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**kuwanda huuya: mutualising as intercultural abundance
in a teaching practice of listening**

ganyamatopé dzapasi tawona t. sitholé

BSc. Health Studies

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
(by publication)

School of Education
College of Social Sciences
University of Glasgow

April 2024

hekani
welcome

on this soil of Scotland
ancestors of this dear rugged land
where i undertake this work
University of Glasgow
with a long tradition of embodying knowledge
working to change the world through ideas
my privilege as staff in this university
with access to human and beyond-human resources
here and in relation
to other spaces of learning around the world

Mutumba / Abstract

Whilst historical 'Western' domination is coming under pressure from decolonising agendas for research and teaching, the prevailing social scientific models for both are traditionally located in well-funded and variously bureaucratised institutions in the 'Global North', with rare exceptions. Intercultural education worldwide is dominated by teaching derived from knowledge and, consequently, pedagogic approaches formed predominantly from the 'Global North', or in contradistinction to what was viewed as *inferior knowledge* in the 'Global South'.

With the renewed turn to decolonising and holistic models of integration, alternative approaches and pedagogies are required. This thesis by publication draws on one example - *daré* - a gathering in the Zimbabwean context, for communing, including for education. Augmented by ritual, human and non-human forms all considered to have *anima*, *daré* is classified as '*indigenous*' knowledge. *reciting/resighting* the ancient saying, *kuwanda huuya*, I argue for mutuality, for declassifying *daré* from this imposed category. Through my mutualising educational practice, I am claiming the place of my ancestors in the open space of learning and teaching worldwide. As this thesis will show, *daré* is a primarily aural and oral, sensory mode of *kufunda/learning*.

This thesis consists of a portfolio of work made in *daré* knowledge practice over a decade and a 12,000-word exegetical essay, which describes the introduction of *daré* into the public space, the work produced, and the changes experienced by audiences in those intercultural encounters with models of learning from beyond the 'Global North'.

The work presented has been subject to peer review as academic publication and/or to the commissioning processes of the arts and cultural mechanisms for publication. By fusing the work in a portfolio, the thesis claims its contribution to knowledge in and for education and its place in decolonising arts as intercultural education.

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**in the spirit of ancestors who acknowledge mufaro/joy
as a value and a valuable**

Invitation to reading the essay (language of the piece)

the poet in me moves in spirit
the storyteller in me wants to play
the educator in me needs to explain

About any writing task, my friend George asks “*Tawona, what is the language of the piece?*”

Like other educators who embody ‘Western’ and ‘indigenous’ knowledge (Diamond, 2019; Wilson, 2018; Smith, 2012; Kimmerer, 2013; Grande, 2004), trying to translate knowledge is an undertaking. I find myself reaching for *ancestors, spirit, ritual, aura* - words that, in broader education, are often scary and scarry, as they mark in unsightly ways, unless when in anthropology of Turner (1982); cultural ecology of Abram (1996); or theology of Walter Wink (1999), for example.

Please note: the term academy refers to ‘Western’ culture of education, from school to university, in the dominant form as it is applied and experienced throughout the world in colonial-born and borne structures and functions.

Not knowing who may be encountering these words, some preliminaries to aid the reading of this essay:

Please expect unfamiliar terms and concepts showing this is intercultural, translational work, made in many languages and traditions and without trying to hide their traces. Wary of “cycling the canonical white English language text” (Phipps, 2019 p6.), I quote written as well as spoken word of both scholars and non-scholars.

Unconventional presentation (grammar/punctuation etc) is intentional dislocation and serves a purpose, a way of standing my ground, knowing that something important will be brought by this. I therefore use, from now onwards, decapitalised font, also a feature of my creative

writing style, as has been adopted by others (Anyidoho, 2022; Philip, 2015; Cameron, 2012; hooks, 1994).

non-English words are not in (parentheses) or *italics*, mindful of Mignolo (2020) noticing the *destitution* caused by the domineering presence of certain ‘truth not in brackets’; and Phipps (2011) in her critique of *italics* forcing languages to *bend to the* straight and upright languages; *bend to the* straightness of the dominant font.

born and raised in Zimbabwe, a country with 16 official languages, i draw from this ‘well of linguistic resources’ (Attia, cited in Andrews et al. 2020), working multilingually to honour the world’s cultures, what Cronin (2013) calls linguistic sensitivity and cultural curiosity. like Glissant (2020 p.15) “ . . . i write in the presence of all the world’s languages.” i deliberately use languages mixed up, what linguists call translanguaging (Blackledge and Creese, 2017; Chalmers, 2016). in effect i am “accessing different linguistic features or various modes of what are described as autonomous languages, in order to maximise communicative potential” (Garcia, 2009, p.140).

in this way, i am working within the linguistic traditions of Africa where multilingualism is the mother tongue. in daré, vakuru/elders return to ancient language and speech acts, therefore learning is a dynamic language experience, punctuated by breath, not symbols on a page. the notion of monolingualism is widely refuted (Phipps, 2019; Gramling, 2016; Cronin, 2013), and where translation finds or seeks equivalence, translanguaging is about communication not about language itself (EAL journal, 2016). Gramling (2016) suggests that to bring a new world into being requires language outside of normal use, and this is what i am observing as i presence my ancestors’ “social continuity of life” (Dewey cited in Ingold, 2018 p.3).

as this essay is concerned with explication, translation gets more attention than in my creative writing where non-English words are often untranslated but ‘retained’ (Cronin, 2013). translation leaves a sense of dissatisfaction because, as Cronin (2013) observes, a translation is paradoxical because it both is and isn't the original, and the original is both present and absent. whilst i

acknowledge ‘Western’ philosophical terms such as ‘epistemology’ and ‘ontology’ i speak here of ‘kuziva/ knowing’ and ‘sarungano/story-being’ by way of enacting a mutualising translation.

poetry is a medium of daré, a caretaking and celebratory attitude to language, spoken and sung. my tool for claiming affinity between words and concepts, it allows me to reimagine language to create new possibilities of meaning. poetry is accommodating to the mystical and magical spirit of this work; language courageous and mischievous enough to dance with wisdom, through circularity of breath, and to make knowledge afresh.

poetry is a form of language that is precursor to the descriptive language of science as it captures abstract ideas and emotions that are so complex, that to articulate the ideas in a linear literal form would, what an artist may consider, be the overuse of space, time, and energy.

(Diamond, 2021, p.30)

to honour **aural** aspects of language, i invite you to read some sections out aloud (at your own choosing) as Wilson (2018) also does, in his *Research as Ceremony*. similarly, Abram (1996) encourages a break from literate culture - the habitual visualising of language that renders it a static structure - opening it out to a participatory mode of experience. i am excited by what this acoustic does as a way of acknowledging language within ecological relations (Phipps, 2011), a view aligned with the Māori whakataukī/‘wisdom speech acts’ where stones appear as seeds of knowledge planted and propagated through the land (Diamond, 2022); maybe see if Ong (1988) is right in suggesting that if written text is horsepower, then spoken word is the horse. in my writing, reading aloud - to myself; stage performance of a poem; rehearsed reading of a theatre play - is a vital method.

chinangwa: what this essay sets out to do

through this essay i will:

- illustrate what i mean by daré, and explain the essay title
- provide intellectual coherence for my portfolio
- present two statements of inquiry which serve as basis for my thesis
- trace my work as daré education practice, and its value as contribution to knowledge, using the portfolio as evidence
- round up and cast an eye to the future

invitation to daré

in my understanding of daré (the learning tradition of my ancestors), knowledge survives as a verb, to acknowledge:

- the spirit of nature present in all beings
- no being or action in isolation
- words and beyond words; understanding and beyond understanding
- every encounter as potential for learning

daré education is a practice of healing, treating ills in relation to the person, community, and all flows and connections in nature i.e. pasichigaré. the literature is thin on daré. as a routine space/practice for solving social problems that may lead to disharmony, daré is viewed by some as a court (Marongwe et al., 2019; Masitera, 2019; Gwaravanda, 2011). Nyatsanza (2023) treats daré as a philosophical framework, endorsing daré as educational practice.

invitation to reading the title

humility is watching my beloved generations-old mbira being handled casually, sometimes carelessly, by airport security staff. i can only smile politely and answer patiently, often having to play to display mbira's musicality to dispel the suspicion of one who knows no better.

i have learned to not be annoyed at the security agent, as i imagine someone who has never seen mbira, then unexpectedly viewing it through an x-ray scanner. mbira probably looks strange, the metal keys like knives, screwdrivers, or some other sharp implements.

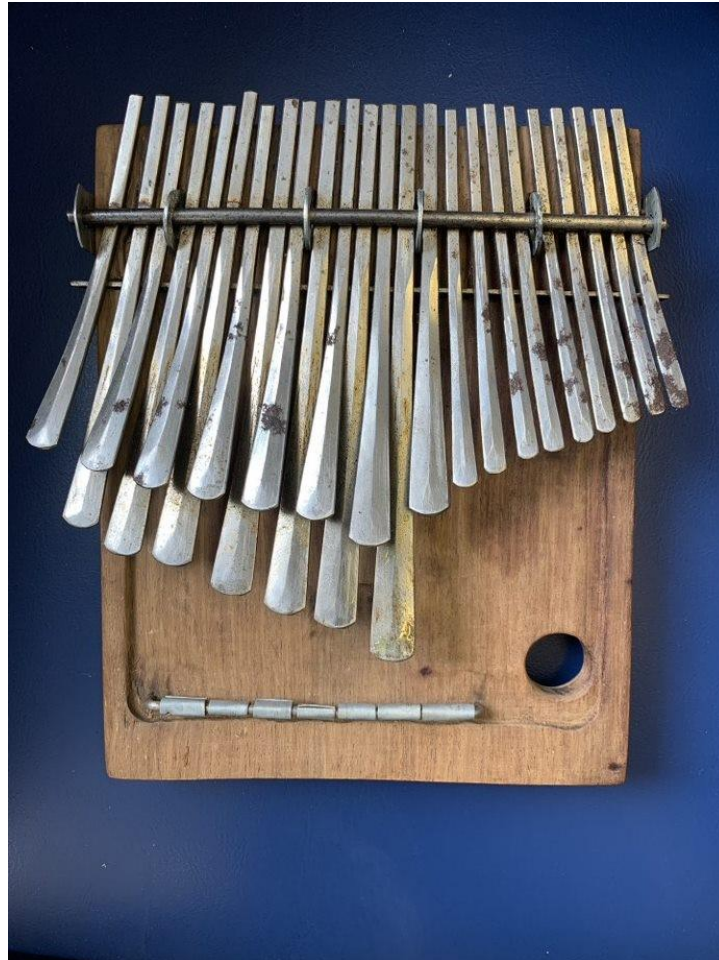


Fig.1 mbira

this is an **intercultural** encounter, rich with potential, fraught with risk. the extent to which both sides can make room determines how this plays out; making room in the way Bolz-Webber (2018, no pagination) likens it to “the kind-faced woman on the subway who takes her handbag onto her lap so there is room for you to sit next to her.”

i lift my *handbag* (bearing susceptibility to overplay my emotion) hoping the agent, likewise, lifts their *handbag* (bearing susceptibility to overplay their suspicion). most times room is made, and the encounter is a pleasant one. in the end, often, there is a smile of intrigue, of appreciation.

sometimes, nearby colleagues are called over to witness mbira - the communion of interest that unites musician and listener (Cronin, 2013). **kuwanda huuya**, the tsumo/proverb is recited/resighted to describe this choreography of convivial interaction, which i understand as **abun-dance**.

when colonisers banned mbira, and hanged people for it, my ancestors continued playing, not as defiance or resistance, but in the joy it bears. in this spirit i'm dislocating from the fetish of colonial violence, that typecasts descendants of colonised histories against descendants of colonising histories. McKee (2016, P.7) observes "In a sense we are all now historians and archivists, selecting and compiling various shards of information to form a reading of the world, knowing deep down there are many counter-histories." i understand that those who do the work of justice are not identifiable by 'categories handed down' (Mbembe, 2017), cognisant of Mandaza (2020, no pagination) suggesting "the oppressor and oppressed carry the same wound from different angles." Edouard Glissant explains his notion of 'tremblings' as "the instinctual feeling that we must refuse all categories of fixed and imperial thought" (Diawara and Geis, 2023, no pagination). similarly, Freire (1993) argues that liberation of the oppressed is tied with liberation of the oppressor. in endorsing 'Relation', Glissant (1997) suggests decolonisation will have done its real work when it goes beyond the limit of identity existing in opposition of the 'Other'. my work contributes to efforts striving to create and curate spaces that are "reservoirs of life" (Mbembe, 2017 p.181), towards a world "in which it is easier to love" (Freire, 1993 p.14").

the abun-dance of the university has afforded me the development of my intercultural education research practice. **kufunda hakuperi**, the tsumo/proverb is recited/resighted to acknowledge a moment of edification, a reminder that learning ever continues. i find in this, **mutuality** with the inquisitive mind that fosters learning as continuing intercultural education research practice. the words of Ingold (2018, p.3), "wherever and whenever life is going on, so too is education" infers this "unavailability of absolute knowledge" (Graeber, 2004, p.10).

in **teaching practice** i re-turn to another tsumo, **dzinonzwa hadzirimi**. literally saying ears don't have to farm the land to prove they are working. recited/resighted to acknowledge a

question/request/information, this saying endorses **kunzwa/listening** as sufficient communication; **kuzeya/**'chewing the cud' is required before any response or decision can be considered. **vakuru/elders** are "listening to understand, rather than listening to respond" (Headlee, 2016 no pagination). **kunzwa/listening** is action - is something that takes effort - and is not always instantaneous but lingers beyond the encounter. Ingold (2018, p.17) suggests "we should cease regarding education as a method of transmission, and think of it rather as a practice of attention."

Part 1

nhorwa: intellectual significance of the submission

in nhorwa/'gifting tradition', offerings reflect on the presenter, recipient, and relationship between the two, as value is co-created in the presentation. Kambalu (2020) notes that gifting is not simply the exchange of things; without mutual knowledge, sensitivity to the choice of items, reason, and timing, the gift could adversely affect the relationship. i present my thesis in the spirit of nhorwa.

my nhorwa bears items i have made in practice born of the mutualising traditions i have inherited through daré, which i present as part of a PhD by Publication: poems, exhibits, films, academic articles and chapters reflecting on my practice. this selection presents the ways in which i have worked with the 'Western' academy towards an epistemology of hearing, presenting ways in which, in the diaspora, i'm re-indigenising myself and my practice. as Santos (2016) speaks of epistemologies of blindness and seeing in his decolonial work, Mbembe (2017) sees clearly that the 'Western' academy cannot open its mind to what it does not have the means to know. i'm holding to daré oral/aural epistemologies; to soundings and the circular music of the mbira. along with these works i offer analysis of the methods i employ and the way the works can be understood.

in my nhorwa are:

- 4 sets of publications as 4 fields of academic literature: the colonial/decolonial; the migratory/linguistic; the pedagogical/educational; the poetic & ecological - poetry as nature.
- 4 beings of a learner
- 4 spheres in which the 4 beings of a learner perform

my nhorwa represents the stage i have reached as i trace my journey into and through working in the academy first as honorary research fellow, then as artist-in-residence, lecturer and researcher². through these different roles i have had the chance to offer my experience and

artistry as a researcher teaching others how to work creatively with the methods i learned from vakuru/elders. these methods have brought me to a place where i have published peer-reviewed academic texts and volumes of poetry; given over twenty keynotes within the academy; co-edited a special issue; and produced a commissioned poem for University of Glasgow's Advanced Research Centre. all these works have been stages in my understanding of daré ways as intercultural education practice.

my work is spreading rather than concentrated, so my practice is often viewed as *multiple artform*, but in daré, performance is a conduit for spirit to communicate - or breathe - healing through ritual, story, music, and poetry. this is where creative arts are not separate from education as we can safely say 'in the spirit of', allowing the word 'spirit' not to scare or scar. learning is not an abstract information enterprise of the mind, it is embodied and steeped in the environment. Akómoláfé (2022, no pagination) argues "knowledge is not a stable objective thing sitting at the end of a scientifically rigorous exercise, but a way of meeting the world as the world meets us." daré as pedagogy is not applied, it is imbued.

concern for mutuality

ask anyone about a memorable teacher and most likely you will get an animated response and vivid recollection of a schoolteacher. whilst it is estimated that only 10-20% of a child's waking hours are spent in school (World Bank, 2017; Wherry, 2004), there remains a fixation on institutional learning. Ingold (2018) asks whether it is acceptable to say people are uneducated or uncivilised if they live in societies without schools, or where only few enjoy the privilege of attending school.

despite relative discrepancies, education worldwide is heavily supported, as seen by the commitment of nations under Sustainable Development Goal 4 (United Nations, 2015). However, the continued inclusion of some while excluding other groups from learning institutions continues to raise concern (Sperlinger et al., 2018; Mbembe, 2017; Diamond, 2021; Education Scotland, 2024). Grande (2004) observes that, with few exceptions, indigenous knowledges tend to be

largely ignored or indiscriminately absorbed into critical theories of education. Smith (2012) goes further arguing that ‘research’ is ethnocentric - closely linked with European colonisation and excesses of imperialism - and indigenous knowledge does not fit into this ethnocentric structure. Nyamnjoh (2015) notes that terms such as diversity and inclusion are misappropriated to disguise the continual practice of assimilation. where Gramling (2021) describes universities as spaces of language-neutrality, Santos (2014) talks of fortified institutions residing in inaccessible neighbourhoods. so, it's not surprising that Smith (2012) sees attending to the issue of education as a matter of social justice.

the understanding of my own traditions of daré learning met those of the academy in the twenty-first century. despite all its decolonising attempts, the academy persists in epistemic injustice by not making room for mutuality or only trying to do this on its own terms - a lack of thought to alternatives (Sperlinger et al., 2018). this said, there are some notable exceptions (Ingold, 2016; Gramling, 2016 and 2021; Phipps, 2019; Smith, 2012; Cronin, 2013). Badwan (2022) critiques educators who “stubbornly insist on the verbal, cognitive, intelligible and categorisable while turning their back on the divergent, the messy, the unspoken, the unintelligible.” my nhorwa traces what i have learned by imbuing daré in different contexts - university, school, theatre, arts venue, museum, prison, research project, UNESCO, and other learning spaces. this is where a research inquiry is found as i look back at my publications and exhibits as practice and asking the ‘coherence’ of my work in a new context; learning to mutualise as being both indigenised and colonised in one context and based in Scotland - a place of coloniality and indigeneity at the same time.

statements of inquiry

- **the western academy, through several centuries of practicing domination, is ill-equipped to listen, hear, and accommodate aural traditions of knowledge.**
- **the methods through which the new practices required might be found are made visible/audible through mutualising practices like daré.**

the centre and the round

in the typical linear arrangement of a classroom cube where students' sitting bodies are obscured by desks and other furniture, the teacher's standing body takes centre stage. like a music concert, stage play, or talk, the performance is centred on a *transmitter*³ demarcated from a target audience of *receivers*. the *transmitter* faces all and is faced by all. as for the *receivers*, those in the front row face only the *transmitter*, while subsequent rows face the *transmitter* through an increasing number of backs. spatially, the classroom cube is, arguably, a circle shrunk to a dot by concentrating attention on the teacher performing to knowledge receivers in the depository exercise described, seminally, by Freire (1993) as the *banking method*. with this centring approach, perhaps it is no surprise that learning spaces are often called centres, and not circumferences. indeed, like daré, the academy performs specialised occasions, such seminars and workshops, in the round.

daré aural tradition – the round

the automatic translation of denderedzwa is circle, but with poetic hesitation a perfect 'O' seems unfitting for the way the round exists in nature as the shape of the moon, flower, tree trunk. human-made *round* shapes, too, are the imperfect clay pot, basket, rondavel, or a gathering round a fire.

"كلنا ولاد 9 ، محدش احسن من حد"

"We are all children of 9." ⁴

meaning we are all children of 9 months in the womb (another example of the round); no one is better than the other.

the denderedzwa of daré is like a labyrinth, having many a connection, path, and impasse. learning is ancient theatre without the 'fourth wall'⁵, often requiring from those gathered,

performance of spoken word, music, dance, or song. *daré* learning is also a languaging experience:

Languages are more than skills; they are the medium through which communities of people engage with, make sense of, and shape the world. Through language they become active agents in creating their human environment; this process is what we call languaging. [...] This purpose is incontestably profound, humane and educative; its ‘profit’ is existential, personal, social, and the ‘return’ on what is given or exchanged with other cultures and languages is immense. (Phipps & Gonzalez, 2004, pp.2-3).

i see any gathering with the following mutualising qualities as being in the spirit of *daré*:

- *kunzwana*/'mutual listening' is prioritised and incendiary habits of everyday speech are tamed into a poetry form i call *aura-tory*
- communication becomes ritual through concentrating of spoken word to idiom or expression that invokes wisdom
- the interaction is considered greater than the individuals involved, in my tradition this spirit attracts the presence of wise ancestors

whereas a talk prioritises speaking, *kuziva mbuya huudzwa*, the *tsumo*/proverb is recited/resighted to acknowledge that learning comes through listening. just as Dewey (cited in Ingold, 2018 p.4) notes an affinity between *communication*, *community*, and *common*, i claim the affinity between *auricle*, *aural*, and *aura*, interested in attending to *aura* as well as speech. Clanchy (cited in Ong, 1988 p.117) notes how in medieval times “ . . . checking of accounts was done aurally, by having them read aloud, even today we speak of auditing as in ‘hearing’ account books, though what an accountant actually does is examine them by sight.” according to Ong (1988) in a primary oral culture, the phenomenology of sound enters deeply into human being’s feel for existence.

Because of its physical constitution as sound, the spoken word proceeds from the human interior and manifests human beings to one another as conscious interiors, as persons, the spoken word forms human beings into a close-knit group . . . audience become a unity with themselves and the speaker.

Ong (1988 p.73)

i am concerned with acoustics, because they embrace the surroundings, affecting sound and silence. according to Ingold (2008) organisms figure not as externally bounded entities but as bundles of interwoven lines of growth and movement, and the relation between people and objects as “texture of material flows comprising the lifeworld” (Ingold, 2010 p.96). McKee (2016, P.18) suggests “We will know what is really happening if we remove our headphones and engage more directly with our surroundings.”

Scharmer (2001) identifies four levels of listening: downloading, factual, empathic and generative. i am concerned here with generative listening, which mutualises with kuninipa/humility, acknowledgement by the listener that they are part of something greater than themselves. like the mbira at airport security, dropping ego and other potential barriers can open a willingness and effort towards ‘the best possible future’ (Scharmer, 2001). daré practice is imbued in occasions such as marriage, rites of passage, ngano, and, through my inquiry here, in the academy.

ngano as pedagogy

the automatic translation of ngano is storytelling, but with poetic hesitation i notice that in my tradition there is no word for storyteller - a *possessor* of the story who *transmits* to a consuming audience. usually practised in the family, ambuya/grandmother plays celebrant in an *ensemble* of participative listeners. by the call-and-response invocation,

ambuya: paivapo

gungano: dzepfundé

ngano collectively comes into being. following this imaginative birth of a *being* - ngano is then *carried* collaboratively, *born* and *borne* through the imaginative performance of the gungano/gathering. the experience is mystic, in the way Kimmerer (2013, p.3) describes: “The storytellers begin by calling upon those who came before who passed these stories to us, for we are only messengers.”

the ending of ngano is marked by another speech act,

ambuya: ndoo pakaperera sarungano

announcing the poetic *death* of the *story-being*, who diffuses back into the unknown realm where ngano come from. this *story-being* is called sarungano - arriving, as with pedagogy, after the preparatory work ensuring conditions are set for learning.

sarungano: bearing of this essay

Cora, my drama teacher, defined acting simply as behaving. Turner (1982) points out the ambiguity of 'acting' to mean both doing things in everyday life, and performing on stage. we act as appropriate to conditions within the different *rounds* of our lives - family, work, privacy, public etc. it is a learned ritual like putting on uniform or preparing to teach. for each *denderedzwa/round*, different conditions of existence produce different 'habitus' (Bourdieu, 1984) - a certain *poise* or *comportment* that establishes our presence and determines our performance.

just as sarungano is born/e through ngano performance, we *bring to bear* our life experience/story through sarungano precipitated in various conditions. as Bourdieu (1984) elaborates, habitus is necessity internalised and converted into a disposition that generates meaningful practices and meaning-giving perceptions.

to demonstrate the intellectual coherence of my publications, i have identified 4 *madenderedzwa/rounds* and i treat these through 4 related sarungano:

- kutambirwa - being celebrated
- kutambanuka - unfurling
- kutambidzana - reciprocating
- kutambarara - stretching out

the sarungano i have conceived for this essay are linked by the root -tamb- from kutamba - to dance or play; 'play' in English also being dynamic - play a role, music, dead, etc. the prefix ku- denotes the verb form, as action or being, and avoids the noun form's construction of beings as 'things', as has also been noted by others Ingold (2008, 2010) and Kimmerer (2013) in her chapter 'Grammar of Animacy' where she notices that verbs make up 70% of all words in the Potawatomi language compared to 30% in the English language. please notice the different forms of meaning kutamba bears in relations; i have sketched the following dialogue to highlight some of these



Fig.2 Shona dialogue

translation:

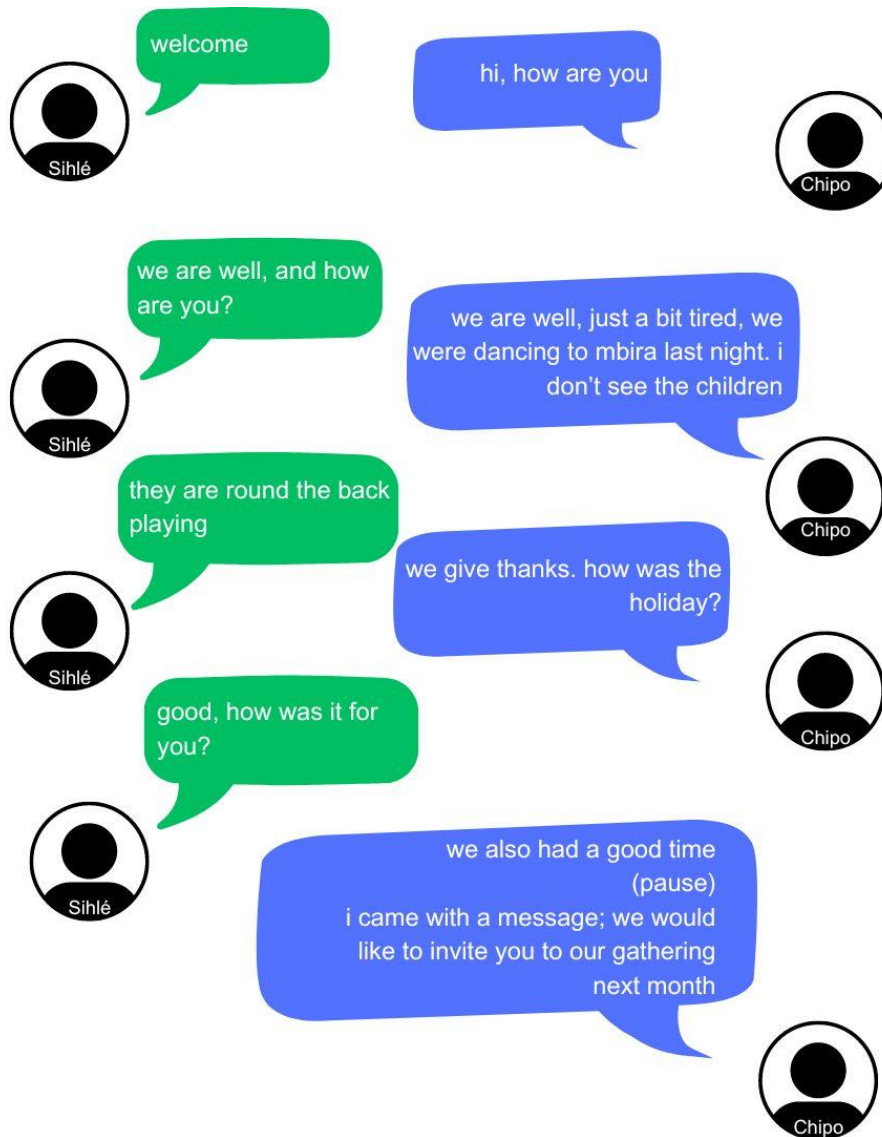


Fig.3 English dialogue

sarungano, then, are treated one at a time in conditions that may prevail according to how we are *called* (as an act of invocation) into intercultural spaces of learning. please note, no sarungano comes before another, this is simply a device for movement between the different sections of the essay like touching different points in a denderedzwa/round. akin to the 'names of the human species' (Wikipedia, 2021) different sarungano will have primacy in different intercultural encounters. like the musasa forest, they are rhizomic (Deleuze and Guattari, 2013).

sarungano ebbs and flows between the gungano and the story realm. to make the work cohere as part of nhorwa/gifting culture, i adopt a chronological structure referring both to my own noticed sarungano and the work presented as published to which this essay refers.

each following section will come into being and come to an ending in ngano style:

Part 2

invitation to draw a denderedzwa/round - names, including nicknames, you are given in the family

List of Publications treated in this section:

- people of influenza
- people of no influenza

kutambirwa - being celebrated

in which the candidate introduces sarungano as **born/borne listener**, in the hands of others, vulnerable and often treated as not yet knowing:

learning in the dislocated body

daré celebration of kasvava/newborn begins with kushumira - direct address with ancestors. amai/mother and kasvava remain in the chikuta/'birthing space' until rukuvhuté/'umbilical cord' falls off. rukuvhuté is buried under the chikumbaridzo/threshold, a *liminal* space (Turner, 2013), to ground the spirit of the newborn with the ancestors. once rukuvhuté is *earthed*, the child can now be acknowledged through kudoma/naming, an act to honour the new life in relation to pasi/earth. this zita, which i refer to from now on as true-name, celebrates the self through genealogy and through connections and responsibilities to pasichigaré - all nature. daré learning is therefore steeped in the "greater than human family" (Abram, 2022 no pagination) or "world archive" (Mbembe, 2022 no pagination).

in 1952 the Rhodesian⁶ government passed the African Registration and Identification Act (Dube, 2008), which as well as monitoring and restricting the movement of 'native' people, imposed the 'first name-surname' format over the familiar zita. Dube (2008) describes birth registration as the first contact we have with the state. on Rhodesian birth certificates, zita/'true name' was absent or squeezed in as a middle name.

when poet Kathy Galloway visited a First Nation reservation in Canada, her encounter with three generations of women of one family, painfully brought home the implication of names and naming in the colonisation of a people, their culture and identity. she notes the significance of a name “. . . is not just a question of being known by others, of belonging, but of knowing oneself.” (Galloway, 2004, p.10). through this dislocation by renaming, many would-be bearers of *daré* became “objects who are known and are acted upon, rather than subjects who know and act” (Freire, 1993 p.10).

people of influenza and people of no influenza

“UNESCO believes everyone has the right to learn in their own language and that it is an important means to improving learning, learning outcomes and socio-emotional development. However, globally 40% of the population does not have access to an education in a language they speak or understand.”

(unesco.org)

school education replaced *daré* learning buoyed by enthusiasm from parents who pushed us because the Rhodesian ‘colour bar’⁷ had deprived them of equal access to that type of learning. i was forced into a new habitus (Bourdieu, 1984) in a space where my *zita*/‘true-name’, tongue, and all other bearings in the world were unacknowledged and unwelcome. in a routine choreographed by schoolteachers as power actors of the state, i was contorted into a depository-in-training for memorising and memorialising. the cubed classroom jarred with the rounded *daré*, and school became a place of destitution (Mignolo, 2020). i resembled the organism in an autoimmune disease, programmed to attack normal cells in favour of foreign cells. instead of growing naturally, i became a farm crop fertilised to depend on the farm hand rather than absorb nutrients from *pasichigaré*. and yet, as will be shown in the following sections, the farm hand could not stop the breeze from whispering my true essence into my cropped limbs, leaves and nipped buds.

[Something Like Sugarbread \(2018\)](#)

Sithole, T. (2018) *Something Like Sugarbread*. Speculative Books. Glasgow

People of influenza p.19 People of no influenza pp.20-21

this poetry anthology features a critique of my schooling, illustrated in this couplet of ease and dis-ease titled 'people of no influenza' and 'people of influenza'. this encompasses the point i had arrived at, of seeing education as intercultural, not as a set of polarities. Ingold (2018) notes how anthropologists have gone to great lengths to document 'indigenous' knowledge, to reveal its detail, sophistication and accuracy and uncover the process of its acquisition. in the portfolio i am submitting, going beyond documenting, i reflect on my embodiment of this knowledge in education. for children like me who grow up with at least two concurrent educations, mutualising begins instinctually as a survival tactic then gradually becomes a skill.

ambuya: ndoo pakaperera sarungano

Part 3

invitation to draw a denderedzwa/round - names you are given in community

in the second denderedzwa of your choice, please write the names that you are called socially. think about where you live, hobbies and pastimes (not formal work/paid employment).

totenda/thanks

ambuya: paivapo

gungano: dzepfundé

kutambanuka - unfurling

in which the candidate introduces sarungano as **bearable listener**, venturing into unfamiliar spaces of uncertainty and risk, tracing the encounters and conditions that create the migrating story-being, and the knowledge created as a body of work, bearable to new habits, habitats and their inhabitants:

List of Publications treated in this section:

- **guide to a traveller**
- **animyst**
- **seeds of thought**

makarekare/'in ancient times' most young men dreamed of being hombarume/'accomplished huntsman', much in the same way mazuvano/'in current times' many young Africans dream of being 'overseas' (a modern sango/forest) hunting cash, goods, clothes, and some sort of refinement. for the hunting adventure into sango, fear and excitement in time give way to realisation that the hunt is not only to down prey, but to up knowledge - of the land, plants, creatures, and the flow through and in-between. kuvhima/hunting is also about medicine -

treating the body from stings, bites, and injuries; geography - situating/locating yourself within the landscape; spirit - acknowledging residing and wandering spirits in sango. community - being part of a group; logistics - how and when to travel, what to carry; and much more. ultimately it is about learning to acknowledge sango, a realm both dangerous and life-giving. in education this is like acknowledging that numeracy can be enhanced through music or dance, chemistry through cooking, literacy through imaginative storytelling.

creativity as treatment for the dislocated body

i arrived in the sango of UK, the former colonial master, at twenty-one. struggling to mutualise with my new environment, due to cold weather and some discrimination related to immigration and integration, i took refuge in an old love - reading and writing. writing allowed me to notice hidden frustrations that had been building up, my poems increasingly becoming a polemic aimed at 'the West'. my foray into the arts allowed me deeper listening beyond what i perceived as hostility.

seeds of thought (creative arts collective)

<https://5seedsofthought.weebly.com/>

initially trying to pursue my own 'success' as a writer/poet, co-hosting 'seeds of thought' (Seeds) arts collective made me realise my potential in supporting the creativity of others. the hosts of Seeds (Tarneem, Ernest and i) share between us poetry, theatre, music and visual art, organising and facilitating free workshops, exhibitions, and performances. i lead in creative writing, expanding my 'creative habit' (Tharp, 2008) - nurtured with practice in order to be cultivated and sustained. our monthly performance event is what Seeds has become known for, as a gungano/gathering.

with no money exchanging hands, Seeds is a liminal rather than liminoid space as Turner (1982) explains, the liminoid (sport, art, pastimes) is more like a commodity, which one selects and pays for - than the liminal, which elicits loyalty and is bound up with one's membership or desired membership.

the gungano opens with a mbira set from my brother Ernest and i, and then, like ambuya does in ngano, i invoke sarungano of of the gathering with the maungira/echo of call-and-response:

ganyamatopé: hekani

gungano: hekani

hekani, an affirmation, acknowledgement, greeting embracing ancestors mutually, a celebration of coming together - what began instinctually has come to symbolise the event. i have since adopted it as my opening to any public performance.

with no ‘fee-paying stranger’ (Brook, 1968) or headliners, the gungano/gathering is the main attraction. though Seeds happens in a cubed auditorium, we mutualise through the spirit of daré, reminding everyone that in the gungano/gathering presence is participation. we see people developing their writing, confidence and stagecraft through this convivial environment. Nyamnjoh (2015, p.1) writes:

... conviviality invites us to celebrate and preserve incompleteness and mitigate the delusions of grandeur that come with ambitions and claims of completeness ... with the added possibilities of potency brought their way by the incompleteness of others, never as a ploy to becoming complete, but to make them more efficacious in their relationships and sociality.

such conviviality is a form of “... Poetics of Relation where each and every identity is extended through relationship with the Other.” (Glissant, 1997 p.11). we learn to acknowledge the generosity of the venue offering the space in kind; performers (professional and non-professional) who come not expecting payment find a certain freedom without trying to earn their fee; the audience who come without expectation and judgement predicated on a ticket price.

Graeber (2013, p.286) makes a distinction between socialists demanding higher wages and anarchists demanding fewer working hours because they “...wanted time in which to live, to pursue forms of value of which the capitalists could not even dream.” we recognise these values

as those of a ‘fugitive space’ (Akómoláfé, 2022) as we operate outside the performance of (capitalist) power, and a ‘ruderal space’ (Yohannes, 2023), one that is deemed by coloniality to be wasted.

[ganyamatopé dzapasi my zita/true name](#)

a moment of cheer inspired my amai/mother to recite our ancestral poetry during one of our long-distance phone calls. by praisefully acknowledging me as ganyamatopè, she chanted me into to ‘the dream of learning [my] true name’ (Galloway, 2004). in this, what the first nations people in Canada call ‘dreaming back’, she repaired the dislocation that occurred at my birth registration. as a result, I changed my strap line as an artist:

“better known as ganyamatopè dzapasi, my ancestral family name, my heritage inspires me to connect with other people through creativity and the anticipation to learn...”

[animyst](#)

it is difficult to treat the injustice of colonisation without being resentful. in my poem ‘[the animist](#)’ i start to loosen my grip on the chokehold of my own anger by finding a more playful and mischievous treatment of this contamination. this is another way of honouring vakuru/elders’ insistence on mufaro/joy, as i start to experience what Abrams (2022) calls falling in love outwards. an approachable quality starts to develop which creates possibilities for intercultural abundance.

in this piece i attend to the demeaning connotations of ‘animist’. for example, accounts of ‘natives worshipping muchakata’ were commonplace in early intercultural encounters between my ancestors and some ‘Western’ observers. if the ‘natives’ were indeed worshipping muchakata as reported, it seems reasonable since scientific study itself has concluded that muchakata releases oxygen into the atmosphere - a source of life itself.

muchakata is a tree!

my ancestors were in fact gathering at the foot of muchakata to commune with nature.

i am being mischievous of course in this presentation of 'Western' knowledge, but i mean to expose something important here - that mutuality is often present, but hubris occludes the potential for mutualising.

Ingold (2022) regards anthropology as observation and conversation with all beings (human and non-human) we share our lives with, and goes further to say this conversation is not about the world, but *is* the world, and to engage in it is to inhabit the world. i inhabit the world as ganyamatopé dzapasi, and in my poetry even frustrations or anguish are expressed in an *accent* of joy - not as being but becoming (Ingold, 2022).

as a poet i notice the beauty, power, and pattern of words; i agonise for days, weeks, or months over word choice; i'm woken often from drowsiness by a thought that just demands to be jotted down. when i'm asked 'who has published you?' the previously-mentioned destitution of 'truth not in brackets' (Mignolo,2020), is revealed in the presumption that being published is what makes a poet. i have other ways of validating myself as a poet, for example the invitation to be sadombo - auratorpoet on behalf of the family - during my elder sister's marriage ceremony; a role usually performed by someone with many more living years than my sixteen at the time. through Seeds i was re-calling daré practice that began as a pwere/youngster where i was LearnPerforming⁸ various forms of ancient auratorship:

- kushumira in communication with ancestors
- kusuma in communication with vakuru/elders
- kudeketera in communication within zvirango/ritual
- kudetemba - in communication through performance poetry
- kubhuya - in communication within the conversation style of daré

though an aural practice, in daré people need to interpret language of ritual processes - symbolic and sensory elements - what have been called visual or opaque literacies (Kondon, 2007; Pink, 2001).

Smith (2012) discusses the struggles of indigenous peoples (*oral* tradition) challenging the nation state over legitimacy of documents (*written* tradition) as authority in their relentless search for social justice. Ong (1982 p.12) argues “Though words are grounded in oral speech, writing tyrannically locks them into a visual field forever”. Abram (2022, no pagination) expresses similar views, “... the alphabet allowed us a chance to forget our connection to our natural surroundings and other forms . . . speech as shaped breath, nature’s sound as voice . . .”

Abram (2022) does also appreciate the ‘powerful magic’ of writing, which i recognise as enhancing reflective and creative skills; remote sharing of ideas and stories; and the potential for meaning making or mischief. for example, in the poem Good English⁹ my pronunciation of ‘minute’ as something small and not a unit of time, playfully muddles the familiar idea of a minute’s silence.

what is often forgotten in migration conversations is that all this movement is happening in speaking subjects on a planet with more than 6, 500 languages (Cronin, 2013). it is through Seeds that i lay ground for my intercultural scholarship, multilingual pedagogy and my discovery of translanguaging in this migratory aesthetic:

Translanguaging refers to the communicative practices in which people engage as they bring into contact different biographies, histories, and linguistic backgrounds.

Translanguaging has the potential to be transformative and creative, as it can transcend apparent difference, enabling people to communicate with whatever resources are available to them, rather than constraining them within prescribed limits.

(Blackledge and Creese, 2017 p.250)

Seeds’ work brought relationships and increased visibility which led me into working as a freelance artist. in Sir Walter Scott’s novel Ivanhoe (1820), a feudal lord refers to the paid army he has assembled as ‘free lances’ - the first known appearance of this term in written record. my freelance work is in the spirit of *mhizha*, someone whose talent/skill is held in *kuninipa*/humility, in service of a greater cause than the self. Seeds’ work led to further recognition as a community educator, notably to working for Scottish Book Trust

<https://www.scottishbooktrust.com/authors/tawona-sithole>, and to the position of honorary research fellow at the University of Glasgow.

Guide to a Traveller (2014) Showman Media. 2014.

Guide to a Traveller. [Online]. [Accessed 13 July 2023]. Available from:
<https://vimeo.com/109685038>

as i began my first role as an academic researcher, i was commissioned by the City of Glasgow for the 2014 Commonwealth Games. i was known to the City, having previously led the Afr-I-can project which i designed to challenge the ‘pitiabale African’ narrative. ‘guide to a traveller’ was inspired by African items in museum collections acquired in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, from the personal such as tsvimbo/’walking sticks’ to taxidermy-preserved animals such as mbizi/zebra and ngongoni/wildebeest. i returned to poetry, a language of spirit, to assume authority to speak on behalf of the items and their unknown makers and bearers. along with my own creations is a folk lullaby which i symbolically perform next to a once-living mbizi/zebra, my mother’s zita/’true name’.

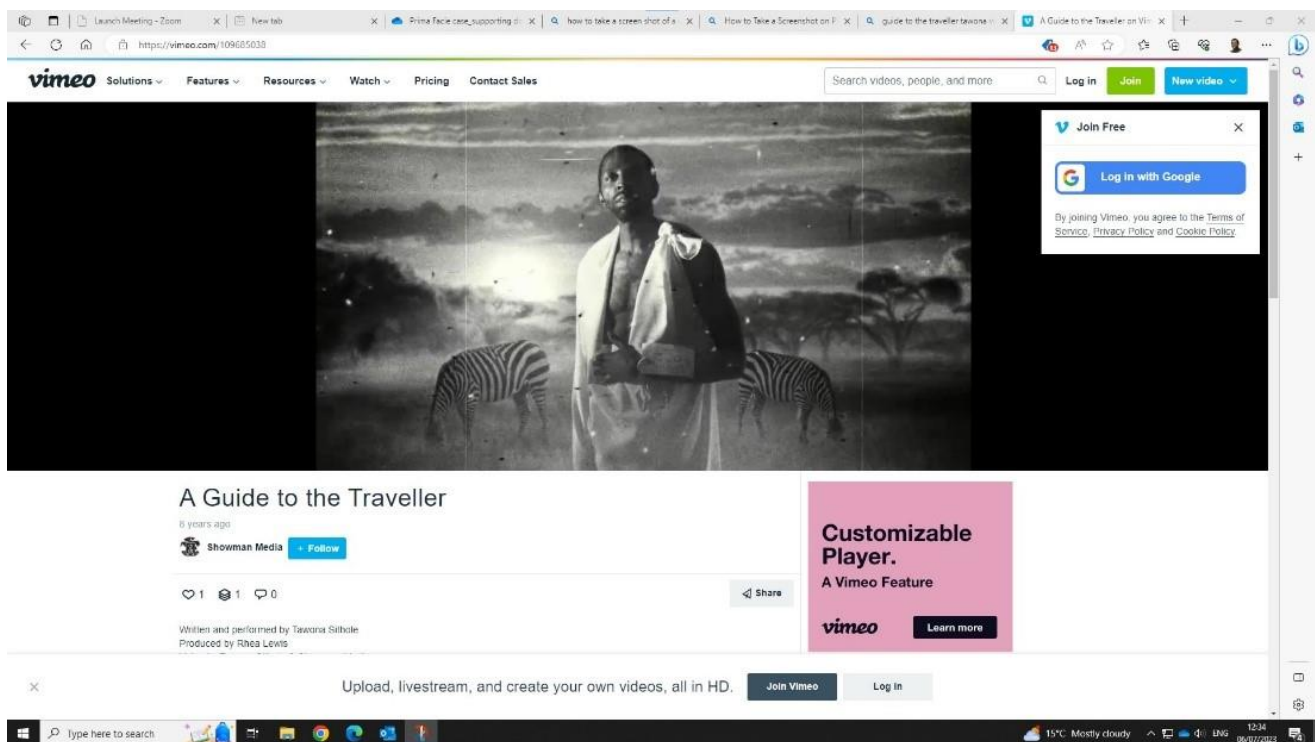


Fig.5 still image from ‘guide to a traveller’ film

in the film, a traveller is present who is not defined as human or non-human, identified instead through marks/markings and distinct sounds rather than appearance or voice. this opens migration to pasichigaré/'all nature' and allows a wider interpretation of a traveller and the experience of travelling. the refrain 'depending on conditions' locates sarungano in relation to surroundings and presence of other bodies, including migratory bodies.

hunting for knowledge, language and the arts with which to present daré wisdom to the world, i acknowledge collaborations like this one. i relate with Diamond (2021, p.75) who contends that "bringing in the *other's* perspective provides the mechanism that can shift the recycling gaze of the insider who struggles to see beyond their own reality, to enter into a space of true imagining." just like ancient adventurers relying on 'kashiri kamambo'/'majestic little bird' to lead them through the sango, this sarungano adventures by making new kin.

within my nhorwa i'm offering Seeds as an element in the PhD by publication, a place where work is in a different community development classroom, and my roles as convener and curator. mutualising requires getting out of the mindset of the academic/creative genius, which Tharp (2008) cautions against, saying that though it may seem paradoxical, talent is developed through practice.

ambuya: ndoo pakaperera sarungano

Part 4

invitation to draw a denderedzwa/round - names you are given in work

in the third denderedzwa write down names related to your work. include previous roles if you like. getting there, just one more denderedzwa to go. totenda/thanks.

ambuya: paivapo

gungano: dzepfundé

kutambidzana - mutualising

List of Publications treated in this section:

- **Good english**
- **Broken World Broken Word**
- **warriors who do not fight**
- **Creating welcoming learning environments**
- **Interrupting the cognitive empire**

in which the candidate introduces sarungano as **bearing listener**, able to offer accrued knowledge. the candidate summarises their contribution to knowledge within the field of intercultural pedagogy and the arts:

Bourdieu (1984) explains, habitus is defined by the capacity to produce classifiable practices and works, and the capacity to differentiate and appreciate these practices and products (taste). the publications in this section show the point of crossover and why this thesis is not being presented for a Doctorate in poetry but for an intercultural poetics and education.

[good English \(2014-2017\)](#)

Showman Media. 2017. *good English*. [Online]. [Accessed 13 July 2023].

Literary text published for The Scotsman: <https://www.scotsman.com/arts-and-culture/write-stuff-poetry-by-tawona-sithole-1517027>

Oral Performance poetry record and available from:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uo8kiSwZGs0>

The primary publication site is the archived AHRC Researching Multilingually at Borders website:

<https://www.gla.ac.uk/research/az/unesco/aboutus/>

“this is the oppressor’s language, but i need it to speak to you”

(Rich, 1989, no pagination)

as Philip (2015) uses poetry to comment on the long and violent history of the English language in her native Caribbean, i explore my own complicated relationship with English through this poem. ‘*you speak good English*’ is a phrase said to me often in the UK, usually preceded by ‘*where are you from?*’. though offered as a compliment, the often overly-surprised undertone is hard not to hear, hard to bear. the assumption of an achievement i should be proud of unintentionally renders invisible the suffering of my forebears through colonisation, the vehicle that delivered this tongue to my birthplace. any attempt to confront this moment would involve some reprimanding/retaliatory lecture to ruin a thus-far convivial intercultural encounter. just like the mutualising in my school days, what started as instinctual becomes habitus, hence the refrain in my poem - ‘*little awkward smile, my euphemism for words*’. like mbira at airport security, i adopt a mutualising poise towards historical language trauma.

acknowledging that i have a choice of how to react is important, as my brother ganyamatopé chatetereka observes, “uto rese rine marwiro aro” / “each warrior has their own way of fighting”¹². my little awkward smile, my way for making room in that moment, is my own warrior/fighting technique, concealing a surging cringe in me. it took me over four years to create the poem *good English*, in the way Brook (1968) describes an utterance as a final act of a long internal process. Bringhurst (cited in Popova, 2023, no pagination) argues “the survival of poetry depends on the failure of language”. similarly, Popova (2023, no pagination) says “poetry gives shape to our unspoken and often unspeakable hopes, fears, and inner tremblings”, reminiscent of the seminal work of Edouard Glissant (Diawara and Geis, 2023).

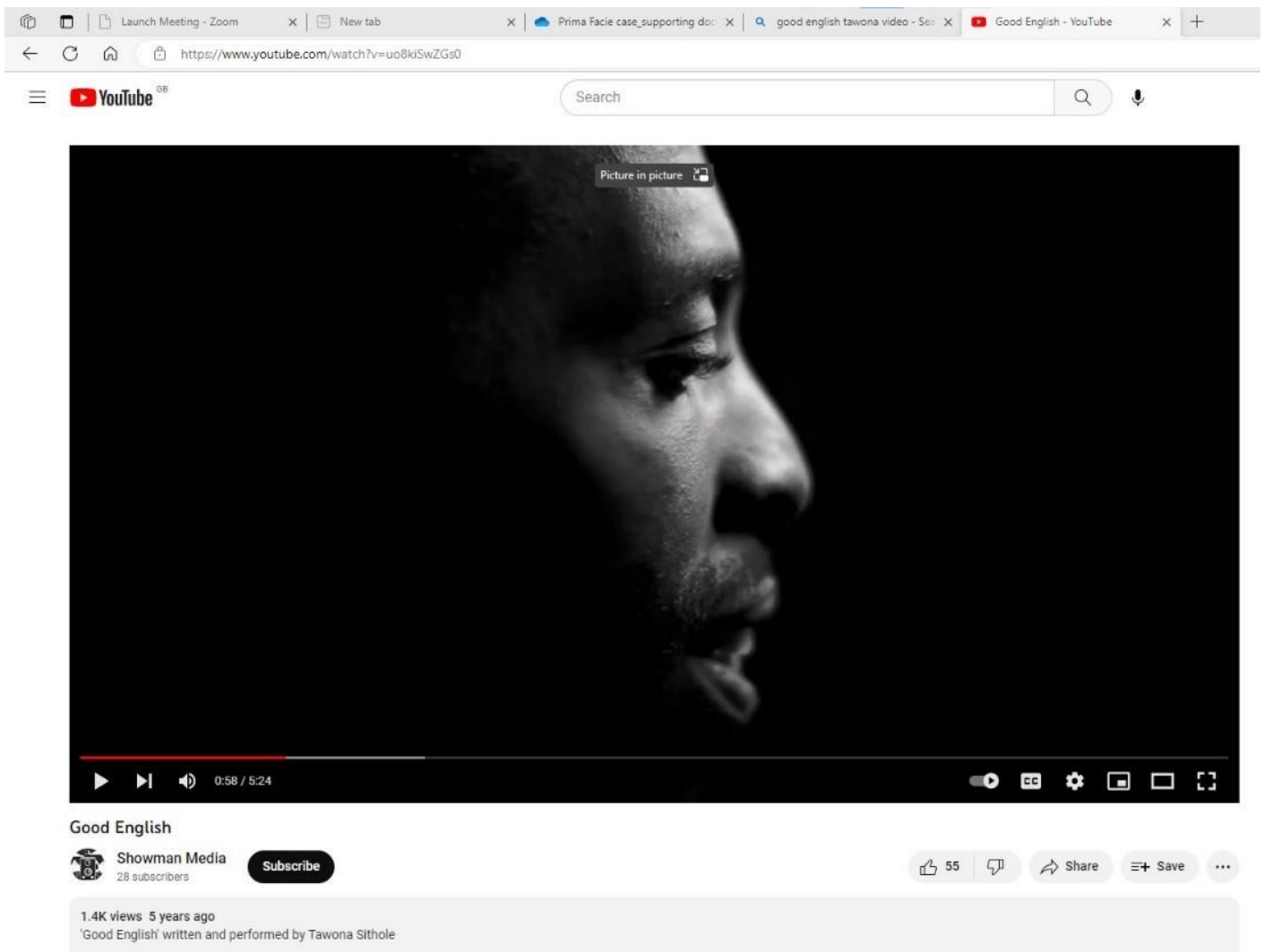


Fig.6 still image from 'good English' film

my 'inner tremblings' held memories such as humiliating punishments if caught speaking your mother tongue on school premises. terms like witchdoctor, kraal, tribe, settler, 'garden boy'/'house girl' (referring to adult servants), third world, etc., were staples of the culture i grew up in. television or 'idiot box' (Lee, 2000) and songs were a major part of English language learning, so as well as unquestionably/unquestioningly being on the side of the cowboys in 'cowboys and Indians' films, a childhood song that accompanied skip-rope opened with the words "Christopher Columbus was a great man"

‘good English’ is ironic, postmodern, and playful but also exuberant in its reaching to show English at the height of her powers. a regular feature in my spoken word performance, it has also been adopted by many scholars and teachers of literature, languages, and intercultural studies. it is part of a University of Glasgow MOOC that has now been taught in over thirty-seven countries.

in the poem, *student’s companion* is rightly interpreted by audiences as *classmate*, but the hidden mischief is that it also refers to a childhood English textbook by Collins and printed in Glasgow, the city i now live in.

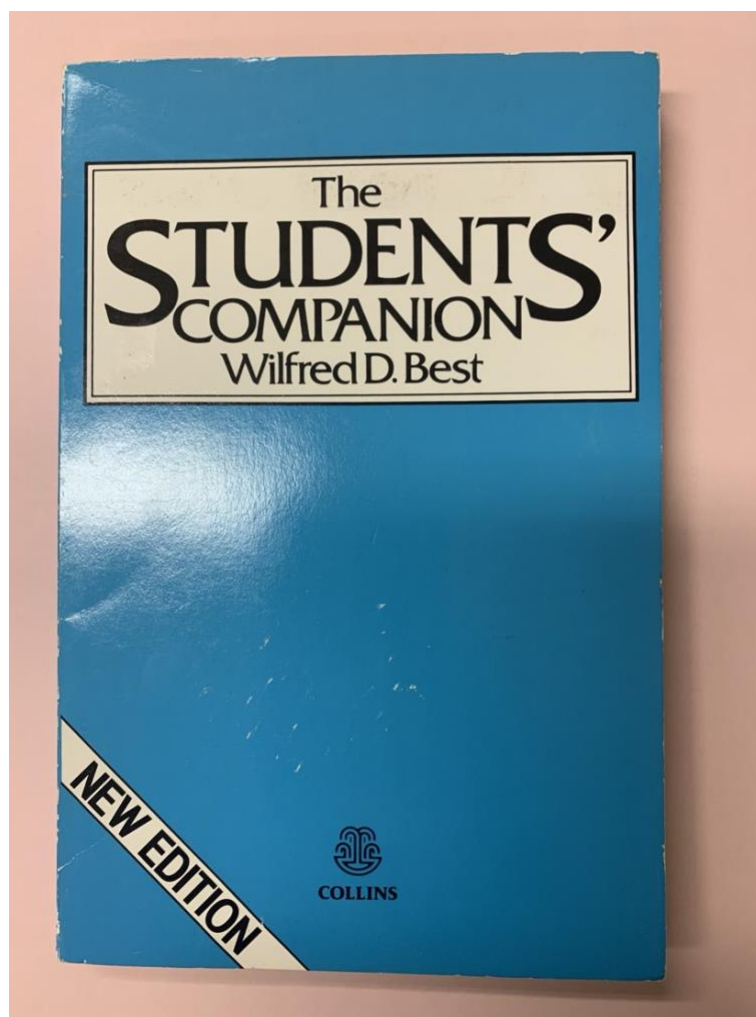


Fig.7 cover of The Students' Companion book

‘weak arms twisted by the brutish’ is an idiom of the body and a mischievous reference to the assailant - British.

the com(pli)ment is complicated, also, because it exposes the lack of mutuality in formal education. if the history of Empire was more openly acknowledged then my fellow English-speakers would recognise me as being part of the same world, having been taught in English from the age of five.

with over 1 billion speakers, English is the topmost spoken language in the world and boasts the most non-native speakers (unesco.org, 2024; ethnologue.com, 2024). in the poem i'm mischief maker, trickster (Turner, 1969) exposing my mastery of the idiom, thereby playfully rebuking the 'complicated compliment' for the language of an aggressor. yet i'm also embracing it as nhorwa/gift, as Glissant (2020) did with French, knowing it would serve his purpose to work within this imposed tongue. i'm saying *i'm greater than that, my culture is greater than that* and *i escaped all that*. the rebuke is not of an angry teacher, it is of an elder.

RM Borders

as poet-in-residence my initiation into *serious* scholarship was the invitation to a large Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) project, *Researching Multilingually at Borders* (RM Borders). seven academic institutions (international and UK) and third sector organisations collaborated in comparative research on translation and interpretation at borders of Language, the Body, Law and State to develop theory, ethical research practices and research methodologies in relation to multilingual research.

[University of Glasgow - Schools - School of Social & Political Sciences - Research - Research in Sociology - Research projects - Researching Multilingually at the Borders of Language, the Body, Law and the State](#)

i guided colleagues in applying creative arts practice in the research process - exploring questions, conceiving ideas, engaging with participants, and presenting findings/outputs. researchers from law, social sciences, medicine, linguistics and education learned how to engage partners and participants using 'theatre of the oppressed' (Boal, 1979), finding it surprisingly effective in knowledge exchange; writing field notes as poems or scripts, finding them more

detailed and memorable; adopting the drama technique of devising as a way of inquiry and idea generation, finding it intellectually stimulating as an embodied experience.

Broken World Broken Word

Broken World Broken Word Production. [Online]. [Accessed 13 July 2023]. Available from: <https://vimeo.com/245734132> (requires Vimeo log in to view)

as well as introducing creative arts practice into the RM Borders research process, i was tasked with writing a play script. *Broken World Broken Word* is a devised theatre show based on RM Borders research themes and experiences. it was made in rural Ghana with a company of twenty-six young local dancers/performers and an orchestra of international musicians playing African instruments. colleagues conducted their own ethnographic research of our production process. with more than twenty languages in the room our biggest challenge was finding a multilingual practice that would honour the research themes whilst de-centering power. in the presumed *scarcity* that leads to monolingual practice, we discovered the ‘communicative potential of the senses’ (Cronin, 2013) especially through dance and movement. our principal investigator came up with ‘English last’ as a methodological device, meaning the conversation emerged from languages held by those with the least power in the room (Phipps et.al, 2020). the repetition of multiple translations *slowed* things down, forcing us to listen in a concentrated way. the young people, who like me live multilingually, became more than just performers but translators, teachers, and equal partners in a collaboration. we later discovered this was the first time a lot of parents had seen their children performing on such a stage.

warriors who do not fight

Phipps, A. and Sitholé, T. (2018) *The Warriors Who Do Not Fight*. Wild Goose. Glasgow (WORD COUNT - 9,792)

the anthology “warriors who do not fight” is a poetic rendering of the RM Borders project co-authored with our principal investigator, as i encouraged her to return to writing poetry. this medium allowed us to reach into meaning and expression that did not fit norms of representing research. the collection is a call-and-response between two scholar poets who share understanding of daré as intercultural practice.

creating welcoming learning environments

Sitholé, T. and Andrews, J. (2022) *A Conversation with Tawona Sithole, Poet and Musician* pp98-113 in Andrews, J. and Mohammad, M. (eds) (2022) *Creating Welcoming Learning Environments: Using Creative Arts Methods in Language Classrooms. Multilingual Matters. Bristol* (WORD COUNT 8456)

in this chapter, i perform in text, an academic conversation with a colleague relating to my daré methodology as pedagogical practice.

“Stories arrive through your ears and eyes and skin; they settle among your bones as you sleep, and when the time is right, you let them out so they can be free to go and grow.” (Aldegheri, 2022, p.7)

in April 2021, while we grappled with the COVID-19 pandemic, a story arrived of a woman from Chiredzi in Zimbabwe who jumped into a river and prised her three-year-old son from the jaws of a garwé/crocodile.

<https://www.facebook.com/NYTelevisionzim/videos/chiredzi-woman-rescues-son-from-crocodile-attack/577386359803227/>

interviewed afterwards, she recalled vakuru/elders saying that attacking the nostrils would weaken a garwé. despite her panic, this woman somehow recalled, reacted, and rescued her child. this kind of *auratory* is something i would have dismissed at the height of my urban-schooled hubris, but this time it took me back to ngano in the denderedzwa/circle. this story is about the power of stories. in the context of the pandemic, i reflected on how the elders’

anecdote had given birth to another anecdote, one for me to hold as i performed and workshopped ngano online.

in the classroom or any gungano/gathering, i bring denderedzwa by rearranging the seating. when not possible, such as online, the spirit of denderedzwa is borne in my ambition to encourage every voice in the space. the round is also present in non-human elements as pencils trace shapes on paper, bearing traces of the soil, trees, paper mills, delivery vehicles, desks and tables.

ngano/storytelling humbles the experienced practitioner through the wonderment of a child's imagination and power is changed through mutualising. ambuya does not start ngano by saying nyararai/'be quiet', or teerera/listen; just the call 'paivapo'. in teaching this auratory practice to those not familiar with it, i'm translating a form of concentrated listening, and archiving ngano through performance as mnemonic. ngano pedagogy is an invitation to mutual learning and starts to create welcoming learning environments.

in one classroom, while introducing mabvumira/rhythm through drumming, a curious excitement brought a pause to the session. with a nod from the teacher, pupils disappeared into an adjacent room and one-by-one reappeared bearing a jembe - West African drum. my little drum i usually pass round was in abundance (a-drum-dance) as nearly everyone had their own drum. by the time i left the school at the end of the project, the jembes were in regular use. this is an example of what i see as the transformational element of my pedagogical practice.

[interrupting the cognitive empire](#)

[Phipps, A.](#) and [Sitholé, T.](#) (2022) Interrupting the cognitive empire: keynote drama as cultural justice. [Language and Intercultural Communication](#), 22(3), pp. 391-411. (doi: [10.1080/14708477.2022.2039170](#)) (WORD COUNT - 12308)

"Courage is the greatest virtue, for without courage you cannot practice the other virtues consistently."

(Angelou, 2008, no pagination)

in one ngano, zizi/owl manages to rule the other birds to the extent of enslaving them, by pretending that the pointy ears are horns. it took the courage of little gwenhuré to get close enough to expose the deception. we have our own zizi to contend with in education - hubris - and we need intellectual and ethical courage to treat this contamination. many are being courageous like little gwenhuré. in his collection's title poem 'Freedom is Only a Thought Away' Mhofu Vhuramayi (Kunaka, 2007) encourages us to 'stop running away from love' of pasichigaré/'all nature'. in 2019 the four nominees for the prestigious Turner Prize came together to request that the jury award the accolade to them as a collective, and the jury unanimously agreed. Graeber (2015) provokes a courageous attitude as he reminds us that the ultimate hidden truth of the world is that it is something we make and could just as easily make differently.

in 2015 i was invited by our principal investigator to 'interrupt' her during a keynote address: while she flows with intellectual arguments and quotes, from within the audience i suddenly start performing poetry. the audience are shocked, not knowing exactly what is going on, or what to do. in this *liminal* moment, structure must be restored, or else chaos reigns and the audience is potentially unsafe (Turner, 1977, 1995). when i stop speaking, my colleague acknowledges me and the expected keynote continues, but something has changed. the 'keynote interruption' had been born. later, when it is clarified that this was planned, there are animated responses and conversations. now, over 20 of these performances of 'interrupting the cognitive empire' have been borne on stages round the world.

this act requires courage from my colleague who bears risk as a celebrated academic *breaking contract* with an audience, and on my part as the outsider *gatecrashing*. i had given keynote addresses as a recognised figure in the creative arts, but the academic keynote was new ground. the publication 'interrupting the cognitive empire' is a reflective and reflexive paper co-authored with my colleague for *Language and Intercultural Communication* (LAIC). in a playful subversion of an iconic form of the academy (the keynote address) i, a 'black' African poet, interrupt a 'white' British professor to introduce *daré* pedagogy through poetry, song, drama,

and ultimately mischief into this *sacred* academic space. to prevent chaos and avoid harm (Turner 1969, 1995), an acute level of caretaking is needed for the host, audience, security, janitorial and other staff, us the performers, and scholarship itself. in collaborating this way, we trust our experience in performance as ritual, akin to ambuya as celebrant in ngano. the ‘biting point’ is that moment just before i interrupt, my mutualising poise like that of the folklore warrior Jekanyika, lying face-up, head resting on a log, waiting for a mukuru/elder to tattoo his chest with a red-hot arrow he declares, “nyorai garwé asorojena, ndagadzirira” / “please draw a crocodile my elder, i’m ready” (Mugugu, 2010, p.24)

with all risks considered, we have found the interruption concentrates listening, ushers in the voice of the ‘Global South’ mutualising with that of the ‘Global North’ and pushes the audience emotionally and intellectually. the ‘interrupter’ role is also that of my earlier ‘trickster’, influenced by the sahwira role of bringing comic relief to daré in serious or sombre occasions.

[The Language of Migration \(2022\)](#)

[Sitholé, T.](#), Crawley, H., Feyissa, D., Tapsoba, T. A., Meda, M. M., Sangli, G., Yeoh, S. G. and [Phipps, A.](#) (2022) The language of migration. [Zanj: The Journal of Critical Global South Studies](#), 5(1/2), pp. 14-26. (doi: [10.13169/zanjglobsoutstud.5.1.0002](https://doi.org/10.13169/zanjglobsoutstud.5.1.0002)) (WORD COUNT 5424)

funded by United Kingdom Research and Innovation (UKRI), the Migration for Development and Equality (MIDEQ) research hub is working to better understand migration in the ‘Global South’ and thereby find ways of reducing inequality. as research associate, i am further developing creative arts methods in and as research. during a meeting with colleagues i wondered what would happen if all researchers drew from our ‘well of language resources’ (Attia, cited in Andrews et al. 2020) to re-treat our research topic of migration. after discussing with our director, we invited colleagues to write vignettes on migration from their language/cultural perspectives. some researchers decided to attempt writing poetry which i supported them in. i ended up with a writing *and* editorial role, the outcome being a special issue featuring academic articles and poems. all this work is validating poetry as a language of education, as former Welsh

laureate R.S. Thomas (2002 p.69) says, “poetry is that which arrives at the intellect by way of the heart.”

Muster Station (2022)

Edinburgh International Festival Commission, Grid Iron Theatre, 2022

Available at: <https://www.eif.co.uk/archive/muster-station-leith>

the production of Muster Station represents a breakthrough in my work as a playwright, researcher and educator. it allowed me to show on stage to the world’s leading artistic festival the work i have researched and developed within the UNESCO Chair¹³ and CUSP¹⁴ concerning the violent and intimate experiences of borders, and collaborative methods of development. performed by one of the leading theatre companies in the UK, the production was sold out every performance, nominated for a CATS¹⁵ award, and received 4- and 5-star reviews across all the critical press.

ambuya: ndoo pakaperera sarungano

Part 5

invitation to draw a denderedzwa/round - words of kuyera/'affinity with nature'

in this final denderedzwa please write any elements of nature that you feel an affinity with, such as animals, landscape, weather.

one more invitation to come. totenda/thanks

ambuya: paivapo

gungano: dzepfundé

kutambarara - stretching out

in which the candidate introduces sarungano as **borne listener** acting and enacting reflective cycles of being, knowing, and not knowing. like mist is tangible and intangible at the same time, treating all the mysts - mysterious, mystical, mystic. invitation to a barefoot walk through forest floors of your own wonderment. kutambarara is the position you sit in (legs outstretched, arms at your side) while the murapi/healer attends to you. kutambarara is borne in spi-ritual communication:

List of Publications treated in this section:

- **pasichigaré: we are nature**

pasichigaré: we are nature

Sitholé, T. and Al Mousawi, T. (2018) Pasichigare: we are nature. [Exhibitions]

Currently on display and also available at: <https://eprints.gla.ac.uk/193506/>

a collaboration with my wife, Tarneem Al Mousawi illustrating my poetry, this artwork attempts to “reconcile humanity with nature” (unesco.org), in the same way that others advocate (Akómoláfé, 2022; Abram, 2022; Phipps, 2019). i also make the important distinction between pride and kutenda/appreciation. kutenda returns us to acknowledging, which is a moral concern, in academic writing performed as referencing.



Fig.8 pasichigaré exhibit, Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum

a tryptic of illustrated poetry, commissioned by the City of Glasgow; its making and presence are a celebration of the mystic power of creativity.

the story of how the ring structure of benzene apparently came in a dream to German chemist August Kekulé seemed outrageous in a high school chemistry class. i reflected on the elsewhere

'witchdoctors', ridiculed for their claims of receiving treatments and remedies in dreams. there is a plethora of visual art, music and poetry that came from dreams, or whose making was dreamlike, occurring in dreamtime.

the 'poem that writes itself' is acknowledged by many poets (Longley, 2024; Oliver, 2015; Angelou, 2011; Lehmann cited in Kembrey, 2018). RS Thomas insisted that poetry was an impulse and came from emotion rather than thought, adding "We only know when a poem is about when it has wafted by, trailing a fragrance." (McElhinney, 2014 no pagination). Longley (2024, no pagination) tries to describe this sarungano mystic, "It's a mystery where poems come from, if I knew where poems come from, I would go there . . . When I write a poem I'm moving into unknown territory, hoping to be surprised by some kind of redemptive eloquence to cast light into dark corners." Naomi Shihab Nye recalls sitting on a bus and hearing an unseen woman's voice speaking the words of her now famous poem, *Kindness* (Nye, 1998). this experience of what in the folk traditions of Britain is called 'night visiting' was mine for 'pasichigaré: we are nature'. in psychology it is known as 'flow' (Csikszentmihalyi, 2004).

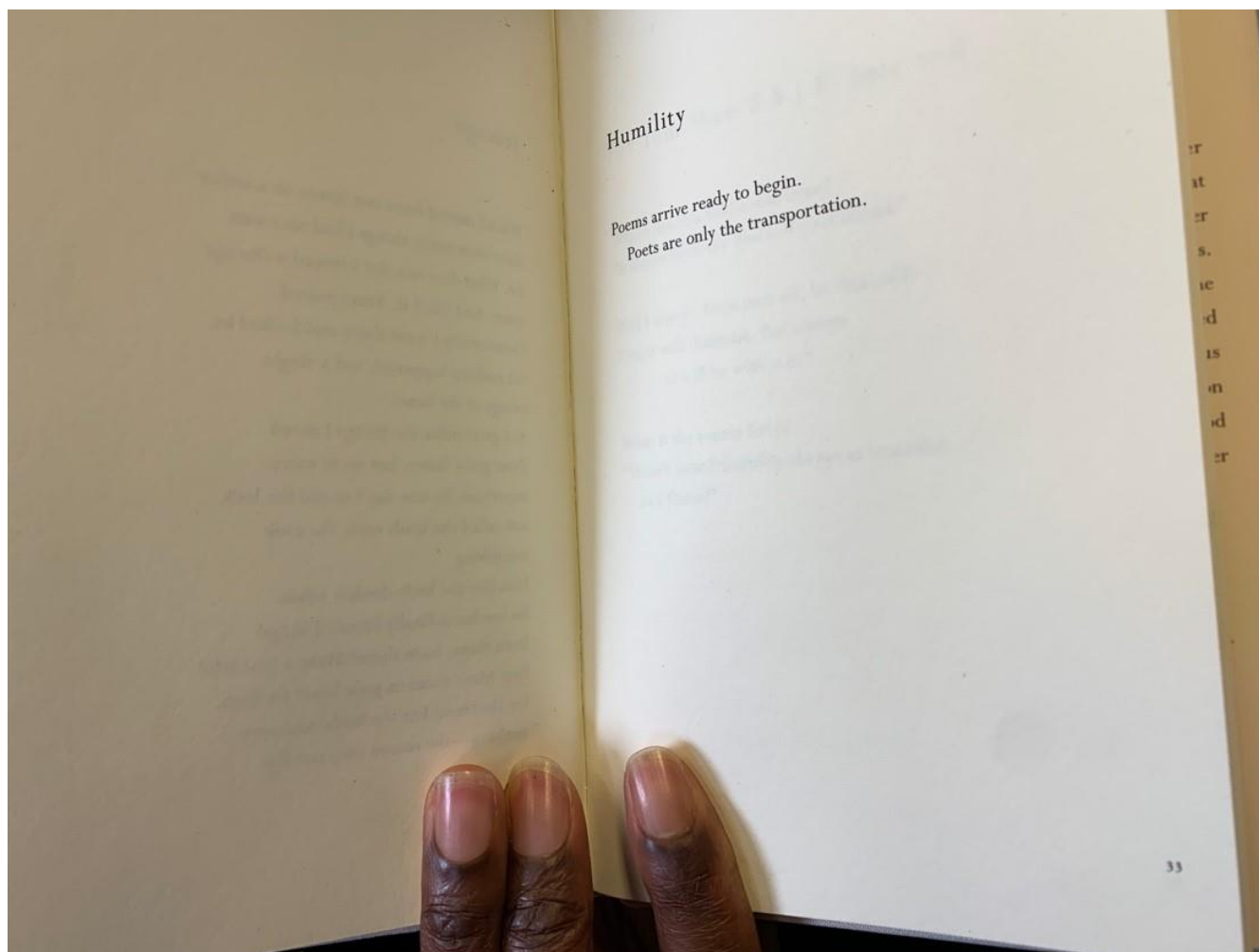


Fig.9 image of poem 'Humility' (2015)

this experience of wonderment was not new to me, having happened and still happening with other makings. my self-effacement in the poem as i declare “don't remember these words”, is to acknowledge this mystic realm, where ‘words are merely approximations’ (Mbembe, 2022). ritual and ceremony afford us a space to open up beyond the intellectual to meaning-making that is not coloured in by our cognitive dispositions but to a wider potential of possibilities of knowledge.

in teaching practice, my mutualising poise allows me to acknowledge this **aurality** in bodies of learners through idiom of sarungano and mbira.

mbira as pedagogy

- kuridza mbira - to *rouse* mbira, make sound, anyone can do this anytime
- kurova mbira - to *hit* mbira, play with intensity. also the name of notoriously venomous snake, rovambira/‘black mamba’. in the *spi-ritual* realm (and especially in dreams) the snake represents ancestral spirits
- kukwenya mbira - to *scratch* mbira (the keys are touched with the fingertips/nails). to play yearningly, inviting attention of ancestors; an urge to wake the sleeping
- kubata mbira - to *hold* mbira, play effortlessly as if all the gwenyambira is doing is kubata/holding mbira and the ancestors take over and do the playing

ambuya: ndoo pakaperera sarungano

Part 6

in which the candidate rounds up and states why this work is about bearing daré in intercultural education through finding a zita/true-name within and outwith daré, and within and outwith the academy; and now on many world stages; and how this daré method can and does offer new ways of mutual learning and knowledge:

rukova / stream

rounding up is less conclusion more rukova/stream running and returning just as sarungano/story-being does. in the current, no two reflections are the same, and sediment gathers in the flow, so what i present here needs further attention.

through creating, curating, performing, facilitating, as intercultural education, i notice that the most important aspect of my work is listening. the more attention i give to listening the better connection made within the human and non-human interaction. my work in various learning spaces has afforded me the privilege to acknowledge knowledge and develop my professional practice. i have also been exposed to the continuing deficit in intercultural relations and education. what are presented as world institutions and systems, such as the United Nations, The Commonwealth, World Bank, and International Court of Justice are all implicated in historical injustice - many key founding member states had colonies at the time. in its current state, the academy is in “. . . a shape that was determined by historical accident and preserved by tradition.” (Sperlinger et al., 2018 p. 88). according to Smith (2012) history from the coloniser controls the colonised.

we have no choice in what we inherit, but if we consider ourselves as future ancestors, our treatment of that legacy shapes our nhorwa for future generations. just like museums holding human remains and artefacts from colonial territories, the ‘Western’ academy has inherited wealth, cultural materials, and ideological dominance reaped directly from colonisation. despite its tremendous influence to address the gap in knowledge, the academy largely continues to

avoid telling the story of colonisation. this inability to hear and make room for other forms of knowledge renders the ‘Western’ academy equitably ineffective. as Freire (1993, p.106) puts it, “Every approach to the oppressed by the elites, as a class, is couched in false generosity . . .”

the unbearable and as-yet untreated trauma of colonisation undermines the integrity of world institutions and, therefore, they remain under siege from the voices calling for redress. the frustration of not being heard often boils over into undignified and unhelpful shaming or combative approaches. these approaches often attack those who are inclined to listen, and they have not worked beyond being performative for those who are not inclined to listen, who instead want to dig in and not change their ways. they just become aware and bureaucratise their response. the oppressed will not forget, in fact, as Glissant (1997) argues, from this ‘Abyss’ their memory only intensifies. the result is a dynamic equilibrium where the story of colonisation is known but remains invisible - what i understand as the insatiable desire for justice.

whilst there is pressure from decolonising agendas, normatively, the university continues to reside in the ‘Global North’, thus i return to my first statement of inquiry:

- **the western academy, through several centuries of practicing domination, is ill-equipped to listen, hear, and accommodate aural traditions of knowledge.**

if education is to better serve the world, alternative approaches and pedagogies are required (Santos, 2016; Mbembe, 2022; Badwan, 2022; Mignolo, 2020; Sperlinger et al. 2018). i'm now offering a means through experience, description, practice and analysis of showing how this might be done through introducing *daré* as an example. this thesis by publication is re-citing *kuwanda huuya*, arguing for mutuality, for declassifying *daré* from the imposed category of *indigenous knowledge*. through my educational practice, i am claiming the place of my ancestors in the open space of learning and teaching worldwide, hence my second statement of inquiry:

- **the methods through which the new practices required might be found are made visible/audible through mutualising practices like *daré*.**

i'm offering this as a linguistic, pedagogical, poetic and ecological approach which resonates and can connect interculturally, in the spaces of learning that educational practice affords in the academy. trying to bring ancestors wisdom into the university in a similar way to Diamond (2021), i attend to sensory aspects as well as aura of learning bodies. i am presenting something different, able to do this because vakuru/elders valued kuwanda huuya in a way that their experience of colonisation did not contaminate their treatment of knowledge. as intercultural experience, i have journeyed in the opposite direction of nineteenth century 'invading nomads' (Glissant, 1997), but instead of domination, i'm intent on mutualising through daré values. in the current structures, room must be made for this knowledge, to facilitate education as exposure rather than indoctrination (Ingold, 2022). the creative arts offer a way out of this non-hearing bind, in the way Glissant (1997) views imagination as the force that can change mentalities. this work is a commitment to methods as well as forms of non-violence, in the spirit of the preamble to UNESCO's mission, "Since wars begin in the minds of women and men, it is in the minds of women and men that the defences of peace must be constructed." (unesco.org)

this is an introduction to a cosmology too wide to do in an essay. daré is a multilingual, multimodal learning space, being in practice working to translate the space between worlds, to reveal mutuality. singularity and universality of daré point towards mutuality. i present an emic view of daré as a *living approach* through publications i'm offering. in this way the classroom becomes a haven where learners can safely make mistakes (Cronin, 2013) and educators can "allow children to dream" (Badwan, 2022, no pagination). Gramling (2021) describes a multilingual system being one where instead of domination, languages coalesce. participants create a 'community of enquiry'¹⁷ where people with different experiences of life can develop a like-mindedness that allows them to carry on their lives together (Ingold, 2018).

daré as a primarily aural space struggles to see the academy, and the academy as a primarily visual space, struggles to hear daré. i'm developing a practice that mutualises the ways of daré and the structures and processes of the academy.

mutualising daré and the academy

typing a multilingual piece like this one is a reminder of inequality. the words i rest on philosophically are underlined in red as anomalies, and i'm involved in regular clashes with the text-generating software over spelling and grammar. it is easy to presume that mutuality is lacking, based on immediate evidence, so from here i mutualise daré and the academy through the four sarungano that bear this essay.

kutambirwa is present in the *birth* of the university, in the case of my University of Glasgow, the Papal bull (founding document) pledges “ ... equity in judgement upheld, reason flourish, the minds of (men) illuminated, and their understandings enlightened ...multiplying the seeds of learning”. It is in the motto - *via veritas vita* - demonstrating that different or expansive ideas about knowledge have existed before certain ways of narrowing were introduced and exclusivities or hierarchies of ‘Western’ form. **kutambirwa** is in enrolment of students; lecture and viva as mutual with ‘oral tradition’; class as mutual with gungano/gathering; call-and-response of the register in preparation for teaching as mutual with ngano; and procession/speech acts of graduation ceremony as mutual with zvirango/ritual.

kutambanuka thrives in the regular migration of students and staff to and from the university to gather for mutual learning. international students and staff are the diaspora community of the university. camaraderie is student societies sharing “experiences, skills, support and advice for life on campus and the locality in which the university nestles. a community within itself, the university plays its role within the larger community through partnerships in research and collaboration with other organisations for better health, technology, economic advancement, and celebrating achievements of local people. the university also provides expert advice and opinion on various social and political issues of the time.” (University of Glasgow, 2024)

kutambidzana is probably the most recognisable to the academy in learning and teaching, international collaborations for research, student exchanges, and justice issues.

kutambarara is in the aura of *sacred* spaces of art, museums, faith, and chaplaincy. many universities have a spiritual origin, and my University of Glasgow does, starting off as a centre for theological and civic studies. gardens as nature are cared for through the biodiversity branch responsible for ensuring a wide range of flora and fauna on the campus.

these are madenderedzwa mapped onto the distorted ‘circles’ of the university. when it recognises itself as more than kutambidzana, this is the intercultural mutuality. the library now as coffee shop with listening stations; note taking in lectures as recordings on phones - are all signs of mutualising within the academy. writing this essay is itself multimodal between thinking, discussing, handwriting, and typing.

the academy is indispensable, with centuries of providing and protecting spaces of freedom to inquire, collegiality, and excellence.

my poise as a learner was formed in daré and, through mutualising within the academy and other learning spaces, that habitus continues to develop. the academy has allowed me an intercultural space that is international and requires intelligence for the many edges that interculturality brings. vakuru/elders of whom i speak fondly and reverently are not unique to daré. the proverb kuwanda huuya holds this essay and i offer it to the academy in the hope that with some adjustments which i have been making and which are evidenced by the nhorwa of publications i offer here, the academy can better recognise its own qualities mutual with other ontologies and epistemologies, as this example of daré.

in the presence of assigned categories, i present this published work as my thesis and present it, as all thesis defenders do, to power - as a ‘Global South’ thinker to the might of a ‘Global North’ institution, as a learner of knowledge disturbed by colonisation and empire. i present my thesis at a time when language learning policy across the world continues to favour colonial languages over local tongues; at a time when UNESCO is pledging protection and enhancement of ‘*Indigenous* peoples’ rights and knowledge; at a time when the Arts and Humanities Research Council is pledging support for ‘important but vulnerable disciplines’ (UKRI, 2023). i present this work at a time when my University of Glasgow has become the first in the UK to publicly

acknowledge its implication in the enslavement of African people. and still i present this thesis as nhorwa, grounded in the learning traditions of my ancestors, in the spirit of daré.

invitation to write your own praise poem

you now have your four madenderedzwa/rounds representing your own four sarungano. i now invite you to create a poem, as in the zita tradition of praise poetry. using the phrase ndini/‘i am’ as a refrain, add an element from each denderedzwa; go in any order you feel like. play with this and see whatever feels sound. you have been very kind to accommodate me by doing this. you now have your own praise poem to celebrate your zita, your true name, made now, thanks to your reading, in daré. enjoy it, celebrate yourself, your connections and your responsibilities to the greater-than-human family of pasichigaré. totenda

ambuya: ndoo pakaperera sarungano

kutenda / appreciation

ganyamatopé dzapasi
musango rine varidzi
ana chirandu kwatinobva
ana mbizi kumukaka
masahwira ese
pasichigaré
totenda
hekani

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