# ***Humanities@Mak100 Research Findings Dissemination***

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**Historicizing the role of the Performing Arts Department (MDD) in the Development of Theatre Education in Uganda**

**Dr Nicholas Ssempijja**

**Abstract**

In the development of Performing Arts in Uganda, it is inevitable to consider the role played by the department of Performing Arts and Film, formerly Music, Dance and Drama department at Makerere University. While active theatre activities existed before, Ugandan theatre generally gained momentum after the establishment of the Music, Dance, and Drama department. Therefore, this research aims at historicizing the formation of the Music, Dance and Drama department, paying attention to important landmarks that form part of this history, and personalities that played leading roles in setting up the department. The study examines the relevance of the department to Makerere university and to Uganda in the development of theatre education and performance. The research will analyze the curricula used overtime, accounting for the changes, while considering the impact of the alumni. Utilizing a postcolonial perspective, it analyzes the current multidirectional flow of glocal theatrical practices in Uganda, considering performing arts disciplines and their implicit role in local agency within the recurrent glocal forces.

**From generative grammar to digital humanities: exploring the positionality of linguistics and language scholarship at Makerere University**

**Dr.Levis Mugumya, PhD**

**Abstract**

This study reflects on the current positionalityand intellectual locations of languages and linguistics scholarship at Makerere University. It seeks to re-examine the basis and significance of languages and linguistics scholarship the University.The study posits that linguistic science like any other discipline that entails “human knowledge and learning” ensues from “its past” and it’s a ‘matrix of its future’ (Robin, 1984). Furthermore, linguistics builds on the past, challenging, refuting, developing and reformulating traditional doctrines (González andCantón, 1990, p. 27). Therefore, it begins by examining the nature of languages and linguistics scholarship by tracing the trajectory of erstwhile and current global trends and patterns of linguistics scholarship and research. It explicates the current knowledge systems that characterise the discipline of linguistics and demonstrates the justification for studying, teaching and researching linguistics. The study then explores the praxis of languages and linguistic scholarship at Makerere University since the 1950s to-date. It examines the continuities and discontinuities of linguistics by underscoring which linguistic knowledge systems have been privileged and dominant; those that appear to be at the periphery; and the novel ones that have been embraced.Finally, it explicates the challenges that scholars in the linguistics disciplines(have) encounter(ed) and argues for a rethinking of linguistics research relevant to the university and the country within an apparent mutating nature of other humanities disciplines and global demands and challenges.

**Keywords:** linguistics, English language, linguistics knowledge systems, Makerere University

**Peripheral Archivists: Alternative Historicising of 1960s Ugandan Violence in *Penpoint***

**Dr Edgar Nabutanyi**

**Abstract**

The scholarly agenda of this research project is to explore how student writers who published literary works in the Makerere University Literature Department’s periodical — *Penpoint*— enacted perfect snapshots of Ugandan cultural and socio-political life of the 1960s. Envisioned as the training ground of future writers, literary magazines such as *Penpoint* provide a professional space for student writers to not only try out their thematic ideas and stylistic innovations, but most importantly also to utilise their creative fiction into capturing portraits of cultural and socio-political life of their respective societies. Thus, it is paradoxical that while their education — modelled around the Oxbridge curriculum anticipates an aesthetic and subject matter that is Eurocentric in inclination — sought to produce glorified clerks, Makerere University’s *Penpoint* availed them an opportunity to deploy innovative linguistic and literary devices to produce art that brilliantly captured the pulsating life of the new Ugandan nation in all its various forms in the 1960s. This makes the work published in *Penpoint* a poignantly unique archive of postcolonial Ugandan essence. This is because *Penpoint* empowered this cohort of writers to engage with the material reality in Uganda of the 1960s. Foregrounding Michel de Carteau’s observation in *The Practice of Everyday Life* that peripheral subjects often subvert the power and ideology of their oppressors to claim their agency, I seek to explore three objectives in this project, namely a) how do student writers published in *Penpoint* use their fiction to snap realistic images of the cultural realities of 1960s Uganda, b) interrogate how in the words of Achebe, the works of this cohort of writer capture the postcolonial moments when “the rain began to beat Uganda” into political violence and c) examine how the texts published in this premier Makerere Literature Department’s periodical chronicled the social life of post-independence Uganda.