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**AFRICANIZING OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN AFRICAN NOVELS: ANALYSIS
OF ABDULRAZACK GURNAH'S AFTERLIVES (2020)**

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**Africanizing of the English language in African
Novels: Analysis of Abdulrazack Gurnah's
Afterlives (2020)**

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Abstract

Purpose: This article aimed to ascertain which methods were used to Africanize the language used in Gurnah's Afterlives. It is well known that Abdulrazack was born and raised in Tanzania (Africa), and how to be an African was reflected in his work through language was the main aim of this article. Unfortunately, studies on Africanizing English language in African novels are few and based on old novels. Therefore, researchers need to analyze the current works written in English by Africans to find out which methods were used to Africanize English in their works.

Methodology: This research used a descriptive qualitative method. It means that it describes the method used in Gurnah's Afterlives to Africanize the English language based on the data gained through reading the whole content of the novel. This article was grounded on the Languages in Contact theory introduced by Uriel Weinreich's languages in Contact: Findings and Problems (1953). Data were analyzed by using a content analysis-directed approach.

Findings: It was found that Gurnah used code-mixing, code-switching, and translation to Africanize English Language. Furthermore, the main reason was to reflect on the language used in daily activities in Tanzanian society.

Unique Contribution To Theory, Practice and Policy: This article contributes to the theory that, not only in spoken language where we can notice languages in contact, but also in literary works where the writers reflect on how the certain society use language in daily activities. Thus, even though the writer chooses to write in another language, we can still notice the characteristics of his language in his writing, as shown in Gurnah's Afterlives novels.

Keywords: *Translation, Code Switching, Code Mixing, Africanizing, African Literature*

INTRODUCTION

“I feel that the English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience, but it will have to be a new English, still in full communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit new African Surroundings.” (Chinua Achebe)

In Africa, some writers decided to use English instead of their mother tongue. This situation triggered a need for African literature to be written in the African language. Over the years, researchers and writers have held disparate views on African writers who wrote their works in a foreign language. In contrast, some scholars such as Chinua Achebe (1975a), Wiwa (1992), Mphahlele (1997), Moore (1997), and Adejunmobi (1999) are of the view that African novel is the one that treats issues related to Africans regardless of the language used. On the other hand, some postcolonial African creative writers like Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1963), Obi Wali (1963), Abiola Irele (2000), Gabriel Ruhumbika (1992), and Mazisi Kunene (1992) argued that African literature must be written in an indigenous African language to avoid imperialism and subjugation of the colonizers. This article was based on the group seeing that African literature can be written in a foreign language but still carry the experiences of Africans well. The aim was to see how the foreign languages used by African writers still have African characteristics. The writer chose the African novel *Afterlives* by Abdulrazak Gurnah, published in 2020, to be analyzed. The writer is interested in finding the method used to Africanize the English Language in this novel.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Africanized English Language

Achebe (1989) opines that African writers can use the English language to address the concerns of Africans and spice up the English language with an element that typifies African oral literature, such as proverbs and code-switching. Also, Mphahlele (1997) joined hands with Achebe that a writer must have the liberty to choose the medium that suits him best, although to maintain that, such colonial languages must deviate and Africanized, but which would still be in full communion with its ancestral home to suit its new African surrounding. Due to this, we witness some studies conducted to prove what Achebe argued about Africanized colonial language.

Azuike (1987) established a comparative analysis of Chinua Achebe's novels, *A Man of the People* and *No Longer at Ease*. In his study, find out that Achebe employs code-switching to bring out the Africanness in the foreign English language. Also, Ibhawegbele and Edokpayi (2012) joined hands with Azuike in that Chinua Achebe, in his novel known as *A man of the people*, was using code-mixing and code-switching to bring Africaness. They add that Achebe also wants to tackle the language problem in Nigerian society. Other novels analyzed by Ibhawegbele and Edokpayi were *Purple Hibiscus* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and *Everything Good will come* by Sefi Atta. Furthermore, the observation was the same; the writers in these novels use code-switching and code-mixing to show how the language is used in Nigerian society.

Another example is the work of Afful and Mununken (2015) where they investigated three African Novels which were *I Will Marry when I want* by Ngugi wa Thiongo, *A man of the People* by

Chinua Achebe, and *Blinkards* by Kobina Sekyi, and found out that African writers engage their characters in code-switching as a way of Africanizing the English language. They continued by showing that Characters' code switch in African novels depending on their setting and the situation. Also, Bamiro (1994) established a study based on "Recasting the Centre: Ngugi wa Thiong'o and the Africanization of English" together with other things, he investigated the Africanization of English in Ngugi's *Weep Not Child*. He found out that Ngugi wa Thiongo engages in the process of relexification of his mother tongue, Gikuyu, using English vocabulary but indigenous structures and rhythms. On the other hand, he resorts to linguistic appropriation, whereby English words are redefined in new contexts.

Problem Statement

The finding of previous studies shows that there is still an argument on how African literature works written in English can reflect Africanism through language. Researches dealing in this field are few and based on old novels, especially Nigerian novels. Something stimulates the need to investigate more in current African literature written in English to find out how these works can reflect Africanism through language. These writers are from Africa, even though they chose to write in English. Choosing to write in English cannot delete the realities of their Africans. How their Africaness is reflected in the language they use is most important. Therefore, this article examines how the language used in Abdulrazak Gurnah's *Afterlives* reflects Africanism.

Abdulrazak Gurnah

Abdulrazak Gurnah is among the African writers who used the English language to write his works. He was born in 1948 and grew up on the island of Zanzibar. He arrived in England as a refugee in the late 1960s (Ivens, 2021). Until 2022, he had already written ten novels. Out of ten novels, nine of them had African settings. It can be seen that Abdulrazack Gurnah chose the African community to address in his works. *A memory of Departure* (1987), his first novel, describes the experience of leaving home which is Zanzibar (Gurnah, 2022), a theme which he continued in *Pilgrims Way* (1988), *Dottie* (1990) and *Admiring Silence* (1996). His fourth novel, *Paradise* (1994), was set in colonial East Africa during the First World War. A theme he continued in *Desertion* (2005), he illustrated the impact of Colonialism on love and various relationships. *By the Sea* (2001), *The Last Gift* (2011), and *Gravel Heart* (2017) return to the subject of contemporary migration. His most recent novel, *Afterlives* (2020), examines the brutality of the German colonial presence in East Africa in the early 20th century and its impact on Tanzanians' lives. *Afterlives* novel was chosen because it is more current than other Gurnah novels.

Summary of Afterlives

Afterlives is the novel that tells the story of Khalifa, Ilyas, and Hamza, whose lives are intimately linked. Khalifa married Asha, who goes through life with difficulties, but he cannot be anything less than kind to those who are down on their luck. He befriends Ilyas, who ran away from his wretched home only to be kidnapped by an Askari and is taken in by a noble German farmer who ensures he receives an education and helps him secure a job. Hamza's tale is a worrying one. Sold

as a bonded laborer by his father, driven to do so by crippling debt, he runs away and volunteers to join the Askari, only to realize he has traded a terrible existence for a worse one. It is through his eyes that Gurnah explores the complicated relationship between the oppressor and the oppressed. Afiya, who was sent back to her tormentors, is rescued by the unassuming yet heroic Khalifa but cannot reconcile herself to the inexplicable silence of her brother and the crippling uncertainty regarding his fate. Hamza also becomes the benefactor of Khalifa's compassion.

Theoretical Framework

This study was grounded on Languages in contact theory. Language in contact as theory started in the 1950s; even though there was much investigation about languages in contact, there need to be advanced methods to be taken as theory. It was during the 1950s, in the works of Uriel Weinreich's *Languages in Contact: Findings and Problems* (1953), an advanced method on how language in contact can be used, as shown. Weinreich's works begin a sociolinguistic approach to different problems studied within contact linguistics. Languages in contact deal with linguistic phenomena that arise due to language coming together. Among the factors that lead to languages coming in contact with each other include commerce, education, religion, and migration. These result in linguistic outcomes such as pidgins, creoles, code-switching, code-mixing, borrowing, translation Etc. These outcomes are seen in bilingual or multilingual countries such as Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, and Tanzania. Our study intended to understand how such sociolinguistic phenomena are used in the *Afterlives* novel.

METHODOLOGY

In collecting data and finding the relevant theories, the writer uses library research to support the analysis from written sources such as textbooks, the internet, and dictionaries. Then, the descriptive qualitative method is used to analyze the data, which is a procedure for solving the problem by explaining the data and exploring the facts. Using this method, the writer elaborated on the method used in Gurnah's *Afterlives* to Africanize the English language.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The writer analyzes based on the theories given by Uriel Weinreich (1953). Then, following the theory of language in contact, the writer classifies the method used in Gurnah's *Afterlives*. Here are three methods of Africanizing the English language that the writer has found in *Afterlives* novels.

Translation

Newmark (1988:05) defines translation as "rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the author intended the text." Therefore, translation means presenting a text in a language other than the one in which it was originally written. Sometimes, a translator has to make several adjustments in content, form, and style of the original text for the following reasons: first, to convey the writer's message in the original faithfully but secondly, to communicate with the reader according to his/her needs. To some extent, Gurnah uses translation in his novels.

Translation in Gurnah's Afterlives Novel

Afterlife is a novel written in the English language. The target audiences are English speakers. However, intentionally, the author translated some of the words and sentences in the *Afterlives* novel. There are some words written in English and translated into Swahili. Also, some words and sentences were written in Swahili and translated into English. It is normal for the translator to make different adjustments while translating. Based on these adjustments on the part of the translator, we have different types of translations, such as free translation, word-for-word translation, conceptual translation, elaborate translation, and back translation.

Translated Words and Sentences from Swahili to English

Below is the table showing the translated words from the Swahili language to the English language in *the Afterlives*

Table 1: Translated Words from the Swahili Language to the English Language

Data Number	Novels per words	
	Source Language	Target Language
01	Jana, Leo, Kesho:	Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow
02	Sugura	Rabbit
03	Dubu –	Stupid weak man
04	mkangazi, mvinje, mzaituni,	Mahogany Cypress olive.
05.	Vipi	what do you say
06	sitiri	He was to save her from shame and keep the name of the family clean
07	Karibu	polite word of welcome

The above table shows us some words translated from Swahili to English. The reason for the translation is clear. First, because the whole book was written in English when the author used Swahili words tended to translate them into English for the targeted audience to understand the meaning. A good example is shown on pg. 21 when the author provided an elaboration translation of the word "**utamsitiri.**"

“utamsitiri, Khalifa was to save her from shame and keep the family's name clean. He was nothing special, but the merchant knew who he was, and marriage to him would protect her name, Amur Biashara's, from any possible dishonor.”

Elaboration Translation means the translation based on expanding something in detail. It has generally been observed that a translated text is longer than the original text in the source language. Among the reason is because of the peculiar characteristics of languages and differences in cultural background, a translated text consumes more words and sentences to communicate the same message which had been put in a lesser number of words or sentences in the original language. Therefore, an elaboration translation of the word "Utamsitiri" helps readers who are not Swahili understand the meaning well.

Apart from words, Sentences are translated from Swahili to English. For example, the table below shows sentences translated from Gurnah's Afterlives novel.

Table 2: Translated Sentences from Swahili to English in Afterlives Novel

Data Number	Novels per words	
	Source Language	Target Language
01	Kaniumiza. Nisaidie.	He has hurt me. Help me.
02	Wamekimbia, wamekimbia,	They have run away; they have run away.
03	“Hawa wazungu watu wema”	These Europeans are good people.
04	Tumefanya fungo na Mjarumani, tayari, Askari wa balozi wa Mdachi tayari, Tayari Tutampigania bila hofu, Bila hofu, Tutawatisha adui wajue hofu. Wajue hofu.	We have joined the German, We are ready, We are Soldiers of the governor of the Mdachi. We are ready, We will fight for him without fear Without fear. We will terrify our enemies and fill them with fear. With fear
05	“Boma la mzungu” one of the guards said “Kila kitu safi hataki mavi yenu ndani ya boma lake. Hapana ruhusa kufanya mambo ya kishenzi hapa.	“This is the mzungu’s camp. Everything is clean here. He doesn’t want your shit inside his boma . It is not allowed to follow your savage ways here.
06.	“Inafanya kazi”	in good working order
07.	“Kwa hisani yako”	if you please
08.	Unakuwa mjanja we,	You are becoming cunning.
09	Naam, Bwana mkubwa	Yes, big master
11	Ndo mambo yalivyo	That’s how things are.
12	“Amri ya Mungu. Mungu akuweke, sisi tunarudi kwenda kuuliwa”	It is God’s Command. May God keep you; we are going back to be killed.
13	Kibanda chetu	our hut
14.	Usijitaabishe	Don’t worry yourself

The above sentences in the table are translated from the Swahili language to the English language. The reason for using some Swahili sentences in the novel written in English is that the writer wants to show his identity because the author is from Tanzania and wants to express his language in writing. Since the readers are English speakers, he needed to do some translations. Apart from showing the writer's identity, he could show us the language of the natives, Swahili. Example pg 51 and 53:-

"Jana, Leo, Kesho: Afiya said, pointing to each word in turn, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow" pg: 51

"She wrote: kaniumiza. Nisaidie. Afiya. He has hurt me. Help me. Pg 53

The above paragraphs show that Afiya, the character in *Afterlives*, wrote these words in Swahili and not in English. Because in the previous page, the author has already given us information that Afiya never attended school and does not know how to write. It is through his brother that she learns how to read and write. Through this, the writer was successful in showing us the realities. If these words were presented directly in English, many would be taken to think that Afiya wrote those words in English, something which was not true.

Translated Words in *Afterlives* Novel from English to Swahili

Below is the table showing the translated words from English to the Swahili language in *Afterlives'* novel.

Table 3: Translated Words in *Afterlives* Novel from English to Swahili

Data Number	Novels per words	
	Source Language	Target Language
01	a herbalist,	a mganga
02	protection troop,	Jeshi la Serikali.
03	frankincense numb foam, Bubbles.	Ubani Ganzi, Mapovu

The table above shows some words translated from English to Swahili in *the Afterlives* novel. The reason for translating those words could be that the author wants to reflect the Swahili society because the story was based on the Swahili community. So even though he wrote the whole novel in English, he still wanted the readers to get some words used in the Swahili community. For example, on pg 86, the author says:-

"Sometimes, the lesson was reversed, and the officer asked for the Kiswahili word for something. What is the word for frankincense? **Ubani**. How do you say numb? **Ganzi**. What is the word for foam? Bubbles. **Mapovu**."

The above paragraph clarifies the translation because the officer who was a character in *Afterlives* wanted to know some English words in Swahili. So, Hamza had to translate those words. As the history of Tanzania shows, whites colonized Tanzania, and whites tend to learn the language of the native in order to be easy in their activities. Gurnah for creating such kind of character, Gurnah wants to bring Africanism into his novel.

Apart from Words translated from English to Swahili also, sentences were translated as shown in the following table.

Table 4: Sentences that were translated from the English language to the Swahili Language

Data Number	Novels per words	
	Source Language	Target Language
1	"Afiya selected the sixth day of the sixth month."	mwezi sita wa mfungo sita

We found those sentences written in English and then translated into the Swahili language were few because the targeted group was English speakers. Therefore, we see that the author intended to use some Swahili words and sentences in his novel because his novel was about people from East Africa; specifically Tanzanians, and the people of Tanzanians use the Swahili language in daily activities.

Code Switching and Code Mixing

Code-switching refers to the ability of members of a language to pass one dialect of the language to another according to the situation (Lyons, 1977). It is also seen as the act of alternation of two languages within a single discourse. More technically, when code-switching occurs, various linguistic units are mixed, such as words, phrases, sentences, and clauses from two participating grammatical systems of the language across sentence boundaries within a speech event (Richards, Platt, and Weber, 1985). On the side of code-mixing is the mixing of two or more languages within a sentence. In Code switching and code mixing, people fluent in two or more languages may regularly choose code switch from one to the other according to the situation, the person being addressed, or even the topic. It is important to note that sometimes, speakers code mix or code switch because it becomes difficult for them to find appropriate words and expressions to convey their thoughts.

The linguist Ronald Wardhaugh believes that code-switching is not a random but a choice made by the speaker with a communicative purpose. The linguist Gumperz divides the code conversion into three categories for the reasons that occur. The first type is context-based code-switching, in

which the speaker changes the code according to the occasion. The second type is conversational code-switching, in which the speaker performs code-switching within a sentence. In some cases, it may even be converted multiple times. However, no change in the scene during the conversion process will change the topic. The third type of code-switching is metaphorical code-switching. This code-switching is mostly intentional. The speaker's code-switching is based on some motivation; in order to achieve a certain purpose Generalized (Chen & Avila, 2018). It is not only in conversion but also in writing when the writer decides to code-switch in his novels to achieve a certain goal. The followings are code-switching and code-mixing and why it was used in *Afterlives'* novel.

Table 5: Example of Code-Switching and Code-Mixing in *Afterlives* Novel

Data Number	Examples of Sentences
1	".....which was the teacher's regular baraza , where he went most evenings for gossiping."
2	As for the young Tajiri , well, I have known him for Years
3	That was in the boma camp
4	You're a bunch of Washenzi , they said. Don't swing your hips like a shoga
5	It is not clean you will suffer Kiboko na Matusi in front of Everyone
6	Some copies of Rafiki yangu
7	She hid it under her buibui A new dress or a kanga for the woman, a new kanzu and kofia
8	Do you know why they are called ruga ruga ? Because they are full of Bangi and are always jumping about.
9	They left Kilemba with a gift of Sausages and a bottle of schnapps for the others officers
10	Cross the " Nyika " towards the escarpment.
11	Cucumber and vipusa in there

The sentences above show clearly that, Gurnah used code switching and code mixing in the *Afterlives* novel to some extent. In these bold sentences are Swahili words and the writer decided to use them intentionally because he had time to find English words to replace them. This article found out that the writer code-switched and mixed English and Swahili due to his fluency in both languages. The history of the authors shows that Gurnah was born in Tanzania and later went to study and live in England.

Another reason is that since Gurnah spoke about Swahili, society decided to code mix and switch to reflect how language is used in Tanzania societies. In Tanzania, English and Swahili are used in teaching education curricula. Therefore, some people tend to mix both languages when their speaking. Using two languages in one sentence shows how Tanzania uses language in their communication.

Further, the writer can choose to code switch and code mix due to a lack of vocabulary, which will carry the exact meaning he wants to express. For example, in the sentence

“.....which was the teacher’s regular **baraza**, where he went most evenings for gossiping and conversation.”

The word "**Baraza**" is a Swahili word that goes together with the customs of the Swahili people. Therefore, for Gurnah, it took work to get an English word that could carry the exact meaning of Baraza. Also, the words, **Buibui, Kanga, and Kilemba**, which are the names of clothes, are traditional; to get their meaning must first know the tradition of the Swahili people, and it is challenging to get the equivalent words from English.

Conclusion

Even though some African writers use English in their writing, they still reflect their Africaness through their language. As shown in the *Afterlives* novel, Gurnah has two cups, a writer and a translator, and at the same time, uses a lot of code-mixing and code-switching compared to other white writers. This situation shows that he is a writer from Africa, and being African is reflected well in his novel through his language. Therefore, African writers who write their work in a foreign language can be regarded as African literature no matter which language was used. This article recommends that to judge whether the literature work is African literature or not based on language, we do not need to look at which language was used. However, we have to look further at how language was used. Since many African countries were being colonized and had some relations with whites, something made their languages become in contact.

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