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Students' responses to the insertion of popular culture into an English literature curriculum: A Rwandan case study

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

This research study aims to explore an experimental expansion of the content of the English literature curriculum for a third year pre-service[1] literature programme in Rwanda. It uses an interventionist teaching of texts from the field of popular culture as a means of rendering classroom activities and readings more immediately relevant to the students' environment in such a way as to further the requisite analytical skills of the programme. The study uses a Multiliteracies theoretical framework in an English classroom to support the expansion of the English literature curriculum by including texts in a range of media rather than in writing only. To contextualize the aims of this study, a summary is provided of the historical and educational landscape in which the field work for the study was conducted.

1.1. Contextualization

Rwanda as a country is best known for its long history of ethnic intolerance culminating in the genocide of 1994 which claimed a million lives and displaced another two million people. Rwanda is inhabited by three ethnic groups: the Hutus, the Tutsis, and the Twas, representing respectively 84, 15 and 1 per cent of the total population[2]. The ethnic conflict has involved the two major ethnic groups – the Hutus and the Tutsis – in a battle for political supremacy. The conflict was exacerbated by the Belgian colonial occupation whose allegiance oscillated between the two major tribes and the colonizers' reading of the history of Rwanda which positioned the tutsis as invaders and outsiders. On the eve of Rwandan independence, that is from 1959 to 1962, the two tribes competed politically for control of the country, with the colonizers supporting the formation of a republican government consisting of the major tribe, the Hutus. After the first bloodshed in the long history of ethnic confrontation that the country was to endure, the Tutsis and moderate Hutus who did not agree with the new government's policy of exclusion, were forced to flee the country in their thousands[3] to find refuge mainly in neighbouring countries of

[1]The term pre-service teacher is used consistently in the research report to refer to students who are following a teacher-training programme.
[2]Information drawn from http://www.nationsonline.org.one.world.
[3]The estimated number is over a hundred thousand people

Burundi, Uganda, Tanzania and Congo - where I was born. For more than 30 years, these refugees tried by various means including political negotiations and armed attacks to secure their return into Rwanda. Every attack from the outside ended in bloodshed in the country, and saw increasing numbers of Tutsis killed or discriminated against. In 1994, after a plane crash involving the former President Juvenal Habyarimana, the Rwandan interim government launched the most inhuman genocide in the history of Africa. The Rwandan Patriotic Front, which represented the three ethnic groups and the major political opposition parties, took over the governing of the country, with its main objective being the creation of a nation where the rights of all would be preserved. This government was also concerned with re-writing the history of the Rwandan people to establish and entrench the principle of equality and equity for all. It is against this background that the National University of Rwanda was re-opened in April 1995.

I am a lecturer currently on study leave at the National University of Rwanda. The University has 7500 students, who are mainly Rwandans. The students are enrolled on the basis of the level of their performance in the secondary school national exam and come from a diverse range of secondary schools from across the country. They study with the support of government scholarships which are granted to all students. The students comprise approximately 30 per cent females and 70 per cent males. They are aged from 20 to 27 years old. The students attend a two-month pre-university course in politics which aims to convey the government mission regarding education and topical issues such as reconciliation, good governance and gender equality. The University provides undergraduate programmes of between four and seven years in length. The majority of the lecturers at the National University of Rwanda are Rwandans, with neighbouring countries providing visiting lecturers for short periods of time. Some foreign academic staff are hired on contract basis. The University is located in Butare, Rwanda's second major city, which is situated approximately 130 kilometres from Kigali, the capital. The National University of Rwanda enjoys a reputation for the quality of its academic staff, its students and its teaching at both national and international levels which has not been equalled by other tertiary institutions in the country. It provides its

lecturers with on-going training at outstanding universities all over the world and its students undergo in-service training at private and public institutions in Rwanda.

1.1.1. Rwanda: a changing educational landscape

After the genocide of 1994 the University set itself the objective of providing the Rwandan nation with qualified personnel to fill the vacant positions left by the dead and the displaced. One of the main challenges the University had to face was the choice of the language(s) of instruction. Before the genocide, Rwanda had French as the language of instruction at secondary and tertiary levels. English was taught as an additional language at secondary schools and at university level to students who intended to pursue their education in the field of English studies. Kinyarwanda was the language of instruction for the first three years of primary education in public schools, with French being progressively integrated from grade 4. Due to the volume of refugees returning from both Anglophone and Francophone countries, the linguistic landscape was changed and French, English and Kinyarwanda became the three official national languages and, consequently, the languages of instruction. As the main tertiary institution and the first institution to become functional after the genocide in the country, the University of Rwanda rose to the challenge and designed programmes intended to accommodate this new linguistic landscape. Not only were courses at the National University of Rwanda developed to be taught in the two languages of instruction at tertiary level – French and English - but the University also had to face the challenge of preparing teachers who would translate the new vision into reality. To accomplish the first aim, a language centre was made available to all students who wanted to study at the National University of Rwanda[4]. Primary French speakers and English speakers had to follow an intensive one-year training course at this centre prior to being registered at the University. It was presumed that students who had undergone this training would be able to function bilingually and to manage with lectures being held in either French or English. Today, at the National University of Rwanda, French and English are the languages of instruction. To accomplish the second aim, the Faculty of Education devised programmes to cater for

[4] This centre, which is called l'Ecole Pratique des Langues Modernes, has become an integral part of the University. It accommodates approximately 3000 students each academic year, 1500 students studying English as a second language of instruction, and 1500 studying French.

the dispensing of courses in the three national languages. To maximize effectiveness, students are being trained to teach two languages at the same time, either French and English, or French and Kinyarwanda.

At the secondary education level and in private primary schools in Rwanda, students have either French or English as their main language of instruction, with the other two languages functioning as additional languages. The students' choice of a school depends on their linguistic background, whether they have studied primarily in a school where English or French was their main language of instruction. However, because French is the language of the former colonizers it has a slight advantage over English as a language of instruction at the National University of Rwanda. Kinyarwanda is the language of instruction in public primary schools and a subject on the curriculum for private schools throughout the secondary level. It is also the language of social communication for the Rwandans and often the language of business and political transactions.

With its vision of education for all Rwandans, regardless of tribe, gender or religious affiliation, the National University of Rwanda is attempting to rise to the equity challenge. Furthermore, as its motto 'illuminato et salus populi' indicates, the University has set itself the objective of reconstructing a viable and profitable environment for all Rwandans after the debilitating experience of the 1994 genocide, through designing curricula that will cater for this transformation.

1.1.2. The Faculty of Education within the National University of Rwanda

The Faculty of Education at the National University of Rwanda comprises three departments: the Department of Humanities, which offers the subject French-English and French-Kinyarwanda; the Department of Science, which offers Mathematics-Physics and Biology-Chemistry; and the Department of Psychology, which offers Pedagogical-Psychology and Clinical-Psychology. Since the year 2000, I have been a lecturer in the Department of Humanities which has as its mission the transformation of the monolingual system into a multilingual system, and of provision of resources for this transformation, particularly in the training of language teachers who will be instrumental

in changing the educational landscape to include the three languages of instruction. The curricula for pre-service language teachers include modules related to the teaching of the two languages, to literatures in the two languages and to education and general interest subjects - such as computer skills and ethics. As far as literature in English is concerned, students have to study British, American and African literatures. The students who graduate from the Department of Humanities are meant to fulfil a primary function in the field of education or related fields. In order to achieve the objectives of establishing a multilingual society and a more equitable and tolerant society, the contribution of these students, as in-service and pre-service teachers, is considered of paramount importance in Rwanda.

1.2. Research aims

> [A] curriculum is, always, a design for the future. In the knowledges, practices, values which it put forward – and in their modes of transmission in pedagogies – it imagines a certain kind of human being, with particular characteristics (Kress 1995: vii).

Kress's contention that a curriculum embodies values and beliefs that are inscribed in the way a particular society envisages its future and the type of people that will be necessary to implement that vision is central to this research as it provides a framework within which to take a critical look at the current English literature practices in Rwanda from the perspectives of the texts it incorporates, the values and beliefs it promotes and the pedagogies it favours. Taking his view as my starting point, I intend to explore the content of the English literature curriculum in a pre-service literature programme in Rwanda and to experiment with its expansion through the teaching of popular cultural texts as a means of rendering classroom activities and readings more immediately relevant to the students' environment. Specifically, I intend to use the teaching of texts produced by a Congolese subculture – the Bana Molokai - in an English literature classroom for pre-service teachers as a means of expanding the existing literature curriculum.

My research questions foreground the students' role as reflexive practitioners (Schon: 1990) as the pedagogical intervention seeks to activate responses informed by the

students' experience as learners at tertiary level, but more importantly by their experience as secondary school teachers as they discuss the expansion of the literature curriculum using multimodal[5] texts. The research report aims to address the following research questions:

1. **MAIN QUESTION**

   What happens when popular culture is inserted into the literature curriculum of pre-service students of English in a Rwandan tertiary institution?

2. **SUB-QUESTIONS**

   - What are the students' responses?
   - In the context of Rwanda, do their responses signal a different outlook to literature, to the literature syllabus, and to literary practices at the secondary and tertiary levels to those which existed before?

In addition, the research report is intended to provide a model which exemplifies and pays tribute to the vitality and richness of the cultural practices inherent in the students' environment by establishing an interface with the primary literary canon in the context of Rwanda. Specifically, this research is intended to provide a model, which includes, over and above the written texts, texts in other media for inclusion in a literature classroom environment as relevant 'discursive practices' – to quote Eagleton (1983: 205) on literature - as a way into the established literature curriculum. However, the research report does not necessarily promote the inclusion of this particular subculture and its texts in the literature curriculum in the context of Rwanda. Similarly, the students' views on the integration of texts using a range of other media in literature classrooms and on literature practices in their context will be stressed rather than their views on the teaching of texts produced by this particular subculture. The report is based theoretically on a synthesis of the Multiliteracies and the popular culture analysis frameworks. It employs a phase of analysis of the Bana Molokai subculture as a preliminary step to the pedagogical

[5] The word was coined by Kress () to express the way the new communicational landscape rely on more than one medium to make meaning.

intervention and as an integral part of the research project. The research is organized around the pedagogical intervention, which explores the teaching of texts produced by the Bana Molokai subculture.

1.3. Rationale

1.3.1. Genesis of the problem

This research study stems from my long-felt unease with the literature curriculum at the National University of Rwanda where I have been a lecturer for over four years. I have been teaching British and American literature modules to pre-service English teachers and felt that literary practices in my experience seldom elicited the expected level of student engagement. This fact prompted the need within me to look critically at the content of the literature syllabus and its pedagogies. I noted that the majority of texts prescribed by the literature curriculum were written by middle-aged, Western, male authors before the turn of the 20th century. Literature teaching in Rwandan tertiary institutions is influenced by the New Critical Theory of I.A. Richards (1924) and F.R. Leavis (1930), which defines 'our Great Literary Heritage' in hegemonic terms, emphasizing the role literary critics play in determining which texts form part of the literary canon. Leavis, one of the pillars of the New Critical Theory, contends that

> [i]n any period it is upon a small minority that the discerning appreciation of art and literature depends: it is (apart from cases of the simple and familiar) only a few who are capable of unprompted, first-hand judgement (quoted in Easthope 1999: 3)

During the two last decades, this vision of literature and literary practices that 'focus on the reproduction of dominant texts and knowledges' (Buckingham and Sefton-Green, 1994) and universalizes knowledge regardless of people's specific needs has come under attack, particularly from literature educators (Carter and Long, 1991; Lazar, 1993; Brumfit and Carter, 1986) because it exerts a hegemonic power by defining some cultural beliefs, opinions and tastes as universally valid. Literature educators further claim that this vision of literature decontextualizes knowledge by disempowering subordinate groups, who are differentiated by ethnicity, class, gender and race, by attempting to co-

opt and transform them through shaping their taste, moral values and beliefs (Giroux 1989: 8).

The present research report uses a more inclusive definition of literature to interrogate literature practices in the context of Rwanda. Some literary theorists have questioned the definition of 'Our Great Literary Heritage' which attempts to find objective intrinsic criteria to account for literariness. Eagleton defines literature in more relative terms,

> [M]y own view is that it is most useful to see 'literature' as a name which people give from time to time for different reasons to certain kinds of writing within the whole field of what Michel Foucault has called 'discursive practices', and that if anything is to be an object of study it is this whole field of practices rather than just those sometimes rather obscurely labelled 'literature'. (Eagleton 1983: 205).

This inclusive definition of literature that extends the definition of a literary work to include people's 'attitude to texts rather than as a body of texts' (Brumfit and Carter 1986: 33) is central to this study because it justifies the incorporation of texts that could not traditionally, using the narrow definition of the New Literary critics, be considered to be literature. This work is in line with this extended definition of literature because it does not try to question that texts can be taught on the basis of objective criteria, instead it acknowledges the legitimacy of a popular subculture, such as the Bana Molokai, as part of the literature syllabus on the basis of its vitality in the cultural universe of the students and the value they grant it.

This study uses the work of influential international educators to interrogate the current literary practices prevalent in Rwanda. The first contention Lazar (1993) makes is that students should be taught texts that are culturally nearer to them, even where the texts are not part of the established canon. She advocates the reading of texts that mirror students' lives and interests. My reading of students' apathy in the face of the English literature curriculum in use in Rwanda is that students are estranged by the cultural distance between these texts and the students' living space, cultural practices and background experience, as these texts are culturally too remote for acceptable levels of comprehension. Lazar (1993) highlights this problem in her book about the teaching of

literature and language. Secondly, I argue that students resent the fact that engagement with these texts presumes an extensive contact with and understanding of Western culture and its history. As Carter and Long (1991: 3) argue,

> [t]he study of literary texts can also, and regularly does involve acquiring a compendious store of information about the history of the target literature, its tradition and conventions, its particular heritage, the nature of the influences and relationships between the authors, texts and contexts which make up that literary culture.

This is particularly true for students who do not share the same culture and history with the average author whose work forms a part of the literary canon. In the case of Rwandan literature students, the literature educator has to allocate a disproportionate amount of time to the explanation of the cultural and historical elements in the texts on the British and American syllabus. Furthermore, the lack of students' response is, I argue, an expression of their resentment at having to read texts from a literary canon which is endowed with superior status as high culture, while their own literature and culture are relegated to an inferior position. This increases their sense of 'powerlessness and inferiority' (Lazar 1993: 3).

Thirdly, legitimizing the teaching of a predominantly Western body of canonical texts presumes an acceptance of the moral and aesthetic values that inhere in these texts as universally valid, a premise that my students appeared to find very questionable.

To conclude, my reading of the students' apathy concurs with the views of Brumfit and Carter in that they find these readings alienating because they provide, alongside the literary message, cultural models that students feel compelled to resist as a threat to their identities (Brumfit and Carter 1986: 224).

African literature texts have recently been incorporated in the literature syllabus for pre-service students at the National University of Rwanda. However, there are some concerns with the proportion of African texts on the curriculum – only one fifth of the total number of Western texts - and the type of texts that have been included. The teaching of African

literature to Rwandan pre-service students emphasizes the reading of oral forms outside narrative contexts in the light of how they relate to oral tradition as a genre that characterizes African literature. As Barber (1997: 1) explains,

> [f]or the nationalist African elites, celebrating the 'traditional' was an affirmation of self-worth, an assertion that African civilization had their own artistic glories to compare with those of the colonizer.

Although the teaching of oral forms supports the claim that Africa has a literary culture worth teaching alongside the Western canon, the focus on African oral traditions does not allow an extensive engagement with present concerns, as these genres are mostly discussed in isolation from a narrative context and from the standpoint of a glorious past. The needs of students to explore their identities are frustrated both by the perceived threat of the imperialist mission of English Literature (Loomba and Orkin: 1998) and by the forms on traditional African oral literature. Moreover, oral forms are criticized as impeding direct engagement as these texts are perceived to be in a traditionally frozen state (Barber 1997: 2). Therefore, although it has the potential to provide a platform for looking at the world using an alternative standpoint, and to prompt an exploration into the students' interests and needs, African literature as a subject in the literature syllabus, is limited in scope to texts that exclude direct engagement with the students' immediate space.

An alternative route might be to bring to the classroom environment African narratives that retrieve an African voice and agency and facilitate a discussion of the interests and concerns of contemporary Africa and Africans. However, access to contemporary African narratives is limited either because copies of the texts are not available in the university libraries or because there is an insufficient amount of critical work that will enable a lecturer to feel confident about including them on the literature syllabus.

The ultimate reason for interrogating the current literature practices used in Rwanda at this particular moment is that the country is at a turning point in its history after the ravage of the 1994 genocide, and it needs to look critically at its educational practices and

the values they foster. I agree with Kress's contention that it is imperative at certain moments in a people's history to look critically at the content of its curricula to question the type of knowledge they provide in light of the type of people they intends to create (Kress: 1995). Kress develops an argument that a curriculum 'needs to act, not merely follow' (1995: xv). His vision legitimizes the redesigning of the literature canon in Rwanda in order to incorporate texts that can address the present concerns of contemporary youth as they relate to the traditions of the Great Literary Heritage, both Western and African and to contemporary texts from the field of popular culture.

1.3.2. Addressing the problem

This research report explores whether a teaching and learning breakthrough occurs when texts are introduced to the classroom environment that can pertinently link the students to the literary and cultural practices of their communities, but that can also, ultimately, constitute a breakthrough in the teaching of literature generally. I will work under the assumption that texts that relate more closely to the students in term of age, issues discussed, cultural background investigated, characters, settings and thematic points (Lazar 1993: 51) might elicit a more engaged response. Furthermore, I am concerned with expanding the literature curriculum through the inclusion of texts that address contemporary issues. However, since written narratives in English about Rwanda and its immediate geographical surroundings are practically non-existent, the aforementioned objective will be difficult to achieve. On the other hand, meaning making processes in the area tend to consist of a range of popular cultures that are articulated around social and cultural practices. Not only are these practices widely recognized by the local communities, but they are the most natural way for people to explore their living space and to imprint their meaning on it (Murungi 2002: 70). I will explore whether the classroom environment can be a space in which to play tribute to and critically analyze these innovative expressive forms, particularly because the students are daily challenged by them for the 'site of emergent consciousness' (Barber 1997: 7) they provide.

To interrogate the existing canon of printed text, texts produced by the 'Bana Molokai' in a range of semiotic modes will be explored in an English literature classroom. There are a

number of reasons for my choosing a subculture as a mirror through which to take a critical look at the present literature curriculum in the context of Rwanda. First, the texts are produced using media other than the written form. The research intends to interrogate Rwandan literature teaching practices which are concerned exclusively with written material whereas students' living space is alive with a range of media and popular texts that use other forms of representation which are the preferred texts of the youth. The second reason is that the canon in the context of Rwanda marginalizes not only other forms of expressing knowledge but also subordinate groups defined by their ethnicity, class, gender and race. Studying a popular youth culture will encourage the debate surrounding the question as to how the marginalized construct an alternative knowledge. Here the marginalized are represented by the youth and the poor because the texts produced by the Bana Molokai are aimed at the poor, and, in addition, are constructed for a relatively less educated audience than the average books of the canon. My third reason for choosing this subculture is that it is produced in contemporary Africa and speaks about contemporary issues. Finally, the choice of a subculture as a space for interrogating practices in the students' environment will be studied for the sheer enjoyment and pleasure of linking academic activities with the field of culture outside the classroom. The assumption I am testing is that students will find it an agreeable novelty to link learning with pleasurable activities when in many learning situations the two remain clearly separated. The subculture will bridge the gap between the knowledge students bring to school, which will eventually shape who they are, and the classroom activities. In addition, besides allowing a link between out-of-school and in-school knowledges, investigating a youth culture also provides an understanding of the interests of contemporary African youth. As Dimitriadis (2001: 119) has noted, 'there has been a growing sense from many quarters that young people's lives – their needs, wants, interests and desires – are being occluded from daily life in school'.

1.4. The Bana Molokai subculture

Very little attempt has been made in the academic world to theorize one of the most prolific and influential youth cultures in Africa – the Bana Molokai – and its spiritual leader, Papa Wemba. My reasons for embarking on a description and analysis of this subculture are twofold: to provide the reader with some knowledge of the subculture that will serve as the basis for my pedagogical intervention, and also to pay tribute to its vitality, cultural richness and its ability to capture the pervasive mood of Zairian[6] youth, a fact that accounts for its lasting influence not only in Congo, but also in other regions of Africa.

The Bana Molokai subculture was founded in Zaire in the late 1970s by musicians who used music as a space to construct a group identity that mobilized the youth in a process of reinventing and reasserting their distinctiveness in the face of the socio-cultural crisis which started ravaging Zaire in 1975. The musicians created a mythical space they called 'village Molokai' in which they could construct imaginary narratives about their living space and experiment with new identities. These they disseminated primarily through the medium of music. Their spiritual leader and the leader of the band was and still is Papa Wemba. The village members practiced different rites of 'talk', 'walk, and 'attire' that became popular throughout the whole central Africa region, but that have since extended their influence in other African countries.

My reason for incorporating this particular subculture in a Rwandan English literature classroom at tertiary level is because of my privileged position as witness of this subculture at the peak of its artistic expression, between 1980 and 1985. While I was growing up in Zaire, I was fascinated both by the richness of the subculture and its capacity to mobilize the youth. I was attentive to the creation of the narratives that were disseminated through the medium of music and also to the use of the body as a symbolic surface on which to engrave their thoughts and perceptions as the group members

[6] The Democratic Republic of Congo has been called respectively Congo from its colonization until 1973, Zaire from 1973 until 1978, and the DRC thenceforth.

experimented with new identities. Today, from my perspective as a lecturer, I am struck by the enthusiasm the subculture was able to elicit in the youth in the late 1970s in comparison to the lack of expected response and engagement I received from my students as a lecturer working with British and American literatures. Another reason for selecting this particular subculture for discussion in a Rwandan classroom environment is that the subculture shows a deliberate need to engage with the complexity of the lives of contemporary African youth by articulating their views and interests about a range of contemporary phenomena such as fashion, music, relationships, identity and tradition. The perspectives of Bana Molokai differ noticeably from most African artistic forms such as those found in Rwanda specifically, which are more concerned with the preservation of 'pure' traditional cultural forms. Although it could be argued that, as a product of another country, this subculture is relatively distant from Rwanda, I am investigating the inclusion of texts produced by this Congolese subculture in the context of Rwanda because the subculture has been highly influential not only in Congo, but throughout the whole Great Lake Region to such an extent that students will feel personally addressed by the numerous concerns the investigated texts are raising. One can also argue that the texts are nearer to the students than the average texts on the literature curriculum.

To understand the subculture, one has to relate it to its creator and leader, Papa Wemba. Papa Wemba is an emblematic figure, who is linked to the Congolese culture of music, fashion and cinema. In the early 1970s, he helped to revolutionize the Congolese music industry with a group of young Congolese artists by integrating traditional and modern instruments and blending the Congolese rumba and rock music, using an accelerated and accentuated tempo. He renamed the music 'rumba rock'. He also made copious use of traditional myths, beliefs and culture in his musicology in a mix of traditional and modern elements. The main reason for his continued success within a transitional Congolese society is that he created narratives that bridged the gap between tradition and modernity for a youth who perceived tradition to be in jeopardy in the face of mental and cultural alienation from the West, but who could not completely turn from the more global world and its commodities. From the vantage point of his musical success, Papa Wemba created a mythical space, the 'village Molokai' whose members were called

'Bana Molokai' (literally, the children of Molokai). In this mythical space the youth experimented with new identities in a range of ways. They used the body as a surface for the engraving and articulation of new meanings. Besides being the Nkuru Yaka, the mythical leader of the Bana Molokai, Papa Wemba also became a fashion icon who made liberal use of cultural artefacts from different parts of the world in ever-changing combinations to create and express his uniqueness, which was derived from the combination of his Zairian identity and his encounter with fashion from the rest of the world. He created new fashions that were rooted in his Congolese identity but also incorporated the haute couture of far away horizons – both historical and geographical. He invented and reasserted a new Congolese vision that claimed its originality and richness through the retrieval of traditional cultural values alongside an appropriation of modern commodities selected from the range of culturally available material. They were turned into new hybrid symbolic signs and referents for the members of the subculture. Papa Wemba's continuous experimentation with the body as a space on which to engrave new meanings and to subvert others has made him famous on the continent as a fashion icon, the pope of la SAPE – *la Société des Ambiasseurs et Personnes Elégantes* (Society of Posers and Elegant people). Furthermore, Papa Wemba has experimented with cinema and played a leading role in La *Vie est Belle*, a film that captured the way the Congolese society is shaped by its music and how the music has become an inherent aspect of its *joie de vivre*. He is also known for having provided a platform from which modern Congolese musical talents, such as Koffi Olomide, Reddy Amisi and Awilo Longomba, have emerged. Papa Wemba has sung with musicians from the Congolese, African and international music industry, and been produced by renowned Western managers. He has experimented with the integration and reappropriation of different local and international dances and the use of different dialects and foreign languages in his musical repertoire. Recently, he has been charged with the illegal smuggling of Congolese immigrants into Belgium and France, but has pleaded that he was only trying to provide opportunities for his countrymen. His predicament rekindled the debate about the real lives behind the lavish lifestyle of Congolese stars[7]. Critics argued that it is a common practice with African singers to supplement their meagre incomes with more lucrative activities as they

[7] Information drown from the Afrique Magazine 211 of April 2003.

are either exploited by their Western producers or are failing to appeal to the Western public. His popularity across the continent, and progressively in other parts of the world, has resulted in an outcry from many Africans at the news of his conviction and subsequent arrest and the intervention of three African Presidents, notably the presidents of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon and the Congo.[8]

Papa Wemba's originality is based on his use of music and his body as symbolic surfaces to display modernist views of what it is to be a Congolese. Unlike the views expressed about Africa and Africans by renowned authors on the continent, Papa Wemba as an 'author' of a youth fashion that is inscribed in alternate media, acknowledges his encounter with the West as enriching instead of considering it to be a threat or a violation of his intrinsic essence. He uses this encounter as a means to reaffirm his distinctiveness and uniqueness. He experiments with different cultural products from different countries and different historical periods and integrates them into his musicology and his flamboyant style. Furthermore, as a band leader, Papa Wemba has deliberately created a space to become a leader and a model thereby creating a unique and popular identity for the youth.

My aims as a researcher are to explore the reading of texts produced in alternate modes in a literature classroom for third-year pre-service teachers at the National University of Rwanda as a means of exploring their 'readability' and 'teachability'. I also intend to investigate students' responses to the intervention to derive its significance for their teaching/learning practices in the context of Rwanda.

1.5. Overview of the chapters

The research report consists of seven chapters. Chapter one sets out the context of the research report, presents the research aims and rationale for the study, introduces the Bana Molokai subculture as providing texts towards an interventionist expansion of the ambit of the literature curriculum in the context, and includes an overview of the research report. Chapter two investigates the research methodology, discussing its two main

[8] Information from the Jeune Afrique/L'INTELLIGENT NO 2215 of 22 to 28 June 2003.

components: the researching into the Bana Molokai, and the pedagogical intervention which forms the major component of the research project. This chapter delineates the process of data collection and data analysis with the Bana Molokai subculture. Thereafter, it discusses the pedagogical intervention highlighting the lesson as its central part. It also presents the research participants, the methods for data collection, the type of data gathered and the methods of analysis. Chapter three presents the major theoretical framework with which my work is aligned, namely the Multiliteracies framework Moreover, this section incorporates debates in the field of literature teaching and critical pedagogy which are convergent with the Multiliteracies framework. For the purpose of analysis of texts produced in a range of semiotic modes by the Bana Molokai, the research integrates a methodology of analysis of popular forms. It uses the methodology developed by Hebdige (1979) on subculture analysis. Chapter four presents an overview of the Bana Molokai style as a means of contextualizing the pedagogical intervention of teaching texts produced by this subculture. Chapter five and six analyze the data gathered, respectively before and after the pedagogical intervention. The data gathered before the pedagogical intervention serve the purpose of accessing literary practices currently in use in Rwanda from the respondents' perspective. The chapter presents an analysis of the literary background in the light of legitimizing an expansion of the literature curriculum in Rwanda. The data gathered after the pedagogical intervention are analyzed in order to understand how the students responded to the experimental expansion. Chapter seven discusses major findings and makes recommendations towards further studies in the field of teaching texts produced in a range of semiotic modes and emphasizes the need in the context of Africa to theorize and analyze texts from the field of popular culture which are increasingly prosperous and popular with the African audience.

CHAPTER II: RESEARCH DESIGN

This chapter outlines two aspects of the design of this research report, that pertaining to the research itself and that pertaining to the development of my pedagogic intervention. It discusses the process of collection and analysis of artefacts produced by the Bana Molokai, the nature of the pedagogical intervention as the major component of the study and the collection and analysis of data pertaining to the intervention.

2.1. Researching the Bana Molokai Subculture

2.1.1. Data collection

The collection of the Bana Molokai texts took place between March and June 2004. I had asked Congolese friends to assist me in the collection of archival material as I was residing in Johannesburg at the time. They attempted to find magazines and journals that were published when Bana Molokai was at the peak of its cultural expression in the early 1980s. In June 2004, while I was in Rwanda, I gathered materials that had been produced after the year 2000. These included articles in journals and magazines produced by the consumers of the subculture and its critics, information on its spiritual leader in the form of printed interviews, archival photographs now available on the internet, and audio and video tapes that I purchased locally, as these productions were available for sale in Rwanda.

I acknowledge that the process of compilation was hindered by the fact that original archival visual and printed documents are difficult to obtain due to the multiple social and political upheavals that have unsettled the region since the early 1990s. These upheavals, including the looting of shops and public and private institutions, have resulted in the destruction of Bana Molokai texts and artefacts amongst other goods and documents. In the end, therefore, the texts that have been used derive from different websites on the subculture. I have requested and have been granted permission to use the texts from these

websites, including those of Papa Wemba. Photographs used in this study are from S.I. Cashman and V. H. Luttman on the Website Nostalgie ya Mboka[9]. I have also used more recent printed material from different magazines and journals, and the audio and video tapes purchased in Rwanda.

2.1.2. Data analysis

The texts are analyzed using Hebdige's methodology within the Multiliteracies framework, both of which will be discussed in more detail in chapter three. The Multiliteracies framework enables the 'reading' of details of composition such as materials, textures, colours, recombination and reorganization, as well as the reasons that lie behind these choices in order to understand what meanings the designer ascribed to the final products. The method for the analysis of subcultural texts facilitates a discussion of the discourse of dominant ideologies and the creation of new meanings. However, during the pedagogical intervention, because the students did not have the necessary knowledge of the two theoretical frameworks and because I could not successfully introduce them due to the limited time at my disposal, the analysis was done under the rubric of literary analysis. The texts were analyzed according to the purposes assigned to literary texts on the English curriculum (Lazar: 1993) and following traditional literature teaching/learning models such as the identification of major thematic points, characters, setting, and tone. There was also an attempt to subject the texts to major methods of literary criticism such as the formalist, the postcolonial and the feminist methods.

2.2. The Pedagogical Intervention

This section discusses the pedagogical intervention, the research participants, the methods used to gather the research data, the type of data gathered and the methods for analyzing the data.

[9] The Website I have consistently used is www.aozj17.dsl.pipex

The pedagogical intervention took place at the National University of Rwanda in June-July 2004. It was centred on a lesson that integrated the 'reading'[10] of two sets of a photograph taken during the time of the Bana Molokai subculture. The pedagogical intervention comprised of three phases:

- The introduction of the subject of the study to the students

On 6 June 2004, I met with third year pre-service teachers during a two-hour preliminary session that introduced the subject of the study. I also used this occasion to distribute the first set of 25 semi-structured questionnaires designed to collect information on the students' responses to the literature curriculum and literature practices in their context, as well as their views on the role of the literature subject in an English curriculum for ESL/EFL learners. After the students had filled in the forms, I had a two-hour session with the class representative during which we read the students' responses and identified a focus group for the second and third phase of the research. We attempted to select a representative group whose opinions reflected those held by the first group concerning the students' views regarding literary practices in their context, the role they assigned to literature in an English curriculum, and its aim and importance. Other criteria that were taken into consideration in the selection process were gender representation, the level of students' interest and their availability during field work. A final sample of 7 students was selected, comprising four male and three female students. The final sample was reduced to allow an in-depth analysis of the teaching material as well as to increase the opportunities for individual students to interact with the texts.

- A two-hour literature lesson based on Bana Molokai texts

This phase, which was the central phase of the pedagogical intervention, was structured in the form of a two-hour literature lesson. Because the lesson was designed for a small group of students, it included material that, under normal circumstances, would be covered in four hours in much larger classes, say of 70 to 80 students. The lesson was centred on the 'reading' of photographs depicting the Bana Molokai subculture. The

[10] I use the word 'read' to hint at the similarities and differences between the reading of written texts and the 'reading' of multimodal texts,

photographs depicted two teenagers – a boy and a girl - who called themselves supporters of the group and exhibited the style and pose advocated by Bana Molokai (Appendix A, Plate 1). The first photograph had a visual element only, while the second photograph included as legend a verbal element. The students had to derive from the exercise of reading the two photographs the relationship between the visual and verbal elements, and how the verbal element 'anchored' (Newfield: 1993) the message on the visual text. Besides having to discuss stylistic elements of the two photographs such as clothing and adornments, the students had also to discuss extended elements of 'style', as used by Hebdige (1979) in its generic form, and including such elements as the characters' attitude, their complexion and the unusual use of spelling and syntax in the legend at the bottom of the photograph. The students also had to 'read' the photograph in light of the historical moment it portrayed which was the year 1978. To supplement the students' understanding of the culture and its products, towards the end of the lesson, some written texts were also read. These texts linked Papa Wemba, the singer and band leader, to the global fashion industry, and described his musical journey from being a singer in a choir to becoming an international renowned musician[11].

- Responding to the pedagogical intervention

After the lesson, as an individual and collective assignment, students were provided with six more photographs (see appendix A, Plate 2-7), an audio tape of Papa Wemba's music band, and a film about the band, as secondary materials. The students were asked to 'read' these materials out of class individually to enable them to respond cogently to the second set of semi-structured questionnaires. This four-hour analysis session was aimed at extending the students' familiarity with the subculture and its products. Thereafter, the students had to fill in the second set of semi-structured questionnaires. Finally, they took part in a recorded group discussion which was aimed at allowing the students to discuss the lesson relative to the feasibility of extending the literature curriculum by including texts using other media for their expression. Unfortunately, due to repeated power cuts, the students were only able to listen to the audio tape which featured one of Papa Wemba's latest musical successes 'Je suis mannequin'.

[11] Downloaded from the website www.rfimusique.com

The lesson used a number of different teaching methods including 'reading' in small groups with one member of the group reporting to the class, semi-directed discussions in which the researcher provided prompts, and an open group discussion with peer students.

2.2.1. Research Participants and Sampling Criteria

The research participants were third year pre-service English teachers at the National University of Rwanda. I chose this particular class because I felt they had had some exposure to pedagogy through their practice teaching in local secondary schools. They had also been exposed to literature learning in French and English from their first year at the university onwards and to some extent from their experience at secondary schools. I was interested in the research participants' responses as learners but also as practitioners in the field of English teaching.

The focus group for the second and third phase was relatively homogenous, consisting of students whose level of exposure to English literature both as learners and as in-service teachers was the same and they all came from relatively similar cultural and language background. All the students had Kinyarwanda as their mother tongue, and French as their primary language of instruction. They had learned English as a second language in secondary school and had attended an intensive one-year course at the University Language Centre. Currently, they are being trained to become second language teachers of French and English for the secondary school and have had similar experience in the teaching of English as pre-service teachers in Rwandan secondary schools. Most of the students have been raised in Rwanda and have spent most of their lives in Rwanda. They come from different parts of Rwanda, but are mainly from semi-rural areas and rural families.

Ethical considerations were addressed in that it was the students' right to withdraw from the project at any time. I also promised to ensure student anonymity and confidentiality by referring to students using the letters of the alphabet. In order to get unbiased responses, I had to assure students that, even where I could trace the responses to specific

respondents, their personal contributions to the intervention would have no influence whatsoever on their academic performance either as my students or as students of the National University of Rwanda. However, I want to acknowledge that students' responses could to some extent be influenced by their desire to please me. This is the reason why I attempted to access the data through an array of different methods. I also requested and received permission from the office of the Academic Vice-rector to use the university facilities and students, and to mention the research site explicitly by name. Permission was granted in compliance with regulations regarding paper writing in use at the National University of Rwanda.

2.2.2. Methods and Techniques for Data Collection

1. Questionnaires

The first set of self-administered, semi-structured questionnaires was distributed to 25 volunteer students for the purpose of selecting seven students, who would later constitute the focus group. Another set of semi-structured questionnaires was distributed at the end of the pedagogical intervention in order to gather students' responses to the lesson. Semi-structured questionnaires are appropriate because they provide directives in the form of questions which the respondents answer, while also providing space for the respondents to express unaccounted thoughts and feelings that might arise during the intervention or as reflections on the intervention.

1. Recorded group discussion

Pollock (1995 quoted in Flick 1998) asserts that group discussions are preferable to individual interviews because they promote the study of human attitudes and opinions in a genuine interactive context. He argues further that the dynamics found in the group are at their highest expression levels when the members of the group can share background knowledge about the research question and/or have had a stimulus in order to maximize output. For the purpose of my study, students had a similar background and their perceptions were triggered by the pedagogical intervention which was intended to throw a new light on literary practices in their context.

Group discussions were used as a means of allowing students to discuss points raised by the pedagogic intervention and to elucidate their answers to the second set of semi-structured questionnaires in the light of revisions and clarifications provided by discussions with other members of the group. The group discussions also allowed students to think individually and collectively in order to address a concrete issue, taking into consideration different perspectives to the question and discussing the complexity of the issue.

The focus group discussions were conducted in the absence of the researcher because I felt that my dual position as a researcher and the students' lecturer might be inhibiting and restrict spontaneous response. The advantage of this method is that students can discuss freely their opinions with peer students, choosing to discuss issues that they feel are particularly resonant for them. The disadvantage is that students might 'wander' away from the immediate issues. Because my aim was not so much to direct their views in answering a certain set of questions, but rather to activate responses related to their perception of the pedagogical intervention, I thought that non-monitored group discussions would better serve my purpose of triggering diverse responses from the students to inform an in-depth analysis of the pedagogical intervention.

2. Field notes

As a participant-observer, I compiled reflexive notes on the intervention. I used my field notes to record the development of the intervention, unforeseen occurrences (power cuts and holidays which disrupted my plans) and remedial steps that were taken. These notes also serve as observations of the respondents' behaviour before, during and after the pedagogic intervention. Furthermore, I used field-annotated notes extensively because I did not have the necessary equipment to film the pedagogical intervention.

2.2.3. Methods and Techniques for Data Analysis

Data collected during the pedagogic intervention comprised semi-structured questionnaires that reflect students' attitude to literature before and after the pedagogical intervention (Appendix B and C); transcripts of the recorded group discussion that took place after the pedagogical intervention (Appendix D); and the researcher's field notes compiled throughout the different phases of the pedagogical implementation (Appendix E). The research data is grouped chronologically into two major categories: the data gathered before the pedagogical intervention and the data gathered after the pedagogical intervention. This grouping is important because it enables a comparison between students' perception of literature, literary texts and literary pedagogies in their context before the pedagogical intervention, and their perceptions at the end of the pedagogical intervention.

I have described and analyzed the data under major thematic themes that I related to answering the research questions. The data is presented in the form of tabular displays that summarized students' responses to different questions pertaining to major identified themes that surfaced from their answers. The analysis is my attempt to link the data to how they answered my research questions. The findings in each chapter are provided after the description and analysis.

CHAPTER III: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study comprises an intersection between the field of popular culture on the one hand and contemporary studies of literacy and literature in education on the other. In this chapter, I therefore, in the first instance, discuss the method of subcultural analysis which underlies my own approach. Thereafter I discuss contemporary approaches to literacy and the English curriculum as frameworks in the field of education and English studies. I also provide an overview of illustrative applications in South Africa and Africa more broadly that incorporate an emphasis on culture and contemporary approaches to literacy and the English curriculum. These underpin my intervention, and I attempt to comment on application in the global and local arenas. In addition, the chapter outlines some arguments from the fields of literature teaching, critical pedagogy and media education which converge with ideas about literacy and the English curriculum in the present time on which my study is built.

3.1. A Method for the Analysis of Popular Culture

Popular culture is a term that is broadly applied to cultural texts that are linked to 'industries that disseminate cultural material, for example film, television and publishing industry, as well as the news media. (…) [I]t is the result of a continuing interaction between those industries and the people of the society who consume their products[12]. My study is limited to a specific genre within the field of popular culture, the subculture phenomenon, and to a particular subculture, the Bana Molokai.

Hebdige's (1979) model on subculture and its meaning is used to assist in the analysis of the Bana Molokai popular culture which forms the basis of my pedagogic intervention. The theoretical framework Hebdige has defined is useful for the purpose of the present research study because it reads 'style' as a signifying practice that uses available commodities in a process of collage and pastiche to create new meanings. Style in

[12] Definition from Wikipedia enyclopedia drown from www.absoluteastronomy.com.encyclopedia

Hebdige's terminology is a generic term that includes both the commodities and the rituals by which the members of the subculture signal their presence. He defines style as 'gestures, movements towards a speech which offends the "silent majority", which challenges the principle of unity and cohesion, which contradicts the myth of consensus' (Hebdige 1979: 18). Hebdige reads cultural elements as being embued with ideological significance. The dominant ideology defines those elements in hegemonic terms and, through the different coercive structures of family, education and religion attempts to present a unified reading of those elements as silent. Through this process of harmonization, the dominant culture can exert hegemony over marginalized groups. Hebdige also argues that, as a social phenomenon, youth cultures have emerged at the end of the Second World War to signal the collapse of the consensus era. Commodities as ideological signs are reappropriated and distorted to display new meanings and are presented as implying a discourse of difference.

Hebdige makes a second contention, namely, that subcultures are always in opposition to a dominant culture to which they send circuitous messages through a flamboyant repossession of the shared commodities of style. Marginalized groups use style to dramatize their otherness in the face of the dominant ideology through the use of forbidden forms and the transgression of the accepted behaviour codes of conduct. The subcultural analyst argues that this is the reason for the antagonism which subcultures elicit from dominant groups. Furthermore, he contends that this process of innovation and selection is not undertaken randomly, but is rooted in a reading of the context of its production. Hebdige (1979: 122-3) states that

> [i]f a style is really to catch on, if it is to become genuinely popular, it must say the right things in the right way at the right time. It must anticipate or encapsulate a mood, a moment. It must embody a sensibility ….

Hebdige also argues that once the members of the subculture have allocated a new meaning to a commodity, it is captured by the fashion industry for the purpose of commercial exploitation. The created style is disseminated and consumed by society at large as a rejuvenation of the fashion industry, its meaning becoming frozen. However,

the members of the subculture continuously create new uses and new combinations of the commodities in an effort to evade being codified and classified. This desire and capacity for innovation is a characteristic of popular culture

In the second instance, Hebdige links the social practices of youth culture to a discourse of appropriation and subversion of the mainstream ideology, not only as a critique of the values inherent in that group, but also for the purpose of bargaining an identity for the members of the subculture outside the identity bestowed by the dominant culture. Hebdige (1979: 88) argues in the case of punk culture, for example, that its members

were attempting to negotiate a meaningful intermediate space somewhere between the parent culture and the dominant ideology: a space where an alternative identity could be discovered and expressed.

The subculture provides its members with a space, albeit a symbolic or mythical one, within which, they can resolve contradictions found in society at large and also to create a common identity. I concur with Roe's argument that subcultures furthermore provide their members with a 'meaningful way of life during leisure'[13].

Brake, another cultural theorist who has attempted to theorize the phenomenon of subculture (1985) asserts that subcultures originate in the marginalized group's sense of alienation from the values heralded by the dominant ideology. He demonstrates that in the particular case of youth cultures, its members are young people who are marginalized in relation to the economy, the school and the family and attempt to create a space where they can generate an illusory impression of power and control. Swendinger and Swendinger (1976 a, 1976 b, 1982) as cited in Brake (1985: 45) contend that the capitalist system has removed the youth from the labour system and 'prolonged youth's dependent status and thus its marginality'. Furthermore, Brake argues that the education system is regarded as unfulfilling with regards to expected rewards, resulting in disillusioned young people dropping out of school (1985: 53).

[13] Drawn from an article by Keith Roe on Music and Identity among European Youth publish on the net on the site http//www.icce.rug.nl/-soundscapes/DATABASES/MIE

The method for the analysis of subcultures is important for the purpose of the present research report because it reads style as a relevant social practice that can be perceived as meaningful in a particular social and historical context. In addition, style is perceived as encapsulating a particular group's perception of its identity in a process of identifying its choices as symbolic referents that dramatize and symptomize the problems encountered in a particular society. Furthermore, Hebdige's model is important because it reads the phenomenon of youth culture as a product of the new media landscape whereby marginalized groups create meanings using music as a departure point for their experiments. Finally, his inclusive reading of style that transcends the visual to include the verbal and the behavioural is important to this study because the research intends to investigate different modes of expression as they combine to create a significant mythology for the Bana Molokai. This report uses Hebdige's model of subcultural analysis to facilitate a discussion of the emergence of a new language code practiced among the Bana Molokai members to signal difference. My report provides, for example, an overview of the naming practices and the use of a new image-laden language among the members of the subculture as a subversion of the language code and the naming practices used by the dominant group and an illustration of some aspects of the 'creolization' of the French language.

To illustrate Hebdige's analytical method, I refer to the case of punk rock. Hebidge (1979) has analyzed the punk style as an attempt to recapture and parody poverty in its most colourful aspects as a lived condemnation of capitalism. He explores punk culture in light of its subversion of the dominant ideology through language, attitude, pose and general behaviour. As an illustration, he has analyzed elements of language as 'signifying practices which negate and disturb syntax' (Kristeva 1975 cited in Hebdige 1979: 119), pointing to the fact that the punk subculture made extensive use of cursing and profanities. Another illustration is provided by Brake (1985) who has theorized that the black youth subculture phenomenon in Great Britain is a flaunting of richness in order to subvert the subordinate position of the poor which the mainstream ideology has condemned the black man to occupy. Brake (1985: 117) explains that

[i]n a society where black people were kept out of desirable suburban residences and decent schools and their civil rights were resisted, symbols of economic affluence were important. Clothes, cars and other goods were deliberately and openly flaunted.

He demonstrates further that marginalized blacks developed an informal employment sector which he calls 'hustling', defined as 'living on [one's] wits' and allowing young men with unknown sources of income to have a lavish lifestyle filled with joyful parties and entertainment. My research intends to read style as an enacted discourse, but in converse to the aforementioned analysts of subculture, it reads the Bana Molokai subculture as a subversion of the position of hegemony occupied by the minority Zairian intellectual elite from the position of the poor majority and the subjugated masses. Popular media forms will provide a platform for discussing how Bana Molokai construct a postcolonial identity in the face of traditional values and their encounter with modernity and how they articulate their views using a range of modes and media.

Case studies of subcultural analysis

On the African continent popular culture has been recognized as being particularly prolific. Critics acknowledge the presence and vitality of a wide range of popular forms which are drawn form the daily experiences of Africans and are the preferred texts for the majority of the African public. According to Appiah (1992: 157),

[d]espite the overwhelming reality of economic decline; despite unimaginable poverty; despite wars, malnutrition, disease and political instability, African cultural productivity grows apace: popular literatures, oral narrative and poetry, dance, drama, music and visual art all thrive.

Many prestigious scholars have responded to the prominence of this phenomenon on the African scene. Barber has linked African popular culture to African oral production, asserting its connection with traditional oral forms, but seeing it mostly as a new phenomenon that seeks to intersect modernity and tradition in a constant discourse of self-discovery. Nuttall as paraphrased in Bogatsu (2002: 1) has theorized African youth subculture as a genre that 'is producing a range of highly imaginative cultural forms in which existing genres are reworked and "remixed" with a range of global resources'. The

hybrid nature of African popular culture is acknowledged. It blends hi-technology with traditional musicology; the modern commodity of fashion to meanings directly engraved on the body surface - a practice that is reminiscent of African traditions; the use of different languages in a cultural interface; and the centrality of the performance act to the more fixed artistic genres. These are some of the characteristics of the Bana Molokai subculture that my research report will explore.

Since the year 2000, the African Literature Department at the University of the Witwatersrand has been exploring the field of African popular culture within an overreaching African literature paradigm. The Department has published essays and books on the subject and has devoted an edition of the journal *English Studies in Africa,* to research into popular culture in South Africa. Bogatsu's work on Loxion Kulcha (2002: 1-11) provides a model for analyzing African youth culture. She has described in minute detail the link between a particular youth stylistic choice and a celebration and assertion of a township identity. My research is aligned with Bogatsu's model because it reads meanings in a broader socio-cultural context that transcends fashion trends. It locates style as enacting the period and surfacing its contradictions.

Professors Bhekiziwe Peterson and Isabel Hofmeyr, two lecturers in the African Literature Department at the University of the Witwatersrand, have incorporated into their curriculum both African literature canonical texts and popular texts comprising 'South African magazines, periodicals, pamphlets, popular novelettes, films, television, popular drama, letters, popular religious media and so on' (Graduate Study Handbook, 2004); and they have devised a module that explores the interaction between literacy and orality in Africa in relation to popular forms. To a lesser extent, the English Department at the University of the Witwatersrand also incorporates popular culture into its curriculum, as can be seen in its linking of film, media and literature in some of its undergraduate and postgraduate modules. My research aims to explore the inclusion of popular local culture into both the African and Western literature canons in a dialogic interplay with a view to redefining the Rwandan literature curriculum for the instruction of pre-service teachers.

3.2. Contemporary Studies of Literacy and English Literature in Education, the Multiliteracies Framework

A second framework that is essential to this study and which provides a major justification for the incorporation of multiple modes of knowledge representation in education is derived from the multimodal project of Kress (1995, 1997, 1999) and the Multiliteracies project of the New London Group (1996). Both the NLG and Kress advocate a curriculum that takes into account the multilingual and multicultural aspect of modern societies, and the modal plurality of texts produced in these societies. These literacy theorists contest the more traditional view of education as providing a unified vision of the world through a single means of representation. The literacy framework that the New London Group advocates pluralizes the notion of literacy and advocates 'a pedagogy of Multiliteracies'. They foreground the notion of 'design' which aims to emphasize both the design of curriculum in the contemporary world and learners' adaptation to this changing world. According to them, 'educational research should become a design science, studying how different curricular, pedagogical, and classroom designs motivate and achieve different sorts of learning' (Cope and Kalantzis, 2000: 19).

Kress (1995, 1999) extends his theoretical work on children's meaning-making practices to the field of English studies and specifically questions of texts taught in an English classroom environment. In 'Writing the Future', his investigation into English curricula for the late 20th and early 21st century (1995: 35), he argues that any curriculum that is to be viable for the purposes of future societies must include three types of texts, 'the culturally salient text, the aesthetically valued and valuable text, and the mundane text'. To paraphrase him, an English curriculum should consist of texts that are diversified. The first category will illustrate culture and cultural difference in order to enrich students' perception of knowledge and how different societies articulate this knowledge; the second category should explore texts that are considered 'Literature' with capital L and are part of the established literary canon; and the third category should contain texts that are more functional and mundane. Kress also advocates the extension of the curriculum to accommodate the plurality of representational media in the modern educational

landscape as well as the recognition of different subjectivities in the classroom environment. If a curriculum is 'a design for social futures' it should be shaped by the social and cultural practices found in a particular society. Kress's comprehensive vision of an English curriculum that addresses specific societal needs as defined by the people's subjectivities is central to my research study as it helps to extend the literary canon to include texts that are relevant as a portrayal of the conditions of contemporary youth in a transitional society. According to the New London Group, 'the role of pedagogy is to develop an epistemology of pluralism that provides access without people having to erase or leave behind different subjectivities' (2000: 18).

My research report uses the notions of Multiliteracies and multimodality to allow for the interrogation of practices in a Rwandan literature curriculum with the express aim of finding a curriculum that is best suited to the needs and interests of students, and for a consideration of the potential of shifting the boundaries of English literature. Kress (1995) critiques the current monolingual and monocultural trends in education on the grounds that these trends are not being aligned with the contemporary communicational and cultural landscapes. A Multiliteracies framework legitimizes the reading of a range of multi-semiotic texts and cultural practices.

Implementations of the international Multiliteracies framework

South African educators have made a contribution to the Multiliteracies model advocated by Kress and the New London Group by providing a number of practical implementations of multimodal pedagogic practices. At the University of the Witwatersrand, a team of researchers has endeavoured to incorporate 'a pedagogy of Multiliteracies' into the pedagogic practice of the Honours and Masters in English Education and English Language Education programmes. They show that this pedagogy enhances the students' cultural consciousness while fostering interplay amongst different representational modes. At the primary and secondary school levels, the Wits Multiliteracies Research Project has experimented with representation in a number of semiotic forms as a response to the challenge which the multicultural and multilingual

nature of the South African landscape poses (Newfield and Stein: 2000; Newfield D, Andrew D, Maungedzo R and Stein P: 2003).

Newfield et al (2003) describe an experimental case study that utilizes local cultural forms as an entry point in the literature curriculum in order to encourage Soweto students to embark on a journey of literary and cultural discovery, which later incorporates traditional Western genres and contemporary media. This process enables them to break the students' apathy and resistance to the literature texts. The students interpret and speak back to these texts using different languages and cultural artefacts. Brenner and Andrew (2004) have experimented with the use of local garments called Minceka as a self-expressive mode which connects visual literacy studies at tertiary level to African cultural practices.

My research sees local cultural texts as forms of self-representational practices that I introduce into my English literature classroom at the University of Rwanda. As previously mentioned, recent developments in the field of literature and literature education have acknowledged the pertinence of introducing cultural practices from the students' living space into the literature classroom. Carter and Long (1991) discussing the value of literary study for ESL/EFL learners, stress the need to relate literature to the students' world. Lazar (1993) also argues that the relevance of a text to a particular community of students is important. She stresses that teachers should consider the students' cultural background, their age, their intellectual maturity, their linguistic proficiency, their literary background and their interests and hobbies. When selecting an appropriate text, she states that the literary text will be alienating if it is too remote from the learners in terms of the aforementioned criteria. Therefore, for the more practical part of the study, I will use Lazar (1993) as an inspiration to find new ways of engaging with cultural texts within a literature curriculum. Her model allows me to contextualize the pedagogic intervention within the requirements of pre-service teachers in Rwanda. Furthermore, Lazar's work has inspired the structured questionnaire which I used with the students. Her model provides different practical points of entry into the study of literature that take into account the learners' needs as determined by their identity.

Critical pedagogy as defined in the work of Giroux (1989 and 1994) is aligned with the Multiliteracies framework. Giroux sees the classroom as a platform from which students learn to value the multiplicity of experiences provided by different subjectivities and in which students can construct their identities as they critically engage with different cultural practices. He (1989: ix) defines the mission of education in the following way:

> [E]ducators need to educate students to view schools as places that not only produce subjects but also subjectivities and that learning is not merely about the acquisition of knowledge but also about the production of social practices which provide students with a sense of place, identity, worth and value.

My research is also aligned with some aspects of media education. Goodwyn (1992) reflects on media education and its application during the last two decades. He first acknowledges that media texts are now an integral part of the English syllabus in England and in many English speaking countries because these texts 'are no longer seen as the preserve of the less able or the illiterate who study films and videos instead of books' (Godwying, 1992: iix). He describes two formerly prevalent approaches to the incorporation of media texts in classrooms. The first approach that media teachers previously privileged was to teach these texts as subversive and dangerous and to explore them in the classroom environment as a way of arming students against their persuasive discourses through rigorous deconstruction. The second approach was to teach media texts as baits to entice students to more dense texts. This trend of presenting media texts in a classroom environment either as dangerous products or lures away from the more difficult texts is progressively being replaced by an approach that values media texts and texts of popular culture for their own sake.

My research integrates some aspects of media education in that it provides models to integrate texts using a range of other media in the English classroom for the purpose of extending students' experience with a range of texts and developing a critical approach to texts. However, it goes a step further than most media education modules because it does not simply read texts, but explores them as relevant cultural practices that can be explored for their 'literary' value (Eagleton: 1983). The teaching of texts in other modes

and media in the context of this report is a means for students to understand the cultural and social practices from the field of popular culture. It is also a means to deconstruct the discourses the 'authors' of the culture have invested in the appropriated commodity and to connect the meanings to the dominant ideology in a specific context.

CHAPTER IV: THE BANA MOLOKAI SUBCULTURE

This section will deal with an overview of the Bana Molokai 'style' in order to explore how the subculture relates to the historical and cultural moment of its production and how the selected elements of style can be read in the light of a subordinate group's attempt to make meaning of the society at large and its position within that society, subverting its position of powerless marginality.

The analysis uses the model defined by Hebdige (1979) to deconstruct the elements of style appropriated by the Bana Molokai subculture. Hebdige contends that a subculture uses commodities available in its living space to articulate new meanings about the dominant institutions while at the same time constructing a mythical collective identity based on opposition and difference. This view is important to the study because it enables a comparison between the Bana Molokai subculture and the values and beliefs that prevailed in Zaire in the 1980s through a careful analysis of the commodities appropriated and their new uses. Another contention Hebidge makes that is important for this study is that the subcultural phenomenon is frequent in societies experiencing an identity crisis. This chapter attempts to read an identity crisis experienced by the youth in Zaire of the 1980s, which could be considered to be engendered by their living in a transitional society where traditional values competed with Western values, and which was facing a major economic crisis.

4.1. Origins and Meanings of the Subculture

As mentioned in chapter one, Bana Molokai was created during the late 1980s by Papa Wemba, a renowned figure in the global music industry. This musician started his musical career by singing in one of the most avant-garde bands in what was then Zaire. The band was called Zaiko Langa Langa – Zaiko, a contraction for Zaire ya ba Nkoko (Zaire of the ancestors). It revolutionized the Zairian musical landscape by mixing traditional and modern elements to create popular music that suited the needs of a youth audience attuned to global musical production. While a member of the Zaiko Langa Langa, Papa Wemba was derisively called 'yaka' by the other members of the music

band, a pejorative epithet used to define village boys who did not know the 'ways' of Kinshasa city. He was also denigrated for his nose which was perceived as too big according to aesthetic standards in the world of popular music. When Papa Wemba created his own band, he decided to use the term 'yaka' that had been applied disparagingly to him and to turn it into its opposite, loading it with positive connotations. He created the Bana Molokai village as a mythical space for villagers like himself and crowned himself king of the village, the 'Nkuru Yaka'. This village provided him with a space to articulate his views on subordinate groups of 'villagers', 'ugly', young uneducated and unemployed men, who formed the majority of Zaire's population, in contrast to the dominant group which consisted of a an educated elite who promoted 'progressive' values of education and 'civilization' as perceived in Western terms. He radically changed the dominant vision of subordination to a language and perception of empowerment. This he did through changing the society's norms of beauty, tradition and village and of the supremacy of education and conventional employment. He created the myth of the average young urban Zairian man who was handsome because he paid particular attention to his physical appearance by being well shaved, well groomed and well perfumed ('bon chic, bon genre') at all times. Through the 'la SAPE' movement, he invented a style to suit the needs of the Zairian public, mixing traditional trends with global fashions. The 'village members' became obsessed with their physical appearance - having the right hair style; looking after their complexions; polishing their expensive crocodile-skin shoes; and having an eye for the right Clothes. In this way, Papa Wemba overturned and collapsed gender and fashion boundaries by subverting practices that were traditionally considered a feminine preserve and created the myth of handsome young men who unashamedly plucked their eyebrows, used make-up and perfume, and made the practices part of a new code of conduct. He opened up the world of the high fashion to Zairian urban youth who could become connoisseurs of the French, Italian, American and Japanese fashion industries.

Papa Wemba also challenged people's perception of the French language as an empowering language, the language of the colonizers and of formal education and employment in Zaire. He helped promoted the use of Lingala, the lingua Franca in

Kinshasa, as the language of the streetwise people. He experimented with new terminologies that he disseminated across the country for use among the 'village' members, and created specific ways of using Lingala as the language of courtship and romance. His influence changed the status of Lingala. Papa Wemba also changed the perception of how people related to formal employment. As a result, a new class of successful 'hustlers' was created – amongst whom were a number of musicians - who lived lavishly on their wits, spending their incomes extravagantly on clothes, entertainment and expensive cars. Kinshasa became 'Kin Kiesse' – 'Kin the joy' – the title of the film in which Papa Wemba was a leading character and which captured joy as an inherent essence of the capital city of Zaire. The following analysis will demonstrate how Papa Wemba's ideology was transmitted through style, following Hebdige's model of subcultural analysis.

4.2. The Political and Social Context of the Creation of Bana Molokai

The empowerment of the Zairian youth through the particularities of style as applied and disseminated by the Bana Molokai subculture coincided with a political and cultural movement initiated by the late President Mobutu. This movement, which was called 'authenticity', was an attempt to link social and cultural practices in the country to tradition, thereby inverting the process of denigrating people's traditions which the colonial occupation had started. The 'authenticity' movement promoted the use of 'Zairian' outfits, particularly official attire of men and women. The abacost (*a bas costume* which translated literally means 'down with the suit') was officially instituted as the official costume for Zairian men. Women had to wear the 'maputas', colourful pieces of cloth wrapped around the waist and reaching to the ankles, with tops made in the same materials. Both men and women were officially addressed as 'mama' and 'papa', and no longer as 'monsieur' and 'madame'. First names were changed from the Christian names people received at the time of their baptisms into meaningful traditional names. For example, the president of Zaire who up to that point was known as Joseph Desire Mobutu became Mobutu Kuku Ngbendu Wa Zabanga. According to certain translations the name means 'Mobutu, the man of multiple women'. The Catholic religion relinquished its role as the religion of the state and an attempt was made to link church rites to people's

beliefs. For instance, Mobutu would spill his drink at official gatherings as a symbolic gesture to quench the thirst of ancestors. He also wore a traditional leopard skin chief's hat. The Catholic Church made outfits for nuns in the local material and according to the recognized fashion for Zairian women: a top and a wrap-up material that reached to their ankles. It also revolutionized church proceedings by incorporating colourful dances and songs in the rituals.

Although Papa Wemba denied his role as a critic of the 'authenticity' movement, his style has been perceived as a transgression of its ideology. During a time of conformity when the nation was obsessed with a return to traditional 'pure' forms, Papa Wemba experimented with clothing styles that borrowed elements from the Zairian traditional repertoire, as well as from the fashion repertoires from different part of the world, in the process collapsing the divide stressed by the authenticity movement. He positioned himself at the margins of society, performing spectacular transgressions of the imposed behaviours.

Ironically, the 'authenticity' trend of traditional consciousness as initiated by Mobutu's regime ran parallel to an unprecedented social and economic crisis. From the late 1980s people found it more and more difficult to find jobs in the formal sector and those who had jobs were paid either poorly or rarely. School and university leavers were obliged to work in more informal sectors where their knowledge of the language of the colonizer was disparaged. People who were 'streetwise' became financially and socially more successful than educated people, thereby conveying a derisive view of the education system as failing to prepare people for both the informal sector and professional life. In this political and social atmosphere where the mainstream discourse of the imitation of Western values based on education and formal employment was perceived as a failure, the youth were quick to adopt the alternative vision that was offered by the Bana Molokai subculture.

The following overview is based on texts produced by the Bana Molokai, comments on the subculture by different critics, the students' interpretation during the pedagogical

intervention and my observation of the Bana Molokai phenomenon. The photographs that were used to sustain the analysis appear in appendix A of to this report.

4.3. The subculture and 'Style'

This section will discuss some elements of style, as an inclusive term to mean not only the attire of Bana Molokai members, but more generally the practices that shape a recognizable physical image of membership. Brake (1985: 13) identifies the role style plays in a subculture in these terms:

> [S]tyle, then, is used for a variety of meanings. It indicates which symbolic group one belongs to, it demarcates that group from the mainstream, and it makes an appeal to an identity outside that of a class-ascribed one. It is learned in social interaction with significant subcultural others, and its performance requires what theatre actors call 'presence', the ability to wear costume and to use voice to project an image with sincerity. Indeed, this form of performance skill may well be tested out by other subcultural members.

The following section will include elements of fashion as adopted by the youth culture, but also social practices as recognized codes of conduct within the group.

4.3.1. The subculture and 'la SAPE'

The young men cultivated a fetishist dandyism which was made up of an ostentatious exaggerated elegance. They appropriated styles from different historical periods and from different geographical and cultural spaces which they used symbolically to create new styles and new referents for the Bana Molokai members. They not only wore clothes made by famous French and Japanese designers, shoes and belts in crocodile skin from Italy, watches from Germany and jewellery from England, but they also, when they were in the mood, wore clothes produced by local couturiers made in local material that they designed, lending them a new cachet. They subverted the Western taste for discreet fashions and tones for men and instead wore colourful and arresting clothes in their desire for visibility and difference. They were innovative in their continuous search for the most daring and expensive clothes and the village members acquired new prestige as connoisseurs of global fashion trends. Papa Wemba, the spiritual leader of the group and the 'pope' of the quasi religious fashion movement 'la SAPE' – Society of Posers and

Elegant people - initiated new fashion trends for the Bana Molokai members that encompassed a wide range of cultural horizons. For example, the 'beret molokai' – the flat hat in Appendix A, Plate 1 – which became a symbol and a referent for membership to the Bana Molokai subculture at the peak of its artistic expression during the years 1980s – was a hat that originated in the French cultural landscape at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. The cultural transposition of this hat negates and subverts both the message of thrift and also the Mobutist message of 'authenticity'. In Appendix A, Plate 6, Papa Wemba subverts the original meaning of the iron hat worn by the Roman garrison to celebrate his identity as a-temporal and a-historical figure. In Appendix A, Plate 5, he appropriates the attire of a traditional Zairian chief at one of his most famous concerts at Bercy in France, and he has some white carriers bring him to the stage in the chief's chair, which is designed as a modern armchair, subverting in the process both the cultural meaning of the attire and its function, while at the same reaffirming his position as a modern day village chief – the 'nkuru' of the mythical Molokai village. In one of his most colourful and subversive moods Papa Wemba wore a costume that looked like a bathroom robe for one of his evening concerts, while during another occasion he wore a hat from Siberia, and still at another event 'boubou'[14] from West Africa. The village members appropriated the 'la SAPE' code, spending extravagantly to acquire the latest fashion of their icon, Papa Wemba. This obsession with physical appearance was extended to the use of make up, chemicals to lighten the young men's complexion, the use of expensive perfumes and was also punctuated by regular visits to hair salons. Masculinity was subverted as these new dandies flaunted not only their expensive and flamboyant clothes, but also their clean shaven chins, hair cuts, new perfumes, well-kept nails and carefully designed eyebrows. Cultural theorists explain this phenomenon in the particular case of Zaire as a 'form of anti-poverty and anti-depression rebellion. [La] SAPE was also a way of fighting against the dictatorship of the 'abacost', a local version of the three-piece suit and virtually an official uniform of the Mobutu regime.'[15] Bogatsu (2002: 10) reads the phenomenon more globally, stating that 'the black body, previously slighted and denied recognition, now comes out in

[14] 'Boubous are big robes in colourful material worn in the western part of Africa
[15] Drawn from website http://rfimusique.com/siteEn/biographie/biographie

spectacular displays of its presence'. These two readings are important to the understanding of the Bana Molokai subculture. Recent research in the field of cultural studies has demonstrated further that masculinity is at the core of virtually all subcultural organizations. In the case of Bana Molokai, there is a constant attempt to collapse cultural, geographical, historical, class and gender boundaries, as well as to inscribe new identities that are grounded in the creation of a new Zairian man whose essence transcends the bleak conditions of his existence. The Zairian man is attuned to the best and the latest fashion, spends lavishly and is recognized internationally for the communicative joie de vivre that he transmits through the medium of music and dance.

4.3.2. 'Dance', 'walk' and 'talk' rites

4.3.2.1. The 'dance' element

Bana Molokai experimented with the creation of new dances. They were related to the 'La SAPE' movement in that they promoted dance as a vehicle for showing new fashion trends. The dances contained steps that would call attention to every article of clothing, with the singers sometimes supplementing the display by detailing who the fashion designers were. One such dance is the 'griff', a subversion and rewriting of the French word 'griffe' which means a fashion label. The village members would use elaborate hand and foot movements during the dances and would utter the word 'griff' every time they wanted to draw the audience's attention to a particular element of their outfit. Music concerts became the place where new fashions were created and exhibited. Progressively, the dances became more sensual and the lyrics hinted overtly at sexuality, expressing the members' desire to collapse the morality of the dominant ideology, which was perceived as an extension of the Western prudery. The village members rejuvenated elements of the traditional Zairian dances. In the process, they acknowledged the sensuality of these dances, celebrating it at the same time as they incorporated choreography from the Western tradition.

4.3.2.2. The 'walk' and the 'pose'

The group members walked in a self-conscious way, calling attention to themselves and the nonchalant use of their bodies. They walked, for example, with an affected limp –

stepping with one leg while pulling the other - at the same time as they performed the ritual of pulling their baggy trousers over their waists up to their upper bellies every now and then. Every movement they made professed to their new-found confidence in their artistically entertained image of handsomeness.

4.3.2.3. The 'talk'

Alongside these practices, the group also developed a flamboyant way of speaking to females. Courting became an exercise with its rites, its body language and an exaggerated concern with lyrical tones that were appropriated from the musical elements produced by the band. Young men polished their ways of addressing women and girls and practiced their courtship on any female audience available, just for the pleasure of demonstrating and perfecting their oral and body language. With their friends they discussed the effectiveness of their ritual practices on different female audiences and refined their courtship skills for the next victim. They would accost any female on the road to show off their skills. They would use exaggerated politeness in addressing women and girls, would talk to them in the most nonchalant tone about their love for them, only to leave them in the next five minutes to start all over on their next victim. They would observe these females to see what effect their courtship performances had on them and would boast to their friends about a particular language form or pose that they had used that the group would discuss and adopt for use in their future courtship rites. Both the young men and women would enjoy these courtship practices for the sheer pleasure of exchanging witticisms and would part company without a second thought being given to this encounter.

The group also developed ways of speaking that departed from the conventional code of conduct. Stuttering and repetition of words in initial positions, as well as the use of affected clichés, often from other cultural spaces and transposed and translated in Lingala, the language of courtship, became the norm in the speech acts of these groups.

4.3.3. The Bana Molokai and language

According to Kristeva (1975 cited in Hebdige 1979: 119) a subculture is defined as a 'place where the social code is destroyed and renewed'. This is particularly the case with the language code used in the mythical space of Molokai village. The subculture not only subverted the preponderance of French as an empowering language at all levels of the Zairian national life, but it was able to replace it by Lingala, a lingua franca that originally was spoken in the capital city Kinshasa and by the army, and whose influence progressively surpassed the four other national languages as a result of its acquired prestige as the language of the streetwise sophisticated youth. The empowerment of Lingala was facilitated through the use of music as a platform and the space of the village Molokai to collectively create and disseminate new terminologies and meanings in Lingala, conveying in the process the notion of membership and group identity that the use of the new terms bestowed on its users.

Once in a while, new expressions appeared in the group's linguistic space which referred to new notions or signified the renaming of an existing reality. The terminology blended different traditions and geographical spaces. It included words retrieved from the traditional Zairian space, terms readily created by the group members and expressions that were poetically said to originate from the supernatural world. The followers of the group remained alert to the exploration of these new words and their particular context of production. They attempted to reproduce the words by using the right tonal element and the right body gesture. They undertook to know their position in a sentence, exactly what they meant for their producers and how they shaped their users. These new expressions were used profusely before new lexical items replaced them in the village members' linguistic repertoire. The Bana Molokai used language as an experimental site. The linguistic code was constantly subverted and renewed to suit the members' needs. They also parodied intellectualism through the parodying of the French language. The language was constantly being renewed and appropriated through the disruptive use of its spelling, grammar, pronunciation, and punctuation codes, creolizing the language in the process. For example, the caption of Appendix A, Plate 1 reads 'fanatics de Viva La Musica: le Bearegard Alashi Vava et Mere Mansi'. The correct spelling is 'fanatiques' and 'Beau

gars'. This disruptive use of the French language, which, during the pedagogical intervention, my students read as an indication of the village members' low level of education, is an affectation of intellectualism at the same time as it is an inflicted sneer aimed at the intellectuals and the former colonizers This disturbance of the grammar and spelling codes has been interpreted by Genet (1971) cited in Hebdige (1979: 135) as an acceptance of the language of slavery in order 'to corrupt it so skilfully that the white men were caught in [his] trap'. Hebdige argues that the final objective of this disruption is a symbolic annihilation of the 'owners' of the language. Papa Wemba in one of his albums – 'Je suis Mannequin' – parodies and displaces some of the school practices in use in the context of the educational system in Zaire, namely mindless repetition of conjugation and the use of elaborate mental functions in arithmetic. He ridicules the language of school by showing how inefficient and repetitive it can be.

A second disruption in the language code is the appropriation and disruption of terms from different lexical repertoires to create new terminologies for the members of the Molokai village. For example, the world 'master', which in the English world is associated with a power relationship, was appropriated in Lingala as 'masta' to mean a close friend. It was used among equals and was utilized in a linguistic context that excluded women and girls. Furthermore, contrarily to the meaning of the original English word, in Lingala it pointed to equality. Another example of appropriation was the use of the French word 'quoi' in Lingala added to an utterance as an affected pose. Proverbs, clichés and sayings were regularly appropriated from different languages such as Latin – the village members used such expressions as 'errare humanum est' and Italian – Papa Wemba sings about 'la dolce vita'. They also appropriated or created new proverbs in Lingala that expressed contemporary realities, appropriating the traditional practice of proverbs. The village members also coined new words from existing expressions, sometimes from different languages. For example, the word 'mpifro' which means food is coined from the French verb 's'empiffrer' which means to gobble one's food. Papa Wemba uses the word metaphorically to mean excessive greed for material things in his song 'Je suis mannequin', which title ironically, instead of pointing to his identity as a singer, points to his function as a fashion icon. The innovative influence of the Bana

Molokai on French language made its use one of the most 'image laden'[16] in the francophone world.

The Bana Molokai used the 'authenticity' trend initiated by president Mobutu to innovate with the use of names, which were no longer considered primarily for their identifying functions, but more poetically as praise names, either designating attributes that the owners of the name possessed, or aspired to acquire, thereby appropriating and subverting the way names are used in the modern world as identifying elements. These names could be replaced by other names whenever their users found that they no longer suited their personalities or when they found new names that were more suitable. For example, Papa Wemba has been called Jules Wembadio, his original legal name; Shungu Wembadio, his authentic name; Nkuru Yaka, a name that refers back to his position as leader of the mythical Molokai village; vieux Bokulaka, an endearment that linked him to one of his best musical productions; Fulangenge – literally the dispenser of wisdom – a reverent terminology used to acknowledge his position as an enlightened leader; and Ekumani. He referred to his wife as 'mama bana' - literally 'mother of my children', an attribute that acknowledged and praised her maternity in the light of Papa Wemba's appreciation; sometimes she was identified as 'molongani na ngai' – my assistant, but she also came to be known as Amazone, a name that tried to relate her to the courageous Amazons of Western history and acknowledges the role Papa Wemba thought she ought to play or had played in his life.

Sometimes, names were simply used for the way they looked on the printed page or for their consonance. Members of the Molokai village used the French punctuation code to add an arresting and aesthetic aspect to their names. They made liberal use of apostrophes and dashes. And in addition, long names were highly valued – sometimes a person would have a name that consisted of five or six separate words, the spelling of which the person would go to great pains to design elaborately. Most of these names were added during the young man's every day life as he or his friend would hear a new name that they found appropriate. Subverting the 'authenticity' trend which intended people to use traditional

[16] Drawn on the website http://rffimusique.com.siteFr/biographie/biographie

African names, the Bana Molokai members also used names that came from different geographical spaces, appropriating and subverting them. Names were often a blending of traditional cultural practices, an original rewriting or deliberate misspelling of existing names, and/or the appropriation of names from different geographical and cultural spaces. For example, my brother called himself Kalisa Mobon'd – Kalisa is the name given to him at his birth, the Bond is from James Bond and the apostrophe is there to make the name look more exotic and arresting on paper or when its owner spelled it to a mystified public. The Bana Molokai also relished the American way of using abbreviations for naming purposes. For example, the legend on Appendix A, Plate 4 states that the designer who created and assembled the outfit is JPG and Kansai Yamamoto. The abbreviation is used as a complete identifying element. The second name is a tribute to Papa Wemba's famous Japanese couturier, whose name is appropriated here by a local designer, probably because the outfit presented resembles a Japanese gown and as an expressed wish to have a career in the design industry that will bear resemblance to that of the Japanese couturier.

4.4. Conclusion

Music in the Zairian society of the 1980s determined the emergence of new youth identities of which the most significant is the controversial Bana Molokai subculture. The aim of the preceding overview has been to demonstrate how the subculture used different modes to engrave their visibility in the face of a dominant ideology that denied them recognition. The account highlighted the fact that the Bana Molokai members were dramatizing an identity crisis which the dominant ideology perceived as a dichotomy between Western and African values. Bana Molokai questioned and collapsed established boundaries of gender, language, culture and class to create a space where meaning as inherent in the appropriated elements of 'style' could be endlessly constructed and deconstructed. Bana Molokai was innovative in creating a parallel symbolically gratifying lifestyle on the fringes of a dominant ideology which failed to provide the youth with a meaningful belief system and way of life.

CHAPTER V: ANALYSIS OF THE DATA GATHERED BEFORE THE PEDAGOGICAL INTERVENTION

This chapter analyzes student perceptions of the literary practices as learners and practitioners in the field of English both at secondary and tertiary levels in the context of Rwanda. In a rationale for the question of broadening the ambit of the existing literature curriculum, I posited the supposition that the content of the literature curriculum needed to be enhanced because the texts were remote from the interests and needs of the learners. My research study interrogates the supposition through an analysis of students' views as gathered during the stage prior to the pedagogical intervention. My analysis attempts to provide an overview of the students' perception of their literary background prior to the pedagogical intervention. To this effect, the semi-structured questionnaires distributed before the pedagogical intervention are analyzed. The questionnaires are collated in Appendix B. The researcher's field notes were also used as a reflection of and reaction to the students' opinions. The field notes are collated in Appendix E.

The analysis is based on a reading of the main thematic points found in the data and in relation to the assumption at the basis of the research. The data are presented in tables, carefully detailing individual students' responses to the points raised, before they are analyzed qualitatively. I use tabular displays as a means of recording students' responses to each of the main thematic points raised and include them in my analysis because they enable a quick and easy cross-reading of students' responses. They also provide a graphic view of a particular student's perceptions of the different issues raised in comparison to other students. Students are consistently identified by means of a letter of the alphabet and their opinions are listed under that letter. Quotations from selected students' answers are used as evidence and illustration and included in my analysis. When quoted, students' answers are reproduced as faithfully as possible, with minor corrections in respect of spelling or punctuation.

Some of the thematic points that emerged from the analysis of the data include: literature design at secondary school level; the aims of teaching literature at secondary school level; the importance of literature in the curriculum; students' definition of literature; and students' perceived link between their literary practices and their teaching at Rwandan secondary school level. The tabular display for this chapter is collated in Appendix F, tabular display 1.

Discussion of the data

5.1. Literature Design at Secondary School Level.

According to Kress (1995) academics have to play a central role as designers of curricula that take into account the needs, ability and interests of a particular community of learners for an envisaged social future. It is with this vision of practitioners designing literature curricula for learners in their contexts that students were asked who was responsible for text selection in their context. Students' responses varied. Student F replies that 'it is the teacher who chooses literary texts in use in local secondary schools. There are some texts which are chosen by the Ministry of Education.' Student E states that 'some texts are found in textbooks', but agrees that the teacher 'designs' some of the texts. Students C and D answer that the texts are from the curriculum and books that are at the teacher's disposal. Student G reports that 'the teacher together with school leaders can select a precise and helpful text according to what they want children to learn' and specifies that needs and interests may vary. He gives as an example of texts designed for schools in the countryside and in the cities that can address students' differing needs.

The students' answers, although they vary, recognize a level of agency that the secondary school teacher possesses in choosing texts for a literature lesson, because all the answers state that the teacher chooses some if not all the material from the range of texts available either in the curriculum or from outside. Student G gives more latitude to the teacher because he sees him/her as a producer of some of the texts that he/she teaches, whether he/she designs them or compiles them from available material. The same student also specifies that the choice is not a random one, but based on the teacher's concern that he/she selects texts that are related to a specific community of students' needs.

The students have a clear perception of the central role that the English teacher plays in selecting texts that appear in the English literature curriculum. They emphasize that, although there might be an established primary canon of texts to be taught in their context, the teacher as the person who is ultimately responsible for text selection has the latitude to adapt texts to the learners' needs. The data also established that the teacher has enough latitude to impact on the learning process as he/she is free to choose texts from different sources and even to design his/her own texts. Finally, the students have highlighted the need for specific curricula that are suited to the needs of a particular community of students.

5.2. The Aims of Teaching Literature at Secondary School Level

Kress (1995: 34 -36) contends that for the literature curriculum to provide knowledge that is relevant for viable social futures, it has to include the culturally salient text, the aesthetically valued text and the mundane text. According to his classification, the culturally salient text refers to texts that are culturally significant for a particular society. The aesthetically valued text refers to texts that are valued aesthetically by a particular community. The mundane text refers to texts that are studied for their pragmatic function in society. When asked their views about the role literary texts play in an English language module for secondary school learners in the context of Rwanda, students' responses varied. Student D suggests that she teaches texts 'to develop our students' language skills. Through a literary text one can learn vocabulary, grammar…. Students try to apply what they have studied in grammar and vocabulary, imitating what they find in texts'. She also asserts that literature is important because it enables students acquire understanding and knowledge about a 'language history'. This position is in opposition to what student F believes to be the mission of teaching literature. According to him, one teaches literature 'to teach children about African ways of living, about the respect of their culture, to accept to be what they are (for example the poem 'Song of Lawino), to know the value of a human being, the notion of equality, freedom, sincerity and other moral values that can help them live at peace with the environment (for example in The River Between, Betrayal in the City)'. Other students emphasize the teaching of literature

as a resource towards the acquisition of the target language; some attribute other functions to the literature subject such as the knowledge of other people's histories and culture.

Students' perception of the literature curriculum varies from literature being taught mostly for its pragmatic and instrumental function with the content of literary texts being discussed in passing (student D and B) to teaching texts for their cultural value. All the students advocate that literature plays an important role in the acquisition of the target language. Student A highlights the fact that for the purpose of variety, the literature lesson can use texts produced in other modes, such as songs and films. Student E and F highlight the use of literature to gain an insight into the African culture and the learners' living space. The students' classification takes into account the teaching of literary texts for its mundane and cultural function. However, they overlook the teaching of texts for their aesthetic value, which can be understood considering that the students come to English as a second language of instruction.

5.3. The Importance of Literature in The curriculum

The importance that the students attribute to the literature subject as a part of the subject English is directly linked to the function they accord literary texts. Student D says that if he had to devise an English curriculum, literature and literary practices would amount to a fifth of the other English sections of the English curriculum, such as grammar. Students B, C and F would design an English curriculum that gives literature a third of the space allocated to the other English sections. Student A and E state that literature should be given the same importance as other sections in the English curriculum, such as grammar. Students C and E stress the role of literature as a self exploratory process which enables the formation of moral, social people, particularly African people who will adhere to African cultural beliefs and values, and, therefore, will adjust to their environment. They advocate that English literature should occupy a space equal to that of other English sections. Student G suggests that it should amount to half of the other English sections.

As demonstrated above, the students' views are directly related to the role they assign literature in the English syllabus. Because most students advocate primarily the teaching of literature for its instrumental function, they suggest that it should be given inferior status on the English syllabus compared to sections that are directly linked to the acquisition of language skills such as grammar and vocabulary. The student who adopts a language-based approach to literature suggests that it should be given only a fifth of the importance of the other elements in the English syllabus. Two students, who believe that literature has a direct role to play in societies in a multicultural context support the idea that literature be given the same importance as other English sections in the curriculum.

5.4. Students' Definitions of Literature

English literature as a subject fulfils different roles, and it is therefore necessary to describe the various functions it performs in the curriculum. According to Kress (1995: 35), besides being the medium for communication and representation, it is the carrier of cultural values and the site of the development of the individual. Student C believes that literature promotes an insight that is directed towards other people as well as oneself. Student G sees literature as a means to improve his knowledge of British and American societies. He argues that narratives about British and American societies are important in a literature curriculum because they portray the universality of human experience besides providing relevant models of behaviour that transcend the here and now. He believes that reading the way these people 'used to solve their problems' provides an insight that can help come to terms with life situations today. The use of the past tense in the student's answer is significant, particularly if one reads it in the light of the current literature practices at the tertiary level in the context of Rwanda. Texts from the literature canon are predominantly British and American and were written before the turn of the 20th century. Student E stresses that literature deals with societal issues and challenges and that the selection of literary texts should take into account the students' context. He stresses the fact that literature allows one to adjust to one's society, and therefore, should be as culturally near as possible to the students' environment. Student A teaches literature to 'make the lesson interesting' through the inclusion of 'a wide range of texts' that he proposes as an alternative to the 'superseded chalk-and-talk method'. Texts that he

proposes to this effect are ‘music, riddles, films, plays and poems’. For student A, literature is studied for variety because of the delight students derive through dealing with these texts.

The students’ definition of literature varies from literature being primarily perceived as enabling people to relate to their own culture and context (student E and student F), to literature being seen as language in process. Student F suggests that literature is a way of looking at how people explore the culture, beliefs and values inherent in their society. Although the student supports the inclusion of texts from all over the world, he criticizes the position of hegemony of British and American literatures in the literature curriculum and states that he is particularly interested in African literature. He does not, however, argue for the exclusion of texts from other parts of the world. Student E defines literature as a ‘field that deals with societal issues and challenges’. Literature enables students to adapt to their environment. Literature, according to this student, permits the individual to gain an insight into his environment and ‘to react to this environment’. He advocates a contextualized reading of literature as enabling the making of subjects who can adjust to their living space.

A second trend that emerged from the analysis of the data defined literature in Eurocentric terms. Student G defines literature as a ‘mirror of society’, but more precisely of British and American societies whose values, cultures and beliefs are perceived as universally valid, and which he feels he can know through literary texts. He sees literature as portraying the universal condition of mankind, and parallels the plight of characters in literature, conflated here with British and American literature, with the challenges and problems the reader encounters in real life. He defines literature in terms of its universality. Student B sees literature as language in application and expresses her fascination with the language of literature ‘which contains metaphors’. She also expresses the view that literature is about culture. Student A’s perception of literature encompasses a wide range of texts such as films, riddles, music, plays and poems which provides a variety to the classroom activities.

The data established that students have a comprehensive view of the role literature plays in an English syllabus, although they advocate that in their context primacy be given to African narratives that enable the exploration of their identity as Africans. However, they do not dismiss other literatures from their curriculum arguing that they enable them to acquire knowledge about other people's culture and history. They also legitimate the inclusion of British and American literature especially because they see them as portraying common values shared by human kind. One student supports the reading of literature purely for its recreational function through the use of multimodal forms. Another student stresses the role literature plays in enhancing people's imagination and critical thinking.

5.5. Students' Attitudes towards Literature and Literary Texts

When asked whether they would study literature if they had any choice, their answers ranged from a curt acceptance (student D) to varied degrees of enthusiasm. Student G answers, 'certainly yes, especially African literature. Through various writings of different literary genres, I enjoy the ways in which our ancestors have defended their 'being'. To have a look at other literatures is something crucial, too.' Student C answers, 'If I had any choice, I would study even all existing literatures (African, American…).' Student F answers, 'yes, because literature is a mirror of society, so if I had any choice, I would study literature so as to improve my knowledge of British and American cultures. Another reason is that from literature we get examples of people, i.e. how they used to solve faced problems, so the way they used can be a good example to me because all men have the same needs and wants and for that the easy way to get satisfaction is almost the same.'

Students professed their interest in extending their literary experience to reading literatures not only from Africa - although some students perceived that it should have a central role in their endeavour to understand themselves and their contexts - but also from other parts of the worlds. Their enthusiasm, which was extended to include American and British literature, came as a surprise to me because I had assumed that they did not connect with the Western canon.

5.6. Students' Perceived Link between their Literary Practices and their Teaching at Rwandan Secondary Schools.

Student E sees some link between the texts he is studying at the tertiary level with the teaching at secondary schools. However, because the texts are predominantly foreign, he has to design his own texts. He states that 'I pick out some texts from the modules at my disposal according to how they address societal issues and most often universal values because these modules are foreign culture-based modules; I also design my own texts'. Other students agree with the relevance of the texts taught at the tertiary level to their own teaching practices, but student F says that sometimes he has to look for texts elsewhere and student C says she has to consider the 'students' level'. Student C indicates that the texts taught at tertiary level are irrelevant to his teaching practice at secondary school for 'the modules on literature we have don't meet our students' needs because, besides their not being well elaborated, they are almost exclusively about foreign beliefs, values and very few are specific to our culture, society'. Student C expresses the view that the literature curriculum at tertiary level does not meet the needs of secondary school students in the context of Rwanda. He reproaches the module at tertiary level as badly designed and comprising a majority of foreign texts. Because he advocates a teaching of literary texts that takes into account 'our society', its beliefs, values and culture, student's E position is that he tries to relate the literary texts at tertiary level to the literary module at secondary school level through a careful selection of texts that 'address societal issues'. He acknowledges that the majority of texts on the curriculum are foreign, but he tries to link themes discussed with universal values that can be applied to the students' context. He recognizes that in certain instances, he has to design texts that are more suited to his context. Student A reports that he uses material available in the tertiary curriculum from which he selects texts for use at secondary school level using as his criteria students' class and age. He adds that he also uses material from various sources such as the internet and the American Embassy. Student D says that she selects texts from her tertiary literary modules taking into account the students' level. Student B is also satisfied with the selection at tertiary level, which

provides available material for secondary school teaching. However, she recognizes that her interest in texts is transient.

In summary, it can be said that in comparing students' perception of the relevance of their literature practices at tertiary level with their pedagogical application at secondary school, the modules at best are indirectly relevant because some students have to adapt them in order to be able to teach them, and at worst that the modules are completely irrelevant because they are not related to the students' needs as shaped by a particular environment. One of the students said that the module at tertiary level is badly designed being comprised of a predominantly foreign body.

5.7. Findings

The above analysis has established that students are aware of the centrality of the English teacher in designing specific literature curricula that meet the learners' needs, ability and interests. This centrality is particularly emphasized in the context where students come to the primary canon consisting of Western texts as ESL/EFL learners, I argue, because of the added dimension of the students' linguistic performance which can be inadequate to engage with texts intended for native speaker and their specific cultural needs. Therefore, the English literature teacher has a role in critiquing the existing curriculum and in offering alternative texts. The analysis also established that the students were aware of the use of literary texts for different purposes, including the instrumental and cultural roles. However, it demonstrated that the students advocated that literature in their context served the primary purpose of learning/teaching communicative skills. As Povey (1972: 187) cited in Brumfit and Carter (1986: 191) argues, 'literature will increase all language skills because literature will extend linguistic knowledge by giving evidence of extensive and subtle vocabulary usage, and complex and exact syntax.' Their argument for supporting the functional or instrumental approach to literature is that it is imperative in the context of ESL/EFL learners that they first understand the vocabulary and structure of a sentence before they can read a text. Because of this linguistic factor, most students did not feel that literature should be granted the same importance on the English syllabus as the other sections of the English curriculum.

The students were able to highlight the fact that literature is also used to acquire knowledge and understanding of people's culture and history. Two students out of the seven that made up the focus group emphasized the role that the literature curriculum should play in providing narratives that explore Africa and African values for teaching/learning in their context. However, they did not altogether discard the presence of other literatures such as the British and American in the literature curriculum, and particularly at tertiary level. Rather they argued that Africa should be at the core of the literature curriculum, with other literatures such as the British and American being included as a means of extending the students' reading experience. The students also expressed varied degrees of enthusiasm for a literature curriculum that exploded their reading experience to include other literatures from other parts of the world, besides the British and American, with one student suggesting that the literature classroom explore the inclusion of a variety of other genres such as films and songs. However, the student's view was limited to teaching these forms as a delightful variety to countenance the more serious literature subjects.

When discussing their practice of teaching literature in Rwandan secondary school, students expressed the view that the texts that they study are irrelevant to their teaching practices because they are based on foreign literatures. They also extended this view to include the prescribed syllabus at secondary school level, which is constantly being remodelled by the English teacher because it incorporates texts that are culturally irrelevant or too dense linguistically for comprehension. Other reasons for this dissatisfaction were founded on the students' perception of the role of literature in their context. Because some of the students were interested in a literature curriculum which enabled the exploration of African values, the exploration of the students' living context and the acquisition of an African code of conduct, they expressed a degree of dissatisfaction with their curriculum at tertiary level, arguing for an increased presence of African narratives.

The students' positions concur with my supposition that the literature curriculum in the context of Rwandan should be expanded through the inclusion of texts that are adapted to the African cultural landscape and that are linguistically adapted to the level of the students. Their contention could support the legitimization of the inclusion of popular culture in the literature syllabus as a means of resolving some of the concerns expressed. The pedagogical intervention does not use traditional African narratives as a solution, rather it attempts to broaden students' perception of what they termed paraliterature – multimodal texts which one student claimed were important in the literature classroom for the purpose of variety – to investigate how these texts could address the problem of an inadequate literature curriculum at tertiary level, generally and secondary school level, specifically.

CHAPTER VI: ANALYSIS OF THE DATA GATHERED AFTER THE PEDAGOGICAL INTERVENTION

This section summarizes students' responses to the pedagogical intervention as gathered using the second set of semi-structured questionnaires, the focus group discussion and the researcher's field notes. It groups students' responses according to thematic points which are directly connected to the teaching of texts produced by the Bana Molokai subculture in my literature classroom for pre-service teachers, and then discusses the advantages of the inclusion of such texts both from the thematic and pedagogical perspectives. The second set of semi-structured questionnaires, the transcript of the recorded group discussion and the researcher's field notes are respectively collated in Appendix C, D and E.

The data are processed qualitatively using a tabular display that lists individual student responses under different thematic points that emerged during the analysis process. These thematic points are grouped, for the purpose of analysis, into three main categories: Bana Molokai texts and the literature paradigm, Bana Molokai texts and the purpose of teaching literature and comparative benefits of teaching/learning the Bana Molokai texts. Because the last category emerged spontaneously from students' reflections to the pedagogical intervention, the tabular display that is collated in Appendix F, tabular display 2, concerns Bana Molokai texts and the literature paradigm, and Bana Molokai texts and the purpose of teaching literature. The comments that surfaced concerning the last category are discussed in the analysis using individual student responses as evidence and illustration. The students are consistently referred to using the same letter of the alphabet that was used during the analysis of the data gathered before the pedagogical intervention.

6.1. Bana Molokai Texts and the Literature Paradigm

The students are unanimous in the views that texts that make predominant use of media other than the written can be read as 'literature'. They relate the exercise of reading such texts to what student A terms 'para-literature', meaning that, although the texts can be integrated into the literature curriculum, they belong to a special branch of literature studies that can best be defined as a secondary component. They also state that they envisage teaching these texts or similar texts in secondary school English literature classrooms. Some of the arguments they offer in support of the position that these texts can be integrated in a literature curriculum both at the tertiary and secondary levels are:

6.2.1. The 'readability' and thence 'teachability' of the texts

The students are in unanimous agreement that the texts are 'readable' as literature. When asked whether they found the texts 'readable', student A answered, 'they are much clearer than the traditional literary text, so they are more readable because they involve more than one sense. In a nutshell, they are semi-real.' Student C states the same in emphatic terms, 'no, these texts are not as readable as traditional literary texts. They are more readable than traditional literary texts because they approach real life or context.' Student F concurs with this position, attesting that 'they are more readable than the average literary text on the literature curriculum, because when you read them you feel happy'.

To test the hypothesis of their 'readability' and thence 'teachability', students use the literature paradigm deriving themes that they could read in the texts, discussing characters and tone. They also apply spontaneously during the pedagogical intervention different literary critical approaches to written literature texts (such as the marxist, postcolonial, and feminist). They are able to identify socio-economical concerns that the texts address as the students relate their production to a particular historical moment in Congolese history. The students also highlight major cultural and political issues that the texts raise, and read them in the light of how the previous Congolese government tried to address these issues. Some of the points they make pertain to:

- the texts and the national discourse about education: student B reads the

photographs as 'a mock sign directed towards intellectual people'.

- the text and the national discourse about modernity: students interpret the photograph as advocating a 'cultural marriage between modernity and traditional values' (student A). Student E states that 'these texts are a projection of their historical moment of production because they are portraying a culture which is a mixture of indigenous African values and modern European principles. They reflect a transitional society which is neither primitive nor modern and has no common values. The author was searching for such values'. Student C argues that the texts are a projection of the historical moment of their production 'because they show the influence of modernism brought by colonizers, but on the other hand, they show a kind of revolt against imposition'. Student C suggests that the texts are 'a mixture of two cultures without any rejection.'
- the texts and the discourse about postcolonial Africa and Africans: student C states that the texts are 'a reaction against postcolonial dictatorship'.
- the texts and the national discourse about the historical and socio-cultural space: student F sees the style as being in direct opposition to the 'cultural imposition supported by Mobutu'. Student A elaborates further and suggests that, 'during these years (1978-1980), Zaire was struck by a socio-economic and cultural crisis. The Zairians were facing Mobutu's authenticity and the prevalence of [Western] cultural forms that disregarded past culture'.
- the texts and the national discourse about fashion: student C states that the texts demonstrate that fashion is not always something constructed from outside, but can be rooted in a people's cultural values. He furthermore adds that the texts show a 'process of self identification.'

6.2.2. Some thematic points 'read' in the texts

When asked to identify at least five thematic points in their reading of the visual texts, the students were quick to identify certain points. Student E reads the following thematic points in the visual texts: 'clothing style created by the author of these texts, the colonial

heritage, the impressive appearance of the Congolese people, nostalgia regarding traditional values and beliefs which were destroyed due to colonization.' Student A interprets the make-up and clothes as 'a landmark of the colonial legacy'. He also reads the texts as emphasizing the 'role of music in cultural growth'. Student C states that the texts relate to 'the influence of colonialism (especially cultural), and the struggle towards self affirmation and self confidence'. Student G chooses to read the texts as talking 'about youth problems'. The thematic points he identifies in the text are: 'the problem of sexual immorality among young people, the consequence of adopting a new culture, the negative impact of a 'bad' outfit on comrades of the opposite sex, the difference between primitive youth societies and modern youth society, and the advantages of being 'over civilized due to conformity'.

The students also attempt to discuss aspects that a literature lesson is concerned with such as themes that the texts could enable exploring, the characters that the visual texts presented, the mood and tone of the visual texts, and their audience. Students suggest that the characters in the texts and audience for the texts are the semi-literate Congolese youth.

6.2. Bana Molokai Texts and the Purpose of Teaching English Literature

The focus group apply the three objectives that Lazar (1993) assigns to teaching literature, namely to improve language skills, for personal growth and to gain insight into a culture. They discuss whether the three purposes could be fulfilled through teaching texts from the Bana Molokai subculture, taking as an instance the photographs that were distributed during the pedagogical intervention.

6.2.1. To improve language skills

The generally accepted argument amongst the students towards supporting the teaching of literature is that literary texts provide an illustration of the use of vocabulary and syntax in the target language. Student C states that the texts can improve the learners' language as 'all the six language skills can easily be acquired'. Student F highlights the

fact that 'the teaching of such texts helps develop more than one skill at a time: speaking, listening, pronunciation, writing and so forth.' All the students agree with this position, with the exception of one who did not see how the pedagogical intervention of teaching texts produced by the Bana Molokai could help improve writing skills.

6.2.2. For personal growth

Student A suggests that discussing Bana Molokai texts 'involves various and different opinions; it develops the "give and take" spirit'. Student B indicates that the texts are significant in the students' development because they help 'develop their imagination, their way of thinking'. Student E feels that the 'ability for critical thinking is enhanced'.

6.3.2. To gain insight into culture

Student D argues that Bana Molokai texts help improve students' knowledge of 'their own culture'. The student then makes a restriction and rephrases his opinion in these terms '[the lesson] was precise and interesting. It informed me about a culture that was unknown to me.' Student F states that 'popular culture has the value of making students know their own roots, and using this, they can link those roots to the present and make a projection into the future.' The students' views showed an interesting ambivalence with the subculture, in turn identifying with and distancing themselves from its ideology.

6.3. Comparative Benefits of Studying a Popular Culture

6.3.1. The texts enable a heightened exploration of identity and living space

Student B states, 'this subculture is good because it makes one feel self-confident, that is to say proud of what he/she is'. Student D concedes this point, and adds that, 'this subculture is good because if we don't appreciate ourselves, nobody else will appreciate us. We have to be proud of what we are and have.' Student E states that 'I liked the way the creator of this subculture was interested in his people'. Student G states, 'I gained from the exercise self confidence and self respect by not teaching my students things from outside, but things from 'ourselves'. For example to teach Shakespeare, Dickens… only without teaching Chinua Achebe, Ngugi wa Thiongo … is a mistake.' All the other

students concur with this position, arguing that Bana Molokai is a subculture with which they can identify and which makes them feel proud of themselves.

6.3.1. The texts enable interface between Rwandan culture and other cultures

Student C states that 'the lesson can afford to give students an occasion of thinking about themselves and their country, of being informed about other people's cultures so that they will defend theirs after finding out the way other people defend their cultures'. Student G argues that the reading of texts by the Bana Molokai subculture 'gives us an opportunity to think of our culture and attribute enough value to it.' Student C states that 'in my opinion, this is good for people to adopt their own way of living and identity, but they must not only attach themselves to their beliefs, they should jot down some good values from outside cultures.'

6.3.2. They provide a paradigm to explore popular culture texts

Student E states that the pedagogical intervention opened up new avenues in his teaching practices as he learned that 'non-written texts are relevant in our schools.' Student B says the pedagogical intervention allowed him to get 'some information about that culture and to acquire some methods about unwritten text analysis.'

6.3.3. They are threatening for cultural identity

Student C is concerned that the texts 'tend to persuade readers, especially young people as they are good imitators.' This concern is shared by most students. Student G is concerned that 'instead of straightening learners, they can make them go astray.' He states that his concern lay with students who are not proud of what they are, students who are 'unpatriotic' or not serious, and students who are stubborn. He believes that these students can be easily co-opted through the exploration of texts produced by the Bana Molokai subculture. He elaborates on the point, recognizing a degree of danger in teaching texts from the field of popular culture, stating, 'this subculture is not quite dangerous, but it is. It is dangerous because it causes confusion among students, parents and even the society. What to accept, what not?' Students' position regarding the angle through which to teach these texts varies. Some students believe that the teacher should

have a clear position that will enable him to direct his students' view of the subculture and its products. Student A who believes that the subculture will have a negative impact on students' behaviour, suggests that as a teacher he would work towards ensuring that the discussions are channelled to show the subculture as dangerous and subversive. He suggests, 'I would throw the ball to the students, but I would always be with them as a mature person and a decision maker to dose the impact of the texts on my students.' The other students prefer to create an environment in which the students can make their own choices with regard to the subculture and its persuasive discourse. Student D highlights the fact that her role is 'to show its positive and negative points and let the students choose what they judge good according to their social environment.' Student G expands on this position and emphasizes that 'to teach these texts with regard to creating a critical view of the world, you can give students unlimited time to compare what they see to what they know. You create a classroom of freedom, a classroom in which a student feels at ease. He pours out his ideas and feelings without any hindrance'.

6.3.4. They allow the deconstruction of a popular culture

Student D suggests that the exercise of teaching texts from a subculture 'helps us show/explain/demonstrate the universality of a culture, why some cultures dominate.' Student F suggests that texts from the field of popular culture should be taught in the classroom environment for the purpose of enabling learners make an informed choice. He states, 'students' position can be different because some can support the subculture because they want to imitate the stars; others may refuse, wishing to be more conservative. So the role of the teacher is to marry the two positions to help students be able to judge in order to select between good and bad things'. Student G recognizes that the lesson 'gave me enough opportunity to express my feelings and to think about foreign cultures and what we call civilization or a civilized world and a primitive one.' Student A suggests that the exploration of the Bana Molakai texts in a literature classroom will enable the correcting 'of the students' misconception' about the subculture.

6.3.5. They foster an interface between African cultural values and modernity

When asked what his attitude to the subculture was, student A answered, 'I appreciate it on the one hand because I have learnt the reason behind it: to be independent and take good points of other cultures and mingle them with ours so that we may have a fruitful mixture of cultures'. Student E reports, 'my attitude towards this subculture is that each people should be proud of their culture and should develop it the way they want, but all this in relation with other cultures.' He elaborates further on this point relating it to his teaching exercise as a pre-service teacher in the context of Rwandan secondary schools, and says, 'learners will know that they have their own culture but that it shouldn't be a source of aggression towards other cultures as they may share some values.'

6.3.5. What are the limitations?

Student E suggests that the teaching of such texts is costly, time-consuming and cannot be effective for big classes. Student F clarifies some of the issues raised by student E by specifying that the teaching 'presents problems of classroom management'. Student D suggests that the teaching 'requires [that the learners have] the same cultural background and almost the same level of imagination'. She is also concerned that 'such texts can have different interpretations'. She suggests that the teacher organizes his/her lesson in order to overcome this problem.

6.3.6. Other considerations towards the integration of texts using a range of other media than the written in the context of Rwanda

Student G stresses that when teaching texts that use a range of other media for their expression, the teacher has to adapt the text to the learners' level, their context and their needs. He illustrates his position by giving cartoons as an example, saying that this genre is better adapted for a younger audience. He also stresses that multimodal texts are culturally threatening because most of these texts are created in the West for a Western audience, and he gives as an example films produced in the West. However, the student does not advocate that the texts be dismissed, but rather that 'the African teacher develops a methodology that promotes critical thinking and not blind imitation.' Student A shows some degree of scepticism arguing that learners at secondary school level are

prone to imitate 'film stars', particularly their attire. Student E argues that the literature teacher should discuss with younger learners the adequacy of particular forms of clothing to a particular life style or to specific social occasions. Student D contends that attention should not be concentrated on stylistic elements, but on the content of the multimodal element. Student E agrees with this position and adds that the literature teacher has not only to watch the film that he wants to bring into a classroom, but also do extensive research on the film and the way to access it as a means of focussing on classroom interaction that can enrich the learners.

6.4. Findings

Because multimodal texts are often taught in the classroom as a lure away from more serious subjects (Giroux: 1989), I was concerned that the material offered would be inadequate for a literature lesson, particularly at tertiary level. At the beginning of the pedagogical intervention, I saw some of my concerns mirrored in the sceptical way the students related to the two sets of the photograph that triggered our discussions during the two-hour period of the lesson. However, the lesson established that multimodal texts could be taught in an English classroom at third year level and that the pedagogical intervention of teaching texts produced by the Bana Molokai overturned assumptions that multimodal texts can not engage the learners in a valuable cognitive experience of the same depth and breadth as written texts. Students furthermore corroborated this position by expressing their view about the level of engagement the texts were able to elicit as compared to written texts. They contended that class interaction was heightened because the texts were 'semi-real' in contrast to traditional written texts as they appealed to more than one sense. I also incorrectly assumed before the pedagogical intervention that the Bana Molokai subculture phenomenon, or at least Papa Wemba's role in the global musical and fashion scenes, was familiar to the students. At the beginning of the lesson, students demonstrated limited knowledge of the Congolese music industry, although they knew that Papa Wemba was a Congolese singer. Nevertheless, this fact did not hinder the normal proceedings of the lesson. It established that the texts could be analyzed in any literature classroom without prerequisite knowledge of the subculture and its spiritual leader, although one student expressed a contrary position. The majority of students felt

that the literature teacher who wants to introduce texts from the field of popular culture should do extensive research work before the lesson, in the same way as he would read critical works before teaching a written literary work. A student summarized this position by expressing the view that the lesson has taught her not to underestimate the need to prepare carefully for her literature teaching.

The students confirmed that the texts could be read using a literature paradigm, thereby legitimizing the inclusion popular cultural texts in the literature classroom. Their views were subsequently extended to texts using a range of modes other than the written for their expression, which they believed, ought to be an integral part of the literature curriculum in their context. For the purpose of verifying this assumption, the study used Lazar's identification of the purposes a literature text serves in the English curriculum. According to Lazar, literature can be used as a means of promoting the acquisition of a language, developing critical thinking and enhancing investigation of cultural elements. The students' confirmed that popular cultural texts, and therefore multimodal texts generally, could be read in the literature classroom for the same purposes that written texts are read. Furthermore, the lesson used traditional methods that are applied in analyzing written texts to verify whether the texts could be taught through these models. The analysis confirmed that students were able to identify different thematic points in the texts and to relate them to the relevant social, cultural and political moments of the texts. In addition, they discussed the characters and tone as the literary elements that the text highlighted. Finally, the texts were analyzed using major literary criticial theories, namely, the feminist, the marxist, and the postcolonial. This exercise of analysing the cultural artefacts in a literature classroom established that the findings made using literary methods were as rich and in many ways similar to the findings I made as a researcher using Hebdige's approach to subcultural analysis.

Apart from ascertaining that texts produced by the Bana Molokai subculture could be read using a literature paradigm, students identified a number of initially unforeseen objectives that these texts realized in the literature classroom. Among other considerations, students expressed the view that although the texts were not concerned

with exploring a Rwandan identity, they enabled a heightened exploration into the students' identity and living space as they made the students reflect on their culture and cultural practices, and similar ways to value them. Students also attested that the analysis was emotionally gratifying because it made them feel proud of who they were.

Surprisingly, and contrary to my predictions, students' reaction to the texts was ambivalent. Instead of totally embracing the texts as I had expected, they viewed them from a balanced position by identifying with the subculture's ideology and its proud exhibition of difference and also displaying a discomfort that the culture was not Rwandan, but Congolese. I was perplexed by their shifts from one position to the other. This overturned my supposition of the reader's simple binary relation with texts and reminded me of the way students responded to Western texts, sometimes highlighting how they enable them explore their identities and at other times expressing the view that they needed African narratives to explore who they were. I will concur with the argument put forward by Nuttall in Newell (2002: 186) that the relationship between a reader and a text is often ambiguous, made up of a mixture of recognition and identification, dismissal and rejection. This finding overturns the premise the research report put forward, namely that students are likely to reject Western texts because of the cultural difference. The focus group demonstrated that the popular cultural texts were culturally more threatening for the students' identity as Rwandans than the average Western text in their curriculum. This, in my opinion, is due to the fact that cultural artefacts foreground ideology as part of their message, whereas written texts underplay the ideological element. Another reason for the students' ambivalence might be the radical and extreme nature of Bana Molokai views, particularly when one considers that the focus group proved to be constituted of conservative students.

CHAPTER VII: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1. Review of the Theoretical Framework

The Multiliteracies framework of the New London Group is important to this study for two reasons: first, because it sees cultural difference as an asset to teaching/learning. Kress (1995: 45) contends that in a multicultural environment where learners do not share the same values, there is a need to design curricula that are broad enough to speak to communities of multicultural learners, and address their needs and interests. His theoretical framework justifies the need to look critically at the curriculum in the context of Rwanda. Second, the Multiliteracies framework acknowledges the nature of the modern communication landscape which increasingly uses a range of media in addition to the written. The framework advocates a pedagogy that is aligned to the new technological landscape, and thus suggests the incorporation of multimodal texts into the classroom. When speaking about the centrality of the subject English on the curriculum as the subject which is concerned with representation and communication, and which voices people's values, Kress (1995) argues that English has an important role to play in shaping the outcomes of education. He singles out texts that are taught in the classroom environment as the vehicle through which change can happen. He contends that a literature classroom should be a site for experimenting with a wide range of multimodal texts from different cultural backgrounds, and perceives the learners as agents in making harmonious social futures possible. His theoretical framework is based on a vision of a global society that is interconnected to different subjectivities making encounter with difference and multimodality the norm for success. Kress's theoretical framework attempts to bridge the gap between in-school and out-of-school knowledge, between the outcomes of education and envisaged social futures.

7.2. Significance of the Study

The research stemmed from the researcher's desire to bring into her literature classroom forms that attested to the artistic realization of contemporary Africa and, more particularly, to the Great Region of Africa to which both Rwanda and Congo belong, as a means of situating the practice of literature in cultural practices found in the students' living space. It has attempted to expand the ambit of a narrow literature canon that is concerned with written narratives from the West and African narratives that are nostalgic for a glorious past. It has sought experiment with contemporary texts that embark on an exploration of a range of traditional and modern modes and theorize the encounter with the West. It has attempted to demonstrate the vitality of the 'literary' production on the African continent produced in a range of modes from the oral, the written, the audio, the performative, and the gestural as legible genres for literary analysis.

The study integrates a 'pedagogy of Multiliteracies' with the analysis of popular culture for the purpose of incorporating a contemporary youth culture phenomenon into a literature classroom. Whereas research employing the Multiliteracies framework to date has largely been concerned with using multimodal objects produced in the classroom to enhance and promote learning (Newfield et al: 2004; Brenner and Andrew: 2004), this research shifts the gaze to multimodal objects produced outside the classroom. Similarly, subcultural analysis has traditionally been used for the purpose of gaining insight into contemporary youth practices, whereas this research uses subcultural analysis to address issues of text selection in multicultural and multilingual classrooms. These two frameworks are used jointly in this study because while the Multiliteracies framework allows the integration of a range of cultural texts and expands the range of accessible discourses to include multimodal texts which were traditionally considered to be disharmonious with academic learning, the subculture analysis model provides a framework through which to engage with popular cultural texts through an in-depth way that takes into account the complex relationships of subjects to objects, of subordinate groups to dominant groups, and of the construction and deconstruction of ideology. Pulling the

two theoretical frameworks together has enabled the introduction into the Rwandan literature classroom of one of the most influential popular cultures in the region in a manner that paid tribute to its originality and complexity while exploring the expansion the literature curriculum to encompass a wider range of available texts. The study overturns assumptions about written texts as packed with more nuanced meanings, demonstrating that cultural artefacts can be as rich, if not more rich because of the added emotional dimension the students experienced when dealing with texts that make them proud of who they are.

The study is significant because it explores the injection of popular cultural forms into a literature curriculum and calls attention to the vitality and richness of the contemporary cultural production of Africa. The pedagogical intervention has demonstrated that these texts are valid for exploration in a literature classroom for their own sake along side the primary canon of written texts. The study has served to erode the artificial divide between high and popular culture in the context of third year pre-services students at the National University of Rwanda.

The study is also significant because it expands the literature curriculum by showing how texts that use a range of media other than the written can be integrated into a literature classroom for purposes of enhancing communication and exchange, and for the purpose of expanding students' reflections on issues that are at the core of their identity as Africans living in a transitional society where the norms of the past can no longer stand alone and where commodities from the modern world are used creatively and become part of an African 'Essence'. The study has demonstrated that popular forms have found a way of solving the dichotomy between pure African forms and Western commodity, albeit on a purely aesthetic stage, by combining the traditional and the modern, the new and the old into new mixtures and blends that can account for new identities. The study of popular forms has shown the complex relationship marginalized groups have with the main ideology which is not a simple dismissal of the ideologies, but which is made of a desire to superimpose new discourses on the existing ones.

Moreover, this study is significant because it incorporates into the literature classroom the discourse of the marginalized youth in Africa, privatizing the exercise of teaching/learning literature to understanding the practices of people who are not 'literate' in the traditional sense of the word. The study provides an interface with the Africa literature canon as it is perceived to be concerned with the nation-state more than it is concerned with different subjectivities differentiated by different life experiences. As Appiah (1992: 17) contends,

> the African writers' concern is not with the discovery of a self that is the object of an inner voyage of discovery. Their problem – though not, of course, their subject – is finding a public role, not a private self. If European intellectuals, though comfortable inside their culture and its traditions, have an image of themselves as outsiders, African intellectuals are uncomfortable outsiders, seeking to develop their cultures in directions that will give them a role.

Finally, the work is significant because it provided a means to look at the literary practices in the students' context, unravelling for the researcher and the students new ways of looking at text and relating to them, and new ways of relating to the text selection and to teaching literature in their context.

However, the research had established that, although the students found the exercise of 'reading' texts produced by this subculture exhilarating to their experience as they recognized a degree of similarity between the lives and concerns the texts explored and their identity as Rwandans, their views towards its inclusion into a literature curriculum were ambivalent. They highlighted the fact that the texts are threatening for their identity as Rwandans, and especially for an audience of young learners who could be easily co-opted by its persuasive message, and emphasized its deconstruction into a literature classroom to enable learners make informed choices. Some students stressed the teaching/learning of such texts, and globally texts from the field of popular culture which foregrounds ideology, that are directed towards arming students against its insidious influence.

7.3. Limitations of the Study

The study was able to explode the limits of my expectations demonstrating the complexities and richness of the Bana Molokai texts read through the literature paradigm and the intensity of the response it elicited from the students. However, the research was limited in scope to a narrow population of seven students, and to one context, the National University of Rwanda, because of its design as a case study. In many respects, I regret that the study could not be extended to a younger audience of learners, such as secondary school students, as they are the targeted audience for the commodities produced by the Bana Molokai. Discussions during the pedagogical intervention and students' recorded debates highlighted the impact these texts have on an African audience of teenagers and emphasized the role of the English literature teacher in channelling the students' responses to the cultural artefacts through a careful deconstruction of its meaning.

Another limitation is that the study presented an overview of the Bana Molokai subculture, as the analysis was an embedded aspect of my case study. Although the analysis was sufficient, in my opinion, for the purpose of this study, I deplore that the analysis it was limited in scope and width.

7.4. Recommendations

In the context where meaning making takes place in a range of other forms that the written only, I recommend that more research be conducted to understand and analyze these forms for the purpose of enriching literature syllabus as these other forms of meaning making can no longer be dismissed as lower artistic forms. In the African context where contemporary narratives are produced mostly for a 'literate' audience, the reading of popular forms can lead to an understanding of how the average African who is not 'literate' makes sense of the world around him through the production and/or consumption of texts from the field of popular culture. This is particularly important because the African literature canon has been perceived as an attempt to use narratives to theorize the nation-state, to the detriment of understanding daily private lives of African (Appiah: 1992). There is a need to

establish an interface between the national narratives and the private narratives as narrated by popular genres.

In the particular case of the Bana Molokai subculture, I would recommend that the pedagogical intervention of teaching artefacts produced by this subculture be replicated to other populations of students in Africa or elsewhere to verify some of the conclusions I have drawn concerning their 'readability' and 'teachability'. I would recommend more specifically that the experience be replicated to a younger population of African students in order to understand how the targeted audience for the Bana Molokai artefacts relate to its commodities and its ideology when they are deconstructed in a literature classroom. Another recommendation I can make is that the texts be taught to an audience of learners that is completely foreign to the culture and its artefacts in order to understand whether the texts would have a similar reception and would be legible.

Finally, I would recommend that the Bana Molokai subculture, a fascinating instance of the proliferation of popular forms on the continent, be studied in more detail as the account provided in this study has served to show that the Bana Molokai subculture is worth being investigated because of its capacity to mobilize the youth and to capture the pervading Congolese moods of the 1980s and because of its ability to embody contemporary youth discourses.

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