Countering the cumbersome: Rethinking the Shona compounding term-creation strategy

Gumbo Lettiah

Midlands State University, The Communication Skills Centre, MSU, P Bag 9055, Gweru, Zimbabwe

A R T I C L E I N F O

A B S T R A C T

This paper investigates how Shona linguists can shorten the terms created using the compounding strategy so as to make them user-friendly. Although the use of the compounding term-creation strategy is to try to usher in terminological developments that would strengthen the indigenisation of the indigenous languages, it seems that the attitude of target users towards compounds is very negative. This paper suggests that compounded terms might be shortened using strategies such as blending, clipping and the devising of acronyms. This effort can help in the scientific and technical growth of the indigenous languages, and hence give credence to the richness of a people's linguistic heritage.

1. Introduction

Shona is a Bantu language spoken by more than twelve (12) million people as a first language, mostly in the northern parts of Zimbabwe. It is one of the official languages of Zimbabwe, along with English, Chewa, Chibarwe, Kalanga, Koisan, Nambya, Ndau, Ndebele, Shangani, Sotho, Tonga, Tswana, Venda and Xhosa (Constitution of Zimbabwe 2012, Amendment No 20, Section 6, Item 3 and 4). However, Shona lacks scientific and technological terms, and this has prompted the use of term-creation strategies such as compounding to produce scientific vocabulary terms that will help to fill the gap. This researcher strongly believes that for a nation to develop, its languages should be able to express scientific and technological concepts to keep pace with global trends. This is supported by Chimhundu (2002), who expresses the view that the development of a nation requires the expansion of its indigenous languages and the dissemination of knowledge of them in their enlarged ad expanded form.

In addition, currently Shona has an inferior status to English because it was marginalised by the advent of colonialism (Vambe, 2006). During the whole colonial era, Shona was relegated to the status of vernacular – the language of a group politically and/or socially dominated by another (Bell, 1976:153). The colonial government in Zimbabwe significantly undermined the development of the Shona vocabulary, as its language policy promoted English ahead of Shona to official status. This gave English the opportunity to dominate all spheres of life including the educational sector, health, and all areas of formal employment. As a result of this colonial legacy, Shona now lies far behind English in the areas of science and technology. In addition, Chiwome (1996) observed that printing presses such as, for example, the Catholic-driven Mambo Press, encouraged authors to write literature that mirrored a Christian vision of life. So during the advent of Christianity, the

development of the Shona lexicon was biased towards religious terms. This stifled the growth of Shona as regards scientific and technical vocabulary, leading to stultification of the possibility of teaching these subjects in the language.

In other words, Shona failed to develop scientifically, because its limited use in the public arena meant that it was not given the platform to achieve the same status as English. The colonial language policy is thus one of the leading factors that retarded and continue to retard terminological development in Shona. In addition to its unfavourable language policies, the colonial government introduced the Literature Bureau censorship board in 1956, which created and disseminated propaganda to facilitate the peaceful administration of the African population, thereby encouraging writers to produce creative, fictitious and moralist work that did not explore more important everyday issues or socially motivated behaviour. School textbooks did not focus on technical and scientific knowledge, creating a situation where the Shona language was continuously dependent on the English language for scientific and technical terms. Moreover, during this era, the book industry was in the hands of missionaries and Western owners who were concerned with profit-maing. They did not promote the publication of Shona textbooks as they argued Shona text books lacked commercial value because the market was dominated by English. As a result, Shona writers with potential switched to writing books in English. All this stifled and compromised the production of Shona textbooks. This situation continued up to when Zimbabwe attained its independence in 1980.

Mutasa (2002) hoped that, post-colonial Africa would give an impetus to a resurgence of African languages so that they might carry philosophical and scientific discourse to unprecedented heights. Hence the need to employ strategies such as compounding to scientificate Shona, which is the major focus of this paper. There is need to develop Shona; to provide it with scientific and technical vocabulary, enabling its use as a medium of instruction in the educational field alongside English. If Shona is to be developed so as to express scientific and technical terms, Shona linguists should create terms that are clear, adequate, understandable and acceptable to the target users. Term- creation can, therefore, be regarded as a linguistic mechanism that can be used to develop languages so that they can be used effectively in all spheres of life. The use of the compounding term-creation strategy has the potential to enhance the status of the Shona language, but it should be done in a way that ensures that the terms created are user-friendly.

Compounding is a very common term-creation strategy in Shona language development. It is worth noting that it was one of the earliest ways of coining new words in the first phases of Shona contact with English. For example: *svutugadzike* 'tea' and *bhizautare* 'bicycle' (see Table 1).

Table 1
Showing created compounds for new concepts coming into the Shona language and the preferred term by Shona language speakers.

Compounded term	The compounds	Preferred loan term
svutugadzike	*svutu* 'take a sip' + *gadzike* 'put cup down'	*tiyi* 'tea'
bhizautare	*bhiza* 'horse' + *utare* 'iron'	*bhasikoro* 'bicycle'

However, these compounded terms never gained currency because they had to compete with the borrowed term for the new concepts, for example *svutugadzike* had to compete against the loan word *tiyi* 'tea' and *bhizautare* with *bhasikoro* 'bicycle' Eventually the indigenous term is dropped out of use in favour of the loan word. Most of the compounded terms are self-descriptive or self-contained in the sense that the term itself explains its meaning. In other words, a target user can easily get the meaning of the term from the compounded term, for example *chiomesashaya* 'tetanus'; *nhokonyapfungwa* 'brain teaser', *batamutsindo* 'pulse') as shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2
Giving the structural breakdown of Shona compounds.

Compounded term	The breakdown of the compound term	Meaning
chiomesashaya	*chiomesa* 'paralyse' + *shaya* 'cheeks'	'tetanus'
nhokonyapfungwa	*nhokonya* 'tease' + *pfungwa* 'brain'	'brain teaser'
batamutsindo	*bata* 'hold' + *mutsindo* 'pulse'	'check pulse'

It can be argued that the compounding term-creation strategy, if fully utilised, has the capability of producing numerous new terms for a language. This has led Hadebe (2000) to conclude that the compounding term-creation strategy is probably the most important mechanism for creating new technical terms in any indigenous language. Compounding is a very productive and transparent term-creation strategy.

However, it is sad to note that Shona compounds tend not to be generally accepted by target users as compared with loan words, because they are cumbersome. Chimhundu (2002) suggests that compounds are not popular in usage because they compete with adoptives, which are more simply structured simpler and therefore less unwieldy. The likelihood of rejection is a difficult challenge faced by terminologists who want to use the compounding term-creation strategy as a language development tool in Zimbabwe. On the other hand, the rejection of compounded terms may be further exacerbated by the mere fact that the language is regarded as inferior. Shona is generally regarded as inferior to English by its speakers because of non-usage in the commercial, educational and formal arena where English is dominant in use.

1.1. An outline of Shona morphology

In Shona as in many other languages, a morpheme is a grammatical unit constituting a word or meaningful part of a word that cannot be further broken into smaller independent grammatical parts. For example, *seka* 'laugh'. There are two different kinds of morphemes – bound and free – a bound morpheme is a word element that cannot stand alone as a word, for example prefixes and suffixes. On the contrary, free morphemes can stand alone as a word and cannot be further divided into any other word elements as shown in Table 3 below:

Table 3
Showing examples of free and bound morphemes.

Noun prefix class	Bound morphemes (noun prefix)	Free morphemes (noun stem)
1	*mu-* (big)	*-sikana* (girl)
7	*chi-* (small and short)	*-sikana* (girl)
12	*ka-* (small and slim)	*-sikana* (girl)
19	*svi-* (small and very slim)	*-sikana* (girl)
21	*zi-* (tall and very big)	*-dzikana* (girl)

Thus the prefix class gives a new meaning to the word. In the examples given above if a girl is short and small the prefix 'chi' is used to denote this. Thus prefixes 7 *'chi'-*, 12 *'ka'-*, 19 *'svi'-* and 21 *'zi'-* can give new meanings to the root word *–sikana* (girl) as given in the Table 4 below:

Table 4
Examples of how different class prefixes can change the meaning of a word stem.

Varying class prefixes attached to a word stem	New meaning
chi-sikana (class 7)	small and short girl
ka-sikana (class 12)	small and slim girl
svi-sikana (class 19)	small and very slim girl
zi-dzikana (class 21)	tall and very big girl

The examples above show that in Shona, bound morphemes can be attached to a base word to make a new word.

Compounding is a strategy of word formation effected by combining existing words or lexical items, leading to a new form. Crystal (1997:63) refers to compounding as "consisting of two or more free morphemes" that can easily combine. Spencer (1991) asserts that compounding is an important area in term-creation or morphological processing because it is one of the most frequent and robust strategies found cross-linguistically. He argues that this system has the greatest amount of flexibility and simplicity, as far as term-creation is concerned. In a similar contention, Chimhundu (2002) remarks that one advantage of compounding is its maximisation of existing terms to derive new words and meanings. This means that new target-language words can be easily formed from the source language. It is in this category that new words have been made by joining the two aspects of the language, as given in the examples below in Tables 5–7:

Table 5
Examples of Noun + noun combination.

Compounded Term	Compounds	Meaning
nharembozha	*nhare* 'phone' + *mbozha* 'a rich person'	'cell phone' (at that time a prerogative of the rich)
musoronhema	*musoro* 'headache' + *nhema* 'false'	'false headache' meaning someone pretending to be having a headache

Table 6
Examples of Verb + verb combination.

Compounded Term	Compounds	Meaning
svutugadzike	*svuta* 'sip') + *gadzika* 'put down'	'tea'
mugardzakasungwa	*gara* 'be prepared' + *sungwa* 'for duty'	'policeman'

Table 7
Verb + noun combination.

Compounded Term	Compounds	Meaning
chipaupenyu	*chipa* (giver) + *upenyu* (life)	'life giver' (= oxygen)
shuramatongo	*shura* (predict) + *matongo* (ruin)	'predict Ruin' (= Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome: AIDS)

As highlighted above, compound terms are made by joining two or three morphemes of the language, and the combinations can either be nouns plus verb, noun plus noun and verb plus verb.

1.2. Proportion of Shona speakers who prefer to switch to English when using scientific terms

In Zimbabwe, where English enjoys a superior status, there is a general tendency on the part of a majority of people to switch from Shona or any other indigenous language to English every now and then (three quarters of the population in Zimbabwe can speak English fluently) because English acts as the language of deeper knowledge, and is therefore a language of prestige. Codeswitching is a matter of switching from one language or register to the other in the same sentence. According to Zentella (1997:97) "code switching is a means of realignment for a speaker or an attempt by speakers to control their interlocutor behaviour or as a resource of clarification of emphasis of a point".

Codeswitching is a common practice the world over. It usually occurs where two or many speech communities come into frequent contact with each other. Poplack and Meechan (1998:127) argue that "in all bilingual corpora empirically studied, mixed discourse is overwhelmingly constituted of lone elements, usually major class content (nouns, verbs, adjectives) of one language embedded in the syntax of another". People may codeswitch in order to give clarity to an issue or because they may feel that the switched-to language is more prestigious or that their speech may appear fashionable. However, scholars such as Sounkalo (1995) argue that code-switching by educated Africans should not be seen as a common characteristic of bilingualism in general, but as partly due to lexical deficiencies in the African language and loss in the repertoire of such people as a result of their limited use of that language. From this postulation, one can conclude that it is either lack of terminology in the indigenous languages that causes people to codeswitch, especially in scientific and technical terms, or else it is because of prestige. There is a need, therefore, to develop indigenous languages so that they may be sufficiently developed to express scientific and technical concepts. There can be disaster for a language if people ignore their language because they feel it is inferior. They may lose it and at the same time lose their social and cultural identity.

1.3. Language policy in Zimbabwe

English is the lingua franca in Zimbabwe despite the fact that independence is supposed to have brought tremendous development in African languages (Mutasa, 2006:115). The government of Zimbabwe is still reluctant to fully implement language policies that would develop and maintain the status of indigenous languages. Even though the government of Zimbabwe has recognised Shona together with twelve other indigenous languages (Chewa, Chibarwe, Kalanga, Koisan, Nambya, Ndebele, Shangani, Sotho, Tonga, Tswana, Venda and Xhosa) English still enjoys a near- monopoly as the language of administration and the medium of instruction (Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment No 20, section 6, item 3 and 4). Zimbabwe is not promoting and advancing the use of all the languages as stated in the constitution or creating conditions for the development of the specified languages. Thus Viriri (2003) information available at http://www.international.icomos.org/victoriafalls2 remarks that the post-colonial language policy is just an appendage of the colonial era. Shona and the other minority languages are being used in a narrow sense in the official arena. In other words, Shona is only restrictively used in not so important areas of human life, for example in translating rules and regulations in various organisations like in hospitals or for instructional purposes at the work places while in education, law, science and technology English is still dominant. Ultimately the intended language policy as recommended in the 2012 constitution of Zimbabwe and its implementation may not succeed if the attitude of the government remains as it is.

Some scholars aver that the status quo is so because scientific and technical language is mostly available in English in most fields of knowledge, thus making its use in the education system and wider communication virtually mandatory. However, this can be regarded as a lame excuse because language resources are abundantly available in any lexicon – what is needed is to activate and develop them so that they can express scientific and technical concepts. Compounding is one such tool that can be used in language development, should there be commitment from governments and terminographers. Thus, any language revitalisation process is entwined with language policy, language planning and their various respective categories: status planning, corpus planning, and acquisition. The Zimbabwean government should commit itself seriously to the issue of language development by putting in place relevant language and technology planning and policy and innovative educational reforms, which should include "restoring" indigenous language use in all spheres of life. This will make Shona and other minority languages in Zimbabwe vital instruments of communication, restoring and strengthening their pragmatic functions in various spheres of society.

This means that governments should allow indigenous languages to occupy the place that truly belongs to them in society. It can be pointed out that since time immemorial indigenous languages were able to communicate natural scientific and technical concepts, and can still do so in the contemporary society. This researcher is of the view that, the government of Zimbabwe should also promote literacy in indigenous languages. They should develop materials in indigenous languages and make them available, in print and electronic media as well.

1.4. Problems and challenges posed by the need to expand Shona vocabulary

This paper has established that, there is a major outstanding problem facing the implementation of terminological efforts to develop Shona, which is the attitude of the target users. This contention is supported by Cabre (1999) who contends that,

naturally, terminology expansion depends more on pragmatic factors such as the recognition of the significance of terminology on the part of the users. The suitability of the particular language for the performance of any particular role should depend not on the language but on the user (Ogutu, 2006:53). This is observed by Mutasa (2006) who argues that due to the prestige attached to the English language, indigenous languages are still regarded by their own people as inadequate tools for efficient communication in any formal sphere. Those who are committed to developing the indigenous languages are frustrated by the dominance of English because it strongly deters term-creation activities, and this poses a lot of difficulties for terminologists. As a result, for reasons of prestige the target users prefer terms borrowed from English for scientific and technical concepts. Most feel that English terms are can easily transmit modern knowledge, and have great social economic and educational value. Such linguistic attitudes on the part of target users can complicate the task of Shona language development. The target users are of paramount importance in so far as it is they who spearhead the implementing of terminological efforts and developments. So long as English remains the official language of communication; practical considerations will force indigenous language speakers to despise their own language. This again is a major challenge terminographers have to face, because unless a language is representative and balanced it is an unreliable means of acquiring knowledge.

The Shona term-creation effort, therefore, is taking place in an environment where English is still dominant, and as a result the new terminology developed does not have a space in which it might be used. The coined terms just remain created terms and nothing else. This discourages potential terminographers from engaging in term-creation activities, because they feel it is a useless endeavour. If the terminological efforts are implemented, subjects regarded as difficult by students such as mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology and geography can be made easy to learn for most students, because they would be explained in a language they can easily understand. Therefore, in this case, even if terminographers coin satisfactory new terms, given the prevailing language policy in Zimbabwe, the problem of implementation still remains.

The issue of the status of the Shona language and other indigenous languages of Zimbabwe should be vigorously discussed between government and Shona language linguists. As it is, Zimbabwe corpus planning is being carried out in an environment where indigenous languages have got no space or meaningful role to play in the public sphere where English is dominant. In this vein, Linguists, Language Boards, the Government and other stakeholders should come together and plan a common strategy for term creation efforts in Zimbabwe. This will ensure that indigenous languages are developed and used in all spheres of life through a formal way, rather than leaving everything to individual effort. Major steps should be taken to implement the recommendations of the Constitution of Zimbabwe (2013) on language policy. Only this step will enable indigenous languages in the scientific, technological and educational fields to take their rightful place in the next millennium. The researcher recommends that the government of Zimbabwe should be an active participant in all terminological project meant to develop indigenous languages.

2. Research methodology

This paper used content analysis to explore, investigate, analyse and document the compounding term creation strategies used in some selected Shona specialised dictionaries namely; Duramazwi Reurapi Neutano (Dictionary of Biomedical Terms), Duramazwi Remimhanzi (Dictionary of Shona Musical Terms), and Duramazwi Redudziramutauro NeUvaranomwe (Dictionary of Shona Linguistic and Literature Terms). Content analysis is described as an approach of empirical, methodological controlled analysis of texts within their context of communication... (Mayring, 2000: 2) Content analysis can also be described as an approach of controlled analysis of texts within their context and these maybe books, articles, book chapters, conference papers and speeches, and journals. . Content analysis was very appropriate for this study, since the present writer critically analysed the compounded terms in the three Shona specialised dictionaries. In addition, this paper employed the qualitative research design so as to interpret the beliefs, ideas, and attitudes of the target users of Shona compounded terms to make them relate their experiences and how they felt about using them. The writer purposively selected students and lecturers in African languages in colleges, high school, and university because they were experts in the field of Shona and as such they were able to provide the most extensive information about the topic being studied. The identified participants were a balanced and representative population frame of university and high school students in a way that made it possible to make a relevant study through questionnaires and interviews about issues related to the shortening of compounded terms. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method which involves the conscious selection of certain subjects to be included in a research study. The researcher then analysed the participants' experiences looking into the given perceptions of the subject under study. Furthermore, the answers given were then regarded as a description identifying the opinions and attitudes of the whole population from which the sample was taken. All research participants were Shona speakers.

3. Theoretical framework

The communicative theory of terminology (CTT) by Mariah Theresa Cabre (2000, 2002, 2003) provided this study with an insight of how new terms can be generated in a language and a descriptive of how terms are actually used in communicative contexts. The theory (CTT) highlights that terminology is simultaneously a set of needs, a set of practices to resolve these needs and a unified field of knowledge. In as much, the need in many languages, especially indigenous languages such as Shona is to develop scientific and technological terms. In other words, the rapid progress and the development of science and technology require the naming of new concepts being introduced in the economy gives rise to term creation. This clearly

underlines the importance of terminological development for all nations, especially developing countries whose scientific and technical vocabulary is deficient.

Cabre (2003:92) further asserts that acquisition of lexical units occurs from innate principles present in the neuronal system of mankind and that these principles configure the common basis of knowledge of all speakers, independent of the language they speak. This means that language development should be carried within a language as every language has an ability to be developed to any desired level using various strategies at a people's disposal. Compounding is a term creation strategy that can be used to develop a language (Shona included) so that it can be able to express adequately and accurately scientific and technological terms. It enables the creation of new terms associated to existing forms in a language, and also allows the incorporation of totally new units, and as such is regarded as efficient and effective because in general, the terms would share the general properties of the lexicon. Thus Cabre's communicative theory supports this by stating that:

> acquiring a terminological unit would therefore be a dynamic reuse of information already present in the lexicon … (Cabre, 2003:191).

Furthermore, Gee and Goodhart (1985) say that, new denominations should incorporate and demonstrate the properties innate to the language mechanism of vocabulary organisation and word formation practices. In as much, it therefore means that, the proposed term must be based on sound knowledge of the target language's rules of lexical formation.

CTT highlights that any created term should be evaluated by the criteria of equivalence, adequacy, precision and economy. However, with regards to African languages and Shona in particular, it can be noted that loan words are more precise than some Shona terms which are sometimes descriptive, lengthy and cumbersome, whereas loan terms tend to be more specific in reference, and are concise and simple. In other words, it is very difficult for indigenous languages terminologists to coin simple terms in indigenous languages as they depend more on loan translation for borrowed technical and scientific deficiencies, of which terms end up being statements, descriptions or explanation rather than concise terms. This gives the loan term acceptance by users, over indigenous terms. Hence, this theory made the researcher to be able to understand the challenges of cumbersomeness that terminologists encounter in this term creation strategy. Hence clipping, as a panacea to fight this cumbersomeness.

Another precept of Cabre's communicative theory of terminology is that when engaging the term formation process terminologist should like any good author, have the users of the created terms very much in mind. Therefore, the task of terminologists is to create terms that are acceptable by the users; otherwise vague, meaningless and complicated terms would be disastrous to their acceptability. This is supported by Cabre (2003:92) who asserts that, there are several factors that can influence this choice, e.g. economic reasons (a term might be chosen because it is less cumbersome than others), precision (one term might have greater clarity or transparency than others (Cabre, 2000:50). In addition, Sager (1990:89) says, "without sacrificing precision, terms should be concise and should not contain unnecessary information and not overlap in meaning with other terms". it means therefore that terminologists should pay a great deal of attention to the needs of the users of the terms they create. Basing on the above postulations, the compounding term creation strategy may not be an adequate solution to rectify the deficiency of scientific and technical terms in Shona vocabulary because of cumbersomeness. The point of departure for this study is to suggest strategies to fight cumbersomeness of created terms through compounding thus making them more acceptable to the target users. Thus, because of the importance of accuracy, any term that is not accurate and precise is sufficient ground for its rejection by target users hence the concern.

According to Caber, choice of terms should allow for the systematic formation of many linguistic forms which already exists in a language. It should give room for future concept development. Sager (1990:13) postulates that:

> knowledge structure consists of various interlinked concepts. In terms of this knowledge structure, it should be possible to transform a noun into a verb or adjective and it should be possible to use it as a constituent in a compound word. It should be easy to derive formatives from the term.

Bearing this in mind, terms can be created by allowing for potential derivatives and inflectabilities from nouns, verbs, adjectives and even compounds. Compounding makes use of inflections and derivates which are already in use in any lexicon. Terminologists can derive or inflect terms from verbs, nouns, adjectives and idioms existing in the concerned language. The following are examples of Shona compounds, created through the inflection and derivation strategy (See Table 8):

Table 8
Shona compounds, created through the inflection and derivation strategy.

Verb + verb compound	Verb + noun compound	Noun + noun compound
mugaradzakasungwa	*chipaupenyu*	*mapermbudzi* 'leprosy'
mugara- 'stay put' + *dzakasungwa* 'ever ready'	*chipa* 'give' + *upenyu* 'life'	*mapere* 'hyenas'+ *mbudzi* 'goats'
mu+gar+a+dza+ka+sungw+a	*chi+p+a+u+penyu*	*ma+pere+mbudzi*
mu- subject prefix (class 1)	*chi-* subject prefix class 7	*ma-* subject prefix class 6
-gar- verb radical	*-p(a)-* give	*-pere-* noun stem
-a- terminal vowel	*-a-* terminal vowel	*-mbudzi* noun stem
-dza- object prefix	*-u-* object prefix	
-ka- remote tense sign	*-penyu* noun stem	
-sung- verb radical		
-w- passive verbal extension		
*-a-*terminal vowel		

Using a language is thus understood as selectively activating internal linguistic resources in accordance with the task at hand. Accordingly, terminological applications should therefore, provide answers to all language development initiatives, being carried out in many developing countries. As illustrated in Table 7 above, compounding term creation strategy can provide answers in Shona morphological processes because it has the greatest amount of flexibility and creativity. Cabre (2000:50) says, "in linguistic planning, terms are lexical units requiring intervention in order to support the existence, usefulness and survival of a language as a means of expression". It should be noted that Cabre emphasises on the communicative side of terminology. This implies that terminologists should prefer indigenous terms as they allow derivability and inflectability, since they make it possible to designate new concepts derived from an existing term.

The communicative theory of terminology (CTT) has led the researcher to understand various aspects of terminology such as term creation, terminological variation, and the application of different linguistic models to terminology. It can be argued that Cabre developed a terminology theory from within explicit premises of need feeling by scientists and technicians to develop concepts and terms of their subject fields in order to facilitate professional communication and the transfer of knowledge (Cabre, 2002: 37). One can therefore, derive a conclusion that Cabre's communicative theory of terminology is twofold in the sense that it fills in lexical gaps in developing languages and secondly that terminologists should take care of the methodologies that are employed to resolve the needs. The methodologies may and may not be adequate and appropriate, well innovated, vague and unstructured conceptual and linguistic information, hence, the need to make them acceptable to the target users which is the major objective of this study. Cabre's (2002) communicative theory of terminology provided a logical and consistent approach to the compounding term creation strategy, thus enhancing and permitting the derivation of clear and generally applicable conclusions for this study.

4. Research results

Indigenous language linguists should be prepared to make a judgment as to whether or not they feel the compounded indigenous specialised terms will make an impact on indigenous language development if they remain in the cumbersome form. In this way, compounds can be innovated so as to enable them to assume any linguistic or academic function-and as such, compounds will be available, accessible and user-friendly. This is the most important thing for the indigenous language users. Relatedly, the researcher notes that the use of compounding term creation strategy shows that there is plenty of room for creating new terms in the indigenous language through utilising existing words. Hence, the researcher feels that if compounding new terms is done properly it has got the potential of taking an indigenous language to unprecedented heights in as far as development of the indigenous language is concerned.

4.1. Clipping

Clipping refers to the process whereby a lexeme (simples or complex) is shortened, while still retaining the same meaning and still being a member of the same form class (Bauer, 1983:233). It can be regarded as the act or process of dropping one or more syllables from a word or phrase to form a shorter word with the same meaning. Thus, for example the word dormitory (*dhomitari*) maybe shortened to dorm (*dhomu*) and a new word is thereby created. It should be noted that the clipped term dorm will still have the same denotative meaning as the word it comes from: dormitory. It has been observed by the researcher that the longer term is often used in more formal situations, (e.g. when writing academic essays) and the shorter in more informal situations (Yule, 1996). However, it is expected that, in time, the new term may entirely replace the longer original word. One big advantage is that since the clipped term is informal, it can be easily grasped and used by many target users because there will be no formalities. Furthermore, it can be asserted that the speakers of any language just believe that shorter words make them save a bit of time and effort (Gumbo, 2016). As a result, the clipped term can be a favourite word for any language speakers because it is shorter in form. In indigenous languages clipping is often done for borrowed foreign term. It is good that we try the strategy within the Shona compounded indigenous terms as given in Table 9 below:

Table 9
Examples of how clipping can be used to shorten cumbersome compounded Shona terms.

Compounded Term	Proposed Clipped Term	English Term
chipa 'give' + *upenyu* 'life'	*chipa*	'oxygen'
dzinde (stem) + *rebeswa* (extend)	*rebeso*	'verbal extension'
mafadza (propagate)+ *nhema* (falsehoods)	*mafadzo*	'propaganda'
chienzanisa (equalises) + *mutinhiro* (sound)	*chienzanisa*	'graphic equaliser'
chiratidza (demonstrator)+ *simbaradzo* (accentuate)	*simbaradzo*	'accentuation'
chiwedzero (increase) + *mutinhiro* (sound)	*chiwedzereso*	'resonator'

Using the examples shown above, the proposed clippings would 'work' once the compounded word is shortened and is accepted and adopted as the word to use by all terminologists. This means that during term formation process the following steps would be followed.

Step 1

The terminologists will need to find the meaning of the concept to be named. Then they would create a term in Shona for that concept through compounding term creation strategy, for example oxygen which terminologists may agree as chipa upenyu <chipa (give) + upenyu (life)> (life-giver). Here the terminologists would have considered the self-descriptiveness or self-containment of the word in such a way that the term created explains its meaning.

Step 2

After having coming up with the compounded term the terminologists will then agree on how to shorten that word through clipping, for example, chipaupenyu, <chipa>.

Step 3

Then the terminologist will then adopt the word and standardize the accepted term meaning oxygen in Zimbabwe. Once this is done the term will need to be popularized through textbooks, education and the media. Eventually the target users will adopt it and the tem will then by itself suffice as a word meaning 'oxygen because all would have agreed to adopt as the word meaning oxygen. The shortened terms may become eventually accepted as fully fledged through consistence in use.

As a result, the clipped terms become more acceptable to the target users and over a long time of use, a clipped term may replace the original word in everyday usage such as the use of phone (foni) in place of telephone (terefoni) in the Shona language. The creation of long words in science and technology is often not the most convenient thing because it may be difficult to pronounce and comprehend because of its sluggish nature. Hence the best way is to shorten the term. It is asserted that the Japanese have a tendency to shorten words more so than any other languages in the world, and this may account for their economic development through language use. The clipped terms can account for the scientific and technological development in the contemporary Japan. The popularity and love for short words can also be observed on the social media. A lot of word clipping is happening on the social platforms where a lot of people congregate nowadays. The fact that shortening of words is working on the social media can be a good indicator to terminologists that shortened words have a positive impact on the users. As such if linguists adopt and utilise this idea it may go a long way in solving the issue of the rejection of compounds because of their cumbersomeness by the target users.

4.2. Blending

This paper asserts that speakers of a language prefer shorter terms than longer terms. Therefore, lexical terms should be concise in order to facilitate communication and to be acceptable to the target users. As such the writer of this paper proposes that compounds can be innovated and shortened so as to enable them to assume an effective and a distinctive role in language development. Blending is one strategy of word formation where cleverness in its effecting can be rewarded by instant popularity. Blending is done when one combines two different words into one another. For example, using the first part of each word in a two-word combination, as in war vet (wavheti) for war veteran, (wa vhetereni) Agritex (agiritekisi) for agricultural extension (agirikaruchurari ekisitensheni) Consequently, it means that engagement of compounding term creation strategy for the purposes of language indigenisation will not be disadvantaged, as the cumbersomeness of the created terms will be shortened. This will bring the acceptance of the compounded term by the target users and consequently positively affecting the growth of indigenous language. In the examples below, the writer of this paper has joined the beginning of a word and the end of another to create a short word from the long-compounded term. Thus, the researcher suggests that instead of creating cumbersome compounds, linguists can use the shortening methods as shown in Table 10 below:

Table 10
Examples of how blending can be used to shorten cumbersome compounded Shona terms.

Compounded term	Proposed blended term	English Term
chipa 'give'+ upenyu 'life'	chipanyu	'oxygen'
chiratidza 'demonstrator' + chidema 'clef + mhanzi 'music'	chidemhanzi	'clef '
chimota 'boil' + shungu 'small'	chimongu	'boil'
chiomesa 'paralyse' + mutezo 'body' parts'	chiozo	'tetanus'
chiratidza 'demonstrator' + kure 'far'	chekure	far demonstrative qualitative stem
chiratidza 'demonstrator' + uwandu 'quantity'	cheuwandu	quantitative stem

The examples given in Table 10 above aptly captures how blending can shorten cumbersome compounded terms. In this way linguists would be simplifying some of the complex compounds or language structures through blending to increase the acceptability of compounded terms. However, some linguists argue that the lexical loaded items coined through

compounding are preferable because they are transparent; even when the term itself is unfamiliar, a native speaker can often deduce its meaning from the self-contained term. This means that most of the compounded terms are self-descriptive or self-contained in the sense that the term itself explains its meaning. The researcher however, contends that the need for self-description and self-containment of the compounded term will no longer be necessary because the most important issue here is that a term has been created to serve a purpose. Of which acceptability to target users is key! As such, the researcher have an intuitive feeling that shorter terms will make a created term more informal, more friendly, more colloquial and more relaxed. It is the conviction of the researcher that if the compounded terms are shortened and fully utilised, they have the capability of producing numerous scientific and technical terms for the indigenous languages. The compounding term creation strategy has an advantage in the sense that it can mostly generate a lot of lexical terms with resources from within a language.

4.3. Acronyms

Acronyms are words that are created by omitting words or parts of the words of which a term consists. Bauer (1983) defines an acronym as a word formed from the initial letters of other words for example: AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). According to Maillot (1997 p.318) '… acronyms are the substitution of one or several words using the beginnings'. In other words, acronyms are initialisms that have become words in their own right, or similar words formed from parts of several words. It can be optimistically concluded that term creation through acronyms is a lexical engineering strategy that can contribute positively and enormously to the development of the indigenous languages. When acronyms are adapted into the indigenous language, they emerge as independent words. They are pronounced as words rather than as a series of letters, for example, the English acronymy AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) when borrowed into the Shona language it becomes a fully-fledged word eyidzi (AIDS) and follows a vcvccv (vowel + consonant + vowel+ consonant; consonant + vowel) Shona words morphological structure. Acronyms are a form of language change, as can be observed from the above given examples, the morphology of words are changed. As one can imagine, this renders the "foreign" words completely unrecognisable to speakers of the word's language of origin. Actually, in the Shona language the acronym eyidzi (AIDS) has been in use for a very long time that no one cares what it stands for anymore. It has now taken a short word form.

Acronyms may increase the development of the indigenous specialised terminology more specifically, (and in any case the words formed from acronyms are short and user friendly) in the adaptation and natural fixation of Shona scientific terminology. The acronyms serve the purpose of creating more concise forms as opposed to lengthy forms of words created through Shona compounded scientific terms. In addition, the shortened terms are easy to remember, for example; <CD-siidhii, DVD-dhiivhiidhii and DJ-dhiijeyi. It has been pointed out earlier in this paper that shortening of created terms is a way of conveying a sense of informality in language use. Many contenders agree that the acronymy does set up a feeling of companionship or casualness and friendliness.

However, the big challenge is that abbreviations are present in all forms of English language and are not so common in the indigenous languages. Therefore, linguists concerned with indigenous languages can have difficulty in inventing technical and scientific terms by inventing acronyms from foreign phrases only. However, they can utilise those foreign acronymys so long the acronyms are rephonologised when they are adopted into the indigenous languages so as to suit the characteristics of the receiving language. Table 11 below gives an example of some of the borrowed scientific and technical acronyms which have been adapted into the Shona language in such a way that the terms are completely unrecognisable in their language of origin:

Table 11
Examples of how acronyms have been fully and completely adapted into the Shona language.

Borrowed Acronym	Acronym	Full Term
bhiipii	BP	blood pressure
edzi	AIDS	acquired immune-deficiency syndrome
tiibhii	TB	tuberculosis
viidhii	VD	venereal disease
dhiijeyi	DJ	disc jockey
dhiivhiidhii	DVD	digital video recorder
tiivhii	TV	television
vhisiiara	VCR	video cassette recorder

The writer of this paper notes that, in indigenous language most users prefer acronyms because they are in a shorter form such that terms coined through the compounding strategy disappear from the vocabulary. The acronym eyidzi (AIDS), for instance, has displaced the indigenous coined term *mukondombera,* as users or speakers of a language prefer a shorter lexical item to a longer one. However, this shortening strategy needs to be carefully employed in word creation. One disadvantage of acronyms is that they may distort the understanding of the scientific concepts they abbreviate. Despite this shortcoming, acronyms can assist in shortening longer and more cumbersome Shona terms which may be rejected by target users.

5. Conclusion

This paper has shown that the compounding term-creation strategy in the Shona language can lead to indigenous language development, and has presented a basic procedure for shortening terms created through the compounding term-creation strategy. It is the belief of the present writer that shorter words may change the attitude of target users towards the compounding term-creation in Shona. This will facilitate efficient and effective communication and will go a long way towards developing the Shona language. The use of the shortening strategy in ways such as clipping, blending and the formation of acronyms in Shona can show that word formation is not merely an artificial creation but is an important exercise that needs commitment, dedication and hard work to achieve good results. It is the belief of the researcher that more and more effort should be expediently put in the development of indigenous language and linguists should work hard so that the indigenous created terms do not continue to be overtaken by the English language in technical and scientific terms. This effort shows that with an appropriate language policy, there is no discipline that cannot be handled through the compounding term creation strategy in the indigenous language in terms of technical and scientific vocabulary.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

References

Bauer, L., 1983. English Word-Formation. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
Bell, R.T., 1976. Sociolinguistics, Goals, Approaches and Problems. Batsford, London.
Cabre, T.M., 1999. Terminology: Theory, Methods and Applications. John Benjamins Publishing Company, Amsterdam.
Cabre, T.M., 2000. Elements for a theory of terminology: towards an alternative. In: Paradigm in Terminology, vol. 6. John Benjamins Publishing Company, pp. 33–57.
Cabre, T.M., 2002. Theories of Terminology. John Benjamins, Amsterdam.
Cabre, T.M., 2003. Theories of Terminology: Their Description, Prescription and Explanation. John Benjamins, Amsterdam/Philadelphia.
Chimhundu, H., 2002. Adoption and Adaptation in Shona, Doctoral Dissertation. University of Zimbabwe, Harare.
Chiwome, E.M., 1996. A Social History of the Shona Novel. Mazongororo Printers, Harare.
Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 20) Act, 2013. National Legislative Bodies/National Authorities, Harare.
Crystal, D., 1997. A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics, fourth ed. Blackwell Publishers, Oxford.
Gee, J., GoodHart, W., 1985. Nativisation, Linguistic Theory and Deaf Language Acquisition, Sign Language Studies, vol. 49, pp. 291–342.
Gumbo, L., 2016. Term Creation: an Analysis of the Strategies Used in Some Selected Shona Specialised Terms Dictionaries. Thesis submitted to the University of South Africa (UNISA). University of South Africa, Pretoria.
Hadebe, S., 2000. Developing terminology in African languages with special reference to Ndebele. In: Chiwome, E.M., Mguni, Z., Furusa, M. (Eds.), Indigenous Knowledge and Technology in African and Diasporean Communities: Multi-Disciplinary Approaches. Mond Press, Harare, pp. 225–231.
Maillot, J., 1997. Terminology: Unit III - Generation of Terms. http://ocw.um.es/cc.-sociales/terminologia/material-de-clase-1/unit-iii.pdf (01/07/2020).
Mayring, P., 2000. Qualitative content analysis. Forum Qual. Soc. Res. 1, 2. http://217.160.35.246/fqs-texte/2-00/200mayring-e.pdf. (Accessed 19 July 2020).
Mutasa, D.E., 2002. The reinssance of african languages: an inevitable enterprise?. In: South African Journal of African Languages, vol. 22, pp. 239–247.
Mutasa, D.E., 2006. African Languages in the 21st Century: the Main Challenge. Simbaguru Publishers, Pretoria, pp. 60–93.
Ogutu, E.A., 2006. Mother tongue amidst other languages: playing roles in the classroom and outside. In: Mutasa, D.E. (Ed.), African Languages in the 21st Century: the Main Challenges. Simbaguru Publishers, Pretoria.
Poplack, S., Meechan, M., 1998. Instant loans, easy conditions, the production of bilingual borrowing special issue. Bilingualism vol. 2 (2), 127–234.
Sager, J.C., 1990. A Practical Course in Terminology Processing. Benjamins, Amsterdam Philadelphia.
Spencer, A., 1991. Morphological Theory: an Introduction towards Structure in Generative Grammar. Blackwell, Massachusetts, HS.
Sounkalo, J., 1995. Code-switching as indexical of native language lexical deficiency in Mauritania. J. Multiling. Multicult. Dev. vol. 16 (5), 403–421.
Vambe, M.T., 2006. Language, identity and power in African languages in the 21st century. In: Mutasa, D.E. (Ed.), African Languages in the 21st Century: the Main Challenges. Simbaguru Publishers., Pretoria, pp. 8–10.
Viriri, A., 2003. Language planning in zimbabwe; the conservation and management of indigenous languages as intangible heritage. In: Paper Presented at ICOMOS 14th General Assembly and Scientific Symposium at Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe on the 30th of October 2003. http://www.international.icomos.org/victoriafalls2.2003. (Accessed 30 September 2013).
Yule, A., 1996. The Study of Language. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
Zentella, C., 1997. Growing up Bilingual, Puerto Rican Children in New York. Blackwell, Malden M A.