Overcoming Hegemonic Gateways
Writing workshops in Sub-Saharan Africa

Matt Smith, University of Wolverhampton
Credentials

- Palestine
- Brazil
- Tawaw project
- UNESCO Chair
- DFID paper
- Decolonising Methods paper
- Special Edition

Decolonising EdTech: Decolonising Research Methods

FREE Workshop 2
Join us on
Friday, 28th April 2023
3:00 pm - 4:30 pm SAST

Led by
Dr. Matt Smith
Hub Lead for Digital and Lifelong Learning Contexts
University of Wolverhampton, Institute of Education

Registration: https://emergeafrica.net
Decolonisation...

- Decolonising the curriculum, schools, education, researchers and methodologies...

**BUT WHAT ABOUT**

- Ethics, governance, funding and publishing...?

Taken-for-granted, not-worth-mentioning and the ‘global standard’ - but oppressive for the educational and epistemic experiences and expectations of cultures and communities that are very different, diverse and distant from the national and global norms?
Colonial Gateways

• Colonial, post-colonial and neo-colonial

• **digital neo-colonial...**

**Traxler notes:**

• The impact of a colonising technology
  ➢ Ubiquitous digital corporations

• The legacy of colonising institutions
  ➢ Globalised universities

• The threat of global ‘power’ languages
  ➢ And hidden culture, values, judgements
• Think about your experience of publishing and the steps it takes
• Think about the comments.

>>>>>Reviewer 2…

• What about researchers from and with marginalised communities, already disenfranchised in terms of power, language, education, access, support, infrastructure…

• HOW ARE THEY HEARD?
Our Two Responses

ONE: Invite scholarly discussion on decolonising publishing (and, to a lesser extent, funding, ethics etc.)
<<<but whose voices are contributing?>>>

TWO: Set up a workshop series to hear from these voices, with the explicit aim of supporting them to publication.
WORKSHOP SERIES: the plan

• Assemble a brilliant team

[Images of speakers]

Dr Taskeen Adam
EdTech Hub

Prof John Traxler
Uni of Wolverhampton

Dr Leah Sikoyo
Makerere Uni, UGA

Dr Nompilo Tshuma
Stellenbosch Uni, ZA

Dr Nicola Pallitt
Rhodes Uni, ZA

Dr Samuel Asare
ESSA

• Create a full pitch

Decolonising the field of educational technology: Building a writing community for emerging researchers from Sub-Saharan Africa
Sub-Saharan African education systems, economic systems, governmental systems, academia, and the region itself continue to experience the legacies of colonialisation. This workshop project seeks to create and support a sustainable and critical community of emerging researchers and research-practitioners in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) in order to i) address the colonial issues embedded in the field of educational technology and academic publishing systems and processes whereby epistemic orthodoxy systematically excludes non-Western epistemological, ontological, and methodological practices and ii) produce ground-breaking work that will catalyse distinctively African educational scholarship and agendas. The goal is to enable participants to submit high-quality papers to journals on educational technology such as - but not limited to - the Special Edition we have already established. The grant will cover a series of workshops over a ten-month period, covering critical educational technology, conceptual frameworks, decolonising research methods, research tools, techniques, ethics and governance, supporting SSA researchers towards publication.
Outline of programme

1. Pre-Workshop online support session 1
2. Pre-Workshop online support session 2
3. Pre-Workshop online support session 3
4. Upload 5-page application for in-person Workshop
5. Project team review and finalise selection
6. Pre-Workshop online support session 4
7. In-person five-day Workshop
8. Post-Workshop online support session 5
9. Online Conference
WORKSHOP SERIES: the plan

- A writing workshop award should be seen as much more than simply a ‘writing workshop’. The awards, in effect, are:
  - making a career intervention
  - creating networks
  - developing soft skills
  - setting aside dedicated time for research
  - instilling and aiming to change long-term academic culture, and
  - engaging with the wider ecosystem that researchers inhabit

- The workshops should enable early career researchers based in developing countries to build scholarly networks and connections with academics and journal editors in the UK and elsewhere. This will be measured through participant feedback and post-event reports.
What happened?

• Plan B!
• Do it on our own.
• Abandon in-person workshop.
• Offer any support we can, to anyone we can, any time we can.
So far...

Workshop 1 on decolonial conceptual frameworks  
(slides and recording available)

Workshop 2 on decolonising qualitative research methods  
(slides and recording available)

Workshop 3 on positionality in educational technology research  
(slides and recording available)

Workshop 4 on decolonising the use of evidence and data in research  
(coming, 20th July)
Next Steps…

• Beginning to work with both aspiring writers and established academics who nevertheless find it hard to access publication – especially without payment.

• Critical discussion of injustices and the colonial processes embedded in research design, methodology and publishing.

• Ongoing asynchronous support for writing: shared spaces and critical friendship.

• Face to face meetings – 1:1 and small group.

• Growing access to local, national and international expertise.
Questions

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