed both the quantitative and the qualitative designs. A questionnaire and document analysis was used to gather data. The data gathered was also analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively through a table and thick descriptions. The study establishes that the Structural Approach and its associated methods and techniques were mainly used in the teaching of ESL with Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which is recommended by the Zimbabwe secondary schools English syllabus, playing second fiddle. The paper concludes that this could be due to ignorance, on the part of teachers, of the principles and advantages of CLT, or it could be a result of conservatism. The paper recommends that relevant authorities, such as universities, teachers' colleges and the responsible Ministry should vigorously strive to achieve a paradigm shift towards teachers' adoption of CLT.

Introduction

As Communication Skills lecturers, at University level, the researchers' experience has been that first year undergraduate students in Zimbabwe show glaring shortcomings in what Widdowson (1991: 3) calls language use, an understanding of which sentences or parts of sentences are appropriate in a particular context. First year undergraduate students in Zimbabwe evidently struggle to accomplish what Wilkins (1987) refers to as language functions such as greeting, criticizing, inviting, complaining, congratulating, requesting, arguing and disagreeing. The students' failure to achieve such basic language functions manifests itself not only as the students socialize among themselves

and with their lecturers but also in the students' oral and written assignments. In short the students lack what Hymes (1972) in Brown (1987), Richards and Rodgers (1995), Mhundwa (1998) and Yule (1996) call communicative competence. This is despite the fact that the Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council (ZIMSEC) '0' Level English Language Syllabus (1122) (1998: 2) recommends an approach which is:

...intended to provide pupils with the communication skills necessary for the different roles and situations in which they are likely to find themselves after leaving school...to make the learning of the English language more functional and purposeful...

The syllabus is obviously referring to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and goes on to discourage teachers from having pupils learn structures in isolation.

Justification of Study

It was the realization that first year undergraduate students lack what Lucantoni (2002:13) calls "the ability to use English effectively for purposes of practical communication in a variety of second language situations" that prompted the researchers to find out how English as a Second Language (ESL) was being taught at '0' Level in Zimbabwe, using Masvingo urban and peri-urban as a case study. The researchers sought to investigate whether the traditional Structural Approach (Askes, 1978, Dubin and Olshtain, 1986, Widdowson 1991), with its emphasis on grammatical or linguistic competence, still has influence on English Language teaching in Zimbabwean secondary schools, or whether "the Communicative Approach which is in current fashion" (Widdowson, 1991 :160) and is recommended by the syllabus, was being implemented

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- a) What approach(es), method(s) and techniques dominate the teaching of English Language at secondary school level in Zimbabwe?
- b) What reasons do the teachers give for the preferred approach (es), method(s) and techniques?

Related Literature

Literature focused on the Structural Approach to language teaching and related methods, and on the Communicative Approach or Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).

The Structural Approach

Associated with American psychologists such as Bloomfield and Skinner, the Structural Approach is rooted in behaviorism (Richards and Rodgers, 1995), a theory which views language learning as learning a set of habits (Brown , 1987).

In this approach, elements in a language are viewed as being linearly produced in a rule governed way. Language samples can be exhaustively described at all levels such as phonetic, phonemic and morphological. Linguistic levels are regarded as being pyramidically structured from phonemes to morphemes to phrases, clauses and sentences (Richards and Rodgers, 1995). The focus of language teaching in the Structural Approach is on speech (Askes, 1978, Richards and Rodgers, 1995). Another important tenet of the approach is that focus is on knowledge of language, with the 'doing' being subservient to knowing (Widdowson 1991). The belief is that "Language learning comes about by teaching learners to know the forms of the language as a medium and the meaning they incorporate" (Widdowson, 1991: 160). Focus, therefore, is on what Widdowson (1996: 3) refers to as language usage, which is dependent on "a knowledge of the grammatical rules of the language being learned." Structural methods of language teaching include the Grammar- Translation Method, the Direct method, the Oral Approach or Situational Language Teaching and the Audio Lingual Method.

The Grammatical- Translation Method, which dominated European and foreign language teaching from the 1840s to the 1940s but "continues to be widely used in some parts of the world today" (Richards and Rodgers 1995 : 4) entails the learning of grammatical rules of the target language and the presentation of vocabulary in the form of a bilingual list (Krashen, 1995). Typical of the Structural Approach, in the Grammar- Translation Method, "long lists of words and a set of grammatical rules have to be memorized" (Yule, 1996:193). Also, emphasis is on accuracy, and the basic unit of teaching and language practice is the sentence (Richards and Rodgers, 1995). A major learning activity in the method is translation from L1 to L2 and L2 from to L1 (Krashen, 1995). Since focus is entirely on form rather than meaning, the method results in "very low amounts of acquired competence" Krashen, 1995: 129). Another weakness of the method which is also a major weakness of the Structural Approach is that formal grammar "contributes little to the successful using of language" (Askes, 1978: 21).

In the Direct Method also known as the Natural Approach (Askes, 1978), where all classroom language is the target language, rules of the language are learnt inductively, that is, through using the language (Askes, 1978). Although the method encourages "lots of active oral interactions, spontaneous use of the language" (Brown, 1987 :57), its focus on grammar and its insistence on accuracy and intolerance towards errors (Krashen, 1995), makes the method structural. As with other structural methods, students taught using this method "seem to have had frustrating experiences" Yule, 1999: 153).

The Oral Approach or Situational Language Teaching focuses on selection, grading and presenting of language structures, that is, vocabulary and grammar are controlled (Richards and Rodgers, 1995). Language is viewed as a set of

structures related to situations. Main learning activities include repetition, substitution drills and memorization (Nunan, 1995). Accuracy in pronunciation and grammar are of paramount importance (Richards and Rodgers, 1995), that is, errors are not tolerated. A point to note is that although language taught under this method is situation based, it is not necessarily contextualized.

A typical structural method which has its roots in Behaviorism, (Richards and Rodgers, 1995), the Audio Lingual Method is informed by a theory which views language as a system of rule governed structures which are hierarchically arranged (Nunan, 1995). Because language is viewed as habit formation, learning activities in this method include memorization of structure based dialogues, repetition, substitution, transformation and translation drills (Krashen, 1995). Another feature of the method, according to Richards and Rodgers (1995), is non-contextualization of the language used. Furthermore, emphasis is on linguistic competence and accuracy as production is “expected to be error free” (Krashen, 1995:129) Apart from the boredom associated with the method, its other major weakness is that, according to Yule (1999 : 193), “isolated practice in drilling language patterns bears no resemblance to the interactional nature of actual language use” . Also, the method is teacher dominated (Nunan, 1995).

Communicative Language Teaching

Next the researchers focus on the Communicative Approach and explain some of its salient features. Partly as reaction to the weaknesses of the Structural grammar based methods described above, especially the Structural Language Teaching which had risen to prominence arose the Communicative Approach or Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (Richards and Rogers, 1995, Lucantoni, 2002). The approach was partially a reaction against the artificiality of ‘Pattern-Practice’ and also against the belief that (consciously learning the grammar of a language will necessarily result in an ability to use the language” (Yule, 1999: 193f).

CLT is based on a theory of language as a system of expression of meaning, the primary function of language being interaction and communication (Nunan 1995). Mhundwa (1998), also stresses the importance of meaning in CLT, which is what motivates learners to master the target language. There is a subservience and subordination of form to function. The focus is on communicative competence rather than on linguistics or grammatical competence. Another characteristic of CLT is that classroom communication is planned and presented in ways that stimulate real life situations (Mhundwa, 1998), Richards and Rodgers (1995) give examples of functional communicative activities as giving and following directions, solving problems, using clues, conversations, dialogues, role plays and debates all of which should not be memorized since speech by its very nature is spontaneous. Such communicative activities facilitate co-operation and group work is one of the techniques that stimulate natural language activity in

discussion and conversation (Brumfit, 1984). There is need for students to interact more with each other than with the teacher because CLT is both learner-centered and experience-based.

Richards and Rodgers (1995) observe that in CLT there should be no pre-specification of what language the students will use and Mhundwa (1998) sees the topic and communicative goals of students as the major determinants of CLT content. The content should, therefore, be determined by the speaker or writer (language learner) in relation to demands of a specific task (Brumfit, 1984).

Another feature of CLT is that it discourages over-correction of language errors by the teacher as it distracts from the message (Brumfit, 1984). This is a view shared by Brown (1987) who believes in the absence or infrequency of error correction so that language learners are not discouraged in their Endeavour to communicate. Corder in Richards (1974) goes to the extent of viewing errors as being useful to both the teacher and the learner. To the teacher errors determine how far the learner has progressed towards the language learning. To the learner, errors are evidence of learning.

In CLT the teacher assumes the role of facilitator, guide, participant, resource organizer, recourse himself, learner needs analyst and counselor. Covert rather than overt teaching is the norm (Richards and Rodgers, 1995). During the performance of an activity, students should not normally be aware of intervention by the teacher as teacher but as a communicator (Brumfit, 1984). This emphasizes the role of the teacher as a participant. Yet another important aspect of CLT is its advocacy for the judicious use of the learners' native language in the learning of the target language. The use of translation and code-switching where learners need or benefit from it is permissible (Richards and Rodgers, 1995).

CLT treats language in context rather than as isolated units of meaning. Classroom activities are aimed at the situational and contextualized use of particular language (Piepho in Candlin, 1981). In light of this, Allen and Spada in Jordan (1983) call for the provision of rich highly contextualized linguistic input to language learners. CLT, therefore, eschews all forms of drills and rote learning, which by their nature are not normally contextualized.

As for teaching materials in CLT, Richards and Rodgers (1995) advocate the use of realia, that is, authentic materials drawn from real life. These could include magazines, advertisements, newspapers, maps, pictures, graphs, charts and objects. It is around that realia that communicative activities can be built. Nunan (1995) refers to these as task based materials that play the primary role of promoting communicative language use.

Methodology

Research design

The study employed the survey method to enable the researchers to establish the prevailing approach to the teaching of English language in secondary schools in Zimbabwe. Both the qualitative and the quantitative techniques were employed through use of the questionnaire and document analysis.

Population, sample and sampling procedure

The target population for the study was male and female teachers who were trained at various secondary teachers' colleges and universities, to teach English Language. Their minimum qualifications were either a Certificate in Education (CE), a Diploma in Education (Dip Ed) or degree in English and all of the teachers were currently teaching English Language in secondary schools in the Masvingo urban and peri-urban zone. Out of the fifteen secondary schools in and around Masvingo city, ten were purposively sampled so as to include former Group A, former Group B and day secondary schools. From the selected schools, a total of thirty (30) teachers of English Language were selected to complete the semi structured questionnaire. Three (3) teachers were selected from each of the ten (10) schools. The thirty (30) selected teachers were also requested to avail their scheme cum plan books for analysis by the researchers. The researchers focused on lesson objectives, planned teacher pupil activities and the accompanying learning aids.

Data Collection Techniques

Questionnaire

A semi structured questionnaire was distributed in the ten (10) selected schools, to the thirty (30) English Language teachers. The questionnaire sought information on the teachers preferences for either the Structural or the Communicative Approach to the teaching of English Language. Items on the questionnaire required the respondent to indicate with either a 'yes' or 'no' or 'unsure', whether the stated aspects and techniques, from both the Structural and Communicative Approach were central to his or her teaching of English Language. Items focused on, inter alia, rote learning and drilling, contextual teaching of items, grammatical and communicative competence, group techniques and the teacher's roles. Each item sought the respondent's reasons for the choice, thereby affording the respondents an opportunity to justify their preferred techniques.

Document Analysis

The documents analysed were thirty (30) scheme cum plan books. These documents provided further insights into the preferred approach to English Language teaching by teachers, by focusing on lesson objectives, teacher pupil activities and learning aids.

Data Analysis

Data analysis began as soon as the questionnaire was returned and documents were availed. Due to the relatively large amounts of data collected, data were grouped according to the collection instruments used, that is, the questionnaire and document analysis. The data were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively through a table of figures and descriptions, respectively. The patterns which emerged from the questionnaire and document analysis made it possible for the researchers to establish the prevailing approach to English Language teaching in Masvingo urban and peri-urban secondary schools.

Presentation of Results

This section presents data gathered. The data from the questionnaire is presented first and thereafter from document analysis.

Table 1: Summary of Results from Questionnaire

Items on Questionnaire	Response	Number	Common Reason(s)
1. Repetition, memorization, drills and substitution should be central techniques.	Yes	24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Such techniques result in accuracy in grammar and pronunciation. These are tried and tested techniques.
	No	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils do not seem to enjoy them.
	unsure	0	
2. Definition and explanation of language structures and learning of grammar rules should be prominent features of language teaching.	Yes	30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These will result in language mastery.
	No	0	
	Unsure	0	

3. Language should always be taught in context.	Yes	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contextualization aids understanding. In life language is used in context.
	No	23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils can understand structures out of context. Our own teachers did not always contextualize language teaching.
	Unsure	3	
4. Accuracy is more important than fluency.	Yes	27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The final examination tests accuracy.
	No	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accuracy does not translate into ability.
5. Communicative competence is more important than linguistic/grammatical competence.	Yes	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The whole aim of language learning is ability to communicate.
	No	22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is linguistic competence which results in communicative

			competence.
6. The teacher should be a central figure in the English Language lesson.	Yes	29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the teacher does not take a leading role pupils may not learn. • The teacher knows what pupils should do.
	No	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning is for pupils, not for the teacher.
	Unsure	0	
7. Pupils' language errors should not be tolerated and so they should be swiftly corrected.	Yes	30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The final examination does not tolerate errors. • Errors show lack of mastery of target language
	No	0	
	Unsure	0	
8. Code-switching and use of learners' L1 should be allowed in L2 learning.	Yes	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These may assist the learners in expressing themselves.
	No	26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This may result in inter-lingual errors.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no room for code-switching and use of learners' L1 in the final examination.
	Unsure	1	
9. Language teaching should largely focus on language functions.	Yes	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language functions encourage real-life language use.
	No	26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's difficult to teach all language functions.
	Unsure	1	
10. L2 learners should achieve native-speaker-like pronunciation.	Yes	22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This shows evidence of mastery of the target language.
	No	5	Understandable pronunciation should be acceptable.
	Unsure	3	
11. Group work should be a central technique in language teaching.	Yes	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group work encourages language use through communication. • Group work promotes learner

				participation.
	No	19		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group work wastes valuable learning time. • Group work is difficult to monitor. • Some pupils may not participate in group work.
	Unsure	1		
12. The teacher should determine the language for pupils to use in the English Language Lesson.	Yes	30		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners can not determine the language to learn. • The teacher knows what language is good for pupils.
	No	0		
	Unsure	0		

Results from Document Analysis

An analysis of thirty scheme- cum plan books revealed that teachers' objectives focus on definition and explanation of language structures and their formation and identification in sentences. The objectives also focus on changing verbs, nouns and adjectives from one part of speech to another. Below are some of the objectives sampled from the scheme- cum plan:

Objectives revealed that pupils are supposed to:

- State what verbs are
- Change verbs into the simple past tense
- Form the past perfect tense
- Use the past perfect tense correctly in sentences
- Define conjunctions

- Fill in blank spaces in sentences with correct conjunctions
- Change sentences from direct to indirect speech
- Define prepositions
- Fill in blank spaces in sentences with correct prepositions
- Define adjectives
- Form adjectives from nouns
- Say what adverbs are
- Form adverbs from adjectives
- Use given adjectives in their own sentences
- Define synonyms
- Give synonyms of selected words
- Define antonyms
- Give antonyms of selected words
- Pronounce selected words correctly
- Punctuate sentences correctly
- Write the correct spellings of selected words
- Define 'manner', 'character', 'attitude' and 'reaction' as applied to 'register.'
- Identify someone's 'manner', 'character', 'attitude' and likely 'reaction' in given situations
- Say how someone, or they, would respond to different situations created by the teacher
- Answer comprehension questions
- Differentiate between narrative, descriptive, expository and argumentative compositions
- Explain what a topic sentence is and identify the topic sentences of given paragraphs
- Define 'discourse markers' and give examples
- Write a composition of two pages on a given topic
- Pronounce selected words correctly

The objectives also showed that the language structures are taught in isolation, that is, they are not contextualized. Furthermore, the teaching of language structures is usually at word level and phrase level and never goes beyond sentence level. The objectives also revealed that though the teaching of comprehension and vocabulary are passage based therefore contextualized, sometimes vocabulary items are taught in isolation, for example, synonyms and antonyms.

The lesson activities analyzed showed that teachers play very active roles in the English language lessons. The following is a sample of teacher roles stated in the scheme- cum plans:

- Defining language structures for pupils and explaining grammatical rules
- Explaining meanings of words and phrases from passages

- Correcting pupils' individual and common grammatical errors, pronunciation mistakes, spelling errors and others as they occur
- Leading in pattern practice through drills
- Acting as models for pupils to imitate
- Calling out selected words (spellings) to pupils
- Reading a passages aloud to pupils
- Provision of the language to be learnt

The lesson activities also revealed that pupils' roles range from passive, through responsive, to active roles. Pupils' activities identified from the scheme-cum plans include:

- Listening to the teacher's definitions of language structures and explanations of grammar rules
- Imitating the teacher or repeating what he or she has said
- Memorizing grammar rules
- Taking part in pattern drills
- Responding to oral questions
- Silent and loud reading
- Individual writing
- Memorizing dialogues

As for learning aids, the scheme-cum plans analyzed showed a glaring lack of meaningful learning aids, with textbooks and the chalkboard often indicated as learning aids in most cases. In some cases the scheme-cum plans did not even have a column for learning aids.

Discussion of Results

It is evident from the information shown in the table, that English Language teacher in Masvingo urban and peri-urban secondary schools prefer the Structural Approach to the Communicative Approach in their teaching. The fact that twenty four (24) out of the thirty (30) teachers who completed the questionnaire believed that repetition, memorization, dialogues, drills, and substitution should be a central techniques point to the teachers' belief in Structural Approach based methods such as the Grammar Translation Method, Situational Language Teaching and Audiolingualism (Richards and Rodgers, 1995). The main reason given by the teachers for believing that repetition, memorization and related activities should take centre stage is that the activities will result in grammatical accuracy, which is the primary goal of the Structural Approach (Widdowson, 1991). Results from document analysis show that the teachers actually adopt Structural Approach based learner activities such as listening to the teacher, repetition and memorization.

All the thirty (30) teachers believed that defining language structures and learning of grammar rules is of paramount importance; the main reason advanced

being that this will result in learners mastering the language. This belief is put into practice, as the majority of lesson objectives in the teachers' scheme cum plans (see results from document analysis) actually focus on definition and explanation of language structures, their formation, identification, and transformation from one part of speech to another. Focus is therefore on form rather than meaning, which is a major characteristic of structuralism informed methods (Richards and Rodgers, 1995; Krashen, 1995). It is not surprising, therefore, that only six (6) out of the thirty (30) teachers who participated in the study believed that communicative competence is more important than linguistic competence, with twenty two (22) apparently believing that linguistic competence is more important, the main reason being that linguistic competence will result in communicative competence, a view rejected by Yule (1999:193) who asserts that "isolated practice in drilling language patterns bears no resemblance to the interactional nature of actual language use".

Only four (4) of the respondents agreed that language should always be taught in context, giving the reason that it aids meaning and that in life language is used in context, while twenty three (23) believed in teaching English Language out of context, which is consistent with the Structural Approach (Nunan, 1995). The major reason given by teachers for believing in teaching English out of context was that their own teachers successfully taught them that way, suggesting that one of the reasons why teachers stuck to the Structural Approach is conservatism. The lesson objectives and the teacher pupil activities shown under the results from document analysis show that indeed most of the language teaching done in Masvingo urban and peri-urban secondary schools is not contextualized and the teaching focuses on the word, the phrase and mostly the sentence level. Richards and Rodgers (1995) observe that in the Grammar Translation method, the basic unit of teaching and language practice is the sentence.

Item 4 on the table shows that twenty seven (27) of the thirty (30) teachers regarded accuracy as more important than fluency, the main reason given being that the examination tests accuracy more. Only three (3) rejected this view, rightly arguing that accuracy does not automatically translate into fluency. The fact that the majority believed accuracy is more important than fluency suggests the dominance of the Structural Approach, which could be attributed to what Nkosana (1998) calls the examination wash back effect.

All the thirty (30) teachers agreed that pupils' language errors should not be tolerated and so they should be swiftly corrected. This is consistent with their belief that accuracy is more important than fluency. The two main reasons given for this negative attitude towards errors were that errors are evidence of lack of accuracy, and that the 'O' level English examination does not tolerate errors. This attitude of the teachers towards errors provides further evidence

of their preference of the Structural Approach to English Language teaching. In the Oral Approach or Situational Language teaching, which was informed by the Structural Approach, accuracy in pronunciation and grammar are of paramount importance (Richards and Rodgers, 1995). Results from document analysis show that one of the recurring teachers' roles was correcting pupils' common mistakes. The teachers' obsession with accuracy is also further proved by the fact that in Item 10, twenty two (22) out of the thirty teachers believed that L1 learners should achieve native speaker-like pronunciation, saying inaccurate pronunciation is a weakness. One of the major teachers' activities, as shown under results from document analysis, was reading passages aloud as pupils listened. The aim was obviously for pupils to imitate the teachers' accurate pronunciation, in keeping with the Structural Approach (Nunan, 1995).

As many as twenty nine (29) of the respondents believe that the teacher should play a central role in the English Language lesson. The main reason given was that the teacher knows what pupils should do and if he plays a passive role, no learning will take place. According to Richards and Rodgers (1995: 56), this teacher dominance in a language lesson is synonymous with Audiolingualism and Situational Language teaching (Structural methods) in which "the teacher models the target language, controls the direction and pace of learning and monitors and corrects the learners' performance". Results from document analysis also show that the teachers perform a myriad of roles, indicating that they put their belief in teacher dominance into practice.

Item 9 on the table reveals that only three (3) of the thirty (30) respondents believed that language teaching should largely focus on language functions, while twenty six (26) responded with a 'No' arguing that it is difficult to teach all language functions. This implies non- adoption of Communicative Language Teaching, obviously in preference of structural methods.

Results from the questionnaire also show that only three (3) out of the thirty (30) respondents thought code switching and the use of the learners' L1 should be allowed in L2 (English) lessons, while twenty six (26) thought otherwise, giving the reason that the final examination gives pupils no room for code switching and using the L1, and that inter lingual errors may result. The teachers' rejection of code switching and use of the students' native language is consistent with the Structural Approach informed Audiolingualism, (Finocchiaro and Brumfit, 1983) in Richards and Rodgers (1995).

Only ten (10) of the respondents were in favor of group work as a central technique, while nineteen (19) rejected it, arguing that it wastes time and that more able pupils may dominate group discussions, resulting in the less able not learning. This preference of non- group techniques implies a rejection of CLT, which advocates group work as a central technique

which encourages communication.

Item 10 from the questionnaire shows that all the thirty (30) respondents believed that the teacher should determine the language for pupils to use in the English Language lesson. This is consistent with Audiolingualism, a structural method in which the teacher is expected to specify the language that students are to use (Finocchiaro, 1983) in Richards and Rodgers (1995).

Results from document analysis show that the teachers rely heavily on the textbook as a source of material and the chalkboard as a learning aid. This is in keeping with the Structural Approach rather than CLT, which advocates the use of realia (Nunan 1995, Richards and Rodgers 1995).

Lesson objectives identified in the scheme- cum plans analyzed also revealed that though the teaching of comprehension and to some extent vocabulary is text-based and hence contextualized, the teaching- learning activities showed that the main techniques are oral question and answer sessions followed by pupil answering questions individually in writing, rather than pupils' working together on comprehension tasks that promote meaningful communication. This point towards a Structural Approach to comprehension teaching. What is more, the selection of lists of vocabulary items for definition and explanation is a major tenet defining structural methods such as Situational Language Teaching (Nunan, 1995, Richards and Rodgers, 1995 Yule, 1999). Another point noted from the objectives was that sometimes vocabulary items were taught in isolation, for example synonyms and antonyms.

The lesson objectives and learning activities identified revealed that in the teaching of register, teachers contrived real life situations on which questions were based. This is in keeping with CLT. However, merely asking pupils how they or someone would react to the situations and merely matching given situations to appropriate responses does not constitute real communication and authentic language use. Also, asking pupils to define manner, character, attitude and reaction then come up with words to describe someone's manner, character, attitude and reaction to given situations are dry and lifeless activities associated with the Structural Approach. This is despite the fact that the ZIMSEC 'O' Level English Syllabus (1122) (1996:7) clearly states: "Role play is an ideal way to teach register. Pupils must be given practice speaking in a variety of situations."

The lesson objectives further revealed that the 'teaching' of composition writing is largely structural as evidenced by the teachers' definition and explanation of terms such as 'discourse markers', 'factual', 'narrative', 'descriptive', 'discursive', 'expository', 'formal letter', 'informal letter', 'report', 'article', and others. Although some of the composition

topics identified reflected real life situations, others did not. These include, 'If I were a dog', 'Life in space', 'A day in the life of a motor car' and 'If I were a tree'.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study has established that although the ZIMSEC 'O' Level English Language syllabus advocates the Communicative Approach to the teaching of English Language, teachers in Zimbabwe as represented by those teaching English in Masvingo urban and peri-urban secondary schools - prefer the Structural Approach and related methods. Results from both the questionnaire and the document analysis employed in this study have revealed the dominance of the Structural Approach. Evidence includes focus on grammatical structures and linguistic competence, proliferation of repetition, memorization and substitution techniques, non-contextualization of language teaching, non-tolerance of errors, preoccupation with accuracy, and teacher-dominated lessons. Although results from the questionnaire indicate that at least some of the teachers believe that communicative activities promote realistic English Language learning, in practice they resort to structural methods, if the lesson objectives and learning activities identified in the scheme-cum plans are anything to go by.

One possible explanation for this dominance of the Structural Approach over CLT could be that the teachers lack knowledge of what CLT really is. This raises doubts whether teachers' colleges and universities are doing enough in sensitizing would-be English teachers on CLT. Another reason, which is implied from results from the questionnaire, is that the teachers are conservative and so are unwilling to experiment with new methods which are different from those with which they themselves were taught English Language.

In light of the findings of this research, we make the following recommendations:

- Universities and teachers colleges should prioritize CLT in their English syllabi, so as to wean student teachers from reverting to the traditional Structural Approach with its host of weaknesses emanating from the behaviorists theory of language teaching (Richards and Rodgers 1995, Nunan, 1995, Yule, 1993).
- Through Regional Education offices, the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture should, through monitoring, ensure that teachers implement CLT as stipulated in the syllabus.
- The Ministry could also mount workshops for teachers of English, where teachers should be sensitized or resensitised to the concept of CLT. This could result in a paradigm shift from structural methods to CLT, which focuses on language in real-life situations, places emphases on meaning,

discourages teacher-dominance and encourages use of learning aids from the real world, among other advantages..

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Perceptions of Literature in Zimbabwe: In Search of Re-Evaluations

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Abstract

This paper explores the major conceptual and perceptual patterns of literature in Zimbabwe. It argues that most Zimbabwean people still perceive and conceive literature from a European and Western point of view, which does very little to help sufficiently understand the intended African values, experiences and history implied in the said literature. The paper points out some of the problems of a Euro-centric approach to literature as a national strategy for the full development of the nation, and makes suggestions of what could be done to come up with a more acceptable way of appreciating Zimbabwean literature.

Introduction

African scholarship today has found itself forced to continuously re-evaluate itself and the art in search of relevant functionality. This is in light of emerging and multifarious critical theories of literature that are finding themselves in the service of different communities of people throughout the world, in a highly polarized socio-economic and political scenario today. This has forced a number of serious literary scholars to continue searching for relevance of literary theory, criticism and appreciation of literary art, especially in Africa where literary appreciation has not been understood the same as in other regions like Europe and the Americas. Instead of unquestionably accepting values imposed on African art forms, many African literary scholars have begun to see their art forms in different ways to what other people from other societies see. There are many African scholars of literature who have chosen to reject the universal and homogeneous phenomenon tag of literature, which is known to draw heavily from Euro-centric historical values and experiences of literature. Instead, these African scholars have chosen to re-emphasize the importance of African values and experiences in literature, worried that literature has for a long time been used as a conduit of European and other Western views, values and historical experiences. Thus, the new African scholar has finally concluded that European and Western perceptions of Africa, its people and its art forms has suffered greatly from many distortions and misrepresentations to warrant changed perceptions of the way African people, history and values. They have come to the unavoidable conclusion that only through sustained use of African historical views, values and experiences can Africans truly seek to produce a literary world reality that is theirs and includes themselves. Among the long list of such African voices are Ngugi

waThiongo, Chinua Achebe, Chidi Amuta, Okot p' Bitek, Leopold Sedar Senghor and Chinweizu, just to mention but a few.

To date, there are several African scholars who have begun to challenge seriously the whole idea of unquestionable dominance of European and Western notions on African art and literature. These scholars have emphasized the view that Africa must stop drawing its inspiration from outside of itself but draw its literary inspiration from its own history, resources and talent. This has only recently given way to a growing consciousness, and even consensus, that African historical values and experiences are different from those of Europe and the other Western world to justify a re-look at all the canons that have to date been used on African studies of literature. As one such scholar, Chinualuga Achebe (1990, 46), says:

We are not really opposed to criticism. But we are getting a little bit weary of all the special type of criticism designed for us by people whose knowledge of us is limited.

This is echoed by Okpaku (1973) who says:

Critical standards ... derive from aesthetics. Aesthetics are culture dependant. Therefore, critical standards must derive from culture

These views and those of many African scholars are beginning to form an important background against which perceptions and conceptions of literature in Zimbabwe must be understood.

Perceptions of written literature in Zimbabwe

Most people in Zimbabwe generally see literature as falling into two major categories of written and oral (Finnegan: 1976, Kahari: 1990). Whenever people in Zimbabwe easily talk about literature, what probably comes immediately to their minds is the written form of literature in English, which is also referred to as "English literature" by many Zimbabweans. Not many people think of literature as referring to the oral forms of it, or for that matter, as referring literature written in Shona and IsiNdebele. In Zimbabwe, literature that is written in the in Shona and IsiNdebele is merely called "ChiShona" and IsiNdebele" literature respectively. Thus, not many people in Zimbabwe generally view oral forms of literature in the same vein and breathe as literature written in English. This is in spite of the fact that oral literature is the basis and oldest of all forms of literature everywhere in the world. Zimbabwean people, therefore, generally hold both the English language and its

literature in the highest esteem and see literature in indigenous languages, whether written or unwritten, as rather incomparable to the English forms of literature. Thus, Zimbabweans have often given the English language and literature in English quite some awesome respect when compared to indigenous languages and literatures. In the same vein, people who study indigenous languages or indigenous literatures are often subjected to a lot of ridicule and embarrassment. All this is a result of the colonial tastes, values and experiences that were cultivated in most Zimbabwean people since the British colonial administration times. This has continued to encourage and promote some steeped thinking and behavior among most Zimbabwean people, while at the same time inadvertently suppressing and denigrating indigenous values, experiences and history. It is something that Ngugi (1981) also noted about literary consciousness in Kenya since British colonization times.

It should then not be seen as that surprising that in Zimbabwe, literature in English is the only form of literature that is taught as a subject from Form One right up to University. Literature in ChiShona and in IsiNdebele is only taught as a component of ChiShona or IsiNdebele languages and subjects. Naturally, the depth at which indigenous literatures is approached is much thinner and shallower than that of literature in English, which is taught as a full subject. Thus, the ChiShona and IsiNdebele literature material that is taught and is examined from Form One to Form Six in Zimbabwe cannot be compared to that which is in English. This is because the time allocated to the teaching of these forms of literature is very different. It is only at University level that a student of ChiShona and IsiNdebele literature begins to learn literature in indigenous languages as is done to literature in English. Even then, this literature is not quite comparable to the amount and value of literature in English, because at university level, students doing a degree in English only study literature courses and nothing else. Their ChiShona and IsiNdebele counterparts do literature as well as linguistics courses as compulsory studies. This means that ChiShona or IsiNdebele degree students ultimately do both literature and linguistics as their degree components, while the English degree student only does literature courses. This implies that the indigenous literature students can never reach the same level of depth as their English degree holder counterparts. The depth and breadth of courses covered helps to give the English literature student an advantage over those doing literature in indigenous languages. This historical precedent in higher education institutions has helped to perpetuate the view and feeling that literature in English is indeed superior to literature in indigenous languages, thereby prompting the erudite Zimbabwean to hold English and its students in very high esteem, while denigrating the student and literature in indigenous languages.

One can, therefore, see that literature in Zimbabwe is defined and classified according to the language medium in which it is written or taught.

This is also evident in the structure of the programmes offered to students at universities, colleges and schools in Zimbabwe. For a very long time now, only the Departments of English have had the mandate to teach literature written in the medium of English without adding linguistics to it, implying that in Zimbabwe, the commonest view is that literature is solely defined according to the language medium in which it is found. Departments of English are known to be solely in charge of teaching literature. Only written forms of literature are taught as literature. Interestingly, the Departments of indigenous languages and literature have always carried the two components of language and literature. Furthermore, they have taught literature together with linguistics, while only emphasizing the written forms of literature. Thus, the nomenclature of the Departments structures in Zimbabwe has clearly reflected and carried the biases towards literature in English. Thus, in the schools, colleges and universities, there have always been English Departments and Departments of Languages and Literature. It seems the major perceptions and conceptions of literature in Zimbabwe have always been defined by the language medium used to write it. Unwritten forms of literature have interestingly continued to suffer from these perceptions or have totally been ignored. This seems very unfortunate indeed.

The above scenario has also very interestingly, failed to unite works by the same Shona writer. Literary works written by the same author, but using different language mediums like English, ChiShona or IsiNdebele, has been classified and taught under different departmental roofs. Thus, the English translation of Solomon Mutswairo's *Feso* (1956) has been taught in the English Departments only, without taking any notice of the fact that it is originally written in ChiShona. Equally true, the ChiShona version of *Feso* has solely been limited to the African Languages and Literature Departments. The same could be said of Charles Mungoshi's works in English which have been monopolized by English Departments as "*English texts*" without making any reference whatsoever to the texts in ChiShona. The works include *Waiting for the Rain*, *Walking Still*, *The Milkman Does Not Only Deliver Milk* and others. This is in spite of the fact that their content, consciousness, historical and cultural values are consistently the same in the two languages. One wonders whether the author suddenly becomes different when writing using these two languages. In Zimbabwe, it is seen as appropriate and normal to teach Charles Mungoshi's texts in English together with texts by English writers such as Shakespeare, Chaucer, Dickens and others rather than teaching the texts together with ChiShona texts. Questions must then be asked whether it is sufficient to use the medium of writing as a classificatory tool of Zimbabwean literature. Many would probably shout that this is not justified or acceptable. Other authors who have written in both English and ChiShona include Chenjerai Hove and Shimmer Chinodya.

It seems that Zimbabwean people's perceptions and conceptions of literature is similar to those of some literary critics who controversially

include the so-called “African literature in English” in the category of “English literature”. This is what Palmer (1979) and Kahari (1990) have done. This kind of perception and conception of the literature that is coming from Africa and Zimbabwe seems problematic. It is simplistic, and even myopic, in its approach to literature. It serves to distort the actual value and history of the literature that is typically African. It is this kind of thinking that has interestingly chosen to accept literary texts that have been translated from other languages like Spanish or English into what is now called ChiShona literature. For example, a 17th century Spanish and religious play that was initially written as *El gram teatro del munto* by a Spanish Roman Catholic priest, Father Pedro Calderon de la Barca, was translated into ChiShona by Gokomere Mission Roman Catholic priests as *Mutambo Wepanyika* (1957) Kahari (1990) calls it the first ChiShona play in Zimbabwe. Similarly, Ngugi wa Thiongo’s *A Grain of Wheat* (1979) and *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi* (1976) have also been translated into ChiShona by Charles Mungoshi as *Tsanga Yembeu* (1986) and *Kutongwa kwaDedan Kimathi* (1989). A lot of people in Zimbabwe would be familiar to seeing these translated works being solely taught as ChiShona literary texts and one would never find them being referred to in the English Literature Departments because they are in a different medium. This is why Kahari (1990) typically hails these kind of works as highly innovative and creative pieces of ChiShona works. The only reason he does that is that they are originally found in English. No particular attention is paid to the fact that the writers and the content of the literary works is typically unZimbabwean. It does not matter too that they have no references to ChiShona or the Shona people, except that they they use ChiShona language. These works have nothing to do with ChiShona history or cultural experiences. However, the works have been widely prescribed and studied as ChiShona literary texts, thereby arousing a lot of curiosity among serious ChiShona literary students. The question then is, just what constitutes the classificatory tools of and for our Zimbabwean literature? Is language adequate to espouse the character of our art forms? These become very pertinent questions indeed. They increase the ferocity of the debate of what constitutes English, ChiShona or IsiNdebele literature.

The continued unquestioned acceptance of foreign texts, originally in Spanish or English, as typifying ChiShona literature cannot go unchallenged. Yes, it is controversial. But there are many people who would not agree that it is a legitimate way of viewing ChiShona literature in Zimbabwe. It seems all wrong to use language as the only and central defining factor of our literature in Zimbabwe. Surely, there ought to be other factors that literary critics can use to demarcate literary boundaries in Zimbabwe. Charles Mungoshi (1986), one of the few Zimbabwean writers who writes in both English and ChiShona, says it is commitment to Zimbabwean history and cultural experiences that becomes the all important pillars of defining Zimbabwean literature and of determining the true identity of Zimbabwean literature. Mungoshi (1986:1) says that the material

that shapes Zimbabwean literature should naturally spring from Zimbabwean soil, even if it borrows certain artistic aspects from other literary genres. He adds (Mungoshi ,1986:7) :

If Zimbabwean literature should be Zimbabwean at all,
then it must originate from this country so that the material
it uses to explore the human condition and the ways
in which the human condition manifests itself are indigenous
to Zimbabwe.

The views by Charles Mungoshi (1986) can help us a lot to find a way to define and perceive Zimbabwean literature. It agrees with the views of many African scholars who also see that language alone as inadequate to define completely the identity of our literature in Africa. Rather, common view is that African literature should be basically judged by its sufficient commitment to the African people, history, values and experiences. Such an approach would surely disqualify several literary texts that are commonly masquerading as ChiShona literature today. It would also disqualify many texts that are currently being studied as solely English literary texts in Zimbabwe. There is need to remove the present confusion in classification of literature in Zimbabwe which has allowed literature that is neither written by Zimbabwean people nor talk about their life. Similarly, a lot of Zimbabwean texts in English would not necessarily qualify as *English literature*, but merely as *Zimbabwean texts written in English*. That would seem to be the best way to look at our literature in Zimbabwe.

As far as IsiNdebele literature is concerned, there was a time when texts that were written by South African Zulu speaking people and not IsiNdebele speaking writers was unquestionably accepted as IsiNdebele literary texts, when there is sufficient proof that the Zimbabwean Ndebele dialect, people and history is sufficiently different from that found across the Limpopo. This would warrant that we have a unique and distinct classification of literature called Ndebele in Zimbabwe. Notwithstanding the close relationship and history of all Nguni people, it seems treacherous to assume that IsiNdebele literature is exactly the same as that of the other Nguni groups. What is more, there are writers who speak Kalanga, Tonga, Sotho, Nambya, Venda and Shangani who have been loosely accepted as either ChiShona or IsiNdebele writers. It seems that the linguistic factor has been loosely used to denote literature in Zimbabwe.

Another observation on the way Zimbabwean people view literature is seen in the consideration of racial bigotry as giving identity to literature that is produced in Zimbabwean. There is no doubt that the two categories of Zimbabwean people of blacks and whites offers different histories, values and literary traditions. Kahari (1990) talks of texts produced in English by members of the

Pioneer Column such as Baden Powell, the colonialist Native Commissioner Charles Bullock, colonialist settlers like Getrude Page and Doris Lessing and by missionary settlers like Father Arthur Shearly Cripps. In Zimbabwe, all these works have been banded together with the works produced by nationalist and culturalist writers such as Stanlake Samkange, Didymus Mutasa, Lawrence Vambe, Ndabaningi Sithole, Charles Mungoshi, Shimmer Chinodya, Chenjerai Hove and others. One could question whether this is a fair classification of this literature. A great number of Zimbabwean of people may not agree that we base our classification of English literary texts in Zimbabwe on the general values and historical experiences of the colonial period, given the varied historical epochs represented by the different writers in English over a very long stretch of time in Zimbabwe. Added to this mix are works that are typically British works such as those by Hardy, Hemingway, Lawrence, Wright, Dickens, Keats, Wordsworths and Shakespeare. These have all been studied together as English literature in Zimbabwean educational institutions. But, perhaps this is simplistic view of the classification of literature in Zimbabwe, where we have studied the typically English literary tradition in the same vein as the other tradition produced by African Zimbabweans. The group of literary texts becomes such an amorphous one that it really becomes confusing in arriving at any one definition and classification of “English literature” in Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwean child has been forced to accept that all texts in English belong to one literary English tradition. It eventually becomes important for us to try to find out how those who have classified Zimbabwean literature have done it for them to give us the kind of categories we see and hear people in Zimbabwe give. Many questions abound. Do all works written in English mirror the same productive experiences to warrant one common identity? Would it be fair to have one identity of English literature in Zimbabwe? How could we realistically approach the conception of English literature in Zimbabwe, or be it as it may, literature in English?

Perhaps it has become clear now that people in Zimbabwe have used and accepted, over a long period of time, perceptions and conceptions of literature that are not very easy to understand and follow. They have used literary classification methods that are difficult to justify. They have chosen to classify literary and artistic works written by the same author using different languages as different forms of art, to the extent that they have treated and taught them differently under different teaching Departments. This is in spite of observations that the same author’s vision of Zimbabwean life, history and experiences might not change because he is using a different language medium. Thus, literary perspectives by the similar authors have been viewed differently. Mutswairo’s *Feso* (1956) in ChiShona is taught differently from the other *Feso* (1974) text that is in English. Similarly, Mungoshi’s *Ndiko Kupindana Kwamazuva* (1975), *Inongova Njakenjake* (183) and *Kunyarara Hakusi Kutura?* (1983) have been separated from *Waiting for the Rain* (1975), while Hove’s *Masimba evanhu* (1989)

has been separated from *Bones* (1989). This seems to be consistent with a perception of literature that emphasizes language as a structural and formal aspect of a work of art. Form is, therefore, is seen as the fundamental and underlying factor of delineating Zimbabwean literature more than the content of the work of art. This kind of approach is commonly associated with the formalist school of literary tradition that is associated with the moulds of Roman Jakobson, I. A. Richards, Shyklosky and others. This particular group of critics is mostly known to emphasize the literariness of a work of art. This seems to be the school of thought behind the major perceptions and conceptions of literature in Zimbabwe. Here seems to lie the origins and influence of Zimbabwean literature.

There are many Zimbabwean writers who have admitted to having been greatly influenced by the English and Western literary traditions in their writing. This was the only written literary tradition that was available to them for a long time that the writers were at school in Zimbabwe (Wild: 1992; Kahari: 1990). Charles Mungoshi, Dambudzo Marechera, Chenjerai Hove, Solomon Mutswairo, Wilson Chivaura and Eddison Muzeze (Zvobgo), Henry Pote, Joseph Kumbirai and many others have partly admitted that their writings were somewhat influenced by the English and Western traditions of literary writing, to the extent that their works can be traced to equivalent English literary pieces of works (Wild: 1982, 1983; Kahari: 1990). This is the basis that Kahari (1990) uses to conclude that some Zimbabwean literary texts by black writers are based on known European or Western literary traditions. He cites poems by Henry Pote, Wislon Chivaura, Solomon Mutswairo and Edson Muzeze (Zvobgo) in *Mabvumira Enhetembo* (1969) as derived from or based on John Keats' sonnets and Chiwome (1996) agrees with Kahari (1990) on this evolutionary theory of Zimbabwean literature. Kahari (1990) seems therefore sure that Pote's "*Kukumbira upenyu hutsva*", Chivaura's "*Kutya Kurova*", Mutswairo's "*Chirimo Chitsva*" and "*Mhoro Chapungu*" by Eddison Muzeze (Zvobgo) are all based on John Keats' sonnets: "*Look, watch those trees*", "*When I have fears that I may seize*", "*Praying for new life*" and "*The Bateleur Eagle*" respectively. Using the same analogy, Kahari (1990) believes that there are many other ChiShona literary texts that are based on or should be read together with their English equivalent works. More specifically, Kahari (1990:151-2) says *Gehena Harina Moto* (1965) by Giles Kuimba is based on *Hell is Without Fire*, Marangwanda's *Murambiwa Goredema* (1959) on Rousseau's *Social Contract*, Mungoshi's *Ndiko Kupindana Kwamazuva* (1975) and *Kunyarara Hakusi Kutaura?* (1983) on *Sequence of Time* and *Mayor of Casterbridge* respectively, while Tsodzo's *Pafunge* (1972) is said to be based on Greek mythology "*King Oedipus*."

Accepting Kahari's (1990) observations as accurate, this would mean that Zimbabwean writers and their critics conceive literature as wholly based on the English or European traditions of literature. This would further prompt some

people to add that because of this clear historical link, Zimbabwean literature cannot evolve out of its own history and identity, different from its surrogate history of origins. There could, then, evolve the assumption that the literature cannot be based on its own historical values. It is to suggest that the writers are in fact artistically bankrupt. But, such a view cannot go unchallenged.

Even though some writers in Zimbabwe have confirmed the above link with European historical art, as Dambudzo Marechera (Wild: 1992:189) would admit that;

When I started writing, D. H. Lawrence was the skeleton in my cupboard. After that it was James Joyce, Cat Vonnegut, Jack Kerouak, Allen Grinburg, Charles Bukowski ... until I began to doubt about any originality of myself.

Clearly, for people like Marechera, Western literary traditions not only produced an immediate, physical and psychological impact on their whole conception of what literature they were to produce later on. This could have been used by many people in Zimbabwe to view literature by indigenous people as an appendage of the English and Western literary traditions. Chiwome (1996) has described the effect and impact of Western values on Zimbabwean people as having a neurotic effect on their psyche.

This relationship between European and Zimbabwean literature is seen in another writer, Charles Mungoshi, who totally agrees with Marechera's observations on the role of the influence of European and Western literary traditions on Zimbabwean writing. He also admits that (Mungoshi: 1986:5):

Literature in class was Shakespeare, Hardy and Mathew Arnold: the normal fare of any average secondary school going British subject right through Africa.

Thus, for Mungoshi and other people, perceptions and conceptions of literature were inbuilt into the bastion of the colonial system which systematically and unfortunately promoted, overtly or covertly, Western values, beliefs and experiences in the African mind, while at the same time suppressing any residual African historical values and experiences left in them. This relationship is best summarized by Kahari (1990:2) when he says:

"Zimbabwean literature has adopted and adapted as well as assimilated creative energy from disparate sources and models ... it is born and is growing while exhibiting resemblances to its mother - the English literature."

This "mother-figure" historical image that Kahari (1990) refers stems

from a well-known social and historical context in which all mothers are responsible for bearing and raising their children according to their own indoctrination values and set standards. Under normal circumstances, no child can outgrow or compete with the mother. They can at best become second fiddle to the mother's values, experiences and thought processes. Extended to perceptions of literature in Zimbabwe, this mother-figure image analogy can best be understood to imply that Zimbabwean literature in general was natured and nurtured by European and Western literary models and traditions. It has the effect of legitimizing the subordinate role of the literature coming from Zimbabwe and creates the surrogate relationship between the two literary traditions. It may also mean that Zimbabwean literature cannot disengage itself and emerge from the English and European literary tradition, history, experiences and values. But, this is as debatable as it is controversial.

This is the kind of attitude that Achebe (1990) has condemned as the "junior brother" kind of mentality in literature, that is commonly used on African literature by European and Western literary critics. It sees African literature as having to go through some kind of apprenticeship system of copying, step-by-step, Western literary models and traditions, while seeking the approval of the "big brother" - European and Western traditional literary values and experiences. It is similar to what Kenneth Kaunda (the first black leader of Zambia) once described as the "rider and horse" relationship of blacks and whites during the Federation period, where blacks would be told that they were friends and brothers of the white people, and yet in reality they were inferior to the white race. This is not what African literature wants at the moment. African literature must seek to simply evolve from the European and Western fetters of literature and assume new meaning which will stake its claim of novelty and independence.

Promoting Western perceptions of literature in Zimbabwe, T. O. McLoughlin, one of the earliest Professors in the Department of English at the University of Zimbabwe, banally argued that Zimbabwean literature in English is not "*sue generis*" (Wild: 1993). He believes that it is neither unique nor original because it is written in the English language. Thus, according to people like McLoughlin, Zimbabwean literature in English must be placed in the same class as any other literature that has been produced in English, and must equally succumb to being subjected to the same critical canons of judging literature as those used for the mainstream English art as understood by the English people themselves. Similar views have been heard from George Kahari, Eustace Palmer, Bernith Lindfors, Eldred Jones and Adrian Roscoe and others. It is Roscoe (in Chinweizu et al: 1980:8) who says:

*If an African writes in English, his work must be considered
as belonging to English letters as a whole and can be scrutinized*

accordingly.

In some way, this scholarship advocates for literature be taken as having universal values and appeal, so that those universal literary tools and values are used on it without any blush. The idea of literature being seen as a universal phenomenon, that should use universal tools and values to evaluate it, has been easily rejected by many African literary scholars as nothing but a ploy to subordinate African literature to Western literary evaluative traditions. It goes against the grain of common logic that literature implies studying the people and their historical values and experiences and yet accept to use some other values and experiences to evaluate it. For the people of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwean literature should be seen as focusing on their unique historical values and experiences. Thus, to use Western and European models of literature in conceiving it is similar to arguing that the Shona or Ndebele people are exactly the same as the people of England. Nothing can be further away from the truth than this kind of thinking. This is why Chinweizu et al (1980) point out that whatever language African writers use in their texts, the emphasis must be on using appropriate African values when evaluating their texts. This would make the evaluations more accurate, relevant and meaningful. It behoves on us to use a similar analogy and accept that the best way of conceiving Zimbabwean literature is to use Zimbabwean values and experiences.

African literary scholars are therefore staking rather clearly and unambiguously that literature from Africa is unique and different from that coming from Europe and the West. They emphasize that African literature should not be based on European history, culture and people it is sufficiently justified to have its own identity and critical standards. This is what the people in Zimbabwe should consider when viewing their literature. In spite of whatever borrowings that Zimbabwean literature might have had from Western and other traditions, it remains unique and original. The issue of commitment to the history, values and experiences of African people becomes the crucial defining factor and character of this literature. As Chinweizu et al (1980:241) would argue:

The African writer and critic must confront the issue of what community he is writing for ... Is he contended to write for the audience whose interests in his work is exotic? Let us point out that the immortality of a work of art ... depends on whether the writing is for a community whose situation the work is resonant with meaning, a community which finds itself expressed in the work

Suffice it to say then that, Zimbabweans' conception of literature should be based on the relevance of historical values and experiences. However, even some of the texts written by Zimbabwean people in ChiShona or IsiNdebele can

fall short of correctly situating themselves in the history and experiences of Zimbabwean people. This is true when you find that a Zimbabwean reading a work of art hardly feels confident that he himself is being expressed in that work. Chinweizu et al (1980:24) warn us that:

The artist in the traditional African milieu spoke for and to his Community. His imagery, symbolism and form were drawn from a communal and accessible pool. He was heard. He made sense.

This is the sense in which Zimbabwean literature must find meaning and relevance. In emphasizing this point, Achebe (1975:19) points out that:

African artists lived and had their full being in their society, so that they created works for the good of society.

This is what we should use when evaluating literature in Zimbabwe. We need to use the people's values and history to judge the essence of our art.

It is interesting that sometimes one finds perceptions of literature in Zimbabwe as emphasizing racial preferences of the writers (Kahari:1990). According to Kahari (1990), black Zimbabwean writers of literature in English are mostly concerned about issues of black history, culture and experiences while their white counterparts would do the same for their group. He says black writers see white people as their source of problems while white writers do the opposite (Kahari: 1990:39). In this kind of scenario, literature is not seen as one homogeneous entity. This kind of situation allows for racially determined perception of literature. Kahari (1990) is happy to see literature according to the racial origins of the author. This is a view that was also noticed by DuBois who said the problem of the 20th century was that of colour preferences among mankind. Ezekiel Mphahlele (in Bishop: 1988) also says the same thing about black and white South African writers. Kahari (1990) arrives at the critical point where he questions the legitimacy of works written by the white missionary, Father Arthur Shearly Cripps, as truly authentic Zimbabwean literature. To Kahari (1990:39), his works depict the same history of Zimbabwe, but from a different point of view. He says:

That mystic poet, novelist and missionary, Father Arthur Shearly Cripps ironically complained of what he was busy doing to destroy African traditions.

It is made very clear by Kahari's (1990) that literary positions and conceptions of art by white writers will always be understood as representing white values, experiences and history, which cannot be equated to that of black people's values, cultures and experiences. Chiwome (1996) agrees to this and

observes that the Roman Catholic priest at Gokomere Mission - Father Gruber, always worked to destroy the African esteem which he fought for on behalf of the blacks and against the white colonialists. For Kahari, 1990:39), the same could be said about white Zimbabwean writers. He says they often gave black characters insignificant roles in their works as is the case of the character John Reed. The interesting thing about this is even that still means that most Zimbabwean literary scholars classify literature either according to the language in which it appears or the race of the writers. There is little consideration for the value of the content in the literature concerned.

Perceptions of Oral Literature

When it comes to oral literature, it seems Zimbabwean people do not recognize its value fully as a legitimate form of Zimbabwean literature. Folktales, proverbs, songs, dances, games, riddles and other oral art forms are not found or taught as courses in all Departments of English in Zimbabwe in schools, colleges and universities, save for cursory references. Instead, only Departments of African Languages and Literature offer full courses on Zimbabwean oral literature. Even then, oral literature is a very small fraction of language and literature courses taught from Form I to 6. It is particularly at University, and recently too, that oral literature has been taught as full courses that are separate from language.

Because oral literature is taught and studied as an appendage of many other linguistic elements in the indigenous language subjects, this literature is only a small fraction of what could possibly be done. The emphasis of its teaching has been rather limited to analyses of its linguistic and structural forms and meaning rather than its functional and utilitarian value. Again, this is purely a formalist and structural approach to conception of literature. Thus, most students of oral literature in Zimbabwe are those studying indigenous languages and literature, and they end up thinking that oral literature is all about knowing the meaning and structural forms of this art, rather than its functional and utilitarian value. Such an approach to literature is found in the work that has been done by scholars like Dundas, Propp, Chiwome, Hamutyinei and Plagger, Finnegan, Mberi, Pongweni and Fortune. Only Chimhundu and Furusa have attempted to focus on the social value of selected oral traditional forms like tsumo. Thus, in general Zimbabweans conceive and perceive oral literature as something that was there sometime before but is no longer there and relevant. It is a conception of literature that is suitable for people who have limited knowledge of the value of traditional art forms and their dynamic functional roles in socializing communities daily. In some cases, the way these traditional art forms of literature have been known and taught has been steeped in racial bigotry, commonly used by early anthropologists and colonialist scholars, with the major view that oral literary forms are consistent with backwardness and eruditeness. What seems unfortunate is that African scholars

have not liberated themselves from such thinking. Thus, Pongweni, Chakamba and Masocha, Hamutyinei and Plagger, Chigidi, Mberi, Chiwome, Kahari and Magwa have mostly looked at Zimbabwean oral literature from the same formalist point of view. They have not emphasized the functionalist approach to this literature in the society that it was first conceived. This is a very limiting approach to oral forms of literature.

The fact that Departments of English in Zimbabwe do not teach oral literature courses and at school, college and university levels, shows that we do not have people who believe that this literature can be taken as seriously as the written forms of literature. It means that the philosophy of literature held by some Zimbabwean scholars in those Departments largely devalues these artistic forms of literature as viable literary study areas. It may also mean that the real significance and place of oral literature in Zimbabwe goes against the general philosophy of most Departments of English in Zimbabwe. One is tempted to conclude that oral literature is not seen as closely related to the everyday life activities. Departments of English in Zimbabwe have not been comfortable to accept this literature in its fold. This is very unfortunate, especially when one considers that the literature is the basis of all literature found throughout the world.

It would not be surprising then, to note that people like McLoughlin (1990), who have worked for a long time in the English Department of English at the University of Zimbabwe, actually mistrust and disapprove of the use of Zimbabwean orature in written literature in English. They believe that its inclusion makes the works inferior and sub-standard. This is why we hear McLoughlin (1990) saying:

Early stories in English by African writers reflect much influence from oral art and confirm the myth that blacks are like children. Likewise, these stories bore a close resemblance to the animals stories of the Aesop kind which the Europeans read to their children.

One cannot fail to note that it is people like McLoughlin (1990) who have virtually abused African writers whom they equate to *little children*, merely because African writers have used oral literature in their writings. These are the kind of scholars who have continued to promote the unprofitable view that literature in Africa can have an identity that is without any influence of oral nature. Even black Zimbabwean scholars, have quite ironically, pursued literary studies from the same point of view as white nemeses. They have sadly failed to move away from the imprisonment of the warped Western oriented perception of literature. This has perpetuated the production of African scholars' negative thinking about the role and value of African oral literature. It seems this is the view that has seen most African writers in English as producing inferior

texts to those of their white counterparts, making their works play second fiddle to Western literary art. This is probably the view that is used in Zimbabwe that oral literature is a less valuable indicator of a people's values and experiences. This is a conception of literature that seems to be derived from European and Western notions of literary art.

There have been views that have been so commonly but carelessly propagated by Western thinkers, some of which are none other than our own African people, that traditional African art forms have always been poorer and inferior to Western equivalents. Colonialist thinkers have widely and wickedly propagated such views. It stems from those who see African people and their art and literature as rather secondary to European and Western art and literature. It is a kind of scholarship that seems to lean more towards the Darwin's evolutionary theory, which sees African people as the least intelligent of human species in the whole fictitious ladder of evolution of man. Nobody has bothered to tell us why no other human species has ever evolved from what we have ever known them to be. This is what prompts Chiwome (1996) to say that Western and colonialist scholars do not recognize African artistic forms because it would create another problem of dealing with the myth of the African psyche.

When Zimbabwean teachers teach oral literature in schools, colleges and universities, they tend to restrict it to a past generation of people and history. For most teachers, Zimbabwe's oral literature is never associated with a dynamic movement in the life of African societies. Instead, labels like "traditional" or "African" literature have tended to be used with a pejorative value and are all used in the past tense, the *kwainzi, zvainzi* syndrome. Thus, most Zimbabwean people would be happy to look at African ideas and values as either backward or restrictive to growth and development. The same people are always happy to look at any Western ideas and values as "modern" and "progressive". The thinking among most Zimbabwean people seems to be that African oral literature is not capable of modernizing itself. That concept of human growth and development sees modernity as a preserve of only the Western people. It means that African people can only become associated with it when they agree to renounce their historical identity and are prepared to ape and imitate Western values, experiences and history.

The most studied of oral forms in Zimbabwean literature are riddles, proverbs, idioms, folktales and sometimes songs. Very little has been done when it comes to dances and games. Even in the indigenous languages and literature, games and dances have not been seriously explored. This literature has mostly been studied in the Music Departments in schools and in the Teachers' Colleges and the main thrust has been to follow Western mosaic musical forms. This means that very little of truly Zimbabwean games and dances have been taught using approaches that do not merely focus on the musicality of dance, song and games.

But rather, we should look at the utilitarian values of these oral forms.

In spite of the fact that Zimbabwe has had a Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture since 1980, hardly anything substantial has been done to place Zimbabwean oral art into its proper perspective. There is no known policy on the identification and promotion of this art and literature in Zimbabwe. Instead, the Ministry has blindly promoted dance and song as artistic forms, so that to date, dance performances for *jerusarema*, *mhande*, *muchongoyo* and *shangara* are popularly performed at most state occasions by different people. However, the conception of this literature is still far from what it ought to be. This is because people who hardly know anything about the social history, value and significance of the dances and songs sometimes do the dances and songs. The dance performances are not probably as meaningfully done as they used to be performed then. To both the performers, the audience is nothing more than a group to be entertained. Thus, such a conception of oral literature is a confused one.

A good example of this notion of traditional art forms is that of the *jerusarema* dance. The dance has now been popularized by government, although very few people know and appreciate it for its social significance was. Today, the dance has lost its social roles and is now a mere performance. Traditionally, men and women who had unrealistically overstayed without getting married were the ones who used to perform it in privacy. The dance was an occasion for those kinds of suitors to impress each other, hoping to attract the attention of prospective suitors into marriage. However, today, that value of the *jerusarema* dance is unknown and lost to many of its performers, leaving the dance popularized and commercialized to a point where it is performed by both old and young in public places such as airports. Surely, the dance has lost its intended meaning to most people. It is now a mere performance.

There are also people who believe that the popularity of the dance today may come from its sexiest appeal in a society that is thoroughly intoxicated with pervasive sexual issues. Whichever way we take it, the point is that conception of this literature has remained largely inappropriate and sadly Western. The values and the criteria being used by Zimbabwean people to appreciate their oral literature can be said to be unhelpful and problematic. What people should know is that oral literary forms have always served people as some kind of celebration of life values and experiences. They were ways of demonstrating the way people conceive their day-to-day experiences. Those who sang and danced the *jerusarema*, *muchongoyo*, *mbakumba*, *shangara* and *mhande* dances and performances knew that the activity was intertwined with other real life issues like marriage, fighting, death, happiness or even sad events. Today, this is no longer the case because the performances have now been reduced to mere artistic performances. And yet, Kahari (1990) reminds us all that in Africa,

there was never art-for-art' s-sake because everything was done for a utilitarian value.

Conclusions and recommendations

The tasks that lie ahead of us with regards to perceptions of Zimbabwean literature should start with the proper identification and promotion of Zimbabwean literature based on what defines the Zimbabwean people. In doing so, we need to re-emphasize the need to guard against the subtle methods of the West to lure us into believing that literary values are neutral to a people' s history and cultural experience. As we double up our efforts to search for genuine identity of Zimbabwean literature, we must be warned of pitfalls of uncritically copying unAfrican models of perceptions of literature.

Having noted and accepted the fact that language alone cannot adequately, completely and accurately give us our literary identity as Zimbabwean people, it becomes equally important to further suggest that we need a re-thinking of the way we classify and identify our literature, so as to ensure that we place a lot of value on the content and commitment of our literature on African ideals and experiences. These then become the most useful tools of classifying it, in addition to the other factors like the language medium used. Our perceptions of literature in Zimbabwe must always be guided by the representative views of the ordinary people, including those in the remotest part of the country like Bhuhera, Dotito, Chimanimani, Renco and other such places. We must always be aware of the dangers of using elitist values which are alien to the ordinary people' s conception of things. People in Zimbabwe have been very clear of whom they call themselves as vaShona, vaNdebele or the English, without any elements of doubt or confusion. Why should it become unclear about what constitutes a Zimbabwean or muShona or iNdebele and their literatures? No white person has ever been classified as Shona or Ndebele, even when he speaks the language more fluently than the Shona or Ndebele themselves. Similarly, no African person has ever become a murungu/ikhiwa even when he speaks the English language better than the people of England. Why, then should there be confusion or debate as to what constitutes ChiShona or IsiNdebele or English literature in Zimbabwe? Departments of literature in Zimbabwe need to be reconstituted in order to use the new conceptions and perceptions of ChiShona, IsiNdebele and English literatures hereby given. We need to be constantly guided by the philosophy that literature can only be identified by its commitment to its people' s values, history and cultural experiences. Then and only then, can we be accepted for what we are and as using the right literary tools and consciousness to our art in Zimbabwe.

The task lying ahead of us all is that of re-educating all our people on the significance and value of all our forms of literature, including oral

literature. We must seek ways to promote all these literary genres without exception in our schools, colleges and universities. Literature that is written in indigenous languages and oral literature must be offered as a full course from form 1 right up to university level in all languages of Zimbabwe, just as is currently the case with literature in English. Indigenous languages must be separated from their literatures. Similarly, English Departments must be re-organized so as to reflect correct identities of literature in or English literature. Even the names of these Departments need to be changed for them to become synonymous with the ideals of our conceptions of literature in Zimbabwe. In doing this, we need to run away from perceptions that everything that is indigenous is inferior to that which comes from the foreigner, such as from the West. Neither do we need to uncritically accept all the literature produced in indigenous languages as totally representative of that section of literature. Let us seriously scrutinize our notions and conceptions of literary art, using the philosophy of the theory of revaluing this literature in Zimbabwe from a typically Afro-centric approach.

Munashe Furusa (in Chivaraura and Mararike: 1998) agrees with the idea of re-evaluation of Zimbabwean literature and says that we do not have a place for Western oriented intellectualism which looks up to Europe and America as the only source of relevant literary models. Chinweizu et al (1980) and Ngugi (1981) also agree with this and have called for the 'decolonization of African mind, so as to move away the centre of our criticism of literature from European-based models. For people like Chinua Achebe [1990], African scholarship in literature must 'go back to where the rain began to beat us', in order for us to reconnect ourselves with our very African values and history. Amilcar Cabral talks of 'returning to the source' where we use our original African history and culture when appreciating African literature.

All these suggestions clearly emphasize the need to disengage conception of African literature from European and Western patronage of it. This is the biggest task we all have in Zimbabwe. We should take seriously Langton Hughes' warning that in our efforts to run away from Western domination of criticism of literature, we should not consider whether the Western people approve it or not. Hughes (in Chinwezu et al: 1980:237) says if Europeans are pleased with our efforts, it does not matter. If they are not pleased, he says it does not matter too, for as long as we ourselves know that we are doing the right thing for ourselves. The decisions should be ours as African Zimbabweans and we must own it and be responsible for it. This is a view that is also shared by Okot p' Bitek [1973:vii] who he emphasizes that African literary scholars must re-interpret Africa in a way that protects the interests of the African people.

The debate on the definition of Zimbabwean literature and the path for its development has just begun. We must continue to shape the Zimbabwe's literary

development route. The whole effort must be allowed to gather momentum in a way that will make Zimbabwean literature flourish in the new African thinking, which makes African people equal partners to any other people. Only then can all our labour in African literature be viewed as productive, in the same sense that a farmer brings home some milk to share with his family. Let the whole debate rage on.

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Proverbs as Reflections of Democracy in the Traditional Shona Culture of
Zimbabwe

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Abstract

The article discusses selected Shona proverbs and exposes their democratic implications. It notes that Shona proverbs are laden with democratic ideas. These claims centre on the principles of democracy such as decentralization of authority, rotational kingship, collective decision making, transparency and accountability, rule of law and the protection and promotion of human rights. The article therefore argues that the traditional Shona people of Zimbabwe had the core ingredients of a democratic society and had mechanisms in place that encouraged the protection and promotion of human rights.

Background.

Democracy is defined as a system of governance which was invented in ancient

Greece (Shivji; 1985:50). Its main tenet is an attempt to bring about an inclusive rather than an exclusive form of government. Therefore, according to Abraham Lincoln democracy is described as government of the people by the people and for the people. In spite of the fact that the distinguishing feature of contemporary democracy is the right of the individual citizens to take part in politics of their country to select leaders of their choice, there are other fundamentals of democracy. These are separation of powers, accountability and transparency, citizens' participation, rule of the law, political tolerance, respect of human rights, and others (Mavuru and Nyamanda 2009:196).

There has been controversy on the origins of the concept of democracy between scholars of different schools of thought. Liberal Western scholars argue that the philosophical foundations of the concept of democracy have its origins in the democratic traditions of the Western world - a tradition which is in itself the product of Greek philosophy. (Kamenka and Tay, 1978). They further argue that democracy is a product of Western Revolutions, for example the French and American Revolutions. For example, an important democratic principle that was a direct result of the French Revolution in France was the separation of the executive, legislative and judicial powers which under the ancient regime had been united under the absolute monarch (Claassen and Lambert 1988:321). Therefore, Eurocentric scholars argue that democracy is Western and alien to other regions like Africa. However, Afro-centric scholars have challenged the notion that democracy is an import to Africa. Claude Ake cited by Bhebe and Ranger (2001:xiv) argues that democracy is not solely a Western creation and further points out that the misconception stems from the confusion between the principles of democracy and their institutional manifestations. He adds that the principles of democracy prevailed in a variety of political arrangements and practices, which varied in accordance with historical circumstances. Therefore, according to Ake, the African political systems were infused with democratic values. The paper seeks to demonstrate through a careful study of the Shona traditional institutions that the practice of democracy in Africa is as old as the African civilization itself. It asserts that the Shona traditional governance system while having its own shortcomings had very strong democratic precepts. An examination of the Shona proverbs, which were an expression of the people' s culture shows that democracy was not a rarity.

Authority

The Shona reminded their leaders that their powers were derived from the people for whom it was held in trust. The Shona' s perception of authority was different from that of the European leaders before and during the Renaissance era. Claassen and Lambert (1988) point out that Europe then was ruled by absolute monarchies who maintained that they were appointed by God to rule and

that they were responsible to Him only. Political philosophers like Thomas Hobbes justified this form of government. Hobbes holds the view that people are by nature a threat to their fellows and that they should transfer all power to the state in return for their protection against one another. However, the Shona society had some of the ingredients of a democratic order. To them, power came from the people and the leaders exercised it on behalf of the people.

The proverb that *Ishe Vanhu or Nyika vanhu* (the chiefdom is made up of people) served as a reminder to the leaders that their strength and influence depended upon the number of people who were under their jurisdiction. The proverb could be used at times to encourage chiefs to incorporate as many people as possible into their areas since many people would constitute a substantial political base.

Apart from reminding the leaders that their power came from below and not from above the proverbs served the purpose of reminding the leaders of the need to remain faithful custodians of the people's interests. Mudenge (1988:109) argues that one way in which the Shona kings took care of the people's interests was through the *Zunde ramambo* concept (a village communal field from which food was produced and later distributed to starving people in times of drought). However, if a leader was seen to be indifferent to the plight of his subjects sometimes, they would react by relocating to other favourable kingdoms. If the people departed in numbers the proverb would make sense to the leaders that the well being of the kingdom and his authority were subordinated to the number of people in the kingdom. Hence it was imperative for the leaders to live in harmony with their people.

Furthermore some proverbs acted as checks and balances against potential autocratic rule by leaders. One such proverb was *Ushu idova hunoparara*, authority is dew, it evaporates. (Beach, 1995:24). The proverb cautioned leaders against authoritarian behaviour, since at times circumstances could dictate that the leader be removed from power and become an ordinary citizen. Although the king's power was hereditary, the Shona society would remind the leaders through proverbs that many leaders in the past had left office prematurely due to illness, injury or age, and so they were supposed to exercise responsible leadership. Proverbs like *kare haagare ari kare*, the past does not remain the same and *aiva madziva ava mazambuko*, what were once pools are now crossing places were meant to remind leaders that leadership could not be in perpetuity and that change was inevitable hence it was paramount for them to exercise responsible leadership. Therefore proverbs like the above provided a regime of checks and balances against high-handed behaviour by the Shona leadership.

Rotational Kingship

The Shona made use of proverbs at times to warn and advise leaders of the importance to observe good governance. Despite the fact that the Shona did not have a written constitution, they were guided by a body of unwritten conventions which stipulated the rotation of kingship. A position was inherited only through males and would circulate in one generation before passing on to the next. In succession to the kingship, the collateral aspect was institutionalised in a number of houses of the chiefly family between which the succession in turn of each of the founder chief's sons before any of his grandsons became chief. Thus proverbs like *Ushu usiiranwa* and its variants *Ushu utambidzanwa* and *Ushu madzoro hunoravanwa* were often quoted. These literally meant no man could rule forever. Therefore, according to Hamutyinei and Planger (1974:303) it was advisable for one to be just and fair in the conduct of his business as a leader so that people could continue to esteem him whether alive, retired or dead.

The rotation of kingship was democratic in the sense that no leader or house could enjoy a monopoly of kingship. If one's term of office had come to an end due to death or illness, the button of power was passed to the next house within the same lineage. In this way succession conflicts were minimised so were any dictatorial tendencies. The rotation of kingship within the royal family was meant not to give unfair advantage to one house in the royal family. Therefore people had to wait patiently for their turn to come. Despite the fact that there were no general elections that were conducted to choose a leader, specific formal practices were put in place that positioned selected members of the society to authorise, critique and sanction the rise of their leader to the throne. Bourdillon (1976) notes that spirit mediums and some wise elders were involved in the selection of a suitable candidate from the deserving house. The choice of a leader was sometimes politically charged. However if contestation arose, the Shona had checks and balances that were put in place to resolve conflicts, especially those that were related to succession issues. For instance they had categorical requirements of gender or age which effectively narrowed competition. On the whole, the rotation of chieftainship was a democratic principle because it neither advantaged nor disadvantaged any house, but it was open to everybody who qualified from the royal family.

Decentralization of authority

Although the Shona king was the executive head, the legislator, the supreme judge, religious leader, the commander-in-chief of the army and perhaps even the principal capitalist of the whole community, it will be erroneous to think of him of combining in himself a number of separate and distinct offices. For democracy to exist, the Shona felt that the power of the state should not be held by one person. Power was shared by different individuals or groups which checked one another. Mpofu, Mutami and Tavuyanago(2009:19) argue that the Mutapa state was structured into central, provincial and district

administration. Therefore, it can be observed that the administration of the state was not the prerogative of one man but of many, hence the proverb, *Ushu Makota*. The proverb literally meant that the king minus his helpers and advisers was nothing. It was practically impossible for the king to be everywhere in the state and so he ruled with the aid of political assistance and advice from chiefs, headmen, priests, advisers and others.

It will be a mistake to regard the scheme of constitutional checks and balances and the delegation of power and authority to the regional chiefs as nothing more than an administrative device. Evans- Pritchard (1940:12) asserts that a general principle of great importance was contained in these arrangements which had the effect of giving every section and every major interest group of society direct or indirect representation in the conduct of government. Local chiefs represented the central authority in relation to their districts, but they also represented the people under them in relation to the central authority. Village elders and ritual functionaries represented the community's interest in the preservation of law and custom and the observance of the ritual measures deemed necessary for its well being. For example, King Phiri cited by Bhebe and Ranger (2001) argues that the powerful and awe-inspiring Munhumutapa had this power circumvented by pronouncements of independent religious authorities. From time to time, they had to consult the *Mhondoro* spirit mediums whose advice over a wide range was binding.

The voice of such functionaries and delegates was effective in the conduct of government on account of the general principle that power and authority were composite. Their various components were lodged in different offices. Without the cooperation of those who held those offices it was extremely difficult, if not impossible for the king to obtain his revenue, assert his judicial and legislative supremacy. Viewed from another angle, the Shona society consisted of a balance between authority on one side and obligation and responsibility on the other. Every one who held political office had responsibilities for the public weal corresponding to his rights and privileges. Therefore, the distribution of political authority provided the machinery by which the various arms of government could complement each other, co-operate among themselves and could also be held accountable and responsible for their actions. Evans- Pritchard (1940) asserts that the king had the right to exact tax, tribute and labour service from his subjects, he had the corresponding obligation to dispense justice to them to ensure their protection from the enemies and to safeguard their general welfare. The structure of the society implied that kings and chiefs ruled by consent. A ruler's subjects were as fully aware of the duties they owed to him. By maintaining such a democratic working environment, the subjects as well as the rulers were kept happy.

Collective decision-making / idea sharing

Another feature of a democratic order in the Shona society was the reliance on dialogue and consultation as a means of decision-making. Decision making in the Shona society was a collective enterprise. People met at a dare (king's court) to discuss matters that affected the whole community. Proverbs that underscored the importance of collective decision-making were *zano ndega akatsvira mudumba* (a good idea takes two, he who did not consult others eventually gets hurt in a makeshift hut) *or_rume rimwe harikombe churu* (one man can not surround an anthill) and *mazano marairamwa* (ideas are shared). The people had to grapple with the problem of representing sectional and common interests. In order to do this the members had to talk things over, they had to listen to all different points of view. So strong was the value of solidarity that the people always aimed to reach unanimity, and indeed, they always talked until this was achieved. Unanimity and all the rigorous process that led to it were efforts made to contain the wishes of the majority as well as these of the minority.

The Shona people believed that a good idea could be arrived at if it was critically examined by all. The argument was that an idea was supposed to be subjected to scrutiny and pass the people's assessment. Therefore individualising decision making was generally condemned. The above proverb underlined the Shona philosophy that human nature is fraught with weaknesses and therefore it was important for the people to work collectively in order to reach unanimity. Gwaravanda and Masaka (2008:20) argue that raw ideas could be purified through a process of logical disputation between two or more people. Therefore, the above proverb highlights the fact that decisions or ideas in the Shona society were shared enterprise which required unrestrained analysis for them to be deemed good. In short collective decision making was designed to arrive at what could be abstractly called the general will of the people of the community. Thus, in this way, the Shona society was not short of democratic practices.

Rule of the law

The rule of the law required that all people were subjected to the same known fair and impartial laws and that they would be held accountable if they were found guilty of violating the laws of the state. No person whatever his position was above the law. Chirenje cited by Bhebe and Ranger (2001) argues that the law of the land was obeyed by the common village resident as well as by the chief. Therefore no one was above the law. According to Mavuru and Nyamanda (2009:192) laws were supposed to be enforced equally, fairly and freely and without political interference. The Shona were aware of the fact that the administration of justice would bring about law and order, predictability, stability and peace. That the Shona people upheld fairness and impartiality in the administration of justice was echoed by the proverb: *kumuzinda hakuna_woko* (at the chief's court

yard, there is no relative of yours. The proverb implied that in the court there was nobody who could claim preferential treatment on the grounds of blood relationship. If one was found guilty, the law would be applied impartially. The impartiality in the application of the law made it possible to try offenders since no one could be viewed as being above the law. To underscore the importance of the doctrine of impartiality the court officials would mention proverbs such as *dare harizondi munhu, rinozonda mhosva* (the court does not hate the person on trial but the crime. Hamutyinei and Planger (1974:317) aver that proverbs such as the one above encouraged the court officials to confine its deliberations to the case as going against the law. The court was not supposed to provide a platform for the airing of personal grudges of the accuser. This proverb and its variants were quoted in the court to stress fairness and impartiality.

The participation of the public during the court proceedings provided a further testimony of how fair and transparent the administration of justice was. The chief worked hand in gloves with his advisers in the assessment of cases that were brought before the court. The public attended the court sessions and actively contributed to the verdicts that were arrived at. After each party had made a formal statement of their case, the discussion was thrown open to the public. Bourdillon (1976:131) asserts that any member of the public could take up the case of one of the parties, impersonating him even to the extent of mimicking him. In this way all possible aspects of the case could be fully discussed without the proceedings being disturbed by the emotive bitterness of the disputants themselves. Whatever they had to say had to be addressed only to the court and even then often through the mediation of a senior representative. Holleman (1958: 25) remarks that the traditional Shona judiciary system had parallels with courts in the Roman Dutch legal system in which disputants operate through advocates.

Not only was the legal system impartial, but it had some mechanisms to curb judicial corruption which would inevitably happen if a chief presided over a trial in which his relative was the accused. No matter how authoritative a person was once his relative was involved in a case, he could not pass judgement, but had to abide by the judgement of others. That it was improper to try your own relative, the Shona people made use of the following proverb, *Mhosva_haizvitonge*: (a case can not try itself).

Another feature of a democratic judicial system of the Shona society was its spatial legal uniformity. Legal uniformity was made possible by the fact that sentences were not emotionally passed, but reference was made to previous similar cases. Therefore the previous cases became judicial precedents upon which to judge new cases. Hence, the Ndaus saying that *nyaya_inotongwa neimwe* (a

case is tried on the basis of the other). For example, traditionally those found guilty of incest among the Ndaus were banished to some far away places (interview with chief Gwenzi). On the other hand, Hamutyinei and Planger (1987:300) postulate that murder was punishable by the payment of cattle plus a girl child. Though to some extent the legal system of the traditional Shona society could not be compared to the contemporary one fully, to a reasonable degree it endeavoured to create a democratic environment for citizens.

The right of representation in court

Proverbs as a form of oral traditions were quite useful in the preservation of fundamental rights on judiciary issues. The people were entitled to certain rights which protected them from arbitrary state action. One of those crucial rights was the right to be heard or representation in court. According to this practice a court of law could not try and convict a person charged with an offence against the law in that person's absence. Thus the subject people were also presented with the opportunity to exercise freedom of expression since self representation entailed either talking in self defence or in acceptance of guilt by the accused. Proverbs such as *Mutorwa kunyangonaka sei haatongerwi mhosva asipo* were often quoted to stress the importance of the right of representation by the accused. The proverb's literal implication was that no matter how good the servant was he could not be tried in his absence. Accordingly if the accused person failed to appear for trial under normal circumstances the court proceedings were suspended. The right to be heard was possibly two dimensional in application. The first side was that the interests of the minority groups or servants were supposed to be listened to by those who dispensed justice to the society. The other served the purpose of educating the royal members on the need for impartiality when handling cases that involved citizens who came from the lower classes of the society. The presence and presentation of facts by the accused presented advantages to both the accused and the court. Listening to the accused enabled the court to determine whether the accused had premeditated intentions in committing the crime or not. If extenuating circumstances could be established, usually an appropriate lighter sentence was meted out.

The sanctity of life

Life was greatly treasured by the Shona people and as such, the people in general shrank at the idea of taking away somebody's life. The society upheld the belief that if a person died in unclear circumstances his spirit would come back to torment the living. Therefore life was viewed as a sacred entitlement that was open to all. Infringement of this right was roundly condemned by the

society. One of the proverbs that stressed the sacredness of life was: *Murombo munhu haavigwi ari mupenyu* (a pauper is a person; he can not be buried alive. Hamutyinei and Planger (1974:33) pointed out that the life of person whether poor or miserable was indispensable. Therefore the society was called upon all the time to protect human life. The society observed that placing the right to life ahead of many other human rights would promote a spirit of oneness and harmony among the people.

Furthermore, the Shona demonstrated their respect for life by the words they put in place to protect the lives of the vulnerable members of the society. They accorded full human status to destitutes. The society was aware that the insane and other unfortunate members of society were vulnerable to ritual murder by some unscrupulous people in the society. The Shona accordingly reminded the would be killers that the avenging spirit of a destitute was more dangerous and difficult to appease than that of a normal person. Accordingly, proverbs such as *ngozi yerombe igandanzara* which literally meant that the avenging spirit of a destitute caused untold suffering were quoted as warnings against committing murder in the society. Gelfand (1973:122) argues that the spirit of a murdered person would seek revenge on the member of the family responsible for his death whether it was intentional, unintentional or purely an accident. Thus no one was permitted to kill. The well being and the right to life was the prerogative of every human being. Hence, the Shona culture strongly valued life. Unlike the Kingole of the Kamba and the Kikuyu of Kenya (Evans - Prichard, 1940: xv) where individuals who had offended against the community were put to death the Shona did not met out capital punishment to murderers. They had in store other forms of punishment that did not terminate the life of a murderer. Therefore the Shona society viewed life as an indispensable entitlement that was supposed to be enjoyed by everyone which meant that the Shona culture valued the sanctity of life.

Human Equality

The concept of the equality of persons was enshrined in the Shona society from time immemorial. The Shona knew the treatment that befitted a human being .Hence practices that dehumanized fellow members of the society were not entertained. The society demonstrated its dislike of the ill-treatment of other people by the inclusion of proverbs in their language such as *ndiro yechirema hairovi* (the plate of a cripple cannot be forgotten). In all walks of life a cripple is regarded as a human being and that is why he shares in the family meal even if he would at times eat alone .The equality of persons as a human right was derived from dignity of the human person. Each individual was entitled to it on the basis of his humanity. Its enjoyment was therefore based on the principle of non-discrimination. The Shona people were aware that human rights were held by people equally, the only qualification for the enjoyment was being a human

being. In the literal sense of the word, people discriminate every day, since they distinguish between good and bad, correct and incorrect, clever and stupid but it was morally indefensible to discriminate against people on the basis of their disabilities. The above proverb and its variants were coined not solely to spice up the Shona language with figurative terms, but were an expression of people's reaction to the ill-treatment of the unfortunate members of the society. If the society condoned such unacceptable practices the less privileged members of the society would be deprived of the fundamental human rights such as the right to life, access to shelter and food. Therefore to ensure that all the people acted in the society towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood, the equality of persons was upheld by the society.

Freedom of choice

One of the themes emerging from the huge family of the human rights is the recognition of the value of individual freedom. Immanuel Kant cited by Claassen and Lambert (1988) observed that persons have different desires and needs. Therefore the freedom to choose is one of man's inalienable rights. Kant's argument is that the highest purpose of human life is to will autonomously and this is possible where people are free to design their own course of action. The right to choose was inextricably linked to another important freedom—freedom of conscience. Under normal circumstances the Shona culture respected people's choice. The society appreciated people's choice because chosen things normally became sources of happiness and strength. Therefore, the Shona people usually refrained from dictating options to individuals. Their appreciation of the people's choice was evidenced by several proverbs that emphasised the importance of respecting people's choice. For example *nhaka ndeyemombe, yemunhu inozvisaiudzira* (cattle can be inherited; a human being will choose for himself) is one such proverb. The proverb reveals that a man was entitled to choose for himself without submitting to force. Furthermore, it underlines the fact that the Shona society respected the choice of people, even of woman to be inherited by man of their own choice. For instance, if a man died the Shona would not chase away his widow, but she would be given a chance to choose another man who would become her husband. The woman would choose her next husband in the presence of family members. Sometimes the woman would not choose any of the brothers of the deceased, but would choose either an aunt or her own son (interview with Mapungwana (10/06/10). Mapungwana pointed out that the widow would choose at times an aunt or her own son as a tactical move not do antagonize the wife or wives of the chosen man. At times she would do so as a ploy to kill the rivalry among the brothers over her. Nevertheless her decision was respected by all.

Conclusion

The article has made a critical analysis of a variety of Shona proverbs that were made constant reference to by the Shona people in their daily lives. The article, through the use of selected proverbs, demonstrates that unlike the commonly held view by some Eurocentric scholars that democratic ideas are Western; the Shona people of Zimbabwe had very strong inherent cultural, social and indeed political mechanisms that promoted, reinforced and preserved good governance and the observation of human rights among their kith and kin. The administration of justice was done transparently and in a majority of cases, consensus decisions, arrived at in an open court, prevailed. There was no discrimination in the administration of justice according to one's social standing in society. There was also separation of powers, rotational leadership and decentralization of authority. The rich, the poor and other privileged members of the society enjoyed the same treatment. However, just like what happens in the so-called fully fledged democracies the world over today, there were also rare occurrences of undemocratic practices and isolated human abuses among the Shona people of Zimbabwe.

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The Environment and Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA):
Interrogating the Liberation Struggle Context

Chakawa Joshua and Pfukwa Charles

Abstract

Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (Zipra) was the armed wing of Zimbabwe African People's Union (Zapu) which waged the war to liberate Zimbabwe alongside Zanla. Zipra operated from its rear bases in Zambia and has been often accused of lacking full commitment to the liberation of the country. The claim partly stems from the view that Zipra had only about 2000-3000 guerrillas operating in Zimbabwe at the end of 1979 while the rest of its 15000 combatants were in Zambia. It is also claimed that Zipra was waiting for the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (Zanla) and Rhodesian forces to wear each other out so that Zipra, would at an opportune moment, take over through conventional warfare. On the other hand, more than 13500 Zanla guerrillas were in the country by the time of ceasefire. (N Kriger: 2003, 23-24) This paper argues that the failure of Zipra to deploy larger numbers of guerrillas in the war front in Zimbabwe was largely because of environmental problems. Zipra guerrillas faced the difficult task of crossing the Zambezi River and then walking through the sparsely vegetated areas and game reserves until they reached villages deep in the country. Rhodesian forces found it relatively easy to disrupt Zipra movements. On the other hand, though Zanla forces still faced challenges in crossing over from Mozambique along the 800km border with Mozambique the problems were not as complex. This paper posits that even the Zipra Zero-Hour Plan was not going to succeed as long as the Zipra bases were in Zambia. Most studies on Zipra guerrilla warfare have not dealt with these environmental challenges.

Introduction

The paper starts by briefly reviewing some of the studies so far taken on the war of liberation in Zimbabwe. It then describes the methodology used in this work. The concept of guerrilla warfare raised a lot of questions hence the third segment dwells on it. The discussion gives an outline of the geography of the Northern Front Region 3 which was the major area of operation for Zipra in Hurungwe. The paper goes on to examine how recruits went to Zambia, how they travelled to the front for operations and finally briefly examines the Zero Hour Plan in the context of the physical environment. In conclusion the paper summarizes its position that the physical environment was great impediment to Zipra operations in the Northern Front Region 3

1.2 Some studies on the Second Chimurenga

A critique of some works on the Second Chimurenga is crucial in order to put the

reader into a generalized picture of Zimbabwe's liberation war. Martin and Johnson (1981) wrote on Zimbabwe's struggle for independence from a mainly Zanu-Pf point of view. In his opening remarks into this book, R. Mugabe, then Prime Minister, pointed out that the two authors were compelled by historical reality to trace the revolutionary process through Zanu's history. He argued that the pace of the armed struggle was set by Zanu and Zanla while credit must be given where it is merited, to Zapu and Zipra for their complementary role. Zipra comes as an appendage, an assertion that is greatly disputed by Sibanda (2005) who argues that the Zipra strategy was so advanced that had the liberation taken a little bit longer, the country could have fallen into Zapu hands. The argument by Sibanda is intended partly to dispute the assertion by Cilliers (1985) who suggest that Zapu was building conventional forces in order to thwart a possible take-over by Zanu-PF. Moorcraft and McLaughlin (2010: 151) also accuse Nkomo of keeping the bulk of his army outside the country. They go on to point out that during the peak of the war in 1978, he never deployed in Rhodesia more than 2000 guerrillas; 8000-1000 remained in bases in Zambia. There is need to look at Zipra guerrilla warfare from an environmental point of view because tossing too many to the front would have been suicidal as the river itself, the lake and the valley were well-defended by Rhodesian and South African forces.

Bhebhe (1999) focuses on both Zapu and Zanu and also addresses environmental issues. Since his work is not on Zipra *per se*, it is not conclusive in giving a clear Zipra picture of the war. One other 1992 publication by Kriger focused on the role of coercion by Zanla guerrillas in order to get peasants' support in the liberation war. Alexander (2004) discusses the oral testimonies of guerrillas during Zimbabwe's war of liberation. From her oral interviews of former Zanla and Zipra combatants, she chronicles the nightmares that guerrillas went through as they crossed the Zambezi in dinghies and she brings to light some of the problems encountered in the river itself as well as the journey across the valley. These issues were raised as a result of chance interviews with some guerrillas but do not necessarily constitute the backbone of this study.

Lyons (2004) extensively researched on female guerrillas in both Zipra and Zanla. She points out that those female guerrillas were rarely sent to the front and often treated differently from their male counterparts. However this important study does not focus much on environmental challenges Zipra guerrillas encountered. After all, female Zipra guerrillas hardly left their camps to cross over to Zimbabwe. Their experiences of the war were mainly in Zambia.

Chung (2007) who was a Zanu insider during the liberation war has also shared her experiences of the liberation. As a Zanu member who was attached to the Department of Education in Mozambique, she focuses Zanu and Zanla operations. She narrates from the perspective of an insider and her work extends far beyond

independence to Zimbabwe's present day politics. Because of her Zanu-PF orientation, she does not focus much on Zipra.

Methodology

The paper is based entirely on the qualitative method. Information was obtained through unstructured interviews with people who participated in or were resident mainly in Hurungwe district during the war of liberation. The writers also attended social gatherings in Hurungwe where people debated on the second Chimurenga. Information obtained in these interviews was analysed against published sources. Owing to the social interactions the interviewers had with the people, they had the opportunity to ask flexible, spontaneous questions and this enabled the researchers to collect as much information from the subjects as possible without provoking unnecessary suspicion.

Concept of Guerilla warfare

The concept of guerrilla warfare is not easy to define because definitions vary depending on the interests of different sectors of society as the old saying goes, one person's guerrilla may be the other's terrorist. It is essential to arrive at a working definition of this term. According to Malaquas (2007: 102), guerrilla warfare refers to military conflicts using unconventional tactics. Guerrillas are irregular forces possessing neither the weapons nor the training to engage in a conventional war to achieve political objectives. To guerrillas, war is cheap to conduct because there is the countryside which is a secure base for operations and a source of food. After dominating the countryside, they then move to surround and war down government troops. To succeed, guerrilla warfare relies heavily on people's support.

This paper argues that Zanu's decision to turn conventional had serious logistical problems. From the imposition of colonial rule and subsequent resistances Africans who resorted to conventional warfare lost dismally. For the French in North Africa, during the late century and most of the 20th century, the least troublesome foes were those whose bravery led them to suicidal attacks on French garrisons. Similarly, government fire power proves decisive if attacked by conventional insurgents. Once conventional insurgents are defeated, the war is quickly brought to an end as was the case with Jonasi Savimbi of Angola's rebel movement which was destroyed in 2002.

1.5 The Zambezi Valley

The area under discussion stretches from the Zambezi river in the north to the Hurungwe communal lands in the south. Most of the North-Western side of Hurungwe is bound by the Kariba Dam which is the largest man-made lake in Africa and was obviously a natural impediment in any military operation by the guerrillas. The Zambezi valley on average is about 80km wide before one gets to the range of

hills in Hurungwe. The vegetation in the valley and along the escarpments is unsuitable for guerrilla warfare because it has little cover. It is largely mopani woodland which becomes bare with very little foliage during the dry season. Traversing the vast, sparsely populated Zambezi Valley and escarpment where they were easily spotted by the enemy and forced guerrillas to fight battles which they had hoped to avoid was a serious challenge to Zipra guerrilla war effort (Bhebe: 1999). The thin vegetative cover across the Zambezi valley prevented Zipra from sending in too many guerrillas to the front. The valley has a few natural hideouts which makes a person highly visible from the air. Moreover guerrillas had to march for several days before getting to villages. Once in the front trained guerrillas had to contend with a risky journey back to Zambezi to collect war material or to ferry back sick or injured comrades. Lake Kariba was more threatening mainly because it was well-defended by Rhodesian forces through Operation Splinter in addition to logistical problems of attempting to cross the huge man-made lake.

During the summer season, the valley is extremely hot and is infested with malaria-carrying mosquitoes. Moreover, during the dry season the valley becomes very dry. Areas closer to the valley were sparsely populated by people during the war. The district has a number of game parks namely, Kariba, Mana Pools, Chewore, Charara, Matusadonha and Hwange. Naturally this was difficult terrain to traverse. Therefore to get to Hurungwe or Hwange, guerrillas had to cope not only with wild animals but combined Rhodesian and South African soldiers who had lined camps along the Zambezi River.

The Zambezi River itself was the first line of defense for the Rhodesians bent on keeping ZIPRA guerrillas out of Rhodesia. The river was infested with crocodiles and hippos which took a toll on crossing insurgents. The fast flowing waters increased the dangers of dinghies or inflatable canoes capsizing. The Zambezi River itself was always the first line of defense and even Rhodesian writers praised this natural barrier. Godwin and Hannock (1997) quoted one Rhodesian commentator pointing out that 'the crocodile infested Zambezi and Lake Kariba created barriers out of waterways, the Zambezi escarpment was difficult to climb and there were few natural hideouts in the open country of the Highveld which were mostly visible from the air.'

1.6 Crossing into Zambia

From one oral interviews held with a former Zipra guerrilla Muganiri, it was pointed out that he joined the Zipra ranks in 1974 while in Bulawayo. He used

public transport to get to Kezi where he, along with others formed a group of 23. After rigorous drilling, only 7 were selected to go for military training in Zambia. On the other hand Zanla recruits and guerillas simply walked over across the Mozambican border which was much more difficult to patrol effectively because of its extent.

It appears that most Zipra guerrillas who fought in the northern front came from Matabeleland and the Midlands provinces as evidenced by their fluence in Ndebele. (MaNcube, 10 March 2009). Despite their interest to train as guerrillas, it was not easy for the people who lived Hurungwe. To get over to Zambia; they had to go through the Game parks mentioned earlier. These parks were closely guarded by game warders who quickly reported any 'strangers' to the Rhodesian army. Moreover, recruits feared being attacked by wild animals as they crossed the parks. Zipra guerrillas accompanying recruits did not fire at wild animals because any shots would alert the Rhodesian forces. Before crossing the game park there was the much more demanding task of crossing the crocodile infested Zambezi River. From the interviews it appears that many recruits from Hurungwe either deserted on the journey to Zambia or simply found their way back after attacks by the Rhodesian army before they reached Zambezi river. The rates of desertion and problems in recruitment in Zipra need further research. Guerrillas seldom used the Kariba dam as a route for it was much more threatening. Some crossed in the area below the Kariba Dam or between the dam and Victoria Falls after spending several days trying to ensure that there were no enemy movements in the area. A former Zipra guerrilla, Muganiri, revealed that Rhodesian forces usually waited until the dinghy was in the middle of the river before attacking. The canoe would capsize with disastrous consequences with the guerrillas drowning or falling prey to crocodiles.

For recruits, the Zambezi River was probably the greatest impediment in their efforts to join the struggle. When addressing rural population, Rhodesian forces always pointed out with great emphasis that one of three things would happen to anyone who dared to join Zipra. Either he would be shot while trying to cross or he would be swept away by the Zambezi or he would be devoured by wild animals. The Rhodesians showed films of guerrillas being mauled to death by vicious wild animals in order to deter them. One interviewee (Ngwarai Matsiga) failed to go to Zambia when his group was intercepted by the Rhodesian forces in the Kariba National Park. Several recruits died and in the melee he escaped and sneaked back home and then to look for a job in Salisbury.

Besides attacking the recruits Rhodesians infiltrated guerrilla groups using the Selous Scouts. This was a notorious commando unit within Rhodesian Army whose elements would join up with the real Zipra guerrillas or with recruits (Ellert:1993). An ex-Selous Scout, Danger, revealed in an interview with one of the authors incidents in which he had not only led recruits into traps but even

trained guerrillas. Such infiltrators sometimes strategically escaped back to the Rhodesian ranks thus demoralizing recruits and guerrillas alike. Some recruits went via Botswana and would only get to Zambia if they successfully evaded Botswana Police, an equally difficult task. According to one interviewee the police were often suspicious of every Zimbabwean young man.

1.7 Getting to the Front

Trained guerrillas coming to the war front encountered a number of environmental problems. By the ceasefire of December 1979, Zipra had not succeeded in overcoming most of these. Although the Zipra leadership still believes that if their Zero-Hour-Plan had been implemented they would have won the war, this seems unlikely. Even in 1979 the Zipra war machine was still far from successfully overcoming environmental problems.

Raeburn (1981: 86) and Bhebe (1999: 22) among others observe that geographical problems did much to limit Zapu guerrilla incursions of 1967 and 1968. Among the points they raise were a sparsely populated and inhospitable game park, inadequate maps and lack of food and water, failure to carry out enough reconnaissance, recklessness and fighting pitched battles they had wished to avoid in the Wankie Game reserve. Similarly, the 1968 Sipolilo campaign failed because the guerrillas were too numerous to remain undetected, they had poor maps, lack of food and absence of local supporters. Even though Zipra guerrillas had successfully crossed Zambezi at this early stage, getting to the people in Hurungwe remained a very serious challenge. After these early setbacks, it was to be some 3 years later in 1971 that Zipra would re-launch the struggle but again without effective strategies to overcome the physical barriers such as the Zambezi.

Sometimes guerrillas relied on the local Tonga population to cross the Zambezi. The role of these people in the liberation struggle of Zimbabwe has not been fully studied. The Tonga people have lived along the Zambezi for many centuries and know the river very well. Like the rest of the communal populace they had a lot of grievances against the Rhodesian government especially displacing them from the Zambezi valley during the construction of the Kariba dam in the late 1950s. According to Raeburn(1981, 89) , a Tonga canoe was the most efficient form of transport across the powerful Zambezi rapids, but it required great skill to keep the craft upright. Zipra guerrillas never managed to get the full support of the Tonga so they could not get their critical assistance to cross the Zambezi. The guerrillas never really convinced the local population that they were fighting a national struggle.

Other ways to cross the front were attempted without much success. In 1970, Joseph Mpofu' s group of 10 heavily armed combatants crossed using a rope but

not before exchanging fire with a patrol boat. They marched through Matetsi forest narrowly escaping 2 army patrols. They soon ran into several problems, for instance their radio jammed due to inter-patrol communication. (Raeburn:1981, 92-105). Reconnaissance had not been properly carried out and the local contacts turned out to be informers. Consequently a number of guerrillas deserted increasing the danger of those who remained.

In a bid to avoid attacks by wild animals, guerrillas sometimes smeared their bodies with dung. That way they could pass wild animals downwind without detection. However, they had to put up with swarms of flies attracted by the dung. (Raeburn: 1981, 106). In addition, the continuous shortage of food supplies sometimes compelled guerrillas to shoot wild animals for meat which was discouraged. Any gunshot naturally attracted the game wardens and the Rhodesian forces who would track them down and firefights were sure to follow. The guerrilla security was compromised by members of the Selous Scouts who often infiltrated the guerrilla ranks. An interviewee (Danger) who was a fully trained member of the Rhodesian forces once pretended to be a victim of Rhodesian brutality went on to join Zipra guerrillas sometime in 1977. He was taken to Zambia for training. During the last phase of his training, his 'commitment' and efficiency were found outstanding. As a result, he was deployed to the front in charge of more than hundred guerrillas. Throughout the journey from Zambia, across Zambezi and the game parks, the group encountered no attacks again proving that he was an efficient commander. The real reason however, was that his wrist watch was a TR48 communication radio which he used to exchange information with Rhodesian forces not to attack until an opportune moment. When he finally signaled Thornhill airbase, a number of Zipra guerrillas were killed while cleaning their weapons. He was picked up by a helicopter for a 14-day off before being sent to the Zambezi as a guerrilla commander who had miraculously escaped a ferocious attack. Guerrillas were ultimately not sure of whom to trust in their operations.

According to Alexander and .McGregor, (2004, 92) what greeted new guerrillas was the expanse of the great Zambezi River which was the first physical barrier. At almost all crossing points, there were herds of hippopotamus which terrified many fighters especially those who had never seen one before. In addition, there were crocodiles to contend with. There is no doubt that the size of the dingies Zambezi limited the number of guerrillas who could be crossed over at one time. Guerrillas used to sing about the Zambezi as if it were easy to cross:

There is only one river to freedom
Zambezi, One River
One river to freedom
We shall carry our guns and hand grenades (p, 92).

This was a clear acknowledgement of the Zambezi as a barrier. Deep down in their hearts, guerrillas were aware of the dangers of crossing the Zambezi River and traversing the valley.

1.8 Zero Hour Plan

Zapu thinking was that guerrilla warfare alone was not enough to enable the party to win the war. According to Dabengwa (1995), ZIPRA was increasingly thinking in terms of seizing power by conventional means because they were of the opinion that guerrilla warfare creates a condition for a conventional force to settle the question. Angola's independence according to this version had almost been foiled because she did not have a conventional army to defend her independence when the Portuguese left in 1974. Therefore, ZIPRA had built a large conventional force by 1979.

The plan was to launch an offensive on several fronts. It was to take place during the rainy season and the period selected was the summer of 1979-80. Attacks were to be launched simultaneously from several fronts were to be undertaken by the ZIPRA conventional forces, guerrillas already present in the country and locally trained people. According to Sibanda (2005), five conventional battalions were to establish two bridgeheads: one near Victoria Falls and the second in Chirundu. This would be followed by the infantry and armored vehicles. These forces would seize the airfields at Kariba and Wankie. More conventional troops would then be airlifted from Zambia into the area by Zipra air force based in Angola. Russian Mig fighter bombers manned by Zipra pilots were to provide air support for the advancing forces. Behind enemy lines in the towns and cities, commando units, guerrilla units and specialized intelligence were to simultaneously launch a wave of ambushes and attacks.

On the Northern front, Zipra guerrillas were to attack Karoi and Chinhoyi. In the Midlands, they were to attack Gokwe, Kwekwe and Chegutu, While another brigade was to assault Gweru. Brigades in Tsholotsho would attack Bulawayo. In the Southern front troops would advance into Plumtree, Gwanda and Beitbridge. Strategic sites were to be attacked and captured. All this was to be achieved with the assistance of local militias who were to be armed. About 50 000 AKS and SKS rifles and ammunition were to be given to civilians for the operation. Zipra also claimed that they had engineers' corps who would build pontoons to use in crossing rivers without relying on existing bridgeheads.

However there were several physical constraints. In the first place it not clear how the engineering units were going to cross the Zambezi River. In addition, when Rhodesian forces discovered the plan, they attacked deep into Zambia

destroying all bridges that would otherwise have been used for the offensive. In addition, the plan had the danger that it was going to attract South Africa forces because Zipra and Umkhonto we Sizwe, the armed wing of the ANC cooperated closely. Zipra would not stand the combined force given that South Africa was bent on keeping ANC guerrillas north of the Zambezi so that she would continue to enjoy relative peace. The Zambian government was bearing the brunt of Rhodesian attacks and were putting pressure on Zapu and Zipra to reach agreement at the ongoing Lancaster House talks.

There were several other constraints. The plan assumed Zipra was the only liberation movement and the plan failed to take into account the presence of a large Zanla guerrilla force in eastern and central parts of Zimbabwe. Thus concentrating on Zipra might as well have tilted the war in favor of Zanla. Moreover, if the Zero Hour Plan failed and the conventional force were defeated Zipra would have found it difficult to re-organize a guerrilla war. The example of Savimbi in Angola offers a good example. He had re-organized his forces into a conventional force but when he was defeated by government forces, he found it difficult to revert back into guerrilla tactics. Two years later 2002, he was hunted down and killed down. ZIPRA could as well have misjudged Rhodesian forces that, despite their limited numbers and resources, were a very efficient force. Worse still the local population particularly in the Northern front Region 3 could possibly have 'sold out' as they were already beginning to support Zanu and Zanla.

It was in the interest of South Africa to ensure that ANC guerrillas were at the Zambezi Rhodesians and the South African army therefore worked together along the Zambezi pass to contain the incursions by the two guerrilla armies. A conventional invasion by Zipra was obviously going to attract the full force of the South African army because the Zipra success would have moved the frontier of ANCs struggle to the Limpopo. With Zambezi remaining a natural barrier the conventional option was hardly going to succeed. Moreover, Zambia had already suffered enough from too many attacks from Rhodesia all in the name of Zimbabwe's liberation.

1.9 Conclusion

The failure by Zapu to take up the Mozambican rear base in the early 1970s radically weakened its position. Zanu seized the opportunity and became stronger because its base from Mozambique allowed it to send in as many guerrillas as possible. In addition, Zipra did not fully integrate with communities it operated in so as to secure their full support in the way Zanla guerrillas did. That the Zambezi was a great natural impediment was well known to Rhodesians. These natural barriers may have been exaggerated but the fact remains that operating from Zambia posed serious challenges for Zipra. Joshua Nkomo himself

admitted that Zambia was a difficult base from which to operate by highlighting that:

the frontier along a valley of the Zambezi River swelled from the early 1960s onwards by the creation of Lake Kariba behind its huge dam. The river valley was first line of defense for the Rhodesians. Then south of the river lie ravines and high bare hill, then a wide expanse of bare bush with the semi-desert set in a maze of landmines (2001, 166).

Journeys to collect war material were tough amidst fierce attacks from Rhodesian forces. According to J. Nkomo, it took 30 days to get to the supply bases and another 30 days back to the front. (p,166). Moreover, transporting heavy weapons and equipment across the river and the valley in the face of Rhodesian air cover was near suicidal. Coupled with the above, the military weakness of Zambia meant that Rhodesian forces could enter Zambia and attack Zipra bases at will. Though determined to completely take over through the barrel of the gun, Zipra had insurmountable environmental challenges to overcome.

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When one has to convey in a Language that is one's own, the Spirit that is one's own: What Happens?

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Abstract

Rao (1963) has this to say, "The telling has not been easy. One has to convey in a language that is not one's own the spirit that is one's own". One wonders if the same conclusion is reached when African students are called upon to express their feelings, thoughts and viewpoints, in an examination, using a foreign language. In the Department of African Languages and Culture of the Midlands State University in Zimbabwe, students are expected to answer examination questions in English and not in indigenous Zimbabwean languages. In other words these students are expected "to convey in a language that is not [their] own the spirit that is [their] own". The questions which this paper raises and then grapples with are: What sort of strategies do these students apply to enable

English to carry their thoughts, feelings and viewpoints which in most cases are originally framed in indigenous Zimbabwean languages? How effective are those strategies in making English a medium of students' feelings, thoughts and viewpoints in an examination? Is Zimbabwe moving towards "vernacularization" and/or "relexification" of English in a way which will lead to the birth of Zimbabwean "Nation Language"? In order to meaningfully foreground these and other questions which may arise during research, this paper uses examination scripts of some students in the Department of African Languages and Culture as primary sources of data and critical works on "New Englishes" from Africa and the Third-World as secondary sources. The ultimate goal of the paper is to come to some conclusion on how much students can manage to "Zimbabweanize" English in an examination in order to force it to carry their feelings, thoughts and ideas.

Introduction

Rao (1963) in Aschcroft et al (1995: 296) has this to say,

The telling has not been easy. One has to convey in a language which is not one's own the spirit which is one's own. One has to convey the various shades and omissions of a certain thought movement that looks maltreated in the alien language.

With these words, Rao asserts that it is a challenge to an individual to correctly express his/her thoughts, feelings, ideas and philosophy of life in a foreign language; in a language which is not his/her mother tongue. In other words he asserts that, that cultural distance which exists between one's mother tongue and a foreign language presents challenges to every writer since he/she has to make sure his/her ideas, which of course will be culture bound, are conveyed in a language which developed within the confines of foreign histories and cultures. Challenges of the nature in question are faced by students of African languages and culture of the Midlands State University, who study the Shona novel. These students are in most cases Shona mother tongue speakers and it is always the case that the novels which they study are written in Shona. Be that as it may, the Department of African Languages and Culture prescribes that these students should use English to analyse the novels in lectures and when they write assignment and examination essays. There is no provision whatsoever for these students to answer examination essay questions in Shona.

It is noteworthy that there is a great cultural distance between Shona, which is an indigenous Zimbabwean language and English which is the colonial language in

Zimbabwe. As such, what it means is, during examination students of the Shona novel who in most cases are neither mother tongue nor native speakers of English will be battling to achieve two major tasks. On one hand, these students will be struggling to come up with critical views and opinions which will be needed to answer the examination questions. On the other hand, the students will be grappling with the cultural, morpho-syntactic and phonological distances which exist between Shona and English. They will have to grapple with the distances in order to harness English for the purpose of putting their views, which are in most cases formulated in Shona, into black and white.

This paper foregrounds those challenges students of the Shona novel face during examination when they are asked to analyse Shona novels in English: when they are required to express their views which are originally formed in Shona using the vehicle of English. The paper will also thrive to expose and evaluate strategies, which students develop during examination for the purpose of forcing English to carry and transmit the burden of their views on the Shona novel in an examination setting. That process, which students undergo, of forcing English to carry and transmit views which are originally formulated in Shona, is what this paper terms Shonalization of English. The same process involves to some extent what can be termed “Englishization” of Shona language. The two processes of Shonalizing English and Englishizing Shona do at times go hand in hand. That happens because when students of Shona literature use English to carry the weight of their feelings, experiences and ideas, which in most cases are formed in Shona, they grossly indigenize English (Shonalization) and partly Westernise Shona (Englishization). Shonalization of English is a form of “vernacularization” of English. The type of “vernacularization” here referred to involves

...unloading a linguistic item [whether Shona or English] from its traditional cultural and emotional connotations by avoiding its use and choosing an item from another code. The borrowed item has referential but no cultural connotations in the context./ (Kachiru in Aschcroft et al 1995: 292).

Although Kachiru believes “vernacularized” lexical items have only “referential” and not “cultural” connotations in their contexts of use, this paper will demonstrate that those items borrowed during Shonalization of English do at times convey cultural connotations in addition to referential connotations in some contexts of their use. Shonalization and/or “vernacularization” of English by students of Shona literature during examination, serves to neutralize

or simply to reduce “the incompatibility of local thought and English words, English syntax and English style” / (New in Aschcroft et al 1995: 303). It also involves what Aschcroft et al (1989) have called “abrogation” and “appropriation” of English. It also involves what Brathwaite has termed “submergence of foreign languages in indigenous African languages”. Furthermore, it involves the process of “relexification” as it is understood and interpreted by Zabus (1991). Above all it involves code-switching and other related strategies.

On one hand, “abrogation” is “a refusal of the categories of imperial culture, its aesthetic, its illusory standard of normative or correct usage, and its assumption of a traditional or fixed meaning inscribed in the words” / (Aschcroft et al Ibid: 38). On the other hand, “appropriation” is,

the process by which the language is taken and made to bear the burden of one’s own cultural experience or as Raja Rao puts it, to convey in a language which is one’s own the spirit which is one’s own. / (Aschcroft et al Ibid: 38-39).

The bipolar processes of “abrogation” and “appropriation” are unnoticeably in use when students of Shona literature answer examinations questions in English. During that Shonalization of English, “abrogation” becomes the process of offloading English lexical items of the English worldview which they naturally carry while “appropriation” becomes the process by which those lexical items which are offloaded of an English worldview become loaded with a world outlook and a philosophy which is Shona. On the other hand, during the Englisization of Shona, “abrogation” becomes the exercise of offloading Shona lexical items of a world outlook which is Shona while “appropriation” will be the business of loading those lexical items which would be offloaded of the Shona world outlook with an outlook which is English. Aschcroft et al (Ibid) assert that the two processes of “abrogation” and “appropriation” help to reduce Standard English (English) to a non-standard form of English (english).

Submergence during Shonalization of English happens because while the student will be thriving to express himself/herself, in English “that English [will] nonetheless still [be] influenced by the underground language (Shona)…” / (Brathwaite in Aschcroft et al 1995: 310). During its submergence and/or Shonalization, English is,

…constantly transforming itself into [a] new form. It [is] moving

from a purely British (Standard) form to a form which [is British] but which [is] adapted to the new [Zimbabwean] environment and adapted to the cultural imperative of the [Shona language]./
(Ibid).

Zabus (Ibid: 314) says, “I shall thus here redefine relexification as the making of a new register of communication out of the alien lexicon...” That sort of exercise (relexification) is a strategy, which students of Shona literature use during examination, when they seek to Shonalize English in order to force it to convey their views and ideas which are originally formed in Shona. Relexification of the type Zabus refers to is “tied to the notions of “approximation”. It also encompasses notions of “transposition”, “paraphrase”, “translation”, “transliteration” and “transmutation” / (Ibid: 316). It is noteworthy that “relexification”, which enforces Shonalization of English, leads to a

new register of communication, which is neither the European target language (English) nor the indigenous source language (Shona), [which] functions as an “inter-language” or as a third register/ (Ibid: 315).

It is noteworthy that,

unlike interpretive translation or the “lesser” activity of transcoding, which both take place between two texts the original and the translated versions, [Shonalization of English], is characterized by the absence of an original. It therefore does not operate from the language of one text to the other but from one language to the other within the same text./ (Ibid:317).

What happens is, during Shonalization of English by students of Shona literature, the Source Text (ST) is covert. In fact, the Source Text remains in scope. It exists in the students’ minds when the students formulate views (answers to examination questions) using Shona. The essays (answers to the examination questions), which appear in English in the examination answer booklets, are the overt Target Texts (TTs). As such, Shona becomes the covert Source Language (SL) and English the Target Language (TL) during the whole

process of the Shonalization of English. The other marked difference between Shonalization of English of the type to be discussed in this paper and interpretive translation is that, the translator “...must respect the features of the receptor language and exploit the potentialities of the language to the greatest possible extent” in order to aid it to carry the message of the Source Text./ (Nada and Taber 1982: 4). Be that as it may, the “Shonalizer” is not particularly obliged to respect features of the receptor language (English). He/she can smash them at will in order to force that receptor language to convey his/her own feelings, experiences which are embedded in his/her cultural worldview. The Shonalizer will be eager to force an “alien” language to carry the weight of his/her Zimbabwean and African experiences. As a result of his having no particular respect for the features of Standard English, he/she ends up creating a “new” language, which Brathwaite in Aschcroft et al (1995: 311) has called “Nation Language”. That nation language is neither English nor Shona in its stylistic and grammatical features. On one hand, it is both Shona and English. On the other hand it is not both. It is just an “inter-language” or a form of a third language.

Code-switching is one other strategy, which students of Shona literature employ in order to Shonalize English in an examination for the purpose of forcing it to convey their views, which are originally formulated using Shona.. In this paper, code-switching refers to “The use of lexical items or phrases from one code in the stream of discourse of another” / (Kachiru Ibid: 292). What it means is, in this paper code-switching implies use of Shona lexical items and phrases in the stream of an English discourse. This paper will discuss the above given and some other strategies which students use to Shonalize English during examination. The paper will also grapple with the reasons why students opt to use those options they resort to when they Shonalize English in an examination.

Selection of examination scripts for use

The present researcher is a lecturer in the Department of African Languages and Culture of the Midlands State University. Midlands State University is one of the ten state universities in the Republic of Zimbabwe. The researcher offers a literature module namely Trends In Contemporary African Novel. The Department expects the lecturer to prescribe Shona novels for study every semester. It also prescribes that English is to be used as the medium of instruction during lectures on Shona novels. Furthermore, the Department prescribes that all the students, who study the Shona novel, have to write coursework and examination essays in English.

The semester which started in January 2009 ended with an examination in early April of the same year. Fifty-six candidates set the examination on Trends in Contemporary African Novel. The presenter was both lecturer and examiner of those

fifty-six students. As both lecturer and examiner of those students, he had the chance to go through all the fifty-six examination scripts during the assessment exercise. He then chose fifteen of them for research purpose. The method of sampling the fifteen scripts was both random and purposeful. During his assessment of the fifty-six scripts, the researcher identified and took note of those cases of the Shonalization of English. He marked cases of Shonalization with the abbreviation NB (Note Well). After he had finished assessing all the fifty-six scripts, he then went through each script identifying the NB marks. Nearly all the fifty-six scripts had cases of Shonalization of English. As such, they qualified for use in this research. However, the researcher selected only those scripts which supplied him with a novel technique(s) of Shonalizing English. Novelty was judged on two levels. On one hand, a technique(s) was considered novel if the researcher would not have met and selected it for analysis in some other scripts. On the other hand, a technique which would have been met and selected for analysis in one script was in some cases considered novel when the researcher met it in other scripts. That became the case if there was a candidate(s) who would have employed it in ways which helped the researcher to either make or elaborate on claims and conclusions he would have made when he met and analysed the technique for the first time as it was used in some scripts.

That method made it possible for all the fifty-six scripts to have an opportunity of being selected for use in this study. However using this sampling method which was both purposeful and random the researcher sampled fifteen examination scripts for use in this study. In order to enhance easy access to and identification of each of the fifteen scripts during analysis the researcher numbered the scripts Candidate number 1 (one) up to Candidate number 15 (fifteen). As such the scripts are referred to in this paper using numbers 1 (one) to number 15 (fifteen).

Shonalization of English in an Examination

Students of Shona literature who study the Shona novel in most cases formulate and map their ideas and feelings in Shona and then convey them in English. That exercise is quite taxing to the students. In some instances, these students have to grapple with a general overlap of Shona locative prefixes and English prepositions in their endeavour to force English carry their views and ideas.

Shona locative Prefixes versus English Prepositions

Shona has three basic locative prefixes. The prefixes are Class 16 pa- Class 17 ku-/kw- and Class 18 mu-. Class 16 pa- is equivalent to “on”, “by”, “at”, “near” and “nearby” in English eg. Ari parwizi is translatable to “He is at the river”, “He is standing by the river”, “He is near/nearby the river”. Ari pamadziro can be translated to “She is on the wall”, “She is standing near/nearby the wall”, “She is standing by the wall” in English. Class 17 prefix ku-/kw- is equivalent to “to”, “towards” “at” and to “from”.

“Vari kuchikoro is “They are at school”. Vari kunda kuchikoro is translatable to, “They are going to school and “They are walking or moving towards school” Kubva nhasi is translatable to “from today”. Generally speaking, Class 18 mu- is in, into inside. However it can be on. Mu- as on is a deviant case in Shona. As such it causes a lot of Shonalization of English. Ari mumba is “He/she is in or inside the house”. Ari kupinda mumba is, “He/she is going into the house”. Ari munzira is “He/she is on the way”.

What it means is, there is a one-to-many relationship between Shona locative prefixes and English prepositions. The opposite is true of English. There is a many-to-one relationship between English prepositions and Shona locative prefixes. The one-to-many relationships results from the one to many equivalents which exist between Shona and English. As a result of the one-to-many relationships (one-to-many equivalents) and the many-to-one relationships (many to-one-equivalents) which exist between Shona, which is the covert Source Language and English, which is the overt Target Language when students of Shona literature answer examination questions, there are apt to be problems and challenges to the candidate, who generates his/her views in Shona and seeks to convey them in English. Those problems and challenges arise since Shona locative prefixes overlap with those English prepositions which supply them with equivalents. Since each Shona locative prefix supplies equivalents to a number of English prepositions, what it means is, choice of prepositions to use when one moves from Shona to English rests on the context of use of both the Shona locative prefixes and English prepositions. While students of Shona expression know and are able to disseminate contexts when prefixes pa- ku-/kw- and mu- apply when they seek to locate different aspects and things, they at times fail to decipher contexts when pa- is “at”, when pa- is “by”, when it is “near” and “nearby” and when it is “on” in English during literary analysis. Since there is a one to many relationships (one-to-many equivalents) between Shona locative prefixes and English prepositions what it means is successful translation rests on contextual conditioning. In other words, successful translation calls upon the translator to be able to decipher both the different contexts of use of the Shona locative prefix such as pa- and the different contexts of use of those prepositions that supply equivalents to that pa- in English.

The student of Shona literature, who is not a mother-tongue or native speaker of English, fails to decipher all the contexts of use for those English prepositions which supply equivalents to a locative prefix such as pa- despite that he/she knows all the contexts of use in which pa- applies in Shona. To that student, who is more of a “Shonaliser” of English than a translator of the Shona Source Text to English, what matters is not writing his/her views in Standard English. Instead, what matters to him/her most is forcing English prepositions to occupy the contexts of use of the particular Shona locative prefix which he/she selects

for use. In that way the student in question uses the Shona locative prefix as a mechanism of Shonalizing English prepositions so as to allow them to occupy the context of use of the prefix. During translation of a text from Shona to English as opposed to the process of Shonalizing English, what matters most to the translator is achieving of the contextual conditioning of the lexical items of the Target Language (English) which supply equivalents to lexical items in the Source Language. In that way the translated version of the Source Text, remains grammatical and sensible in the Target Language. However, during Shonalization of English, it is what one can term reverse or negative contextual conditioning of the lexical items of the Target Language which supply equivalents to lexical items of the Source Language which is almost always, which will be at work. This happens when the contextual conditioning of lexical items of the Source Language determine choice of equivalent lexical items in the target Language. When this is done, the ultimate result is an ungrammatical sentence which at times sounds nonsensical to the target reader. However, it is that ungrammatical English sentence which has the potential to transmit Shona thought and sensibilities better than a grammatical (Standard) English sentence. At this point, it is worthy to demonstrate with examples from students' examination scripts the impact of the overlap of Shona locative prefixes and English prepositions on the English Target Text.

Candidate 8 wrote, "...when he is trying to remove the tape-recorder in his office..." The candidate is talking about the main character Sajeni Chimedza in the detective novel *Sajeni Chimedza*. Chimedza suffers an electric shock when he tries to remove a tape recorder which is timely set in his office by his enemies. In the given sentence, "in" and "from" overlap as potential equivalents to mu-. That sort of overlap indicates that the sentence was originally framed in Shona before it was translated into English. In Shona, the sentence will be like this, "...paaida kuedza kubvisa chisembure muhoffice make..." In English, one does not "remove something in..." instead he/she "removes something from..." Be that as it may, in Shona, one can "remove in (mu-)..." What then it means is, in the given example, "from" is Shonalized by mu- to become "in". Candidate 4 overlaps ku- (at) and ku- (to) when she says, "...which had taken place to Mbambara's field". Mbambara is a character in the novel *Rakava Buno Risifemberi*. Mbambara organizes a beer-work party (nhimbe) at his fields. In Standard English the sentence should be, "...which had taken place at Mbambara's field". The candidate's sentence, which is constructed with the use of the preposition "to" instead of "at", is ungrammatical. However, the same sentence becomes totally grammatical the moment it is translated from English to Shona. When it is translated from English to Shona the sentence becomes, "...yakanga yaitika kumunda kwaMbambara". The overlap of ku- (at) and ku- (to) leads to the Shonalization of English for the purpose of forcing English to carry and transmit a spirit which is formed in Shona. However, that overlap contributes to a marked dichotomy between the specific meaning (SL meaning) and the generic

meaning (TL meaning) to some pronounced degree.

Candidate 7 misconstrued mu- (on) and mu- (in) when he moves from the Source Language (Shona) to the Target Language (English) during the examination. The candidate wrote, “In his way to Nyanzira village, Gorerenhamo seeks help from the ancestral spirits”. In Shona, the sentence will be, “Ari munzira kuenda kwaNyanzira, Gorerenhamo anotsvaga rubatsiro kuvadzimu”. Gorerenhamo is a character in the novel *Rakava Buno Risifemberi*. He runs away with his family from his birth place when he is about to be killed for the reason that his wife has given birth to triplets. Mu- (in) is preferred to mu- and/or pa- (on) in the given sentence. The Shona translation is both grammatical and sensible. However the English sentence is ungrammatical. nzira, (a path or way) is considered to have an “inside” in Shona. As such, *nzira* is prefixed by mu- (in) for it to become locative mu-nzira (in the way). In English the lexical item “way” is accompanied by the preposition “on” and not “in”. As a matter of fact, the above sentence should read, “On his way to Nyanzira village Gorerenhamo...” And not “In his way to Nyanzira village Gorerenhamo...”. In order for the candidate to produce a grammatical sentence, he should have opted for pa- (on) rather than mu- (in) in his original Shona sentence. The original Shona version of the sentence, which is translatable to (On his way To Nyanzira village...” should have been “Ari panzira kuenda kwaNyanzira, Gorerenhamo...”. To say “Ari panzira...” is acceptable in Shona. However “Ari munzira...” is more preferable to “Ari panzira...” in this particular circumstance and context of use. Overlap of this nature “abrogates” English and appropriates it in a way which helped the student to come up with a non-standard of English (english) for the sole purpose of making sure he expressed his views, which were originally formulated in Shona.

Overlaps of this nature, which lead to the Shonalization of English, are also common when students use adverbial inflections in sentences, which are originally formed in Shona and then translated into English, during examination.

Shona Adverbial Inflections Versus English Prepositions

Shona has adverbial inflections na- and its allomorphs ne- and no- and sa- and its allomorphs se- and so-. Overlaps between Shona adverbial inflections and English prepositions and conjunctives are common when students use adverbial inflections na- and its allomorphs and not sa- and its allomorphs in sentences which are later translated from Shona to English. Na- and its allomorphs supply lexical equivalents to more than one English lexical item. In other words, na- ne- no- command a one-to-many relationship (one-to-many equivalents) in relation to English lexical items. On the other hand, English prepositions and conjunctives command a many-to-one relationship (many-to-one equivalents) with Shona adverbial inflections. Agentive na- is “by” in English. For instance *atumwa nababa* (He has been sent by father). Na-, which marks association in

Shona, is “with” in English. For instance John auya naPeter (John has come with Peter). Conjunctive na- is “and” in English. For instance, John naPeter vasvika pamba (John and Peter arrived at home). Furthermore, na- supplies equivalents to “like”. For instance John akafanana nababa vake (John is like his father). The allomorphs ne- and no- are “with” when they denote instrumentality. For instance Peter akabaiwa nepfumo/nopfumo nababa vake (Peter was stabbed with a spear by his father). Ne- and no- are “by” when they apply to non-human semantic agents in sentences. For instance akarumwa nenyoka (he was bitten by a snake). What it means is na- supply equivalents to four English prepositions namely “by”, “with”, “and”, “like”. Ne- and no- are equivalent “by” and “with”. Since na- and its allomorphs supply equivalents to more than one English lexical item, what it means is students of Shona literature, who formulate ideas in Shona first and then translate them from Shona to English, find it difficult in some instances to identify when they should translate na- to “by” and not to “and”, to “with” and to “like”. They also confuse ne-/no- (with) and ne-/no- (by) when they move from Shona to English during literary criticism.

Candidate 12 wrote “Rudo should be married with a Christian (Rudo anofanirwa kuroorwa nemukiristu). In the sentence, associative ne- (with) is preferred to agentive ne- (by). Once associative ne- (with) is preferred to agentive ne- (by), the sentence becomes ungrammatical in English although it is grammatically correct and culturally acceptable when it is translated from English to Shona. In other words, the candidate used ne- to abrogate “with” of its associative function in English and appropriates it to mark a semantic agent in the sentence. Probably, it is important to take note of the Shona philosophy of marriage in order to clarify why the candidate Shonalized English through preferring ne- (with) to ne- (by) in that particular sentence.

In Shona culture, it is a man who marries a woman, (Murume ndiye anoroora mukadzi). In that culture, a woman does not marry a man (mukadzi haaroori murume). As such, in Shona marriage, the man occupies the position of subject and agent in marriage while the woman occupies that of object. The ne-, which is translated by the student to “with”, should be translated to agentive ne- (by). However, the fact that ne- commands a one-to-many relationship in English seems to have led the candidate to create a non-standard English sentence since she seemed to have used contextual conditioning of the Shona language and not of the English language to determine which ne- between ne- (by) and ne- (with) should appear in the sentence. As a result of the candidate’s use of the Source Language’s (Shona) contextual conditioning of lexical items, she ended up Shonalizing ne- (by) to ne- (with) In that way the candidate forced English to carry and transmit her Shona “spirit”.

Candidate 11 wrote, “Mbambara goes to Bvunzawabaya to exchange Yeukai with

food” (Mbambara anoenda kuna Bvunzawabaya kundochinja Yeukai nechikafu). That sentence is grammatically incorrect in English. However, if it is translated from English to Shona it becomes grammatically acceptable. If the sentence is to be grammatically correct in its English version, it should appear like this, “Mbambara goes to Bvunzawabaya to exchange Yeukai for food” and not “to exchange Yeukai with food”. Shona *ne-* supplies equivalents to both “with” and “for”. However, Candidate 11, who did not bother to consider the fact that *ne-* supplies equivalents to both “with” and “for”, opted to translate *ne-* to “with” and not to “for” and the result was that the sentence became ungrammatical. Be that as it may, it is in its ungrammatical form, that the English sentence captures her real Shona feelings, ideas and worldview. What it seems is, the ungrammatical sentence availed some form of “vernacularization” which helped the candidate to correctly capture in English the proceedings of the Shona custom of *kuzvarira* (child pledging). Child pledging is practiced in Shona culture in times of drought and famine. When families are hard hit by drought and famine, Shona tradition allows those families to go ahead and exchange girl children for food.

Candidate 1 wrote this sentence, “During the liberation struggle, blacks were illtreated with Giriki” (Munguva dzehondo, vatema vaishungurudzwa naGiriki). Giriki is the semantic agent in a sentence which demonstrates object fronting. He is the semantic agent since he is the one who enforces action. If the candidate had to produce her ideas in Standard English she should have opted for *ne-* (by) rather than for *ne-* (with) in order for her to distinguish Giriki as the semantic agent in a sentence where there is object fronting. *Ne-* (with) denotes instrumentality. It is different from *ne-* (by) which denotes agentive. In the sentence, *ne-* (with) reduces Giriki to an instrument of action, when he in actual fact, is an agent of the action. The fact that Giriki is a human being disqualifies him totally from becoming a potential instrument of ill-treatment. Giriki remains the agent of action despite that he occupies the position of a syntactic object while “blacks”, who are the objects of ill-treatment, occupy the position of a syntactic subject. All what it means is, when one conveys in a language which is not one’s own the spirit which is one’s own, he/she is apt to face the problem of choosing lexical items in the overt Target Language (English) with the potential of supplying equivalents to particular terms found in his/her language, which will be serving as the covert Source Language. The problem is heightened when terms in the Source Language command a one-to-many relationship with terms in the Target Language and when terms in the Target Language enforce a many-to-one relationship with terms in the Source Language.

Use of Doubles and other Forms of Repetition

One interesting aspect with reference to the Shonalization of English during examination is the candidates’ use of doubles and other forms of repetition. Those doubles and repetitions are common during Shonalization of English for the

purpose of aiding it to convey views and ideas which are originally formed in Shona. Candidate 12 wrote “Sajeni Chimedza goes to Mayambo Piggeries to investigate about the brewing of the brandy”. The candidate makes an unnecessary repetition when he says “investigate about”. In Standard English, the lexical item “about” is left out in that type of a sentence. The sentence should read, “Sajeni Chimedza goes to Mayambo Piggeries to investigate the brewing of the brandy”. However, although that sentence is ungrammatical once it is translated from English to Shona, with the double lexical items well catered for, the sentence will be quite grammatical. Its Shona version is, “Sajeni Chimedza anoenda kuMayambo Piggeries kundotsvagurudza nezvokubikwa kwedoro”. Candidate 4 wrote, “This essay is going to discuss about the influence of afrocentric ideas on Matsikiti’s social vision”. Discuss means “talk about”. When the candidate says “discuss about”, it is like the candidate is saying “This essay is going to talk about about ...” The above given sentence with its “doubles” is translatable to “Chinyorwa chino chichataura nezvekubatsirwa kunoita Matsikiti nepfungwa dzechiAfrica.” The “about” in the given two English sentences will supply equivalents to Shona ne-. in the given Shona translations. That ne- is underlined in both translations.

What it means is, use of doubles because a technique which students employed to make sure all lexical items in the original Shona sentences, which they would have formulated in their minds, do have equivalents in the English Target Text. In that way, use of repetition becomes a technique which helps the students to submerge English syntactic structure into the structure of Shona language. As such, Shonalization of English involves not mere translation but transposition of Shona syntactic structure to English and vice versa. To transpose is, “...to alter [something] to a different form while keeping its essential features” (Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary 1987: 1557). The English syntactic structure is deformed by the student when he used doubles in order for him to make sure the Shona sentence, which was in his scope is nearly reproduced as is in English.

Candidate 10 wrote, “Godfrey was hanged himself...” This candidate used double tense markers in a single sentence. On one hand, he used the auxiliary verb “was”. It is “was” which denotes past tense in the sentence. The morpheme (-ed), which is on “hanged” also marks remote past tense. The given English statement can be translated to “Godfrey akazvisungirira...” Shona is an agglutinative language. As such, it uses a conjunctive as opposed to the semi disjunctive type of orthography which English uses. In the case of a-ka-zvi-sung-irir-a: a- is subject prefix, class 1, -ka- is tense sign, which marks remote past, -zvi- is reflexive mood marker, -sung-irir- is an extended verb root, and -a is the terminal vowel. All these grammatical units (morphemes) are presented in Shona as a single grammatical unit or construction. When translated to

English, which uses a semi conjunctive orthography akazvisungirira will be “He hanged himself” A- is “he” -ka- is “was”, -sung-irir- “hang-ed”. Possibly, to the candidate in question -sung- is “hang” and the perfective extension -irir- is equivalent to (-ed). In that way he might have perceived (-ed) to be a morpheme which supplies equivalents to Shona morpheme -irir- and not to be a morpheme which marks past tense. As such he ended up having two tense markers in a single sentence. In that sentence it is -zvi- which supplies equivalents to “himself”. All what it means is, a Shonalizer engages in a sort of linguistic structural adjustment. He/she adjusts the structure of the receptor language (foreign language) in a way which enables it to carry and transmit a spirit which is indigenous. As such, during Shonalization of English, “There are numerous features of sentence structure which must be adjusted in the process, a) word and phrase order, b) double negatives, singular and plural agreements...” / (Nada and Taber 1982: 113).

Really, when one has to convey in a language which is not one’s own the spirit which is one’s own he/she quickly runs out of appropriate words to speak his/her mind. Once in a dilemma of word selection and use, that particular individual will make do with gambling as a technique. He/she ends up putting into black and white all those lexical items he/she perceives to be appropriate to the given context as what Candidate 10 did. Candidate 10 supplies a series of some English adjectives “proficient”, “expert” and “good” in a sentence when she says, “Matsikiti is not a proficient or an expert however he is a good writer...”. The candidate was not sure if the writer in question can be said to be “proficient” or be an “expert” or to be simply “a good writer”. As such, she poured out all the three words which might not even be worth to describe the novelist in question. The idea of supplying seemingly overlapping adjectives in a single sentence may have resulted from the fact that, the candidate did not really know the denotative and connotative meanings of those adjectives. As a result of that, she decided to supply all of them in the hope that one of them or two of the three adjectives or all of them would somehow aid her to put her views, which were originally framed in Shona, into black and white using the medium of English.

Another interesting form of repetition is found in Candidate 9’s script. Candidate 9 has this sort of repetition, “In both the two novels...” In the sentence, “both” and “two” serve the same purpose – that of quantifying the novels. It sounds absurd and nonsensical in English to use “both” and “two” in the same sentence as what Candidate 9 did. However the sentence is sensible when it is translated from English to Shona in spite of the fact that, the candidate employed that sort of repetition. The translated version will read, “Mumabhuku ose maviri...”. In the sentence, mu- is “in”, -mabhuku are “novels”, ose is “both” and maviri is “two”. The Shona sentence is full of sense. One can express himself/herself in this way, “Mumabhuku ose maviri aya

mune zvinofadza” (In both these two novels there are humorous situations.) What it means is ose (both) and maviri (two) can appear in a single Shona sentence with the sentence remaining grammatically correct. However, when both (ose) and two (maviri) appear in the same English sentence, that sentence becomes totally ungrammatical. What it means is, since the cultural distance between English and Shona is enormous, it is in most cases the ungrammatical English sentence which has the potential to carry and transmit views that are thought in Shona.

Transliteration

When a candidate conveys in a language which is not his/her own the spirit which is her/his own transliteration becomes the order of the day especially when these candidates formulate their views using Shona figurative language before they translate them from Shona to English. They find figurative parts of speech such as idioms to be untranslatable. Faced with that sort of situation, the candidates resort to literal translation. Candidate 8 wrote, “He is expected to have a long heart”. The use of “long heart” leads to cross-linguistic conceptual divergence. The phrase “long heart” does not imply its primary surface meaning of since it is a literal translation of the Shona idiom “kuva nemoyo murefu” which refers to a position of being “highly tolerant”. In Shona “heart” is moyo and “long” is murefu. Figurative parts of speech have both a figurative and primary (surface) meanings. Figurative meaning are “...additional meanings assigned to [a word] which are very different in every essential aspect from the primary one” / (Nida and Tiber Ibid: 87). For instance the figurative meaning of Kuva nemoyo murefu (To have a long heart) is “to be highly tolerant”. The end-products of the literal translations of idioms from Shona to English are of no sense to English readers. This is all because, the translations fail to capture the figurative meaning embodied in the idioms. Those literal translations can only make sense to a Shona mother tongue speaker. The Shona mother-tongue speaker can recreate the figurative meaning intended to be portrayed in the literal translation by translating the end-product of the literal translation of the idiom back into Shona. In that case, literal translations of idioms and other figurative parts of speech are transmuted versions of the Shona figurative parts of speech. During their transmutation, Shona figurative parts of speech seem to be in English when in reality they are in a Shona-English language. The Shona-english language is the product of the Shonalization of English. Shona-english language is English on the surface but Shona underneath it.

Candidate 14 wrote, “She pushed her young father into the well” What is interesting here is the candidate’s use of “young father”. In Shona, culture one’s father’s younger brother is babmunini/babamudiki. Babamunini or babmunini is made up of a noun “baba-” (father) and an adjective -munini/-mudiki (young/younger). Therefore babmunini/babamudiki is both paraphrased and literally translated to “young/younger father” in the given sentence. Once

Babamuninin/mudiki is paraphrased to “small father”, it loses its meaning and cultural sensibilities. Infact the target English reader may not even come to realize that “Small father” refers to an individual’s father’s younger brother. What this may imply is, Shonalization of English is based on atheoretical approaches to translation since it is based on acculturated experience as opposed to theoretical approaches to translation. In that way, the product of Shonalization becomes nonsensical to the Target Reader (English reader) since it is a product that is meant to carry Shona cultural sensibilities for the benefit of a Shona speaker. In that Sense Shonalization of English cannot be termed translation in the strictest sense of the word. Strictly speaking, translation is “the individually and interculturally motivated *choice* [of words] according to TL *socio-cultural norms* of a TT by a *mediator* among sets of *homologically* related *paraphrastic* options” / Hewson and Martin 1991: 33). What it means is, in translation, the TL (Target Language) and the TT (Target Text) are of primary importance since the translator has to study carefully the “socio-cultural norms” of the TL and not the SL (Source Language) in order to render a ST into TT. However a Shonalizer concentrates on the structure and “socio-cultural norms” of the SL in order to force the TL to carry and transmit cultural values and sensibilities of the ST into TT. Since the Shonalizer concentrates on the grammar and style of the SL to produce a message in the TL, he/she is apt to create ungrammatical sentences as judged by the grammatical rules of the TL.

Candidate 4 wrote, “” After the war, the land did not go to the black people it remained to the whites” / (Pashure pehondo ivhu harina kuenda kuvatema rakaramba riri kuvarungu). The notion carried in the English sentence is purely Shona. What it means is the given English sentence is more of an approximation than a mere translation of the Shona version of the sentence, which the student formed in his mind during examination. An approximation is, “an object, description, situation etc that is very like something else but which does not have all the features or qualities” ./ (Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary 1987: 62). Since the sentence is an approximation and not a one-on-one translation of the Shona version, it is quite ungrammatical. In the first place, “land” (ivhu), which is a non-living thing, occupies the position of a semantic agent in the sentence. That scenario is not readily accepted in English. Land/soil, which is both a non-living thing and an unthinking being, cannot be said to have the potential to shift its ownership at its own accord. As such, it cannot be said to have “moved” away from the whites and to have “gone” to the blacks. Although “land” (ivhu), which is an immovable possession, does not have to occupy the position of a semantic agent in English sentences, it can occupy the same position in Shona sentences. As a matter of fact, land/soil (ivhu) can appear in Shona sentences changing its ownership. For instance, it can “move away from the whites” (kubva kuvarungu) “going to the blacks” (richienda kuvatema). As a matter of fact, in his attempt to capture his Shona world view using English,

Candidate 4 forced English to personify an immovable asset (land/ivhu) in a way that allows it to occupy the position of a semantic agent in an English sentence.

Code-Switching

In their bid to convey in English the spirit which in most cases was Shona, students of Shona literature resorted to code-switching during examination. They switched from English to Shona and from Shona to English. Infact, Hewson and Martin (Ibid: 28) puts it this way, “...when a hiatus, a discontinuity, and more generally a disagreement in communication intervenes, then there is a necessity for code-switching in order to re-establish the normal exchange of communication”. Candidates of Shona literature encountered “hiatuses, discontinuities and disagreements” during examination when they sought to express their views, which were originally formed in Shona, using English. Faced with such an arising, those candidates resorted to code-switching. Myers-Scotton (1993) quoted by Sure in Mutasa (2008: 35) has this to say, “Code-switching as a language contact phenomenon is normal and acceptable in ordinary communication encounters among Kenyans even in spoken official communication”. The Kenyan situation is very much like the Zimbabwean one. In Zimbabwe, English is learnt as a subject, from the first grade up to Form 4 by all students. It is also the official language of instruction from the 3rd grade up to university level. As such most students of Shona literature were introduced to English very early in their lives. However their experience in using English rarely enables them to speak English just like its native speakers. That becomes the case since the language at school (English) will be different with the language they use at home (Shona). These students who almost always use Shona and home and English in lectures and when they sit different examinations learn to code-switch from Shona to English and vice versa. That code-switching is evident in their examination scripts.

Candidate 5 wrote, “In Kutonhodzwa KwaChauruka, Mambo Dzumbunu is a coward”. In the sentence, *Kutonhodzwa KwaChauruka* is the title of the novel which was studied for the module. Mambo is a leadership title. Dzumbunu is one of the rulers in the novel. The candidate preferred to use the Shona leadership title Mambo to English chief in his discussion. His preference of the Shona title to the English one during discussion, leads to code-switching. Probably, the candidate felt that, if he translated Mambo to chief, he would not be able to capture the real meaning and position of a Shona leader (Mambo). Mambo is not equivalent to English chief. The English term “chief” supplies equivalents to Shona Ishe. Bourdillon (1976) created the term “Paramount Chief” to make a distinction between Mambo (Paramount Chief) and Ishe (Chief). In Shona tradition, Mambo is superior to Ishe in the same way a Paramount chief is superior than chief. Beach (1994: 119) says, “The term Changamire/Mambo appeared first in the 1490s connoting to a “Great Lord” or major cattle owner”. Having failed to find or even to create an

English term which supplies equivalents to Mambo/Changamire, the student opted to code-switch from English to Shona during the examination. In that way, code-switching helped the student to try and reduce the cultural distance between English and Shona for the purpose of conveying Shona philosophy of life using English.

Candidate 11 uses English and Shona terms concurrently in a single sentence. In doing so, he employs inter-sentential code-switching. For instance she says, "Matsikiti attacks the practice of killing triplets/twins/manyatatu. At another moment he says, Pastor/Mufundisa Kunaka is influenced by Christianity in his behaviour". In Shona triplets are manyatatu and twins are mapatya. Possibly the candidate in question could not discern whether it is the lexical item "triplets" or "twins" which supplies equivalents to Manyatatu. As such, he decided to supply both "triplets" and "twins" as having the potential to supply equivalents to manyatatu. In that way, he tried to avoid a communication blockade between him (the candidate) and the lecturer (the examiner) since he knew very well that the lecturer/examiner is a Shona mother tongue speaker. In reality, the student supplied the three terms "triplets", "twins" and "manyatatu" in a single sentence to discuss what happens when a character, Maingeni gives birth to triplets in the novel *Rakava Buno Risifemberi*. The candidate's failure to be absolutely certain that the lexical item "triplets" and not "twins" is equivalent to manyatatu seemed to have forced him to embark on the use of inter-sentential code-switching.

The candidate in question seems to have not been certain whether or not "Pastor" is equivalent to Mufundisi. His uncertainty resulted from the fact that Mufundisi has a one-to-many relationships or equivalents in English. Mufundisi can be translated to both "Pastor" and "Reverend" in English. The novel, which the candidate was analysing is titled *Imbwa Nyoro*. In the novel, there is a character Mufundisi Kunaka. He is Mufundisi Kunaka meaning to say he is a church Pastor or Reverend. This candidate, who was not certain whether it is either "Pastor" or "Reverend" which supplies equivalents to Mufundisi resorted to use of code-switching. Code-switching, made him certain that his inability to decipher whether or not pastor supplies equivalents to Mufundisi would not block the examiner from understanding his views, which were originally formed in Shona, before they were conveyed in English.

Candidate 2 wrote, "Sekai is also failing to be a mannered "muramu". In the sentence, the candidate resorted to the use of the Shona kinship title muramu. Probably she resorted to the use of the title because she failed to get an English lexical item that may supply equivalents to muramu. Muramu is a term that is culture bound. As such it is untranslatable to English. Muramu is a term of address which is used by a man to address to address his wife's younger sister and brother's daughter. It is also used by a man when he addresses his

brother's wife's younger sister and brother's daughter. Furthermore, it is used by a woman when she addresses her husband's younger brother. Since muramu is untranslatable to English, the candidate resorted to code-switching when she commended on Sekai's behaviour. Sekai is muramu to Mufundisi Kunaka in the novel *Imbwa Nyoro*. Using code-switching, the candidate made sure she forced English to convey Shona cultural notions and sensibilities.

Miscellaneous Cases

One other outstanding feature which is noticeable in examination scripts of the students of Shona literature, who had to convey in a language which is not their own (English) the spirit which was their own (Shona) was their tendency of forcing some words, which in their every day use do not overlap to do so in some sentences. For instance, most candidates misconstrued "do" and "does", "where" and "were", "there" and "their" and "live" and "leave" etc. Candidate 6 wrote, "Kawara...do not empower the reader". Candidate 8 has this, "they does blood tests" Both candidate 6 and 8 misconstrued "do" and "does". In fact, they failed to realize and uphold the English grammatical rule which prescribes that a subject, which is in its singular form, has to be qualified by a verb with /s/ and a subject, which is in its plural form, has to be qualified by a verb without /s/. For instance, in the first sentence, the subject Kawara is in its singular form. As such, it ought to be accompanied by "does" rather than "do". Therefore the first sentence should read, "Kawara...does not empower the reader". In the other sentence, "they", which is the plural form of "it" has to be accompanied by a verb with /s/. Therefore the second sentence should be like this, "They do (carry out) blood tests". What it means is, candidates who generate their views in Shona and convey them in English flout the rules of English grammar for the sake of forcing it to convey their feelings which would have been grounded in the structure of their mother tongue.

Candidate 3 confused "where" and "were" when he conveyed his views, which were originally formed in Shona, using the vehicle of English she wrote this sentence, "The two men were going to Hwedza". Candidate 7 confused "leave" and "live" when she wrote, "Pasipamire and Yeukai leave together as husband and wife". What it means is, the two candidates were not concerned with the grammatical exactitude of their sentences when they tried to convey their views which were originally formed in Shona using the vehicle of English. Rather they engaged in an exercise of subverting English grammatical rules for the purpose of forcing English to carry and transmit their Shona sensibilities. The same system of operation is evidenced by the candidates' committing of gross spelling mistakes. For instance candidate 1 spelt "loose" as "lose", and candidate 9 spelt "woman" as "women".

Conclusion

This paper demonstrated that, when a student of Shona literature has to convey in English the spirit which is not originally formed in English but in Shona a lot of activities take place. Those activities lead to what the paper has termed Shonalization of English. When English is Shonalized, the resultant English sentences will be ungrammatical. It is those ungrammatical sentences which do have the potential of conveying the ideas and sensibilities of students of Shona literature, which in most cases are formulated and mapped using Shona language. Strategies which students of Shona literature usually use in an examination to Shonalize English for it to carry and transmit Shona sensibilities range from approximation, paraphrasing, transliteration, transmutation code-switching and many others. These are explored and analysed in the paper. The process of Shonalization of English do actually benefit from the concepts, which different scholars propose. These concepts include: Abrogation and appropriation (Aschcroft et al 1989), submergence (Brathwaite 1984), vernacularization (Kachiru 1986) and relexification (Zabus 1991). Shonalization of English results from the nativization and acculturation of English. The process of Shonalization of English may potentially aid Zimbabweans to develop an English language which is Zimbabwean. That New English will be Zimbabwe's "Nation Language".

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