

## Term Creation in Specialized Fields: An Evaluation of Shona Phonetics and Phonology Terminology at Great Zimbabwe University

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**Abstract :** The paper evaluates Shona terms that were created to teach Phonetics and Phonology courses at Great Zimbabwe University (GZU). The phonetics and phonology terms to be discussed in this paper were created using different processes and strategies such as translation, borrowing, neologising, compounding, transliteration, circumlocution among many others. Most phonetics and phonology terms are alien to Shona and as a result, there are no suitable Shona equivalents. The lecturers and students for these courses have a mammoth task of creating terminology for the different modules offered in Shona and other Zimbabwean indigenous languages. Most linguistic reference books are written in English. As such, lecturers and students translate information from English to Shona, a measure which is proving to be too difficult for them. A term creation workshop was held at GZU to try to address the problem of lack of terminology in indigenous languages. Different indigenous language practitioners from different tertiary institutions convened for a two-day workshop at GZU. Due to the 'specialized' nature of phonetics and phonology, it was too difficult to come up with 'proper' indigenous terms. The researcher will consult tertiary institutions lecturers who teach linguistics courses and linguistics students to get their views on the created terms. The people consulted will not be the ones who took part in the term creation workshop held at GZU. The selected participants will be asked to evaluate and back-translate some of the terms. In instances where they feel the terms created are not suitable or user-friendly, they will be asked to suggest other terms. Since the researcher is also a linguistics lecturer, her observation and views will be important. From her experience in using some of the terms in teaching phonetics and phonology courses to undergraduate students, the researcher noted that most of the terms created have shortcomings since they are not user-friendly. These shortcomings include terms longer than the English terms as some terms are translated to Shona through a whole statement. Most of these terms are neologisms, compound neologisms, transliterations, circumlocutions, and blends. The paper will show that there is overuse of transliterated terms due to the lack of Shona equivalents for English terms. Most single English words were translated into compound neologisms or phrases after attempts to reduce them to one word terms failed. In other instances, circumlocution led to the problem of creating longer terms than the original and as a result, the terms are not user-friendly. The paper will discuss and evaluate the different phonetics and phonology terms created and the different strategies and processes used in creating them.

**Keywords :** blending, circumlocution, term creation, translation

**Conference Title :** ICLL 2018 : International Conference on Linguistics and Languages

**Conference Location :** Cape Town, South Africa

**Conference Dates :** November 15-16, 2018