Using Wikis to Teach History Education to 21st Century Learners: A Hermeneutic Perspective

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Abstract

This paper argues that history education is becoming dangerously obsolete, as it does not always relate to the contemporary needs of 21st century learners, who often find history useless and irrelevant to their present situation. This challenge is attributed to, among other reasons, the way history is taught through largely lecture-driven pedagogies that significantly reduced active learner engagement. This article draws on Gadamer's Hermeneutic philosophy to advocate for dialogue in understanding and interpreting history artifacts using 21st century technologies. Gadamerian Hermeneutics focuses on horizons of understanding through open–ended questioning and answering between past and present rather than transmission to passive audiences. The article argues for the collaborative interpretation of history meanings between teachers and students mediated by a Wiki. The methodology involved a case study of pre-service teachers enrolled at Makerere University in Uganda. The purely qualitative study draws on Gilly Salmon's five-stage model of online learning. The findings indicate that participants successfully engaged with the first three stages - access and motivation, online socialisation, and information exchange - but less so with stages four and five, knowledge construction and development. The paper concludes by proposing a framework that could be useful to teachers wanting to facilitate history education using modern approaches that are relevant and meaningful to today's learners.

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Introduction

Higher education in general and history education (HisEd) in particular, especially in the Sub Saharan Africa, is experiencing a range of challenges including a surge in student numbers (Tibarimbasa, 2010; Bunoti, 2011), reduction in the time given to cover vast amounts of content (Adeyinka, 1991 Savich, 2009; Russell, 2010, Takako, 2011; Kagoda, 2011), increased use of transmission pedagogy (Savich, 2009; Takako, 2011; Kakeeto, Tamale & Nkata, 2014), lack of capacity to learn from history (Adeyinka, 1991; Tamale, 1999; Vansledright, 2004; Savich, 2009; Davies, 2010; Nabushawo, 2013), and failure to relate history to learners' everyday lives (Monte-Sano & Budano, 2013; Stockdill & Moje, 2013). As a consequence, history education does not adequately serve today's students (Bennmayor, 2008) who appear divorced from having a sense of a shared heritage (Mohamud & Whitburn, 2014) and hence find learning history both boring and irrelevant (Savich, 2009).

This paper conceptualises history education as an interpretation of and learning about the human past that is useful to explain the present and project that understanding onto what the future might or could be like. Rather than simply teaching learners about our human past, contemporary history educators seek to focus on interpretation and meaning-making of historic artifacts using tools and lenses from the present. They view this approach as critical in today's study of history because it not only provides reasoned judgement (Coltham & Fines, 1971) but also exploits the technologies that support information being presented and manipulated in smaller chunks (Ali, 2012) [which we have referred to as 'parts' (following Gadamer, 1975)] through a process of collaborative creation and co-editing of meanings. This approach has the potential to engage students actively in history lessons where the role of teachers becomes that of creating a learning environment and providing prompts (Harris & Girard, 2014), while students engage in meaning-making and knowledge construction with one another.

This paper argues that, unless history is collaboratively interpreted and deconstructed using current understandings of its perceived value, students' motivation to learn will continue to dissipate over time and each generation of learners might remain challenged with a less than ideal view of the 'whole' (following Gadamer, 1975).

History Education in Uganda

In Uganda, history is a compulsory subject at primary and secondary levels. Before the advent of formal education in Uganda, history was taught and transmitted from one generation to another in a number of ways, which, among others, included storytelling, music, dance and drama (Ssekamwa, 2001; Takako, 2011). While these approaches remain useful, they do not generally appeal to a younger generation that is more technologically inclined (Prensky, 2014). Another challenge is that these traditional approaches, in most cases, present the teller as the singular transmitter and dispenser of knowledge to a passive learner. With the advent of formal education in Uganda in 1877 and 1879 by the Christian Anglican and Roman Catholic missionaries respectively the situation did not change (Ssekamwa, 2001). Colonial education systems were embedded with a hidden mission of presenting the European missionary as the superior teacher, a central figure, with Ugandan learners as subordinates/passive listeners (Ssekamwa, 2001). This colonial legacy continues to be reproduced through what is taught and learnt at the secondary school level resulting in immense criticism of the value of HisEd to the 21st century learner in contemporary Uganda (Kakeeto et al., 2014).

The greatest challenge to the teaching of history in Uganda is to find an alternative to the lecture-driven approach, which tends to reinforce 'cram work' and the reproduction of history facts at the expense of meaning-making and alignment to the day-to-day life experiences of the learner. The need for the memorisation of historical facts is also evident in the nature of history examinations set by the Uganda National Examination board (UNEB) for primary and secondary school learners. Many of the examination questions require factual answers rather than interpretation and meaningful understanding of history events by the contemporary history learner.

The National Curriculum Development Centre, an autonomous body under the Ministry of Education and Sports in Uganda, is in the process of reviewing the current lower secondary history curriculum to make it more relevant to the 21st century learner. This move provides an opportunity for HisEd to embrace learner-centered methods that elicit reflective and collaborative construction of knowledge between teachers and students. Our thesis is that the use of technologies familiar to most learners as vehicles for communicating history, soliciting

multiple perspectives of interpretation, and mapping today's understanding of historical artifacts, may encourage 21st century learners to appreciate and learn history.

21st Century Learners

21st century learners are assumed to be a generation of students who has grown up with and been surrounded by technology. Prensky (2001) claims that the generation born roughly between 1980 and 1994 can be characterised as 'digital natives'. While this categorisation of a generation may be simplistic and problematic, it highlights an important fact of a possible generation gap between current teachers and their learners. Thus, digital natives could be assumed to be active experiential learners proficient in multitasking and dependent upon communication technologies for accessing information, analysing, critically thinking about and evaluating it as they interact and collaborate with others (Prensky, 2001). Today's students or the 'net generation' (Jones & Binhui, 2011) are unique; immersed in technology, and have technical skills and learning styles that are not often accommodated by current instructional methodologies (Bennett, Maton & Kervin, 2008; Russell, 2010). It can therefore be reasoned that today's pre-service teachers learn differently, have opportunities to use technologies for rapid interpretations of the world as it unfolds (Prensky, 2014), and may therefore need to learn using various learning strategies that exploit ubiquitous technologies and current practices.

The study on which this article is based investigated third year pre-service teachers' engagement with a history methods course at the School of Education, Makerere University. The history methods course challenges students to develop an understanding of and engagement with effective methods of teaching history that are aligned with contemporary 21st century issues while shaping future pedagogies. Makerere University particularly recruits students recently graduated from high school as they have developed skills and knowledge in using computers; all advanced level arts students in Uganda take Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) as a principal subject (Ndidde, Lubega, Babikwa & Baguma, 2009). Thus many pre-service history teachers have opportunities to develop an interest in using computers and mobile phones that are enabled with internet connectivity, leading to their more likely use of social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter and Whatsapp.

In addition to the above, the pre-service history teachers attend an introductory computer course and a curriculum course in educational technologies during their first and second semesters at the School of Education. Given this exposure to and engagement with educational technologies, this article strongly argues that the participants in the study (pre-service history teachers also referred to as 21st century learners) have both access and skills to collaboratively share their understanding of a history artifact hosted on a Wiki platform. Given the emergence of Wikis in business and communications, history teachers are considering ways to use this emerging technology to engage learners more actively in the interpretation of the past from present realities perspectives thereby weaving the past into the present to shape the future (Maloy, Poirier, Smith & Edwards, 2010). In doing so, understanding of history becomes a dynamic process relating an artifact to its history meaning and vice versa, a movement from the 'parts' to the 'whole', hence a hermeneutic perspective.

Theoretical Framework - A Hermeneutic Perspective

Hans Georg Gadamer's hermeneutic philosophy offers a description or way of describing what takes place in the process of interpretively understanding texts. In the context of this article, texts mean historical artifacts that represent history meanings. For example, different interpretations are constructed to attach history meanings to manifestations of neocolonialism in Uganda (given to students as texts), which is synonymous with historical artifacts. The Gadamerian hermeneutic approach views learning as an open, dialogic process embedded within multiple realities and almost endless possibilities (Gadamer, 2004). One of the chief virtues of Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics is that it seeks to find willing dialogue partners by asking questions, rather than merely passive audiences (Porter & Robinson, 2011). Gadamer alludes to understanding as a unity of shared dialogue by listening to the other's voice. This is reflected in his statement: 'If there is dialogue, the relationship must be reciprocal and each must be prepared to listen to what the other has to say' (Gadamer, 1989: 205). This article argues for dialogue in the form of questions and answers to explore the unknown, the opinions and preconceptions of learners, and new experiences.

Gadamer is concerned with how humans access meaning from the past and interpret history artifacts which were written for specific traditions (Gadamer, 1975; Meek, 2011; Regan, 2012). He appeals for establishing open-ended questioning and answering between the past and the present referred to as the fusion of horizon between the past, present, and anticipated future (Porter & Robinson, 2011). In line with Gadamer, this article argues that interpretation and sense making processes in HisEd can potentially be a dynamic process achieved through triadic dialogue (Lemeke, 1990) between teacher, student and the history artifact located within a social context. It is the interface with the social context that shapes contextually dependent meanings, and therefore context is critical to informing history interpretation. Gadamer further alludes to the hermeneutic cycle that places emphasis on the movement of understanding that is constantly oscillating from the whole to the part and back to the whole. In Gadamer's own words:

> The movement of understanding is constantly from the whole, the part and back to the whole… The harmony of all the details with the whole is the criterion of correct understanding. The failure to achieve this harmony means that understanding has failed (Gadamer, 1975: 291).

It can be inferred from the above statement that learning of history would have happened when harmony between a historic artifact, its historic significance, and a student's everyday life (Turner, 2003; Woods, 2006; Meek, 2011) is reached. Thus, new understanding is an outcome of harmony otherwise understanding would have failed (learning has not taken place). The dialogue between the whole and parts can be viewed as dialogue between teachers as representatives of historical interpretations while students attach present-day meaning to the history artifact thus reaching harmony (collective understanding of history). The parts are reflected in the individual students' contribution leading to the whole thus reaching harmony of understanding of history artifacts. A Wiki has affordances to help realise this end.

Reaching Harmony through Wikis

Wikis are web applications that allow multiple authors to collaboratively add and edit web content, inviting active participation for groups such as teachers and students to collaborate in

new roles as authors and editors (Maloy et al., 2010). A useful example of a Wiki is Wikipedia[2]. The particular interest in using Wikis in this study was motivated by their affordance of fostering and sustaining collaborative versions of history writings from which historical meanings can be continually edited, iterated and revised through a community peer review process. Wikis are particularly relevant to HisEd because they can potentially provide a participative way of writing history, thus reaching harmony that can be sustained and shared with different generations of learners. This can be a snapshot of how pre-service history teachers at Makerere University made sense of a particular history artifact at a particular point in time. Historical being is that which exists in preservation; it is not merely storage, but a constant process of putting to the test, proving itself, and collective participation (Gadamer, 1989). Watters (2011) argues that Wikis have the potential to engage users in collaborative reviewing of history through the use of an open editing function. This article argues that Wikis have the potential to facilitate learner-centred pedagogy in a history classroom because their users can collectively update historical information through many-to–many communications. The effectiveness of a Wiki depends on a pedagogically sound methodology that affords open conversations among learners under teacher's continuous guidance (Cole, 2009).

Studies have been carried out to investigate the use of Wikis in teaching and learning at various levels of education. For example, a study carried out in a history course among distance education tutors at the Open University in the United Kingdom aimed at equipping students with historical skills, mediated by Wikis, in source analysis and presentation of arguments supported by evidence (Macdonald & Black, 2010). The findings revealed that some of the challenges of teaching history could be overcome by using Wikis to provide a sufficiently interactive environment to support a flow of ideas between students and staff (Macdonald & Black, 2010). A Wiki was also found to be the most effective platform in an information systems course to provide members with a single forum for sharing, organising and coordinating (Kane & Fichman, 2009), and to engage students the collaborative construction of knowledge (Fleta, Perez, Sabateur & Carmel, 2011).

However, in spite of these affordances, Cole (2009) found that Wikis had little impact on student engagement simply because the participating students chose not to make postings on a

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[2] http://www.wikipedia.org/

Wiki. He recommended greater instructional scaffolding, the use of lab-based exercises, and the creation of accompanying instructional handouts to enable students to use Wikis appropriately. This implies that, for Wikis to be used effectively, the role of the teacher becomes that of a facilitator of learning. Although the above studies report on using Wikis in the teaching and learning process, none of them considered as a focus of inquiry the collaborative construction of history artifacts to be preserved and shared with different generations of learners mediated by Wiki. To the extent that this is about teaching and learning in general, and history education in particular, we first present a pedagogical framework.

Pedagogical Framework: Five-stage model for teaching and learning online

Salmon's five-stage model (Salmon, 2002; Salmon, Nie & Edirisingha, 2010) describes the process of enabling and scaffolding remote groups to work and learn together using asynchronous learning environments (Figure 1). The five steps are: access and motivation, online socialisation, information exchange, knowledge construction, and development (Salmon, 2011). The model of online learning is an excellent resource for meaningful curriculum activities and greater online interaction and communication between students and between students and their teachers (Salmon, 2002).

Figure 1: Five-stage model for teaching and learning online (Salmon et al., 2010: 170).
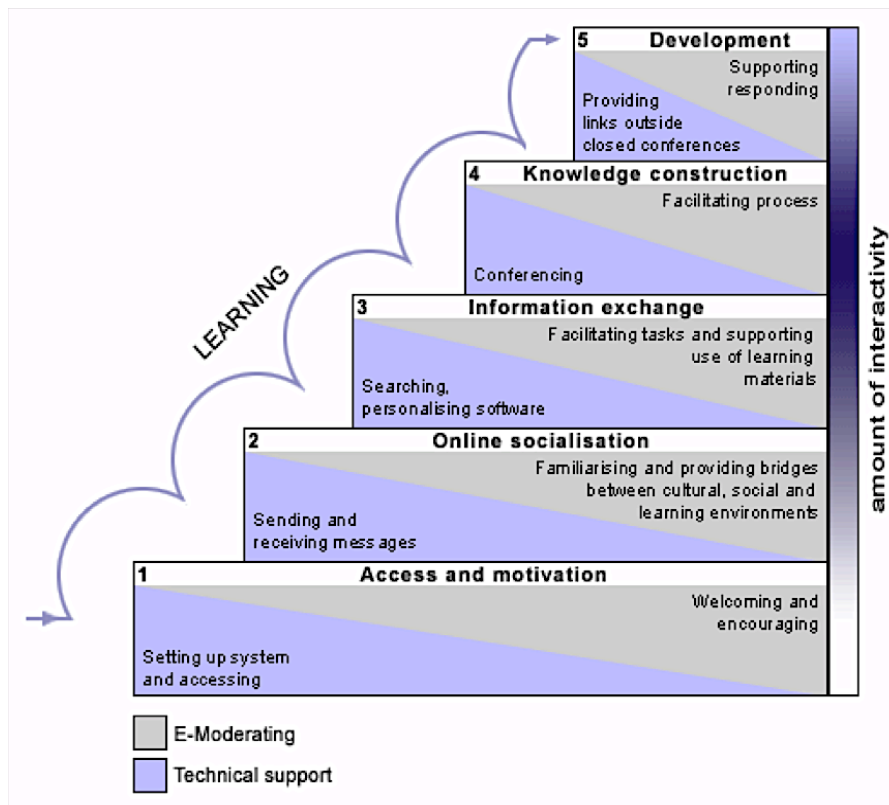
Step one of the model entails accessing and setting up the system as well as welcoming and motivating the students. In this step, one is required to login, find the right place, and know how to take part by engaging in interesting e–tivities (online learning activities) with the educator welcoming, encouraging, and providing clarifications on the purpose of the activities. Importantly at this stage, one needs to acquire the emotional and social capacity to learn with others online (Salmon, 2002; 2011). Also, step one should directly enable participants to increase their comfort with the use of the technology through engaging with the online environment. The key is to mobilise participants' understanding about why they are learning in this particular way, as well as what they have to do to take part (Salmon, 2002; 2011). The intention of the step one is achieved when participants have posted their own messages and responded to one another (Salmon, 2011).

Step two of the model involves online socialisation and includes helping people to develop their online identities as individuals and also finding others with whom to interact

(Salmon, 2002; 2011). Step two of online socialisation should promote group interaction to support more collaborative learning later on, by using e-tivities that are explicitly concerned with exploring cultural knowledge, particularly those that explain differences (Salmon, 2002). This second stage is over when participants start to share information about themselves online and the basis for future information exchange and knowledge construction has been laid down (Salmon, 2002).

Step three entails information exchange. At this stage each participant should have a role to play and should be actively participating (Salmon et al., 2010). Participants interact with course content and interact with peers and educators. In this step, participants need knowledge of tools for remote access to information and knowledge of strategies for purposeful information retrieval. E-moderators should ensure that discussions and e-tivities concentrate on discovering easily accessible answers and identifying resources that can be useful to learning (Salmon, 2011). In step three, participants look to the e-moderators to provide direction through the mass of messages and to provide encouragement to start using the most relevant material (Salmon, 2002). Demands for help from the moderator can be considerable because the participants' seeking, searching and selection skill level may still be low. There can be many queries about where to find one thing or another (Salmon, 2002). Step three is over when participants learn how to find and exchange information productively and successfully through e-tivities (Salmon, 2002).

Step four involves knowledge construction. This step involves frequent discussion or knowledge development aspects at their core. This step involves high-level interaction and scaffolding where participants should add, edit and contribute to each other work (Salmon, 2011). This implies that participants should engage in a never-ending dialectical activity of asking and answering each other's' questions whereby refining understanding as history meanings are constructed. During this process participants remain open-minded to new topics and ideas with a view of obtaining endless realities. Online activities can offer knowledge building and construction (not exchange of information only) or a series of ideas or challenges (Salmon, 2002). E-moderators have important roles to play at this stage. The best online moderators demonstrate the highest levels of skills related to building and sustaining groups (Salmon, 2002). This step is considered successfully attained when participants have engaged in an active knowledge building process as a team.

During step five, participants are concerned with planning and evaluating their own learning while applying it to their individual contexts (Salmon, 2011). Participants can become responsible for their own learning and skills of critical thinking, reflection, and challenging givens come in to play (Salmon, 2011). In this final stage the role of the educator is minimal and quite often experienced participants become most helpful to guide newcomers to the system (Salmon, 2002). The five-stage model was used to guide participants in engaging with history artifacts with a hope of reaching harmony.

Research Methodology

Application of the model

The case study was undertaken with School of Education students at Makerere University (MU). MU is one of the oldest Universities in Africa with the largest teacher training Institution in East Africa. Third year pre-service teachers studying history methods as one of the teaching subjects were recruited on a voluntary basis. The intervention was blended with initial activities in face-to-face mode with online sessions were engaged with the Wikis. Firstly, study participants were invited through emails and phone calls to attend a face-to-face meeting. At this meeting, the educator enlightened the participants about the concept of Wikis and their role in pedagogy and asked them to provide their email addresses if they were happy to participate in the Wiki intervention and the associated research study. The purpose of the research study was highlighted and participants introduced to Wikis and specifically Wikispaces. They were encouraged to ask as many questions as they had to familiarise themselves with the online platform. Guidance on where to find technical support was provided, and this paper notes that it is important to make available an online guide as well as a link to short Youtube videos to encourage step-by-step access to the online environment.

Purely qualitative study data was obtained in December 2013 through observations of the activities on the Wiki (Wikispaces) and a 20-minute interview with each participant at the end of the intervention. The face-to-face interviews were conducted with all ten participants and focused on the possibilities and challenges of engaging with Wikis at each stage of Salmon's model. Salmon's stages were used as a descriptive framework to help analyse the activities.

The Intervention

Step one: access and motivation

At the start of the project, the educator/e-moderator created a Wikispaces platform, and posted a welcoming message to the pre-service teachers and provided guidance on where to obtain technical support (Sebbowa, 2013).

The ten participants who registered their emails were sent invitations from the Wikispaces platform. They then signed in to Wikispaces and created their own accounts. This was done to allow them online access. Three participants accessed the Wikispaces site from their mobile phones while five participants used personal laptops and desktop computers. The remaining two participants had challenges in accessing the Wikispaces and so used their mobile phones to make calls for help, sent SMSes to each other and were eventually assisted in gaining access. One participant volunteered to lead the group and assisted others who faced difficulties in access to embed the Wikispaces on their Facebook page in order to enhance access to the Wikispaces page. Participants' ability to obtain effective help and access to online environment are key aspects at this stage (Salmon, 2011).

All ten participants were able to sign in and explore the Wikispaces environment to acquaint them with the online space. Consequently, they were motivated to access and return to the site later. During this stage, constant consultations and interactions among the participants to gain access and acclimatise themselves with the Wiki platform were evident.

Educator/ Researchers' activities
- Create a protected Wikispaces site. Sent invitation emails to participants through the Wikispaces.
- Used SMS and invited participants to a Face-to-Face (F2F) orientation meeting about the created site. This was to ensure that all participants saw the invites to the Wikispaces.
- Welcomed, motivated and guided participants on where to obtain technical support.

Participants' activities
- Signed into Wikispaces.
- Some attended the F2F orientation meeting.

- Accessed the Wikispaces site on mobile phones and offered to help others to access the site.

- One active student advised others to embed the Wikispaces on their Facebook page for easy access.

- Some participants signed into Wikispaces and assisted others to sign in.

- Participants acclimatised by playing with the Wikispaces environment.

***Step two: online socialisation***

The educator guided the participants through this step by requesting them to introduce themselves by posting their names and year of study. In response, participants established and shared their online identities by choosing how they wanted to be 'known' online for the sake of both their online confidence and ease of interaction. Participants were then requested to access and complete the pre-engagement task (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Pre-engagement task
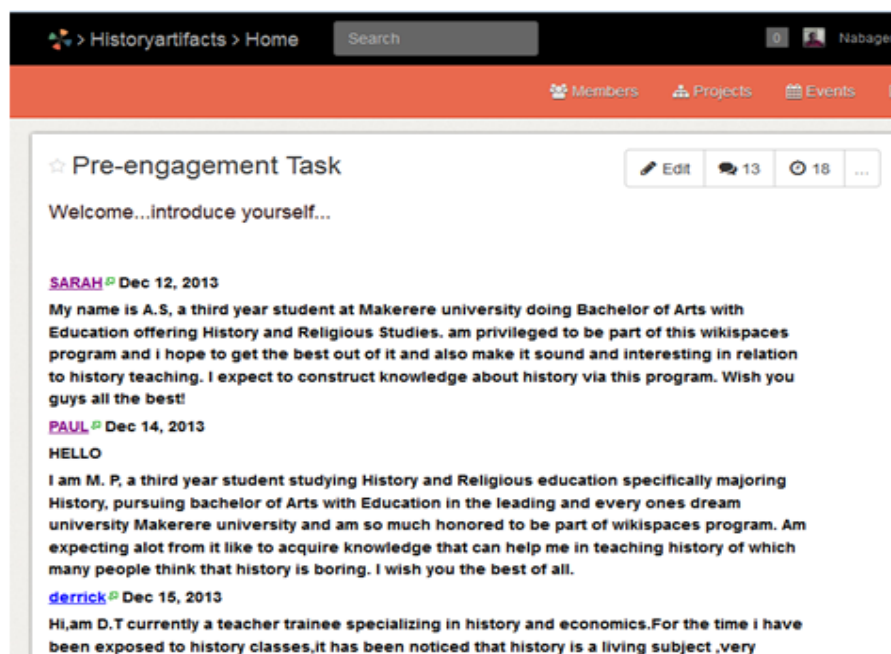
The task required them to think about and post their preconceptions about the teaching of history in Uganda (Figure 3) and respond to one another's posts.

Figure 3: Pre-conceptions about history teaching
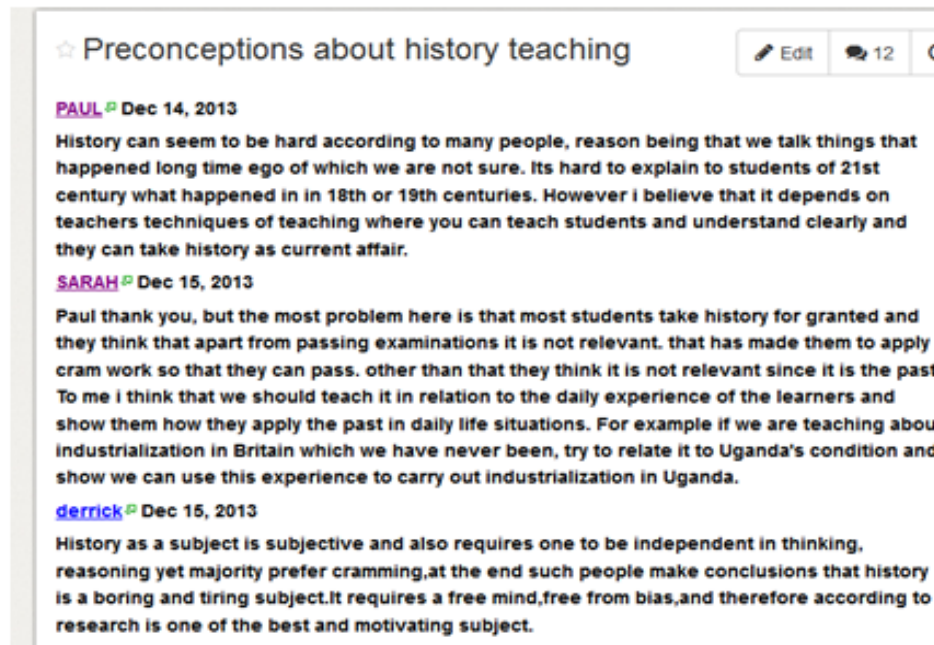
All ten participants were able to introduce themselves by mentioning their names, year of study and the subjects they take in the Education Course at Makerere University together with sharing their preconceptions about the teaching of history in Uganda. They were able to identify each other by name, create their own posts and respond to one another's posts accordingly. This attests to Hermeneutics' notion that the roots of engagement in the social world elicit openness to others' views.

Educator/ Researchers' activities

- Asked participants to introduce themselves through indicating their name, year of study.

- Guided the participants to turn to the right hand side of the site, click on the pages link and access the pre-engagement task.

- Asked them about what they think about the teaching of history in Uganda. This was done to elicit their thoughts about the teaching of history.

Participants' activities

- Introduced themselves by indicating name, year of study.

- Engaged with the task that required them to post their preconceptions/prejudices/biases (Gadamer, 1975) about the teaching of history in Uganda.

- Wrote down their thinking about history and responded to each other's posts.

Step three: information exchange

In this step, participants exchanged information through postings about the conceptualisation of neocolonialism, uploaded pictures exhibiting manifestations of neocolonialism and posted different views about neocolonialism. Each participant made an online contribution on the concept of neocolonialism and only two participants shared pictures exhibiting their understanding of the manifestations of neocolonialism. One participant inquired about and needed more clarification on the concept of neocolonialism, and received responses from other participants with supplementary responses from the educator. The hermeneutic notion of dialogue through asking and answering questions between the educator and learners was demonstrated at this stage. Pictures shared among participants proved useful resources in answering questions. The e-moderator provided scaffolded feedback that resulted in modifications of the participants' understanding of the concept under study. At this stage, participants were able to construct various understandings and interpretations of neocolonialism through sharing pictures and photographs, thus facilitating collaborative interpretations of the concept under study hosted on a Wiki platform (see Figure 4 and Figure 5).

Educator/ Researchers' activities

- Requested participants to propose a topic of interest and they unanimously agreed on engaging with neocolonialism in Uganda. The discussion leading to the topic was done through F2F interactions.

- Participants were asked to post concepts, pictures and different manifestations of neocolonialism.

- Educator guided dialogue through asking questions of what each post meant to the participant.

Participants' activities

- Engaged with conceptualisation of neocolonialism.

- Posted pictures and illustrated manifestations of neocolonialism in Uganda.

- Learners' questions and answer (hermeneutical) process attached meaning to the artifacts posted.

- Aligning past to the present experiences was exhibited at this step.

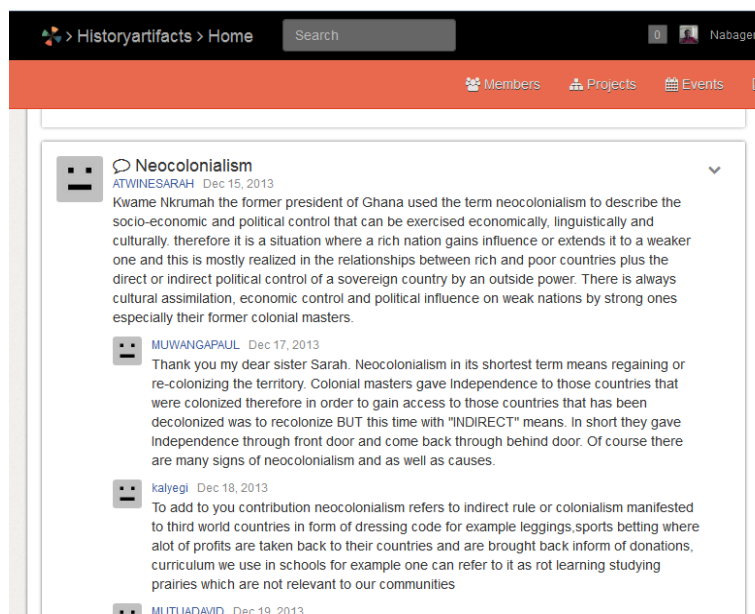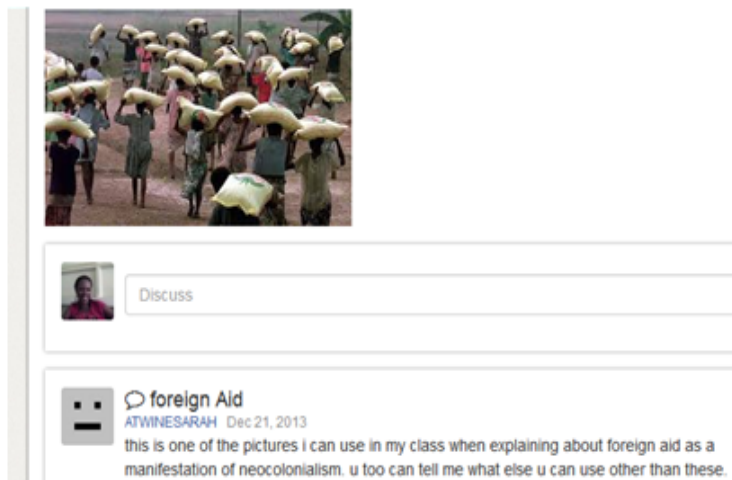**Figure 4: Online discussions on Neocolonialism**

Figure 5: Information exchanges using images

foreign Aid
ATWINESARAH Dec 21, 2013
this is one of the pictures i can use in my class when explaining about foreign aid as a manifestation of neocolonialism. u too can tell me what else u can use other than these.

Steps four and five: knowledge exchange session and development

The expectation in this phase was that participants would begin to work together in the active co-construction of knowledge and interpretation of history artifacts. However, this level of engagement was not reached. On reflection this could be because the move from information exchange to knowledge construction is a challenging one and required perhaps a longer period of time for the participants to become comfortable with being open-minded and challenging ideas within their group, as well as critically reflective of their own views and positions.

An examination of the intervention and how the five-stage model enabled activities aimed at increasing dialogue and multiple perspectives shows that through stages 1-3 it was possible to achieve the various components of the hermeneutic perspective.

Fusions of horizons, reaching harmony, learner-centered pedagogy and collaborative interpretation were evident in participant's activities in step one; meaning-making and shared dialogue were evident in step two; and fusions of horizons, collaborative interpretation and historic artifacts were evident in step three (see Table 1).

Table 1: Hermeneutic analysis of Salmons' five-stage activities

Stage (Salmons 5 stage model)	Participant Activity	Hermeneutic perspective
Step 1: Access and Motivation	Access the Wikispaces site on mobile phones and offer to help others to access the site.	{Fusion of horizons}
	One active student advised others to embed the Wikispaces on their Facebook page for easy access	{Collaborative interpretation}
	Some participants signed into Wikispaces and assisted others to sign in	{Reaching harmony}
	Participants then acclimatised/played with the Wikispaces environment	{Learner Centered pedagogy}
Step 2: Online Socialisation	Engaged with the task that required them to post their preconceptions/prejudices/biases (Gadamer 1975) about the teaching of history in Uganda	{Shared dialogue}{Multiple perspectives}
	Wrote down their thinking about history and responded to each other's posts	{Meaning making}
Step 3: Information Exchange	Engaged with conceptualisation of neocolonialism	{Historic artifacts}
	Posted pictures and illustrated Manifestations of Neocolonialism in Uganda	{Fusion of horizons}
	Learners' questions and answer (hermeneutical) attached meaning to the artifacts posted	{Collaborative interpretation}
	Aligning past to the present experiences was exhibited at this step	{Fusion of horizons}

Conclusion

The study has shown that Wikis offer a strategy for achieving harmony in HisEd as they do afford peer interaction and enable group work viewed as parts (students' ideas), and the whole (teachers' expertise). Learning does become a collaborative process by the group. The ease of operation and interaction makes a Wiki platform easily visited, read, and reorganised with the potential of updating history artifacts to be sustained for future generations of learners. Wikis allow for dialogic questions and answers as teachers and learners located in different parts of the world can work on the same document leading to sustainability and preservation of the history meaning-making process.

The diagram presented below shows how a Wiki used in a Gadmerian framework may foster various activities that work towards an individual students' contribution (part) to a collaborative shared meaning (whole). Guided by the conceptual framework as depicted in Figure 6 involving four inter-related concepts: 21st century learner, history education, hermeneutic perspective and Salmon's five-stage model, the paper has shown that learning history can be both exciting and relevant to young people lives.

Figure 6: Inter-related theoretical constructs

Salmon's five-stage model provides a pedagogic guide for teaching history education using a Wiki. As Figure 7 depicts, taking a hermeneutic perspective to understanding the Wiki activities guided by Salmon's model gives us a way of describing how participants' process of learning is an oscillation between activity from the parts (singular understanding) to the whole (collective and holistic) and vice versa. The article has shown that the various stages of Salmons' five-stage model become more meaningful through a hermeneutic lens. In this article we have shown that multiple realities were captured, fusion of horizons enabled the past, present and the future to

converge, and harmony was reached through shared dialogue. This shared dialogue was enabled by a learner-centered pedagogy, and both individual and collective meaning making was ensured through collaborative interpretation using historic artifacts as prompts for learning as opposed to being facts to be memorised.

Figure 7: Framework for using Wikis to teach history education in a Hermeneutic perspective
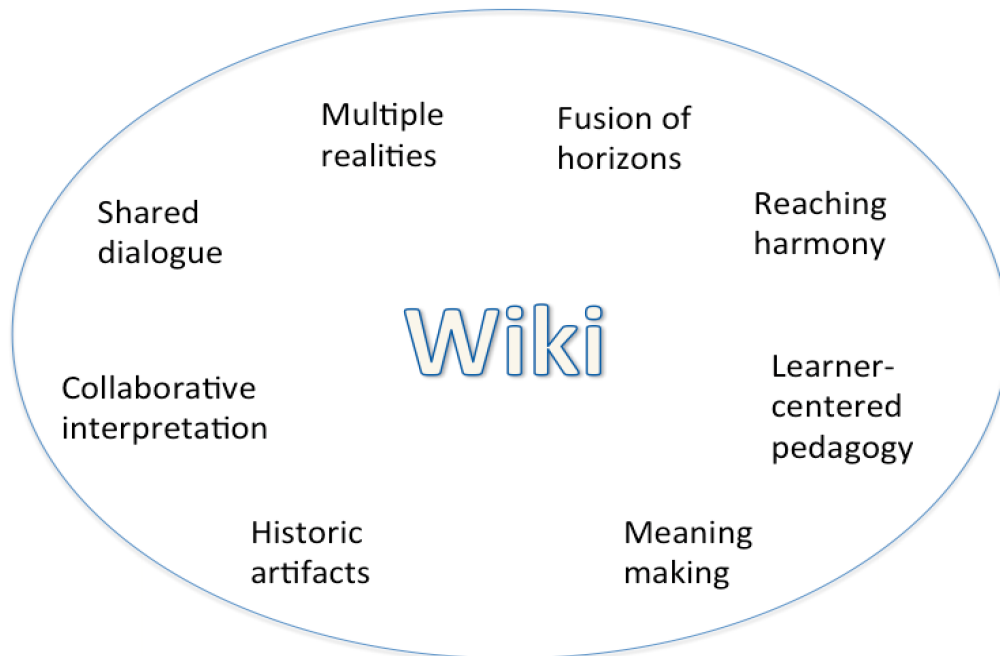
The idea of engaging with Salmon's model was to demonstrate that it is possible to work with an existing model so as to elicit a relationship between the teacher/e-moderator and participants/21st century learners hosted on a Wiki platform. Also, the model explicitly shows that learners engaged with the platform differently; while some were very active, others were slow. In support of this, Gadamerian hermeneutics argues that differences, strangeness, and variations all produce grounds for historical understandings (Porter & Robinson, 2011). Wikis afford peer interaction and group work viewed as parts (students' ideas), the whole (teachers' expertise) and back to the parts to reach harmony.

Collaborative dialogue and scaffolding between teachers and students and students and students is important if harmony is to be achieved. In a nutshell, It is possible to work with Salmon's five-stage model in teaching history to 21st century learners and achieve shared dialogue agitated for in hermeneutics. This is because learners' interests are catered for at the various stages of the model. The paper has proposed a framework to facilitate HisEd using Wikis that are relevant and meaningful to today's learners.

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