



**AFRICAN IDENTITY IN THE MAKING: THE ROLE OF THE  
CENTRE FOR AFRICAN LITERARY STUDIES AS A SPECIAL  
COLLECTION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL**

by

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2016

## DECLARATION

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## **DEDICATION**

To my cherished late parents, John and Joyce Whittle-Bennetts, with love and gratitude for their lives of courage, faith and fortitude, hard work, quiet love, and steadfast support. Their bright torch still lights my way.

To my two late siblings, Heather Mary and John (Jackie) Keir Whittle-Bennetts, my greatest inspiration.

And

To my two beloved children, Margaret-Anne and James Samuel Polak, for all their love, encouragement and understanding.

## ABSTRACT

Libraries contain many collections but professional practice has long recognised the concept of ‘special collections’.

The Centre for African Literary Studies (CALs) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) initially came into being to house the Bernth Lindfors Collection, the private collection of a retired professor of English from the University of Texas in Austin.

Special collections can be hindered in their ability to fulfil their role as custodians of heritage and conveyors of knowledge owing to a number of factors, such as policy decisions and/or elements included in existing policies. The directors of such centres often have ambition but are handicapped in their ability to carry out their plans by various administrative challenges which can put the centres at risk. In terms of the research problem central to the study, this study explored exactly what the role of CALs as a UKZN special collection constitutes and in what way the Centre is able to fulfil its role in facilitating and enabling African Studies at UKZN and in the broader community.

The study investigated these potential challenges, including factors which impede access, such as ‘hidden collections’. Challenges included financial constraints, staffing, collection development policies (including Africanisation), repatriation of collections, preservation strategies, and accessibility, including physical and space issues, and digitisation.

The study employed methodological triangulation which included a literature search, documentary analysis, and survey research using questionnaires and interviews. The population constituted undergraduate and postgraduate English- and isiZulu-speaking students and researchers who have used CALs; present and ex-staff members; the original owners of the two largest CALs collections; the initial founders of CALs; as well as the current and ex-directors.

The study ascertained that CALs was originally established as a separate centre on the Pietermaritzburg campus to “symbolically” make a statement, and as branding to attract postgraduate students in South Africa doing research in African literary studies to

Pietermaritzburg. This would give the humanities in Pietermaritzburg “the edge in a highly competitive market”.

The study established that CALS is underutilised by postgraduate students and researchers. The majority of usage is from isiZulu-speaking undergraduates, owing to the establishment of the isiZulu Literary Museum at CALS, which has proved successful in drawing isiZulu-speaking undergraduate students. The researcher was only able to identify a handful of national and international researchers which undermines the original motive for the establishment of CALS which is to facilitate and promote the study of African literature and thus enable UKZN in its endeavour to become “The Premier University of African Scholarship”.

The most significant finding of the survey was the original noble vision of the founders to create a centre that boosts the humanities and African literature at UKZN and especially on the Pietermaritzburg campus, has been restricted by funding and staffing constraints. The Centre was established as an external funding centre that has proved unsustainable. This has had a negative impact on the endeavours of CALS’s directors who, despite great effort, have been significantly handicapped in their endeavours to manage CALS through lack of institutional support, funding and staff tenure.

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- My children, Annie and Jamie Polak, for their encouragement and support.

Above all, thanks to God, for giving me the strength, good health and wisdom to accomplish this work.

Aristotle held that “Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all”  
(Malhotra 2016)

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADL	African Digital Library
AISA	Africa Institute of South Africa
ANC	African National Congress
APC	Alan Paton Centre and Struggle Archives
AV	Audio Visual
BALE	Black African Literature in English
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BSS	Bachelor of Social Science
CALS	Centre for African Literary Studies
CAS	Centre for African Studies
CATNIP	Cataloguing Network in Pietermaritzburg (a joint catalogue database)
CCMS	Centre for Communication, Media and Society (UKZN)
DAC	Department of Arts and Culture
DISA	Digital Innovation South Africa
DVC	Deputy Vice-Chancellor
ESAACH	<i>Encyclopaedia of South African Arts, Culture and Heritage</i>
EU	European Union
GAP	GAP Analysis Project
HDSS	Human Development and Social Sciences
IK	Indigenous Knowledge
KCAL	Killie Campbell Collection

KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
NALN	National Afrikaans Literary Museum and Research Centre
NARS	National Archives of South Africa
NELN	National English Literary Museum
NLSA	National Library of South Africa
NRF	National Research Foundation
OCLC	Online Computer Library Center
PAS	Program of African Studies at Northwestern University
PGDIS	Postgraduate Diploma in Information Studies
PMB	Pietermaritzburg
PRO	Public Relations Officer
QPA	Quality Promotion and Assurance (Unit)
SA	South Africa(n)
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SADCC	Southern African Development Coordinating Conference
SALI	South African Library and Information [Trust]
SASO	South African Student Organisation
SER	Self-evaluation report
SOAS	University of London: School of Oriental and African Studies
UBC	University of British Columbia
UCLA	University of California, Los Angeles
UCT	University of Cape Town
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
UNFDF	University of Natal Foundation Development Fund
UKZNDFDF	University of KwaZulu-Natal Foundation Development Fund



UNISA	University of South Africa
UN	University of Natal
UNP	University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg
URC	University Research Council
USC	University of Southern California Libraries (USC)
VCU	Virginia Commonwealth University

# Chapter 1

## Introduction to the Study

### 1.1 Introduction

The motto of the Centre for African Literary Studies (CALs), a special collection at the University of KwaZulu-Natal is: “Collecting the best in African literature”. As Michel (2005:385) states, the traditional role of such a collection within academic libraries

“... has been, and still is, often, that of the library’s treasury, where the jewels of the university’s library collections are housed and exhibited in their own museum and, increasingly, on their own web pages. These collections are housed more securely, in better environmental conditions than the rest of the library’s collections – jewels to be digitized and shown off, displayed, and the better the jewels the better the library, and the better the library, the better the university”.

This introductory chapter to the thesis, which examines the role of CALs as a UKZN special collection and its contribution to African literary studies, highlights the background and provides an outline of the research problem, defines key terms and concepts used in the study, and provides information about the principal theories upon which the research project is constructed. The chapter also gives an overview of the research methodology and methods used by the study and the structure of the thesis.

### 1.2 Background and outline of research problem

This section provides a brief background to the study and outlines the research problem that the study endeavoured to answer.

#### 1.2.1 Background to the problem

This study is located within recent debates at tertiary institutions and in the press (an article by Praeg in the *Mail and Guardian* in July 2011) about whether universities need designated centres for African Studies. This issue is explored in 1.3.3 below, but first some background on the Centre for African Literary Studies (CALs) and the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) is required.

The University of KwaZulu-Natal was formed on 1 January 2004 as a result of the merger between the University of Durban-Westville and the University of Natal. The UKZN has acquired four collections containing rare, and in some cases, unique, material, namely:

- The [Killie] Campbell Collections located in Durban: these collections specialise in the socio-economic, political and cultural history of KwaZulu-Natal with special emphasis on early exploration and travel in Africa.
- The Alan Paton Centre and Struggle Archives located on the Pietermaritzburg campus: this specialises in aspects of individuals and organisations involved in the resistance to apartheid in South Africa, the original collection being that of Alan Paton, the world-renowned author of *Cry the Beloved Country* (the above two collections were created under the former University of Natal).
- The Gandhi-Luthuli Documentation Centre located on the Westville Campus: this collection focuses on information on the Indian community in South Africa and came into being on the former Durban-Westville Campus.
- The Centre for African Literary Studies: formed in 2004 by the newly merged University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Libraries contain many collections but professional practice has long recognised the concept of the ‘special collection’. Lee (1993) in Darbey and Hayden (2008:259) defines special collections as comprising:

“Printed items such as rare books, letters and ephemera which have traditionally been already categorized as collections or kept apart from main holdings. In addition, it includes items which were originally at some time, somewhere, current stock, and which have become special by reason of antiquity.”

Lee elaborates on this definition by adding:

“Manuscripts, archives, papers and other collections that have no easy means of being integrated with the general working collections or that involve unusual care are most often subsumed under the special collections heading” (Lee 1993, in Darbey and Hayden 2008:259).

Furthermore, Bengston states that:

“Special Collections are so because they are deemed by an institution to be worth preserving and gathering together for the benefit of the research community. Security and environment would be paramount in the project. Items in special collections often tend to be in better condition than ordinary circulating material by the very fact that they are protected, repaired, and used much less frequently” (Bengston 2000, in Darbey and Hayden 2008:259).

Modern practice has extended the scope of special collections to include electronic and audiovisual materials.

Potter and Holley (2010:149) state: “Special Collections can also include generalized material not considered entirely rare such as an extensive collection on children’s books on a specialized topic such as the urban experience.” Special collections can be formed around the work of an individual, a historical period or location, or a topic. CALS is in the latter category and the collection includes some material that is essential for providing context but is not necessarily rare or unique.

CALS initially came into being to house the Bernth Lindfors Collection (Van Dyk 2002a:1), the private collection of a retired professor of English and African Literatures at the University of Texas in Austin (Zell 2001:3). UKZN purchased the collection in September 2003 (Gunner 2004b:[1]). Reasons for the collection’s coming to UKZN will be covered in the thesis. According to the plaque at the entrance to the Centre, CALS was officially opened by the then South African Minister of Arts and Culture, Pallo Jordan, on 7 September 2004, with Professor Liz Gunner as the first Acting Director (Gunner 2004b[1]). The collection was described by the world-renowned bibliographer, Hans Zell, as

“a rare and quite unique collection, unparalleled anywhere in the world, with the only possible exception of the collections of African literature at Northwestern University Libraries. However even Northwestern does not have the vast number of critical studies on African writing that have been amassed by Lindfors over the years. The Lindfors library brings together in one place the published literature of almost an entire continent, and the depth and richness of the collection can only be described as truly awesome” (Zell 2001:1).

Those who have the task of managing special collections can be hindered in their ability to fulfil their role as custodians of heritage and conveyors of knowledge owing to a number of

factors, such as policy decisions and/or elements included in existing policies. The directors of such centres often have ambition but are handicapped in their ability to carry out their plans by various administrative challenges which can put the centres at risk. The study sought to investigate these potential challenges, which include financial constraints, collection-development policies, staffing, repatriation of collections, digitisation, and access to the collection. The latter includes factors which impede access, such as 'hidden collections'. These challenges are discussed below and elaborated on in Chapter 5. It is thus important to establish what the initial motives and objectives of UKZN were for the establishment of the special collection in African literary studies and to follow up on the extent to which CALS is achieving these objectives. For example, is the role of CALS clear or has it deviated from the original UKZN policy objectives; is CALS being fully utilised; and is it accessible to its users?

In a nutshell, the research problem central to this study was to ascertain what the role of CALS as a UKZN special collection constitutes and to what extent the Centre is able to fulfil its role in facilitating and enabling African scholarship at UKZN and in the broader community. The originality of the work lies in the examination of the policy framework of the constituent institutions of UKZN and the degree to which these policies have been both coherent and used to guide action. In October 2013 the Deputy Vice-Chancellor in the College of Humanities, Professor Cheryl Potgieter, requested that as CALS had missed the previous round of reviews, the Quality Promotion and Assurance Unit at UKZN should undertake a review. Prior to the 2013 review no substantial evaluation of CALS as a UKZN special collection had been done. The review report (15 to 17 October 2013) is available for critique and some of the originality of this thesis lies in its being the first academic study to comment on and evaluate the review in the context of the history of CALS and in the light of subsequent events.

### **1.2.2 Outline of the research problem**

This study investigates the role of CALS as a special collection and its contribution to African scholarship is important for four primary practical reasons:

(1) There has until now been no substantial evaluation of the Quality Promotion and Assurance (QPA) Unit or other reviews of CALS.

In addition to the QPA report, there have been review reports by Professor Anthonia Kalu (2010) and Professor Donal McCracken (2011), the Buchanan library report in 2011, as well as an assessment of the Centre by Professor Christine Stilwell (2011). The Kalu report (2010) proposed guidelines for the establishment of a Centre for African Studies (CAS), which would include CALS; the McCracken report considered CALS as one of UKZN's special collections as part of a larger review focus and made useful recommendations, while the Buchanan library report included an advisory committee on special collections. Stilwell's assessment was in response to a request from Professor Joseph Ayee (2010), then Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the College of Humanities, regarding the reorganisation of centres and units in the College of Humanities.

The study focused exclusively on CALS to assess its viability as a special collection in facilitating and enabling African literary studies at UKZN as well as evaluating the service offered to its users.

(2) Those who work at CALS, as well as board members, should find the study useful because it is expected that the study will offer guidance as to best practice for CALS.

(3) The study should expand our understanding of what constitutes African literary studies at UKZN.

(4) The study should be able to inform external funders who may contribute monetary assistance to CALS.

The core value of the study lies in the field of African scholarship. The study investigated how CALS, as a special collection, enabled the pursuit of African scholarship at the University and within the broader community.

The managers of the UKZN special collections, as custodians of African heritage, play a crucial role in archiving, preserving and promoting African scholarship. In the pursuit of African scholarship, it is of utmost importance to preserve Africa's heritage. "Without records and archives, it would be difficult for people to learn from past successes or failures" (Ngulube 2004:144). Special collections are linked to the University's academic libraries and should play an important role in the University's academic curricula. CALS currently offers a service to UKZN staff, and undergraduate and postgraduate students, as well as to

international researchers and the general public. CALS also serves as a link to various undergraduate and postgraduate programmes at UKZN, including language studies in English, isiZulu, French, Afrikaans and subject-specific work in Information Studies. The study is significant because the curators of UKZN are the custodians of our heritage and promoters of scholarship in this field.

The mission statement of CALS reads: “To be a centre of excellence for research in the field of African literary studies, with the aim of developing, disseminating and applying its expertise as widely as possible” (CALS n.d.:2). However, to become a centre of excellence for research in the field of African scholarship, several factors require consideration. There exists a current drive to repatriate African artifacts, remains and literature, a well-known example being that of Saartjie Baartman’s remains, which were returned to South Africa and buried on 9 August 2002. This drive to repatriate African artifacts and literature can perhaps be tied to the fact that in the 1990s the term ‘African Renaissance’ was coined to “denote a patchwork of outcomes” which included “the mobilization of indigenous knowledge, values and virtues” (Tomaselli 2003:1). For example, CALS consists of various collections of African literature which have been repatriated. Its initial collection was bought by UKZN in 2003 from Professor Lindfors who had established the most comprehensive collection in the world of literature published in Africa. The detail of how this actually came about is investigated in the thesis. CALS is growing and since 2004 has acquired more African collections both locally and abroad. Furthermore, with the African diaspora, African literature is scattered throughout the world. The collections need to be identified and brought back to Africa, either physically or through digital imaging. As far back as 1959, Killie Campbell

“received a plea from the United States National Museum for her to donate part or all of her collection to them as they were planning a hall of African ethnology. Killie was totally against her collection going to America as she felt strongly that items relevant to Natal history should stay in Natal” (Pim 1990:52-53).

This is an early example of the importance attached to keeping Africana in Africa.

The study explored the question of what constitutes African identity. Chinua Achebe's primary focus in his writing has been African identity and he is highly critical of the way in which Western literature has portrayed Africans. Nelson (1998:28) comments:

“A commanding figure in post-colonial literature, Achebe has played an enormously significant role in re-appropriating Africa from the self-serving fictions and fantasies of Europe. Resistant counter-narratives, his novels collectively offer a sustained intellectual challenge to European constructions of Africa and its people ... His successful reclamation of Africa from the heart of European darkness remains the central achievement of his life and art.”

Other African writers such as Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o concur with Achebe. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, a strong advocate of writing in vernacular indigenous languages, argues that writing in African languages is a necessary step toward cultural identity and independence from centuries of European exploitation, thus posing crucial questions leading to the ongoing debate:

“Are we talking of literature about Africa or the African experience? Was it literature written by Africans? What about a non-African who wrote about Africa? What if an African set his work in Greenland—does this qualify?” (Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o 1987:6).

These questions, which are central to the study, are discussed in detail in Section 6.3.

The most significant finding of the survey was the original noble vision of the founders to create a centre that boosts the humanities and African literature at UKZN and especially on the Pietermaritzburg campus, has been restricted by funding and staffing constraints.

The researcher was located at CALS as a librarian almost since the Centre's inception in 2004, until June 2013, and has a special interest in the collection and its subsequent development. In order to guard against bias and to ensure the validity of the findings, the researcher adopted methodological triangulation. Triangulation is important as a means of increasing the credibility and validity of the results and is elaborated on below under the methodology adopted (1.6) and in Section 7.7.



### **1.3 Research problems and objectives: key questions to be asked**

This section discusses the overall intent of conducting the study and the specific objectives the study wanted to achieve. The section further presents the justification for conducting the study and concludes with the delimitation of the study.

#### **1.3.1 The purpose of the study**

In order to answer the research question, the purpose of the study was to investigate the development, role and the possible challenges which face CALS in its mission to contribute to and facilitate the study of African literature at UKZN. It focuses on four strategic objectives:

- (1) The history and provenance of the CALS's collection.
- (2) The governance of CALS and the development of the collection policy.
- (3) An examination of the role played by CALS and its collection in African literary studies.
- (4) A consideration of what role the collection could play in UKZN and beyond.

To achieve the four objectives, a thorough study of the relevant literature was undertaken, as well as a study of the relevant policy statements and document analysis of materials on or about CALS. Furthermore, questionnaires were administered to undergraduate and postgraduate students (both past and present) and researchers who use or have used CALS, as well as the current and past staff members; furthermore, interviews with the original owners of the two largest CALS collections, the initial founders of CALS, CALS's directors and acting directors (both past and present) were conducted in an attempt to answer the key questions.

#### **1.3.2 Research questions**

The research questions based on the strategic objectives are:

1. What is the origin of CALS as a special collection, and what were the original custodial obligations? Have these obligations been changed by subsequent policy development and/or by actual practice?

2. In what way do the current UKZN policies (UKZN as the parent institution which informs CALS's policies) hinder or promote CALS in contributing as a special collection for African literary studies?

3. Is CALS fulfilling its role in its contribution to African literary studies within UKZN and the wider academic/research community?

4. What are the challenges facing CALS and special collections in general? (For example, the question of what constitutes 'Africanisation', preservation strategies, collection-development policies, access and documentation, staff shortages, financial constraints, technology and digitisation, repatriation, fund raising, promotion of collections, physical access and space issues.)

Question 1 investigated the Centre in depth. The researcher intended to establish whether CALS, as a custodian of African literary studies, is fulfilling its original mandate in its contribution to African literary studies more broadly. Sources of data included a thorough literature review, document analysis, and a survey using questionnaires and personal interviews.

Question 2 investigated the crucial questions: are the policies, such as collection development, relevant and useful to the promotion of African literary studies? Sources of data included document analysis, and surveys by questionnaire and personal interviews.

Questions 3 and 4 covered the evaluative aspect of CALS. Questionnaires were linked to Ian Mann's framework (2012) which is an evaluation of the institution's functional strategy. This framework is discussed in more detail in Section 2.8.

### **1.3.3 Justification for the study**

A problem associated with special collections, and a focus of this study, is that often some of the most valuable material for researchers in special collections is unavailable or 'hidden' which means that it is not easy to access because it has not been processed, usually because of a shortage of staff.

Professor Malegapuru Makgoba, in his inaugural address as Vice-Chancellor of UKZN on 30 September 2005, made mention of one of the “important” UKZN initiatives, the Centre for African Literary Studies, which he described as “a unique collection of African literature in the world” (Makgoba 2005:18). Thus, at least in its public pronouncements, UKZN would seem to recognise the importance of the role of such collections. According to Professor Aye’s assessment (as the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) of the College of Humanities) of CALS dated 31 October 2011, “the purpose of the Centre is to serve as a centre for the study of African literature within Africa”. The University needs to ensure that CALS is fulfilling this mandate as well as interfacing with the goals and objectives of the University in furthering African scholarship.

CALS has offered a service to students, researchers and the public since 2004, but the success of this service has never been reviewed in depth. The motives behind the creation of CALS require examination. How do the current operating policies compare with the original institutional policies? An examination of both the historical and policy records of UKZN’s original purpose for establishing CALS as well as the subsequent CALS policies shed light on this matter. Sources include the UKZN archives, CALS files, including all the documentation related to the 2013 QPA review, and the UKZN foundation. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that CALS has had nine directors/acting directors in the 11 years since the launch: the effect of this lack of continuity in leadership upon policy, practice and day-to-day administration is one of the sets of issues which the study investigated. Another question is: how did each director envision CALS in relation to African literary studies?

Furthermore, and the crux of the research problem, is that the search for a definition of what actually defines African literature has elicited considerable debate which includes African diaspora writing. For example, does African literature consist solely of the literature written in Africa, or is it literature written about Africa? Is it the author’s language or place of birth or ethnicity that determines African literature as discussed by Zell and Silver (1971:vii) or, as mentioned by Jahn (1966:22-24), is it the actual style of the writing which classifies it as African? The very idea of what actually constitutes African literary studies challenges understanding and begs the question as to what African literature actually is and what constitutes an African writer. Since UKZN’s goal is that the Centre for African Literary Studies is to become pivotal in terms of advancing African scholarship and in nurturing

Afrocentric research, this topic needed to be explored. Furthermore, it is anticipated that the CALS be integrated more fully with teaching and learning at UKZN, which raises the crucial issue of CALS's ability to still further meet the curriculum requirements.

In his account of the collection, Zell (2001:1) states that "the library is very comprehensive indeed, and I was unable to find gaps of any significance". However, subsequent to this statement, there has been a lack of systematic purchasing of material for reasons which are enlarged upon in the literature review. Despite this lack, since 2004 the original Lindfors collection has been supplemented by a number of additional collections, both purchased and donated.

Literature on special collections in the South African context is limited and the researcher therefore extended the search to international literature on special collections. Her preliminary perusal of the literature revealed the importance of the formulation of development policies which govern special collections. Problematic issues and challenges facing special collections have been highlighted by local scholars such as Hart (2002) and Darch (2004) and are outlined below.

(a) Collection (acquisition) development policies and Africanisation

According to Hart (2002:60) prior to 1994, many university curricula in [South] Africa were largely Eurocentric in content. These curricula have become more 'Africanised' and it is important that collections reflect this change and that collections be built up accordingly. For example, UKZN commits to being the premier university of African scholarship, thus the special collections should reflect this commitment. Darch (2004:190-194) highlights salient points concerning collection policies in Africa which are key to this study:

- "African Studies do not constitute an easily demarcated discipline" and "its meaning has changed and continues to change over time" (Darch 2004:192). "The difficulties are not only geographical [but also entail] which social sciences fall within the framework [of African studies] and which ones are excluded?" (Darch 2004:194).
- "Are African Studies like law, or music, or fine-arts disciplines typically supported by a literature that is so physically or bibliographically 'different' that practice requires separation?" (Darch 2004:190).

- “Why do African academic institutions need to have special academic centres and Special Collections devoted to Africa in the libraries? ... What do we mean by an African Studies collection in the library when presumably the collection development policy of the whole university library service is also committed to using national experience as a point of departure for the local production of knowledge?” (Darch 2004:190-191). After all, says Hart (2002:61), “should not all academic libraries in African countries be deemed African Studies Libraries in that their holdings should reflect the continent in which they exist?”
- “Should an Africa-focused collection in Africa include diaspora studies, or collect works on the Black experience in the United States, the Caribbean and Brazil?” (Darch 2004:192).

The above points were also highlighted by Praeg (2011) in the *Mail and Guardian* and were actively debated when the Centre for African Studies at the University of Cape Town was facing closure. The debate raged around the question of whether “the University of Cape Town should incorporate its Centre for African Studies (CAS) into a larger interdisciplinary school of critical studies under the aegis of ‘Afropolitanism’ or whether it should let the centre retain its autonomy” (Praeg 2011: paragraph 2). This situation is pertinent to this study of CALS.

It is important for the University of KwaZulu-Natal “to reconfigure [itself] as an African university in an African country, rather than – as Nadine Gordimer suggested with reference to South Africa – as ‘an Africanized outpost of the West’” (Gordimer 1999 in Makgoba 2005:13). However, there are difficulties in defining an African identity as mentioned above. Chinua Achebe, in an interview with Kwame Appiah, a prominent Ghanaian author, in the early eighties discussed the difficulties of defining the ‘African identity’ and stated, importantly, that “the African identity is still in the making. There isn’t a final identity that is African. But at the same time, there is an identity coming into existence” (Seepe 2004:18; Makgoba 2005:13). The thesis will explore these views in seeking to establish their veracity.

#### (b) ‘Hidden collections’ and access

One of the most important roles of any public collection is its accessibility. ‘Hidden collections’ are unprocessed material, and the lack of finding tools thus hinders access.

Because hidden collections are uncatalogued, or, in the case of archival materials, unprocessed, it puts them at greater risk of loss or theft and if they are stolen, the lack of documentation would make them more difficult to recover (Yakel 2005:97).

(c) Financial issues and staffing

“A significant threat to keeping African heritage in Africa is the poaching of collections by wealthy First World purchasers” (Hart 2002:63). It is also unfortunate that, according to Hart (2002:65), so many institutions have reported that “they have not been able to continue or to start projects because of the lack of sufficient funds”. This would most certainly impede special collections in their ability to collect, preserve and promote African scholarship.

(d) Preservation strategies

No library development policy will be complete without provision for the safety of the collections and disaster preparedness. “We need good preservation plans, comparable to national health plans and a good building is our first defence”, advises Alexio Motsi, the Deputy Director of Preservation at the South African National Archives and Records Service (NARS) (Motsi 2012:1). The study also investigated the suitability of the CALS’s building in terms of factors such as its configuration and stability of temperature and humidity.

(e) Other challenges include:

Technology and digitisation and concern over the stability and problems of obsolescence; promotion of the collections; policies about fundraising and donations; and accessibility, including physical access and space issues.

In a nutshell, it is the issues surrounding access, collection policies and their challenges (including mission and vision and repatriation policies), staffing, funding, promotion of collections, preservation strategies and general ‘housekeeping’ at CALS that are investigated as these affect directly the efforts of the curators of special collections to fulfil their roles of collecting, disseminating and preserving African heritage and scholarship.

### **1.3.4 Delimitation of the study**

The study is confined to the Centre for African Literary Studies at UKZN, while other collections are of contextual interest.

### **1.4 Definition of key terms and concepts used in the study**

The following terms and concepts are used in the study:

#### **1.4.1 Archive**

The *Oxford advanced learner's dictionary of current English* (2000:53) describes 'archive' as:

Noun: "A collection of historical documents or records of a government, a family, a place or an organization; the place where these records are stored."

Verb: "To put or store a document or other material in an archive, to move information that is often not needed to a tape or disc to store it (computing)."

#### **1.4.2 Afrocentrism**

(Abstract noun 'Afrocentricity')

Afrocentrism is a way of looking at the world which emphasises the importance of Africa and its people in culture, philosophy and history. It tries to restore the continent to its rightful place in the world (Dell 2012:11).

Asante (2007:2) describes 'Afrocentricity' as follows:

"Afrocentricity is a paradigmatic intellectual perspective that privileges African agency within the context of African history and culture transcontinentally and trans-generationally. This means that the quality of location is essential to any analysis that involves African culture and behaviour whether literary or economic, whether political or cultural."

The theory was popularised by Asante in his article entitled "Afrocentricity". Afrocentrism is described in more detail in Section 2.3.

### 1.4.3 Eurocentrism

*Oxford Dictionaries: Language Matters* (2014) defines ‘Eurocentrism’ as “focusing on European culture or history to the exclusion of a wider view of the world; implicitly regarding European culture as pre-eminent”.

### 1.4.4 Special collections

The University of Maryland University Libraries (2015) defines ‘special collections’ as follows:

“*Special Collections* have characteristics that set them apart from other types of collections in libraries. These special aspects may include:

- **Rarity:** books, manuscripts and other materials that are old, scarce or unique.
- **Format:** photographs, slides, films, audio recordings, maps, artworks, artefacts and other objects that need special handling.
- **Comprehensiveness:** accumulation of materials that are individually not unique, but collectively make up an important resource because of their relevance to a particular topic or individual.”

These characteristics also mean that special collections are not readily replaceable and require a higher level of security and special preservation environments to ensure their survival. In contrast to museum collections assembled for visual display, special collections focus on research as their primary mission. Thus, they complement general research collections and are often located in institutions that house both kinds of collections.

## 1.5 Principal theories upon which the research project is constructed

The research is based in African literary studies, not in African studies per se, and draws on a theoretical framework of Afrocentrism as promoted, for instance, by Cheikh Anta Diop.

Diop, a Senegalese scientist, historian and politician, was one of the early thinkers in the development of an Afrocentric viewpoint. Afrocentrism is a way of looking at the world that emphasises the importance of Africa and its people in culture, philosophy and history. It tries to restore the continent to its rightful place in the world (Dell 2012:11).



Molefe Kete Asante explains further that Afrocentric philosophy “has become one of the most persistent influences in the social sciences and humanities over the past three decades” (Asante 2007:180).

In the Afrocentric theoretical framework, emphasis is placed on a focus on meaning from the point of view of the African heritage rather than from outside it.

“It is therefore like any centric paradigm – one that occupies a center perspective. How alien must an African American child feel in those cases where the information being presented makes the child feel like an outsider?” (Asante 2007:81).

The Afrocentric theoretical position is essentially about location (Asante 2007:31). This position correlates with the research problems, namely the discussion on the geographical location of African studies and the debate in Africa as to whether African literature should be separated from academic libraries or be an integral part of all academic libraries, thus reflecting the continent in which it exists. This discussion is also in line with UKZN’s vision of being the premier university of African scholarship, replacing the previously Eurocentric approach with a more Afrocentric perspective. The questions: “Is the separation a product of a particular era” and “Is it no longer necessary” have been asked in the thesis.

The study sought to investigate whether or not an Africa-focused collection in Africa should include diaspora studies, such as works on the black experience in the Caribbean, Brazil and the United States. The Afrocentric theoretical framework provides evidence of discourse on this topic:

“Afrocentrism strives to create new forms of discourse about Africa and the African diaspora, impact on education through expanding curricula to be more inclusive, change the language of social institutions to reflect a more holistic universe, and revitalize conversations in Africa, Europe, and America about an African renaissance based on commitment to fundamental ideas of agency, centeredness and cultural location” (Asante 2007:180).

The study also researched what is seen by Achebe as African identity which, for him, is in the making. Asante (2007:109) states that the Afrocentric idea is “unthinkable without African agency”. However, he differentiates between Afrocentricity and Africanity by saying:

“Afrocentricity seeks agency and action (and is very specific on its reliance on self-conscious action) and the other, Africanity, broadcasts identity and being. Actually, Africanity refers in its generality to all of the customs, traditions and traits of people of Africa and the diaspora” (Asante 2007:109).

In an Afrocentric framework, Africans are taught to view themselves “as centered and central in their own history ... rather than as marginals on the periphery of political or economic experience”. They should not be viewed merely as spectators (Asante 2009a: paragraph 5). Afrocentricity is thus a “paradigm based on the idea that African people should re-assert a sense of agency”. Information is looked at from a black African perspective rather than from a white perspective (Asante 2009a: paragraph 1). This perspective ties in with the crux of the research problem, namely the search for a definition of what African literature actually is.

Other approaches to Afrocentrism have been put forward by scholars such as Wilson Moses and Marimba Ani, but this thesis will focus mainly on the view of Asante. The theory was popularised by Asante in his work *Afrocentricity*.

One of the key questions of the study relates to the history and provenance of CALS, a question that is historical in nature, and necessitates the examination and analysis of various documents to make sense of and understand why CALS was established and what the original custodial obligations were. Thus the study entails archival research within an interpretivist paradigm. Archival research concerns both analysing and interpreting historical events in the context in which they occurred.

“[By] looking at a string of seemingly random events, the historical researcher develops a rational explanation for their sequence, speculates about cause-and-effect relationships among them, and draws inferences about the effects of events on individuals and the society in which they lived” (Leedy and Ormrod 2010:164).

The study required archival research as well as survey research using questionnaires and interviews within an interpretive framework. An identification and analysis of policy documents and reports pertaining to UKZN and in particular the Centre for African Literary Studies was undertaken, and thus the researcher had to “dig deep [and] make every effort to find first-hand accounts and artifacts of an event – newspaper clippings, legal documents, diary events, eyewitnesses, relevant objects – and from such basic sources [try] to establish a

coherence that gives meaning to [the historical development of CALS]” (Leedy and Ormrod 2010:165). Thus the purpose of archival research is to “reconstruct the past systematically and objectively by collecting, evaluating, verifying, and synthesizing evidence to establish facts and reach defensible conclusions, often in relation to particular hypotheses” (Powell and Connaway 2004:60). In order to answer the third and fourth objectives of the study, namely the present role of CALS and its collection in African Literary Studies as well as considering the future role which CALS can play in UKZN and beyond, a “systematic collection and objective evaluation of data related to past occurrences in order to test hypotheses concerning causes, effects, or trends of those events which may help to explain present events and anticipate future events” (Powell and Connaway 2004:60) was undertaken.

An interpretivist framework is relevant to this study because “an interpretivist researcher does not try to control the world, nor try to change it, they [*sic*] merely describe and interpret what they see” (Bertram 2003:129). In other words, interpretivist researchers observe in a natural setting and try to make meaning of it. “Because measurement is fallible, the interpretive researcher encourages varieties of data of different sources and analysis methods in order to strive for validity” (Henning 2004:20). “The interpretivist paradigm does not concern itself with the search for broadly applicable laws and rules, but rather seeks to produce descriptive analyses that emphasize deep, interpretive understanding of social phenomena” (Henning 2004:21). This approach accords with the focus of the research, the purpose of which was to gain a deep understanding of the perceptions of the initial founders of CALS, and their initial reasons for establishing the Centre, as well as the perceptions of current and past researchers concerning their experiences at the Centre.

Furthermore, the study used the framework offered by Ian Mann (2012) in the evaluation of CALS. This framework guided the evaluation and Mann’s nine crucial questions, among which were what drives the Centre and what makes it unique? These nine questions were used also to construct the instruments for the various categories of respondents.

## **1.6 Research methodology and methods**

This section provides an overview of the approaches to the study, the participants, data-collection-tools and data-analysis techniques used by the study.

### **1.6.1 The approach**

Two basic approaches to research were adopted, namely the quantitative and qualitative methodologies of enquiry. However, qualitative and archival research dominated the study's investigation of the role of CALS and its policies and changes in policies. Mann's framework as mentioned above in Section 1.5 constituted the framework for the evaluation of CALS in the study. A historical research approach was successfully adopted by Buchanan (2008) in a related study titled 'A History of the University of Natal Libraries, 1910–2003'. This research approach was deemed to be the most suitable when investigating the development of CALS as an entity.

“There are established conventions which govern the ways in which historians conduct research. Most scholars identify four phases in the historical research process. These are:

- The location of relevant information sources (historical data).
- The evaluation of these resources.
- The interpretation of the evidence found in the sources.
- The recording of findings or conclusions.” (Buchanan 2008:11).

In addition, “unstructured observation, open interviewing, ideographic descriptions and qualitative data analysis are all ways to capture ‘insider’ knowledge that is part of an interpretivist methodology” (Henning 2004:20). Quantitative methods involve collecting numerical data or data which can be counted. Qualitative methods involve collecting textual or oral data (Bertram 2003:44-45). Babbie and Mouton (2001:270) state that one of the main aims of qualitative research is “indepth (thick) descriptions and understanding of actions and events”. This research strove to capture a “sense of actions as they occur” (Babbie and Mouton 2001:272) by means of in-depth interviews.

### **1.6.2 Population**

As mentioned in Section 1.3.1, the purpose of the study was to investigate the development, role and the possible challenges which face CALS in its mission to contribute to and facilitate African literary studies at UKZN. The purpose thus determined the population of the study which consisted of current isiZulu-speaking undergraduate students and postgraduate English and isiZulu-speaking students and researchers who use or have used CALS and were

contactable; present and ex-staff members; as well as the original owners of the two largest CALS collections, the initial founders of CALS, and the directors of CALS, both past and present.

Given the small size of the population, the study comprised a survey of current and past undergraduate and postgraduate students who had been directly involved with CALS and who were still contactable, current and ex-staff members, the original owners of the two largest collections, the initial founders of CALS, and CALS past and present directors (see Section 7.3).

### **1.6.3 Data collection**

In order to test for validity and reliability, Babbie and Mouton (2001:275) state that “triangulation is generally considered to be one of the best ways to enhance validity and reliability in qualitative research”. In this study, methodological triangulation was used by collecting data using three different data-collection methods, namely questionnaires (with some quantitative aspects), qualitative interviews and literature and document analysis. Primary sources included personal correspondence, minutes of management and advisory committees, annual reports, reviews, speeches, and newspaper reports, as well as personal interviews. Secondary sources included literature on special collections. A survey was conducted to determine the opinions of researchers on the service offered by CALS, and was limited to current undergraduate students and postgraduate students, and researchers who currently used or had used CALS in the past. The researcher believed methodological triangulation to be appropriate for answering the key questions because the questions relating to the history and governance of CALS drew on the primary sources and the literature, and the problems which emerged were gleaned from the primary sources as well as from the questionnaires and interviews.

The two questionnaires consisted of open questions and a limited number of closed questions. In keeping with a predominantly qualitative approach, the researcher used interviews and literature searching and analysis. In semi-structured interviews, researchers use an interview schedule, which is a set of questions in a predetermined order. To further enhance validity, the questionnaires were pre-tested before they were distributed to the respondents to complete. The questionnaires were reviewed to ensure that they were clear, well constructed,

unambiguous, easily understood, and relevant. Because of limited time and financial resources available for this study and to be more expedient and cost effective, electronic mail (e-mail) was used for the questionnaires and Skype for the interviews, as it is inexpensive and time efficient (this is enlarged on in Chapter 7).

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007:145-146) warn that “there are several areas where a lack of validity can lurk”. Appropriate instrumentation for gathering the type of data required is therefore important. In qualitative research, Cohen et al. (2007:150-151) state that “one way of controlling for reliability is to have a highly structured interview with the same format and sequence of words and questions for each respondent”. They further contend it is important for each interviewee to understand the question in the same way. It is against the backdrop of this assertion that the researcher chose to make use of semi-structured interviews.

#### **1.6.4 Data analysis**

In this study the researcher presented the findings from the qualitative data by means of text through quoted responses.

In terms of analysing the qualitative data, Bertram (2003:44) states that “qualitative researchers integrate the operation of organizing, analysing and interpreting data and call the entire process ‘data analysis’” in which three activities take place at the same time, namely data reduction, data display and drawing conclusions. Bertram further notes that “data reduction means that the researcher looks for topics that emerge from the data”. In this study, the interviews and primary and secondary data (literature reviews) were analysed using thematic analysis (Bertram 2003:44) for the open questions, whereby trends and patterns were identified, and descriptive statistics for the closed questions. Miles and Huberman (1994:246, 69) say that “when you are working with text or less well organized displays, you often note recurring patterns, themes, or ‘gestalts’, which pull together many separate pieces of data into more meaningful and parsimonious units of analysis. They are a sort of meta-code”. Miles and Huberman (1994:246) contend that “we can expect patterns of variables involving similarities and differences among categories, and patterns of processes involving connections in time and space within a context”. “The analyst blends inferences drawn directly from the displayed data [using] tactics [such as] seeing patterns, themes and factoring – that is, seeing a few general variables underlying many specifics), with illustrative

comments drawn from elsewhere in the case” (Miles and Huberman 1994:131, 133). Bertram states that “qualitative data is usually presented in text through quotes or short case studies, but it can also be presented in diagrams, matrices, tables or graphs” (Bertram 2003:44). Such were the methods of analysis used in the current study. Self-reflexivity also played a role since the researcher was on CALS’s staff for many years.

In terms of analysing the quantitative data from the questionnaires, the researcher used IBM SPSS Statistics 2015.

## **1.7 Structure of the thesis**

Chapter 1 – Introduction. This encompasses a discussion of the background and an outline of the research problem and context of the research, as well as the broader issues to be investigated. The reason for choosing the topic is discussed, as well as potential outcomes of the research and its contribution to the current knowledge base. Questions essential for the consideration of the main topic are outlined as well as the principal theories (research design) upon which the project is constructed and which are used to address the questions.

Chapter 2 – The framework of the study is discussed, namely the theoretical framework of Afrocentrism.

Chapters 3 to 6 – Literature review and documentary analysis. The literature review is divided into four chapters: The original vision for CALS: The history and provenance of CALS; The reality of CALS; The gap between the vision and reality and how to close it; and CALS and the Africanisation debate. Existing literature is reviewed concerning CALS’s original policies, as well as challenging factors such as access to the collection (including physical access and space issues), collection development policies and Africanisation, promotion of collections, preservation strategies, technology and digitisation, and financial and staffing issues.

Chapter 7 – Research design and methodology. The study entails archival research within an interpretivist paradigm. Quantitative and qualitative approaches were adopted and discussed. Questionnaires and in-depth interviews were conducted. Existing data/literature and document analysis constituted a large proportion of the study.

Chapters 8 and 9 – Research results/Findings. Results are presented in text through quotations or short case studies, and/or by means of tables or graphs, whatever was deemed to be most appropriate.

Chapter 10 – Discussion of findings, conclusions and contribution to knowledge.

Recommendations for policy, practice and further research are proposed.

### **1.8 Ethical considerations**

The study adheres to the requirements for ethical clearance in the College of Humanities, UKZN. According to Professor Steve Collings (2012), the following informing ethical principles should guide the study:

- “Respect for persons (treat respondents as autonomous agents); beneficence (strive to do no harm); justice (demand that people are treated fairly).
- Scientific validity.
- Social value.
- Collaborative partnership (gatekeeper permission, community consultation).
- Fair participant selection.
- Favourable risk–benefit ratio.
- Independent review.
- Informed consent.
- Respect for informants.”

A letter of consent was sent to all participants of the study prior to their participation.

Anonymity was assured if the interviewees requested it. Prior permission was requested for the recording of interviews.

To this end the following considerations were applied to the methods of data collection, presentation and interpretation of the findings, and citations and referencing:

- Both the questionnaire and the semi-structured interviews included an explanation of the purpose of the research.
- Cover letters to the respondents introducing the researcher and describing the purpose of the research were included with the instruments.



- The informed consent of the participants was obtained prior to the administration of the instruments.
- Participants were informed that participation was voluntary and assured that there would be no adverse consequences for their refusal to participate or their withdrawal from the study.
- The confidentiality and anonymity of participants were carefully protected.
- Data collected was used only for the purpose of the research and for analysis.
- Findings and interpretations of the research have been presented honestly and objectively.
- References to information sources have been cited and referenced appropriately.

## **1.9 Summary**

This introductory chapter elucidated the research problem, the purpose of the study, and key questions asked. Justification for and delimitations of the study were described. Definitions of terms and concepts used in this study were provided. The principal theories upon which the study is constructed were identified and discussed, and the research methodology and methods and structure of the thesis briefly outlined.

The theoretical framework used for the study is presented in the next chapter.

## Chapter 2

### Theoretical Framework

#### 2.1 Introduction

In answer to the question: “What is a theoretical framework”, McGriff (2014) states:

“A theoretical framework structures the sections of the study that need to be covered. Most research is founded on a question. The researcher or writer of the report not only questions, but ponders and develops thoughts or theories on what the possible answers could be. These thoughts and theories are then grouped together into themes that frame the subject ... It’s a process of identifying a core set of connectors within a topic and showing how they fit together or are related in some way to the subject.”

McGriff further elucidates:

“The theoretical framework is a foundation for the parameters, or boundaries, of a study. Once these themes are established, researchers can seek answers to the topical questions they have developed on broad subjects.”

A framework enables the researcher to remain within the theme or topic, rather than being tempted to veer off track onto broader subjects.

Three paradigms have been selected as suitable to answer the key questions in this study. These are described below.

The overarching framework for this study is Afrocentrism. The terms ‘Afrocentrism’ versus ‘Eurocentrism’, ‘African scholarship’, and ‘African studies’ (of which African literary studies is a component) are discussed and will inform one another under the overarching framework of Afrocentrism in an attempt to determine what actually defines African literature. As mentioned in Section 1.2.1 above, part of the research problem central to the study is to ascertain the extent to which CALS is able to fulfil its role in facilitating and enabling African literary studies at UKZN and in the broader community. The outcome should inform managers of African collections such as CALS regarding the building of their collections and answer problematic questions such as those posed by Darch (2004:190-194) as to which

disciplines the framework of African studies can be considered to embrace, or be influenced by, and which ones are excluded; whether the development of separate collections devoted to African themes is justified in Africa and whether Africa-focused collections based in Africa should include diaspora studies.

## **2.2 The vision and mission of UKZN and CALS**

The vision of UKZN is: “To be the Premier University of African Scholarship” (UKZN 2015). One of the seven goals of UKZN relates to ‘African-led globalisation’, explained as “To promote African-led globalisation through African scholarship by positioning the University, through its teaching, learning, scholarship, research, and innovation, to enter the global knowledge system” (UKZN 2015). CALS is one of UKZN’s special collections and it focuses on collecting the best in African literature. The preamble to the constitution of CALS states its mission statement: “To be a Centre of Excellence for research in the field of African Literary Studies, with the aim of developing, disseminating and applying its expertise as widely as possible. The aim of the Centre is to promote and sustain excellent research in the field of African Literary Studies” (CALS n.d.:2).

Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Corporate Relations, Professor Dasarath Chetty (2005:13), at the inauguration of the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, considered the distinctive challenges presented in the scholarship of African themes and his comments are discussed below.

Chetty identifies the difficulty in defining an African identity. As mentioned in Section 1.5, Asante (2007:31) states that location is central to the Afrocentric theoretical position. UKZN is situated on the African continent and the vision of UKZN is to replace the previously Eurocentric approach with an Afrocentric perspective. The framework of Afrocentrism enables the researcher to place African literary studies within an African context.

In the process of defining ‘Africanism’, Achebe proposes that there are three “tags” to consider, namely “a meaning, a penalty and a responsibility” (Chetty 2005:13). These difficult concepts have to be addressed if the University of KwaZulu-Natal is to reconfigure itself as “an African university in an African country, rather than – as Nadine Gordimer (1999) suggested in reference to South Africa – as “an Africanised outpost of the West”

(Makgoba 2005:13). Furthermore, the penalties of a colonial history have to be overcome such as “the valorization of Western academia, insufficient levels of pride and faith in African achievements, a heritage of complex racial dynamics, and an unequal distribution of national resources” (Makgoba 2005:13). The final concept of responsibility is perhaps the most important of all if UKZN is to face the responsibility of being an African university, for it is here that our “most honourable” identity can be found, “an identity that will also give us a distinctive brand. These responsibilities are moral, intellectual and inspirational and they are served by adapting our scholarship to the social structure and the cultural environment of Africa” (Makgoba:2005:14). The techno-scientific, socio-political environments are changing and it is necessary to be “finely tuned to this environment if we are to create a university that has a strong sense of itself and is also world-class; an institution that will play a transformational role in the development of South Africa, but also make a meaningful contribution to global knowledge” (Chetty 2005:14).

The above statement by Makgoba suggests why the initial initiatives were taken by UKZN in its attempt to transform itself into the ‘Premier University of African Scholarship’.

Makgoba (2005:16-17) states that the University faces five critical challenges in connection with African scholarship, namely:

- “Advancing scientific and scholarly knowledge by engaging freely in fundamental discovery and in criticizing and extending the traditional boundaries and views of the world. This is done by ‘handing down culture’ through research and teaching (the service of the intellect function) and by educating and training people who would enter the ‘learned’ professions or fulfil other social functions and leadership roles to deal, in an intellectually justified and disciplined way, with the educational, social, political, scientific and economic challenges of our time (this is the service to society function). In this way we shall be able to live up to our vision of being the ‘Premier University of African Scholarship’ – a vision that engages in: (i) African identity, the translation of cultures, knowledge systems and history, (ii) The African experience and condition, (iii) The African consciousness, (iv) Reclaiming ourselves as contributors to knowledge rather than imitators or imposters, (v) Unashamedly branding African Scholarship globally.
- We shall do this by continuing to engage holistically in fundamental knowledge production and discovery ...

- The identification, integration and engagement of the university with African society and its realities – for example, the isiZulu language and arts, African music, culture, worldview and ethics ...
- A clear and unambiguous strategy for the development of future African intellectuals, academics and scholars – the service of the intellect to entrench diversity and promote transformation ...
- To establish a ‘Capital Campaign’ fund to ensure and guarantee freedom of thought and support for new, unconventional, long-term strategic ideas and vision projects in knowledge production ... to lay the foundation and protect the legacy of the vision of UKZN.”

The above points from Makgoba highlight the challenges which UKZN faces in its attempt to transform the previous Eurocentric approach in favour of an Afrocentric paradigm and are in accordance with Asante’s viewpoint that privileges African agency within the context of African scholarship. Location (in reference to UKZN and CALS being on the African continent) is essential in this paradigm to any analysis that involves African scholarship. The above points are also in line with Chinua Achebe’s emphasis on African identity and his concern with “the dislocation of the African society caused by the impact of Western civilization” (Jahn, Schild and Nordmann 1972:20).

A point raised by Makgoba (2005:14) was that General Jan Smuts, as early as the 1940s, stated at a Fort Hare graduation ceremony: “Native Africa has its own contribution to make to the world and we would not be doing the best service by trying to impose our own exotic views of culture on you.” This accords with Asante’s Afrocentric views on returning to a strong sense of African cultural identity and being centred agents in the world rather than being on the European periphery.

### **2.3 Afrocentricism versus Eurocentrism**

Hart (2002:59) addresses the challenges facing African studies collections and states that

“with the change of government in 1994 came also a firmer recognition of South Africa’s position as an African country on the African continent, rather than as an outpost of Europe. Prior to this, many university curricula were largely Eurocentric in content”.

University curricula are now becoming more ‘Africanised’ and it is important that academic libraries reflect this change and build up their special and general collections accordingly. An

example of curriculum change is that UKZN has made isiZulu compulsory for all first-year students. This requirement has increased the usage of isiZulu books at CALS and CALS has had to build its collection accordingly (see Section 6.5). The Department of English Studies is also including more African authors in its curricula. Regarding African women authors, according to Kilyobo (2015:148), the UKZN library represents “both Anglophone and Francophone women writers in its collections” but the “level of the representation of most of these authors, be they Anglophone or Francophone, is not satisfactory according to academics [at UKZN]”. The academics were, however, “adamant that writers, be they men or women, were received on an equal basis according to their value with regard to their work”.

Kalua (2009:26) states that “in Africa, and elsewhere in the colonized world, the polemics about identity have usually revolved around two diametrically opposed concepts, Afrocentrism as against Eurocentricism”. Kalua (2009:28) highlights movements such as Negritude, Pan-Africanism and former South African President Mbeki’s vision of African renewal put forward in his “I am an African” speech on behalf of the ANC (Mbeki 2006). These are explored further in this chapter. Kalua (2009:28) makes the point that “the central impulses in all the three movements are tradition and race, the need to endorse the doctrine of the black African personality, emphasizing the differences between blacks and other races”, and these are a “celebration of African identity”.

The above corresponds with UKZN’s attempt to adopt and celebrate an Afrocentric emphasis on African scholarship which is diametrically opposed to its previous Eurocentric approach.

### **2.3.1 Cheikh Anta Diop (1923–1986)**

As stated in Section 1.5, Cheikh Anta Diop, a Senegalese scientist, historian and politician, was one of the early thinkers in the development of an Afrocentric viewpoint (Dell 2012:11). As an anthropologist who studied the origins of the human race and pre-colonial African culture, “Diop’s project [was] to recover the past and systematically overturn Western cultural assumptions, an effort historically situated in the years since decolonization” (Chowdhury 1997:38). Diop’s view and reasoning is a radical and controversial form of Afrocentricity, as it seeks to place “Africa at the centre of history” (Chowdhury 1997:40).

### 2.3.2 Molefi Kete Asante (1942–)

This current study is based on Asante's idea of Afrocentrism as it is a contemporary ideology which focuses on the present controversial divide between Eurocentrism and Afrocentrism, a debate which is in line with UKZN's policy of promoting African scholarship. It is this divide which has created the recent debates about whether universities need designated centres for African studies. Furthermore, Asante's Afrocentric framework places emphasis on location, which alludes to the geographical difficulties put forward by Darch as to whether African centres are necessary in Africa (Darch 2004:192-194). Asante also contends that Africans need to view themselves as centred agents in the world, and not simply as marginal spectators to Europe (Asante 2009a: paragraph 5; Asante 2009b: paragraph 30).

Asante "has become one of the primary spokespersons for Afrocentric curriculums in the United States"; he is described as having launched "a stinging attack on Eurocentrism, while providing an Afrocentric manifesto for African Americans to follow" (Chowdhury 1997:42). "Asante, writing in 1987, comments, 'Afrocentricity is the belief in the centrality of Africans in post-modern history'" (Chowdhury 1997:43). Taylor (1989:103) notes: "Asante asserts a theory of cultural oneness, positing as its basis the concept of a totalized identity as well as a complete faith in a created tradition, a tradition that can only emerge from a history of harmony ... Its primary intention has been to 'break with Euro-modernist power/knowledge' and 'simultaneously [propel] a release from its strictures of authorized expertise and professionalization, recognizing them as agencies of dominant discourse, gate-keeping mechanisms of approved knowledges.'" "

Asante (2009a: paragraph 1) states that "Afrocentricity is a paradigm based on the idea that African people should re-assert a sense of agency in order to achieve sanity".

Asante (2009a: paragraph 3) describes Afrocentricity as a "revolutionary shift in thinking proposed as a constructural adjustment to black disorientation, decenteredness, and lack of agency". He states that Afrocentrists ask the question: "What would African people do if there were no white people?" It is important for Afrocentrists to question "what natural responses would occur in the relationships, attitudes toward the environment, kinship patterns, preference for colors, type of religion, and historical referent points for African people if there had not been any intervention of colonialism or enslavement?"

Asante believes that “Afrocentricity answers the question by asserting the central role of the African subject within the context of African history, thereby removing Europe from the center of the African reality”. In this way, believes Asante, “Afrocentricity becomes a revolutionary idea because it studies ideas, concepts, events, personalities, and political and economic processes from a standpoint of black people as subjects and not as objects, basing all knowledge on the authentic interrogation of location” (Asante 2009a: paragraph 3).

### 2.3.2.1 Asante’s Afrocentric idea

Asante (2009b:5-9) distinguishes the Afrocentric idea, “as a cultural configuration”, by five characteristics:

- “An intense interest in psychological location as determined by symbols, motifs, rituals, and signs ...
- A commitment to finding the subject-place of Africans in any social, political, economic, or religious phenomenon with implications for questions of sex, gender, and class.  
The Afrocentrist is committed to the idea that Africans are agents in the world and therefore should not be viewed as spectators. ... Afrocentrists take a strong view that racial, sexual, gender, and class discrimination and exploitation must be condemned outright and forthrightly. All Afrocentric analysis is a critique on domination. Furthermore, all Afrocentric analysis is a critique on hierarchy and patriarchy because the analysis stems from all forms of oppression.
- A defense of African cultural element as historically valid in the context of art, music, and literature ...  
As King Lobengula puzzled over the Scottish missionaries [*sic*] interest in bringing their god to the Ndebele, he said to Moffat, "we have our own god, Nkulunkulu, and you have yours. Why do you want us to have yours?"
- A celebration of ‘centeredness’ and agency and a commitment to lexical refinement that eliminates pejoratives about Africans or other people ...  
... Africa must be convinced to do three things: (1) return to a strong sense of cultural identity, (2) create international networks of Africans on the continent and trans-continently to cooperate on a global level, and (3) place emphasis on teaching children to leap-frog old technologies and finding ways to exploit the new information possibilities with vigor. In this way we will celebrate centeredness and agency and not dismiss our own ethnicities, histories, and lessons to embrace others. All Africans, wherever in the world, have made valuable contributions to their countries, whether in the West or in Africa, and must be viewed and



must view themselves as accountable, responsible agents in the world, not to be acted upon, but to act. Thus, it means that we must build institutions everywhere in our image and in our interests. One thing that happens to a people who lose their god, is that they lose their institutions, their reasons for being, and their language, and you cannot find the proper strength to build institutions until you rediscover your cultural center. Of course, we have many infusions into the African cultural stream and those infusions must be recognized, given voice, and seen as a part of creating a new African reality.

- A powerful imperative from historical sources to revise the collective text of African people. Whether we are on this side or the other side of the Atlantic we are an African people. There is no real reason to posit some hypothetical Black Atlantic. The Atlantic is neither black nor white, it is a deep blue. It is an ocean, and an ocean is neither a barrier to human interaction nor is it necessarily a consolidator of the human experience. We remain African though we become Jamaicans, African British, Haitians, African Americans or African Costa Ricans.”

The points above stress that Africans have a strong desire to make a break from the currently dominating European culture which they feel is being imposed on them. They wish to remove a European outlook from the centre of African life. Africans prefer to identify with a strong sense of African cultural identity, which includes literature. Africans want to see themselves as central in the world rather than as “European spectators”.

Asante’s Afrocentric points above offer a framework as they tie in with the Afrocentric approach currently being adopted by UKZN and which in turn will impact on and be a guiding factor in whether African centres such as CALS are justified as being separate entities on an African continent or whether they should be an integral part of an academic library.

The latter point also ties in with the question of whether or not an African-focused collection in Africa should include diaspora studies and works on the black experience worldwide. Asante believes in consolidating all African works.

Asante (2009b: paragraph 5) explains above that “societies are held together or disintegrated on the basis of symbols”. He emphasises the importance of Africans as agents in the world who should not be marginalised. He stresses the validity of African literature, questions the need for the imposition of foreign works and advocates a “return to a strong sense of cultural identity with international networks”. Africans need to celebrate their own ethnicities.

### 2.3.2.2 The Afrocentric method

Asante (2009a: paragraph 3-4) outlines five general characteristics of the Afrocentric method for examining phenomena which stress the importance of location:

- “The Afrocentric method considers that no phenomena can be apprehended adequately without locating it [*sic*] first. A *phenom* must be studied and analyzed in relationship to psychological time and space. It must always be located. This is the only way to investigate the complex interrelationships of science and art, design and execution, creation and maintenance, generation and tradition, and other areas bypassed by theory.
- The Afrocentric method considers phenomena to be diverse, dynamic, and in motion and therefore it is necessary for a person to accurately note and record the location of phenomena even in the midst of fluctuations. This means that the investigator must know where he or she is standing in the process.
- The Afrocentric method is a form of cultural criticism that examines etymological uses of words and terms in order to know the source of an author’s location. This allows us to intersect ideas with actions and actions with ideas on the basis of what is pejorative and ineffective and what is creative and transformative at the political and economic levels.
- The Afrocentric method seeks to uncover the masks behind the rhetoric of power, privilege, and position in order to establish how principal myths create place. The method enthrones critical reflection that reveals the perception of monolithic power as nothing but the projection of a cadre of adventurers.
- The Afrocentric method locates the imaginative structure of a system of economics, bureau of politics, policy of government, expression of cultural form in the attitude, direction, and language of the *phenom*, be it text, institution, personality, interaction, or event.”

Several of the points above are pertinent to this study. For example, “no phenomena can be apprehended adequately without locating it first” [and] “A *phenom* must be studied and analyzed in relationship to psychological time and space”. Firstly, the location in this study has been identified as an African university on the African continent which gives the “investigator” a stance from which to “stand in the process” of this study, and secondly, the idea of the separation between Afrocentric and Eurocentric approaches is seen as a product of this particular era, and the question whether the separation is still necessary relates to the psychological time aspect.

Furthermore, the point “This allows us to intersect ideas with actions and actions with ideas on the basis of what is pejorative and ineffective and what is creative and transformative at the political and economic levels”: in the last point “policy” and “institution” tie in with the

transformative politics in South Africa since 1994 which have impacted on the transformation of UKZN's institutional policies as it views the previous Eurocentric approach as ineffective and obsolete in the new South Africa. UKZN's transformation policy attempts to replace previous "generations and traditions" and create a new university based on the idea of being the "Premier University of African Scholarship" in South Africa.

### **2.3.2.3 The importance of location and agency in the Afrocentric paradigm**

As described above in Section 2.3.2.2, Asante (2007:13) emphasises that the Afrocentric theoretical position is essentially about location, which addresses the geographical question in the study (Section 1.5 above). This discussion also ties in with the UKZN's vision of being the premier institution of African scholarship, replacing the previously Eurocentric approach with a more Afrocentric paradigm.

An Afrocentric theoretical framework emphasises the point of view of the African heritage placing Africans as central in the world rather than as outsiders to Europe.

Another of the questions pertinent to the study as mentioned in Sections 1.5 and 2.3.2.2 above is: "Is the separation a product of a particular era" and "is it no longer necessary". According to Asante (Asante 2009a: paragraph 9):

"Analytic Afrocentricity is the application of the principles of the Afrocentric method to textual analysis. An Afrocentrist seeks to understand the principles of the Afrocentric method in order to use them as a guide in analysis and discourse. It goes without saying that the Afrocentrist cannot function properly as a scientist or humanist if he or she does not adequately locate the *phenom* in time and space."

Asante explains further that

"Chronology is as important in some situations as location. The two aspects of analysis are central to any proper understanding of society, history, or personality. In as much as *phenoms* are active, dynamic, and diverse in our society, the Afrocentric method requires the scientists to focus on accurate notations and recording of space and time. In fact, the best way to apprehend location of a text is to determine where the researcher is located in time and space first. Once you know the location and time of the researcher or author it is fairly easy to establish the parameters for the *phenom* itself" (Asante 2009a: paragraph 9).

From the above we can deduce that chronology refers to eras and thus eras are central to the idea of Afrocentricity. The notion of an era is pertinent to the current study regarding the replacement of Eurocentric values with Afrocentric values as UKZN is currently in the process of transformation. Library collections need to take heed of this change in policy.

### **2.3.3 African diasporic literature**

A controversy exists as to whether or not an Africa-focused collection in Africa should include the literature of the African diaspora. According to Asante (2007:180), “Afrocentrism strives to create new forms of discourse about Africa and the African diaspora.” McLaren (2009:97) discusses the literature of Africa and the African diaspora which “often employs vernacular elements derived from the Africanization of European languages”. He states that the linguistic variations, such as creole, patois, pidgin and Ebonics in the United States, are often considered as “languages in their own right” and “though a hallmark of African diasporic literature, Africanized English has become a controversial social and political issue, relating to the dilemma of identity...”. McLaren (2009:100) states that “in the diaspora, the origins of Africanized English have been well documented, the collision of languages, which, for the most part, was the result of enslavement of Africans and their dispersal into the Western Hemisphere”.

The CALS Collection includes diasporic works, including American, Caribbean and South Pacific literature. Diasporic works are enlarged upon in Sections 5.3.2.1 and 6.3.1.2.

### **2.4 African identity**

Within the “cultural configuration of Afrocentricity” as expounded by Asante (2009b: paragraphs 5–9) above is the concept of African identity.

Wright (2002:1) states:

“It is both a daunting and potentially frustrating task to attempt to discuss African identity. It is daunting because African identity is an expansive and nebulous category that can be contextualized in and approached from a bewildering array of ideological and disciplinary positions ... it is frustrating first because Africa has long been relegated to the margins of global considerations of culture, economics and geo-politics and second because African identity is a

category that is always already overdetermined and spectacularly overgeneralized and homogenized.”

In order to work through the difficulties of defining African identity, the study draws on Wright’s prospects and strategies for articulating African identity (2002:2-5): “Can the African speak? Four (somewhat frustrated) strategies for articulating African identity” as well as Wright’s “Five strategies for attempting to break out of the mundane” (Wright 2002:5-12). Wright addresses the dominant Eurocentrism and European imperialism, colonisation, and diasporic African identity issues (Wright 2002:4). These strategies overlap and fall under the umbrella theory adopted by the study and are discussed in Chapter 6.

Another aspect to consider is the fact that “African identity is fluid, relational and always in flux” (Kalua 2009:23). This concept of flux and the fluid nature of identity as proposed by Kalua (2009) and Gandhi (2012) is explored later in the study, as well as the essentialist and ideological concepts of cultural identity elucidated by Gandhi (Section 6.3.1.3)

In conclusion, Kalua (2009:26) states that “in Africa, and elsewhere in the colonized world, the polemics about identity have usually revolved around two diametrically opposed concepts, Afrocentrism as against Eurocentrism”. Kalua (2009:26) contends that the debate was “set in motion by Chinua Achebe in the 1970s [and] was taken up by various thinkers of the time”. Ngūgĩ wa Thiong’o was one of these thinkers “who, in the spirit of decolonizing African literature, and in order to reach a non-foreign audience, wrote *Devil on the Cross* in Gikuyu, his mother tongue”. Kalua (2009:26) stresses the importance of noting that

“the quest for a primordial and unique African cultural and political identity has always derived its energy from, first, the geographical reality that constitutes the continent of Africa as a unitary entity, and secondly, from the debate about the Black people being the majority race and sharing similar, in some cases identical, cultures and traditions”.

Kalua (2009:26) contends: “The quest for a pure African identity remains an undertaking which fails to take into account the hard reality of Africa as an existence that has largely been a function of colonialism”

It is noteworthy that not all thinkers agree with the contention that Africans share the idea that Africa is a geographically unifying entity and hence that all Africans share similar, and often identical, cultures and traditions. For example,

“Anthony Appiah, writing in his famous text *In my father’s house: Africa in the philosophy of culture* (1992), argues that there has never been a name referring specifically to the whole of the continent. For him, ‘the very invention of Africa (as something more than a geographical entity) must be understood, ultimately, as an outgrowth of European racialism: the notion of Pan-Africanism was founded on the notion of the African, which was, in turn, founded not on any genuine cultural commonality but ... on the very European concept of the Negro’” (Kalua 2009:26).

Thinkers such as Appiah and Mudimbe assert that this notion of Africa is simply “a product of the West” (Kalua 2009:26).

The study draws on the above-mentioned authors as it explores the question as to what constitutes African identity. This is a central focus in the writings of Chinua Achebe, who is highly critical of the manner in which Western literature has portrayed Africans.

#### **2.4.1 Language and African identity**

The CALS Collection includes works in a variety of African languages, including isiZulu, isiXhosa and Igbo. An isiZulu literary museum is housed at CALS which has greatly enhanced the number of CALS users. This is elaborated on in Section 6.5.

McLaren (2009:100) notes:

“The validity of Africanized English or Ebonics has also been argued by Ngugi wa Thiong’o [*sic*], whose emphasis has been on the use of indigenous African languages ... Although Ngugi proposes that continental African writers should avoid writing in European languages such as English, he argues that English has been transformed in the diaspora and that those writers have effectively used its changed manifestations.”

The language issue is complex and writers differ in their viewpoints regarding the European languages. African language is intrinsically entwined with African identity. Owomoyela (1992) explores the various viewpoints on language and the study draws on his work as a

framework to express the differing viewpoints of African writers. Owomoyela (1992:84) states:

“Whereas others are inclined to view the role of European languages in African societies in a negative light, Amuta regards them as unifying factors. Accordingly, he dismisses the lingering colonial stigma that attaches to them.”

He adds “Amuta, writing in 1989, comments ‘Since they serve as a cohesive force in contemporary African nations they have negated their originally negative historical ‘mission’ as an instrument of colonization’” (Owomoyela 1992:84).

Owomoyela further notes:

“On this question his attitude is consistent with his fellow Marxists, Chinwizu and his collaborators, who, despite their vaunted Afrocentricism and their declared intention to decolonize African literatures, none the less champion the retention of European languages. Such a choice is certainly implicit in their rejection of language as a criterion for defining African literatures” (Owomoyela 1992:84).

By contrast, continues Owomoyela, “Omafume Onoge, another Marxist, believes that committed African writers should be on the side of the masses, not aligned with the elite, as their defense of European languages proves them to be”.

He adds:

“Onoge, writing in 1974, accepts the fact that languages do constitute a problem, for he laments: ‘Yet [for the writer] to break with this [elite] audience, as he must, in order to adopt the people as his constituency, poses communication problems which have no easy solutions at the moment. For the African case it is not just the colonial tongue which isolates the writers from the people. There is also the question of mass illiteracy even in our own languages’” (Owomoyela 1992:84).

Owomoyela (1992:84) states that “the adoption of European languages by Africans implies a degradation of their African cultural identity [and] such behavior is also demeaning”. He argues: “The African elite who use European languages identify more closely with Europeans than with Africans who do not use these languages.”

In Section 6.3.1.1 the study explores the complex language issue as it relates to African identity and, in turn, whether this has a bearing on the need for separate African studies collections in Africa.

#### **2.4.2 Orality**

The original African stories were never recorded but handed down orally generation after generation. “Literary scholars recognize the intrinsic value of African oral traditions and the significant influence they have had on African writing. Perhaps these traditions are more than sources and influences; perhaps they are paradigms for the future of African verbal creativity” (Owomoyela 1992:92). He suggests that “a concerted effort to promote orality remains the most effective way of restoring African languages to primacy in all aspects of African life” (Owomoyela 1992:92).

According to Ngũgĩ wa Thiongo (Global Literacy Project 2002), “you can’t study African literatures without studying the particular cultures and oral traditions from which Africans draw their plots, styles and metaphors”.

It needs to be noted that there is a movement, known as *the troika*:

“in their manifesto, *Towards the Decolonization of African Literature*, the troika – as Chinweizu, Onwucheka Jemie, and Ihechukwu Madubuike are known popularly in Nigeria and in African literary circles – defend African culture against what they perceive as the imperialist thrust of contemporary literary theory and critical methodologies. They assert what should be obvious about the ‘Africanness’ of African literatures. African literature, they write, “has its own traditions, models and norms . . . And its historical and cultural imperatives impose upon it concerns and constraints quite different, sometimes altogether antithetical to the European”” (Tapping 1990:73).

This statement emphasises the divide between Eurocentric and Afrocentric literature which is explored in the study.



## **2.5 African literature, Africanisation and the challenges facing African library collections**

An aspect of the research problem relates to the definition of African literature. This question was posed as far back as 1971 when Zell and Silver (1971:vii) posed the question: “What is African literature and what makes an African writer?” Zell and Silver contend the definition has occasioned much debate:

“Is it the literature written *in* Africa, or *about* Africa? Is it solely the literature produced by people living in or originating in Africa; or can the writings of a non-African who utilizes an African setting [such as Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*] be accepted as African literature? Does African literature embrace only the indigenous languages, or should it include English, French, Portuguese, Afrikaans? Then there is the question of boundaries: North African writing belongs to such a radically different tradition from that of literature south of the Sahara ... What is the position of native white South African writers?” (Zell and Silver 1971:vii).

The Afrocentric paradigm as outlined above informs these questions, especially regarding location, time and space, agency and language.

Zell and Silver (1971:vii) state that in 1963 a seminar was held at Fourah Bay College in Freetown, Sierra Leone, on African literature and the universities, whereby “a motion was put forward which defined African literature as ‘any work in which an African setting is authentically handled, or to which experiences which originate in Africa are integral’”. Chinua Achebe, whose primary focus has been African identity, felt “that one cannot cram African literature into a small, neat definition, and goes on to say, ‘I do not see African literature as one unit but as a group of associated units – in fact the sum total of all the national and ethnic literatures of Africa.’ He believes that any attempt to define African literature in terms that overlook the complexities of the African scene at present is doomed to failure” (Zell and Silver 1971:vii).

Zell and Silver (1971:vi) inform us that “the German scholar Janheinz Jahn, too, has his own concept of ‘Neo-African literature’”. Jahn argues that works by writers from Africa, including the African diaspora, cannot be classified by the language, birthplace or colour of skin. Jahn proposes that [Neo-African] “literatures can only be classified by style and by the attitudes revealed” (Jahn 1968:21).

As Zell and Silver (1971:vii) stated in 1971: “Whatever the definitions, African literature in English is still in its infancy.” The study draws on Asante’s Afrocentric paradigm, as well as authors McLaren (2009), Wright (2002), Menang (2001) and Gandhi (2012) as frameworks when investigating whether the author’s language, style of writing, place of birth, or ethnicity determine African literature. These frameworks assisted the researcher to establish an updated definition of African literature.

Thirty years later Ngũgĩ wa Thiongo (Global Literacy Project 2002) contends there is still an ongoing debate regarding what constitutes African literature. “Are we talking about literature about Africa or the African experience? Was it literature written by Africans? What about a non-African who wrote about Africa? What if an African set his work in Greenland – does this qualify?” Ngugi explains that these questions “were raised at the conference of African writers of English Expression which included only English-writing African authors because those that wrote in African languages were not invited” (Global Literacy Project 2002).

As mentioned above, Achebe is often considered synonymous with African identity. His works are often critical of the way that Western literature has portrayed Africans and he explores many of the detrimental effects that centuries of colonialism has had on the continent. Gikandi (2001:5) states that he is “often taken to task for having claimed, or rather repeated the claim, that Achebe was the person who invented African literature”. Gikandi (2001:5) believes that no other African writer has

“had the effect Achebe had on the establishment and reconfiguration of an African literary tradition; none of them were able to enter and interrupt the institutions of exegesis and education the same way he did; none were able to establish the terms by which African literature was produced, circulated, and interpreted. So the question that needs to be addressed in any tribute to Achebe is not why he was the person who invented African literature as an institutional practice, but what exactly accounted for the foundational and transformative character of his works, not to mention the monumentality”.

Gikandi (2001:5) then poses the pertinent question: “Why must *Things Fall Apart* always occupy the inaugural moment of African literary history?” In order to answer this question and the further claim made by Gikandi (2001:7) that “Achebe is the person who invented African culture as it is now circulated within the institutions of interpretation”, the current

research enlarged on the framework as proposed by Gikandi (2001:7) who states: “By making a pragmatic rather than a theoretical or historical argument, I want to insist that Achebe’s invention in the already existing colonial and Pan-African libraries transformed the idea of Africa and that his project has indeed valorized the idea of culture in the thinking of African worlds.”

Hart (2002) confronts many of the challenges facing African studies libraries in South Africa today. She wrote a paper titled ‘Africana Collections in South Africa’, outlining recent legislation that affects access to information in South Africa. She states that “the University of Cape Town serves to illustrate many of the current issues that face libraries and archives in South Africa” (Hart 2002:59). At beginning of 2001, Professor Al Kagan, from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, was invited to act as a consultant to look at the collections in the African Studies Library at the University of Cape Town. He “assisted in the process of drawing up a mission statement and new collection development policy” (Hart 2002:59). This study draws on this expertise. In addition, this policy framework assisted in answering some of the research questions listed above, as well as those posed by Darch (2004:190,192): “Why put African materials in Special Collections?”; “What are African Studies?” and the problems of the oppressed versus the oppressor (colonisers), (Eurocentric versus Afrocentric) in the drawing up of collection development policies for African Studies which include “the need to collect materials by Africans, in African languages, in European languages as well as the oral tradition” to ensure that the voice of the oppressed is heard (Hart 2002:61).

The factor of ‘the Africanization of poverty’ needed to be considered. “Those who advocate Africanization seem to forget that they are asking for the replacement of Euro-American ideas with those of Africa without demonstrating that those African ideas are sustainable and able to sustain those who advocate them” (Omotosa 1997:15). This discussion ties in with the financial and currency challenges facing library collections in Africa highlighted by Hart (2002:61-62) and is addressed in Section 6.6.

## **2.6 Historical research**

As mentioned in Section 1.5, the study required archival research as well as survey research using questionnaires and interviews within an interpretative framework. One of the key

questions of the research is: “What is the origin of CALS as a special collection, and what were the original custodial obligations? Have these obligations been changed by subsequent policy development and/or by practice?” These questions relate to the history and provenance of CALS. To this end, the researcher needed to find the meaning of events and policies and try to make sense of them. It is important in archival/historical research to consider “the currents and countercurrents of present and past events, with the hope of discerning patterns that tie them all together” (Leedy and Ormrod 2001:172). Leedy and Ormrod (2001:172) further state that “the heart of historical research is not, as with any other type of research, the accumulation of the facts, but rather the interpretation of the facts”. It is thus the interpretation of the data that forms the crux of the research. Although events seem to happen randomly, “if you study any sequence of events, you will inevitably begin to see patterns that tie them together and make them meaningful ... The task of the historical researcher is not merely to describe *what* events happened but to present a *factually supported rationale* to explain *why* they happened” (Leedy and Ormrod 2001:172).

Connaway and Powell (2010:245) explain that it is important to distinguish between true historical research and mere chronology.

“Chronology [although an important first step] can be defined as simply the describing of events in the order of their occurrence, a process similar to the older concept of historical research ... True historical research (historiography) is concerned with analyzing and interpreting the meaning of historical events within their contexts. It is the process by which a researcher is able to reach a conclusion as to the probable truth of an event in the past by studying objects [and documents] available for observation in the present.”

Furthermore, Connaway and Powell (2010:245) point out that history has two dimensions:

- (i) Historical time (chronology) which considers the spacing of events and patterns; and
- (ii) Historical space which refers to the geographical location.

Many of the historical documents and records (the primary sources) pertinent to this study are to be found in the UKZN archives located on the Pietermaritzburg campus. Evaluating and interpreting historical data is expounded on in Chapter 7.

## 2.7 Interpretive paradigm

The study employed survey research using questionnaires and interviews within an interpretive framework as outlined in Section 1.5.

Thomas (2009:78) describes an interpretive paradigm:

“The researcher aims to understand the particular, contributing to building a framework of ‘multiple realities’. The researcher uses (for example) unstructured observation, case study, unstructured interview, participant observation. The researcher aims to be an insider, interacting with participants. The researcher looks at perceptions, feelings, ideas, thoughts, actions as heard or observed emergent patterns. The design of the research is flexible.”

In this study, semi-structured interviews were used. The study also used questionnaires to evaluate user perceptions of CALS. To this purpose, Neuman (1991:62) explains:

“[Interpretive researchers] spend numerous hours in direct personal contact with those being studied. Interpretative researchers also analyse transcripts of conversations or study videotapes of behaviour in extraordinary detail, looking for subtle nonverbal communication, because they want to understand details of interactions in their context. The interpretive researcher uses rigorous and detailed methods to gather large quantities of qualitative data in the form of specific details.”

Neuman (1991:62) suggests: “The interpretative approach is the systematic analysis of socially meaningful action through the direct detailed observation of people in natural settings in order to arrive at understandings and interpretations of how people create and maintain their social worlds.” Cohen and Manion (1994:36) similarly state that interpretative approaches “focus on action”. In this study it is thus imperative for the researcher to “share the feelings and interpretations of the subjects being studied and learn to see things through their eyes”, since the interpretative approach is one in which social researchers should study meaningful social action, not just the external or observable behaviour of people. Social action is action to which people attach subjective meaning, activity with a purpose or intent” (Neuman 1991:62).

This framework was used in this study as the intent of the researcher was to evaluate user perceptions of CALS in order to answer the key questions of whether CALS is fulfilling

its role in its contribution to African Studies within UKZN and the wider academic/research community and what are the challenges facing CALS and special collections in general?

An important aspect of the study, as mentioned above, is the Africanisation debate: what constitutes Africanisation and how does CALS contribute to and facilitate African literary studies? In addition, the question about the geographical location of African studies, as well as whether or not African literature should be separated from academic libraries or be an integral part of all academic libraries, formed part of the survey and is addressed by means of a literature search and semi-structured interviews. The theories of Africanisation and Afrocentrism as postulated by Asante, and their impact on African studies centres, are investigated by means of a literature search and semi-structured interviews.

## **2.8 Mann's framework**

The study also uses the framework offered by Mann (2012) to guide the evaluation of CALS as noted in Section 1.5. Mann “specializes in strategy and leadership” (Mann 2009: paragraph 1). Furthermore, “his greatest strength is his ability to communicate sophisticated and complex ideas in an easily understood, stimulating and engaging manner”, hence appropriate for application to this study. Although Mann's forte is in the business field rather than that of libraries, there is an increasing need for library directors, and especially those tasked with directing special collections in these times of budget cuts, to be able managers. His management skills were useful in guiding the construction of the research instruments for this study. CALS is the ‘organisation’ that is being studied and Mann's questions offered a functional strategy which was adapted to investigate the uncertain future of the Centre's ‘environment’ as outlined below. It was hoped that Mann's questions would facilitate the interviewer to engage in ‘profitable’ and worthwhile interviews.

The application of Mann's functional strategy to the study links with the interpretative framework that guided the study, in that the research instruments, which were based to some extent on Mann's ideas, were a means of obtaining specific details in an attempt to evaluate CALS through conducting semi-structured interviews.

Mann's nine questions which were adapted to construct the data collection instruments were as follows:

Question 1: What is the profile of our current, most loyal clients? And Question 2: Who do we want to deal with? [CALs's users: undergraduates, graduates and researchers]

Question 3: What is the generic category benefit of our offering? [Is CALs meeting the users' expectations? CALs's role in the university]

Question 4: What do clients do with our offering after purchasing it? [Do users meet the expectations of CALs by producing research theses, books and academic articles?]

Question 5: What makes us unique? [What justifies the existence of CALs? Is it viable?]

Question 6: What is the top team most passionate about? [To ascertain the goals of the board members; directors; original foundation]

Question 7: At what can we be the best in the world? [What can CALs do to improve?]

Question 8: Where do we have the ability to earn the most profit? [To demonstrate the scholarly activities of CALs, for example, published articles, newsletters and the website, which helps to promote CALs]

Question 9: What drives our engine? [CALs's goals and aspirations]

## **2.9 Summary**

This chapter outlined the overarching theoretical framework of Afrocentrism as put forward by Asante, emphasising the importance of location and agency as it applies to this study. The concepts of Afrocentricity versus Eurocentricism, African literature, Africansation, diasporic literature, African identity, language, orality and the challenges facing African libraries were discussed. The chapter further analysed the historical and interpretive research paradigms employed by the study. Finally, Mann's nine questions (2012) adapted to construct the instruments were outlined.

The next four chapters present the literature review.

## **Chapter 3**

### **The Original Vision for CALS: The History and Provenance of the Centre for African Literary Studies**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

In response to the research problem central to the study which is to ascertain what the role of the Centre for African Literary Studies (CALS) as a University of KwaZulu-Natal special collection constitutes and to what extent the Centre is able to fulfil its role in facilitating and enabling African scholarship at UKZN and in the broader community, Chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6 discuss the key questions of the study in depth.

Chapter 3 discusses the literature review, outlines the origin of CALS as a special collection, which includes a brief background to CALS, the original motives and objectives of UKZN for the establishment of CALS, the UKZN Policy on the Establishment of New Research Centres or Units, and the governance of CALS.

Chapter 4 foregrounds the reality of CALS, including its governance and the current UKZN policies that promote or hinder CALS in its contribution as a special collection for African literary studies. Chapter 5 highlights the gap between the original vision, the reality and how to close the gap. Chapter 6 examines what constitutes African literature as well as the role played by CALS in the University's academic curricula and the challenges facing African collections and CALS in particular.

#### **3.2 The literature review**

Thomas (2009:59) states that the literature review is “a major contributor to the development” of a project. “The literature exists in many shapes and forms” and researchers need to be discriminating in what they choose to include; be critically aware in their understanding and interpretation of their readings; and “weave their contributions into a narrative rather than a list.”

University of Southern California Libraries (USC 2014) outlines the purpose of the literature review:



- “Place each work in the context of its contribution to the understanding of the research problem.
- Describe the relationship of each work to the others under consideration.
- Identify new ways to interpret and shed light on any gaps in previous research.
- Resolve conflicts amongst seemingly contradictory previous studies.
- Identify areas of prior scholarship to prevent duplication of effort.
- Point the way in fulfilling a need for additional research.
- Locate your own research within the context of existing literature.”

Similarly, Creswell (2003:29-30) maintains that literature reviews share the results of other closely related studies and fill in gaps and extend prior studies. They “provide a framework for establishing the importance of the study as well as a benchmark for comparing the results of a study with other findings”.

It is important to note that there are various types of literature review. These include argumentative, integrative, methodological, systematic, theoretical, and historical reviews. Pertinent to the current study is the historical review. As “few things rest in isolation from historical precedent”, USC succinctly describes this type of review:

“Historical reviews are focused on examining research throughout a period of time, often starting with the first time an issue, concept, theory, phenomena emerged in the literature, then tracing its evolution within the scholarship of a discipline. The purpose is to place research in a historical context to show familiarity with state-of-the-art developments and to identify the likely directions for future research ... History will include the chronological progression of the field, the literature or an idea that is necessary to understand the literature review, if the body of the literature review is not already a chronology” (USC 2014).

Sections included in a historical literature review include a chronological review with subsections for each vital time period and a thematic review with subtopics based upon factors that relate to the theme or issue. It is, however, important to include only what is necessary for the reader to locate the study within the larger scholarship framework (USC 2014). The current study adopts a chronological review in the sense that it investigates the original policy and custodial intentions by UKZN and the founders of CALS, progressing to the present circumstances. Thematic analysis was undertaken for the qualitative analysis (see Chapter 9). The literature search thus enables the researcher to delineate and focus the research.

### **3.3 CALS as a UKZN special collection: a brief synopsis**

As mentioned in Section 1.2.1 above, CALS initially came into being to house the Bernth Lindfors Collection. It was launched in 2004 and was officially opened by the then national Minister of Arts and Culture, Pallo Jordan. The first acting directors were Professor Liz Gunner, a professor of English at Natal University who was seconded to CALS to act as director (January 2004 to December 2005), followed by Professor Jenny Clarence-Fincham in 2006, the then deputy dean of Human Development and Social Sciences (HDSS) at UKZN. The first substantive director was the late Professor Mbulelo Mzamane (January 2007 to December 2009). Thereafter the acting directors were Professor Kunene, the then deputy dean of HDSS (UKZN) for a short spell between January 2010 and July 2010; Professor Mbongeni Malaba, professor of English Studies at UKZN (July 2010 to April 2011); Professors Christine Stilwell (May 2011 to December 2013) and Ruth Hoskins (January 2014 to December 2014) of Information Studies, UKZN; and Professor Mandy Goedhals of the History Department, UKZN (January 2015 to July 2016). There is no current director. The above professors “brought a wealth of expertise and knowledge to the centre” which is enlarged on in this study (UKZN 2013a).

CALS is situated at Gate House, Milner Road, Main Campus, Pietermaritzburg. CALS is a library/archive consisting of books, numerous journals, microfilms, audio tapes, videos, photocopies, photographs, newspaper clippings and various research notes and materials specialising in African literary studies. The collection is available to staff and students of the University, international researchers and visitors, postgraduate and undergraduate students from other South African tertiary institutions, scholars, and members of the general public. Lectures, seminars and conferences, research, publications and community outreach are among the programmes offered by the Centre (UKZN 2013a).

In its attempt to become a Centre of Excellence,

“CALS is committed to growing its holdings and extending its focus beyond African literature written in English. While initially CALS’s programmes and activities were centred on imaginative writing and literary studies, it is imperative that an African University should prioritise African Studies, with CALS as its recognisable ‘African face’. The vision of the centre is to develop African Studies as an inter-disciplinary programme and thus set the University of

KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) on the path to becoming the ‘Premier University of African Scholarship’ and the ‘University of First Choice’ in African Studies” (UKZN 2013a).

Under Stilwell’s directorship, “a great effort was made in 2012 to build up the collection of titles in other local languages” (UKZN 2013a).

At a UKZN Special Collections Open Day held on 6 October 2011 in the grounds of the Campbell Collections in Durban, Professor Nelson Ijumba, the then UKZN Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Research, “in his welcome address emphasized the important role that the UKZN Special Collections play in enabling the ‘vision of UKZN to be a Premier University of African Scholarship’”. He “identified research as central to the elevation of the University’s status in this sphere, arguing that innovative research was necessary to ‘play an effective role in the knowledge economy, which is underpinned by knowledge production and dissemination’” (Ijumba 2011b).

Karen Ijumba, the education officer for the UKZN special collections in her article in *Concord*, further stated that Nelson Ijumba emphasised the fact that the UKZN Special Collections,

“as ‘custodians of a wealth of data and information’ were key to the achievement of UKZN’s research ambitions as a whole, as they serve as research spaces for postgraduate, local and international researchers on ‘various aspects of African and Indigenous knowledge’... Creating awareness was key to ensuring these services reached their optimum potential, interacting with ‘various academic units of the University, so as to enhance exposure of the information to postgraduate students and other researchers’” (Ijumba 2011b).

Karen Ijumba also quoted Stilwell, who, at the Special Collections Open Day, “spoke on behalf of the youngest of the UKZN Special Collections” [namely CALS], and made the point that

“With nearly every book in the collection being written by an African, ... CALS’s Collections offer a uniquely African perspective on the world and could become a key intellectual and cultural resource and cornerstone for a scholarly contribution towards the African Renaissance; a goal that can be more hastily reached with continued donations of literary works. As a space, CALS has appropriately played host to book launches, such as de Meyer’s *The Changing Face of African Literature*, participants in the UKZN Centre for Creative Arts’ Time of the Writer and conferences, while at the same time serving as a growing ground for Information Studies students

through its internship programme. Capturing diversity in the use of its facilities, CALS continues to mature into its skin as a spring for new African literary scholarship” (Ijumba 2011b).

CALS’s programme includes library systems (acquisitions, cataloguing, library technical services), residencies, and fellowships, lectures, seminars and conferences, research, publications and community outreach (Stilwell 2011:3).

CALS is unique in its dual status as an accepted UKZN special collection as it is not formally managed and funded through the UKZN libraries, as is, for example, the Alan Paton Centre and Struggle Archives. This is enlarged on in the following chapters.

### **3.4 The Bernth Lindfors Collection**

In a personal communication (Lindfors 2011), Professor Emeritus of English and African Literatures at the University of Texas in Austin since 1976 (Zell 2001:2), explained to the researcher how he had commenced with his collection. He and his wife had been teaching in a boys’ boarding school in western Kenya. It was at Makerere in the 1960s that he first started reading African literature. The collection that UKZN acquired at the end of 2003 was based on the personal collection that he had built up over 40 years. This is enlarged on in Section 9.2.1. (For a full transcript of the letter see Appendix 8.)

As he explains in his letter, Lindfors is the founding editor of the prestigious journal *Research in African Literatures*. He is also editor of the bibliography *Black African Literature in English (BALE)*. CALS has an index linking photocopied articles to *BALE* which forms an important component of the collection. Professor Lindfors “amassed over the course of his career what is perhaps the largest private collection of African literature in the world” (CALS 2005a:3).

According to Hans Zell, a bibliographer at Hans Zell Publishing Consultants (Zell 2001:1), the Lindfors library of African literature

“is a rare and quite unique collection, unparalleled anywhere in the world ... The library is very comprehensive indeed ... it consists of approximately 11 500 items of books and pamphlets, complete or near complete back-issue runs of about 350 journals and magazines, a collection of cassette tapes, videos and other audiovisual materials, together with a very large collection of photocopies of articles which have appeared in journals other than those subscribed to, including

a large number of articles which have appeared in African newspapers. There is also a small but interesting collection of photographs and portraits of African writers”.

Zell (2001:1) also mentions that the collection covers most aspects of African literature, including fiction, drama, poetry, oral literature and folklore. It is a repository of popular literature, criticism, anthologies and collections, and also contains a wide variety of reference resources. There are collections of children’s literature, and a small number of dissertations on African literature, in print and microform formats. As well as the works of African writing, the collection includes general works on cultural background, studies of post-colonial and Commonwealth literatures, politically committed writing, and a special collection of West Indian writing. Furthermore, there is a section which is devoted to South African writing, both fiction and non-fiction, and it contains a very large number of first editions of all the leading white South African writers. Zell (2001:1) also points out that “most of the material is in English but there are also a substantial number of items of Francophone African literature, together with a large number of English translations of Francophone African novels”.

Of particular interest is Zell’s point:

“The collection is especially notable for its holdings of material published in Africa, including pamphlets and ephemera, such as a full collection of Onitsha market literature (a diverse selection acquired through Lindfors’ frequent travels to Nigeria). The collection includes a wealth of translations of African literature into other languages, including Russian, Japanese and Chinese – an interesting resource for comparative studies. Also in the collection is a large body of newspaper clippings relating to African authors and wide-ranging bibliographical resources for criticism about African literature” (Zell 2001:1-2; CALS 2005a:4).

CALS’s Annual Report (2005a:4) refers to the value of the journal collection: “The collection also has remarkably complete holdings of the scholarly journals that are published or have been published on literature in Africa, journals from Africa itself, America, France, England, Germany and India. Our singular strength is that all of this material is accessible at one location.”

The report also explains the focus of the collection:

“While other collections of Africana provide a more general coverage, the CALS collection provides a distinct focus on literary, symbolic and expressive forms originating from the African

continent. It features comprehensive collections of the works of prominent African novelists (including Achebe, Soyinka, Beti, Okri, Gordimer, Coetzee) and extensive resources of criticism about these texts. It includes rare books, such as early editions of the slave narratives of Ignatius Sancho and Olaudah Equiano, an autographed first edition of Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, and reader's inspection copies of certain well-known books, providing the literary researcher the chance to undertake comparative manuscript studies" (CALs 2005a:4).

The collection covers the period from the beginning of the 1950s to 2000, and includes many first editions, almost 700 autographed copies, and many translations (Zell 2001:2). Thus it is said that Lindfors had collected the most comprehensive collection in the world of books published in Africa (Zell 2001:1).

### **3.5 The initiative and original motives that brought CALS into being**

Professor David Attwell, of the University of Natal Department of English at the time, was actively involved in acquiring the Lindfors Collection. Attwell commented in 2004 that "The collection is sufficiently large and representative enough to make a significant difference to global flows of scholarship on African literature" (Jenvey 2004).

Dr Christopher Merrett, then director of administration and ex-Pietermaritzburg librarian, drafted a proposal for the "acquisition of Africa's Literary Archive", which sought this archive "... as a permanent collection at the University of Natal for the use of literary scholars from further afield". The proposal outlined the proposed location of CALS and the reasons why the University of Natal, and in particular the Pietermaritzburg campus, should acquire the collection:

"It would be hugely appropriate for a South African university to house and manage the Archive [because], despite the stresses it is under, the South African Higher Education sector still enjoys a degree of prosperity and stability which is unmatched elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa" (Merrett 2001:1).

Another argument put forward by Merrett for its location in South Africa was that "South African literary scholars were divided between those in exile and those at home and the country was unable to take its rightful place in the continent's scholarship". Furthermore, with South Africa "now addressing the legacy of its past, partly by initiating a redefinition of Africa's potential through the discourse of the African Renaissance, it could give some

substance to that discourse by housing and managing what is effectively Africa's bibliography and archive".

The argument for its location on the Pietermaritzburg campus was that Pietermaritzburg had "played an important role in South Africa's own literary history, being the birthplace of literary figures such as Herbert and Rolfes Dhlomo, Bessie Head and Alan Paton"; Pietermaritzburg is "particularly appropriate, [being] convenient, spacious and tranquil, and therefore conducive to scholarship, and yet easily accessible by air or road on the Johannesburg–Durban axis. A suitable house on the Pietermaritzburg Campus has been identified ... [and] there would be obvious synergies with the Alan Paton Centre ... a stone's throw away from the intended site".

Further motivation drew on location of the other libraries in the vicinity, stipulating that "The campus enjoys one of the most efficiently run university libraries in South Africa ... The Natal Society Library in the city centre is both a State Deposit Library and an important archive in its own right, with a special collection of Africana". The Campbell Collections and Africa's Literary Archive would no doubt complement each other, since "the University of Natal has an inter-institutional co-operation agreement in place with the Ohio State University which has the largest Department of African and African American Studies in the United States" and so "the acquisition of the Literary Archive would make further collaboration possible in the form of exchanges of both faculty and postgraduate students" (Merrett 2001:2-3).

Regarding staffing, an important theme of this study, the proposal stated that "the combined staff resources in African Literary Studies of the two campuses of the University of Natal are unmatched in South Africa" and it cites Professor David Maughan Brown (then Acting Vice-Chancellor) and Professor Emmanuel Ngara (then Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Students and Transformation) as scholars of African literature who would provide "invaluable encouragement and leadership" (Merrett 2001:3). He also cites Attwell and Gunner, who served on the editorial boards of every southern African journal regularly publishing African literary research, and Dr Catherine Woeber, who has a PhD in African literature. On the Durban campus, Professors Michael Chapman, Duncan Brown, Michael Green and Margaret Daymond are cited as eminent scholars in the field of African literary studies.

Another important theme consistent with this study concerns the budget. Merrett's proposal included a budget with estimates for four components: (i) purchasing, insuring and shipping the collection; (ii) renovation of facilities (at the Old Gate House); (iii) scholarships and fellowships; and (iv) continuing purchases, running expenses and library staff. Importantly, and of special significance to this study, the budget states that an "endowment of R4 000 000 would be needed if annual fund-raising is to be avoided to support the annual costs" (Merrett 2001:6).

The University of Natal (UN) Senate Minutes (UN 2003:Minute 7:1) affirm that Atwell was instrumental in acquiring, with donor funding, what is considered "the most extensive and significant collection of material on African Literary Studies: the Bernth Lindfors Collection ...". The board agreed that a Centre for African Literary Studies should be established to house this collection and it should be physically located at the Old Gate House on the Pietermaritzburg campus. A steering committee was to be set up to facilitate the establishment of the Centre consisting of Professors Clarence-Fincham, Gunner, Brown, Messrs Merrett, Howe [the architect] and Van Dyk and a representative from the library. The Faculty Research Committee proposed a constitution for the Centre (UN 2003:Minute 7.1). Mr Bruno van Dyk (then Director of the UKZN Foundation, the fund-raising arm of the University) requested guidance with the recruitment of a centre director; the recruitment of a centre librarian/administrator; the transportation of the collection; the cataloguing of the collection; and the line management of the collection (Van Dyk n.d.:1).

It should be noted that the recruitment of the centre director and the centre librarian and administrator have been ongoing unresolved issues and are discussed below.

Horner (2004) states that "the impressive resource may well have remained in the U forever were it not for the intervention of Professor David Attwell". Attwell had completed his thesis under the supervision of Lindfors at the University of Texas in the mid-1980s and he "convinced Lindfors it was time to return the collection to Africa". With R1m 'seed money' from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Attwell set about persuading donors to fund the return of the collection. The US-Irish philanthropic organisation, Atlantic Philanthropies, the Department of Arts and Culture, and the Anglo American Chairman's Fund agreed jointly to put up the necessary funds of R6m, R1m, and R1m respectively. The purchase price of the collection was \$436 000 (Van Dyk n.d.:1).



Thus Attwell can be credited as the main initiator for bringing the Lindfors Collection to Africa.

### **3.5.1 The UKZN policy on the establishment of new research centres or units** (for full details see Appendix 12a)

According to the UKZN Policy Research Policy IV on Institutes, Centres and Units, 2.1 (UKZN 2014b:5) (unchanged since the UN Policy at the time of the establishment of CALS in 2004), the following requirements are necessary when establishing a new Centre at UKZN:

“Once a new research centre is established, the prospective Head of the proposed Centre or Unit will, through the Board(s) of the appropriate Schools and Colleges, submit to the University Research Strategy Group for evaluation a completed application form embodying: a constitution listing the objectives, goals and expected outputs, confirmation of approval by the relevant College Academic Affairs Board(s); a short curriculum vitae of the proposed Director has to be submitted, and each of the members of the research team, together with their agreement to participate.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC Research), in consultation with the University Research Strategy Group, will appoint not more than three external reviewers to review the application regarding Potential contribution to research and development; Impact on the academic activities of related Schools and Colleges; Research track records of the Principal Investigator and the research team; and Alignment of the goals of the proposed Centre or Unit with the University’s Vision and Mission. If the result of the review process is favourable, the DVC (Research) will recommend the establishment of the Research Centre/Unit to the College Academic Affairs Boards, Senate and Council.”

Since the result of the review process for the establishment of CALS was favourable, as outlined above in Section 3.5, a constitution for CALS was duly drawn up, outlining the objectives, goals and expected outputs (see Appendix 11).

### **3.5.2 Review and disestablishment of centres and units (see Section 4.4.3)**

A crucial point relating to this study is that as mentioned in Section 1.2.2, there were no substantial reviews carried out at CALS every five years. However, an external review was carried out in November 2013, and is discussed in Section 4.4.4.

### **3.5.3 Funding**

Professor Bernth Lindfors had “been given numerous offers from various institutions in other parts of the world, [but he gave] the University of Natal the offer of first refusal” (Van Dyk 2002b:1).

The University of Natal “purchased the Lindfors Collection in 2004 and created the Centre for African Literary Studies (CALS) to house it” (CALS 2005a:3).

However, once the University had decided to purchase the collection and establish the Centre, it was necessary to obtain the required funding (as explained above in Section 3.5). The initiative was supported by the UKZN Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Makgoba (Arthur 2002:1).

It has been recorded that “when CALS was first established it was intended to be a Centre that would be self-sufficient” (University of KwaZulu-Natal 2013b:14).

Makgoba (VC UKZN) had written a letter to the primary funder, Gerald Kraak (Director of Atlantic Philanthropies), confirming UKZN’s undertaking to ensure the sustainability of CALS (Makgoba 2003:1).

Funding has been a problem with CALS from the outset and there were many ‘red flags’ besides that of Merrett (2001:6) warning of potential future budgeting problems, especially in view of the fact that CALS was to be externally funded.

Greg Arthur, the project manager from the Anglo American Chairman’s fund, raised (amongst others) an important issue in connection with the funding application for the proposed Lindfors Library. He wrote:

“We are also aware that many of the collections in the country are under pressure because of lack of funding and resources. We would appreciate a report from the University on the collections that it currently owns/administers which demonstrates its experience in handling these

pressures. Please name the collections and give details of when they were acquired, how their maintenance and running costs are being financed, where they are housed and how they are utilized by the University and others, if applicable. An indication of attendance numbers would be helpful if these are available” (Arthur 2002:1).

Merrett responded to the letter, and in turn wrote to Van Dyk (Merrett n.d.:1-2) in which he alludes to having to look to university library funds “to sustain in part the Lindfors Collection in the future”. Merrett explained that the “original proposal included a budget component concerned not just with purchase but also with travelling and subsistence costs because most of the material that will need adding to the collection will not be purchasable through normal commercial sources”. What is noteworthy is that Merrett stated that “there is a possibility that the University Library budget will be able to help out with some purchase costs ... but clearly the peripatetic role of the Lindfors Librarian will need special funding”.

The researcher has not been able to trace any evidence that the university library ever actually helped out with purchase costs of material and the funding of the librarian remains a problem to this day. However, the university library did assist with the cataloguing of the CALS material and the ordering of journals until 2013, which is expanded on in Chapter 5.

The Board resolved to recommend to Senate “that in order for the Centre to grow, it would require a substantial budget to reach its full potential”. As is referred to throughout this study, staffing and a sufficient and sustainable budget have constantly hindered the Centre in its ability to function at full capacity as a research centre.

### **3.6 The establishment of CALS as a special collection**

This section provides an account of the early years of CALS between 2004 and 2005, and enlarges on the original motives for the establishment of CALS as well as the original custodial obligations.

#### **3.6.1 The years 2004–2005 – the arrival of the Lindfors Collection – staffing and the establishing of templates for annual events**

Gunner (2004a:1) gives a description of the initial purpose, vision and contents of the Centre, stating that CALS had been “conceived as a dynamic research centre for the study of African literatures, with its vast store of books, periodicals and critical works (13 000 in all), from the

personal library of Professor Bernth Lindfors”. The collection would “undoubtedly provide a much needed source for scholars in South Africa, from the African region as a whole and will attract researchers from Europe and North America as well”. Gunner added that the Centre “should make a significant and lasting contribution to cultural and intellectual capital in the region and will strengthen the capacity of regional scholars to carry out first rate research on the literatures of Africa” (Gunner 2004b:1). Thus we can deduce that Gunner envisaged a lively and ‘dynamic’ Centre, buzzing with researchers. In 2009, as described below in Section 3.7.1, McCracken enlarges on this theme.

Gunner (2004a:2) also provides a detailed account of the transportation of the books from the US to their destination at CALS. The Lindfors library (consisting of 343 cartons) was personally packed by Lindfors, transported from a base near Austin to Houston, and then shipped from Houston, Texas, at the end of October 2003 on board the M/V MSC Regina via Bermuda; it arrived in the Durban docks on 2 December 2003. Thus “the precious books by African authors from all parts of the continent headed ‘back to Africa’”. “The books were then transported to storage in Pietermaritzburg and were offloaded and deposited in the refurbished and expanded Old Gate House, on the Pietermaritzburg Campus on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2004. The Old Gate House was to become known as the Centre for African Literary Studies (CALS)”. Gunner notes that “the unpacking and the sorting of the books and periodicals began on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February and [was] overseen by Ms Margie Gray, a Pietermaritzburg Campus librarian, and assisted by a dedicated team of [post-graduate] students, all of whom will be using the collection when it is fully catalogued and open to the public” (Gunner 2004a:2).

In the same year Gunner recorded that CALS now had its own constitution which had been ratified by Senate and the governing body of the University. The staff component at that stage was herself, and the acting director, seconded from English Studies for 2004, as well as the temporary library officer, the graduate assistants, and a one day a week administrative assistant (Gunner 2004a:2).

The post of acting curator, funded by the Centre, was filled on 1 April 2004 by Ms Nomonde Maqubela and Ms Andrea Vorster was the temporary library officer. In addition, there was a half-day a week administrative officer, and four graduate assistants of whom two were Anglophone and two Francophone. And so began the time-consuming process of the detailed

classifying and cataloguing of the books. “Only when this is complete can we finally open our doors to researchers from the universities of the region, from Africa and from further afield,” stated Gunner. The offices were “up and running” and all the basic equipment, computers, fax machine, phone connections and printer and photocopier had been installed, affirmed Gunner (2004a:1-2). In retrospect, Gunner underestimated the staff complement required to run such a centre.

The first Open Day was held on 25 May 2004 with about 70 people attending, “in order to alert the rest of the University community to our existence as an important new archive and research centre” (Gunner 2004a:2). According to Gunner (2004a), CALS hosted a series of talks by specialists on Lusophone and Francophone writing, on Africa’s literary journals and magazines, and on African popular literature. CALS conducted tours of the collection (both in English and French) and showed videos from the collection.

On 7 September 2004 CALS held its official opening, inviting many dignitaries and attended by Lindfors and a number of ambassadors and writers from Africa, “as without them there could be no African Literary Archive” (Gunner 2004a:2).

A conference was held in conjunction with the official launching of *CALS: Imagining Texts: Media and Popular Literature in Africa* from 9–12 September 2004.

As part of CALS’s research mandate to facilitate and promote the study of African literature, the Centre established the annual Modisane Memorial Lecture, a public lecture on some aspect of African literature. The annual lecture is in memory of the late writer and broadcaster Bloke Modisane, best known for his autobiography *Blame Me on History*. Prominent scholars of African literature were invited to give this lecture. The Modisane Lecture was advertised widely and attracted a large audience, including the general public. The lectures were published afterwards by the Centre. The first of the annual CALS Bloke Modisane Memorial Lectures was given by Professor F. Abiola Irele, Professor in the Department of African and American Studies and Department of Romance Languages and Literatures at Harvard University. The second annual Bloke Modisane Memorial Lecture was given by Professor James Ogude, head of the Department of African Literature at the University of the Witwatersrand and author of *Ngugi’s Novels and African History*. Both lectures were published by the Centre (Gunner 2004b:2; CALS 2005a:5,7).

In keeping with CALS's vision to provide intellectual leadership in African literary (and interdisciplinary) studies (Gunner 2004a:2), research seminars were held at CALS, with a total of 17 held in 2005. The first two CALS doctoral fellows were Rogier Courau, a University of Natal master's graduate, and Nompumelelo Zondi, a lecturer in the isiZulu department, UKZN (CALS 2005a:19-21).

CALS established links with the Centre for Creative Arts, UKZN, Durban and their annual Time of the Writer Festivals. Three writers from the Time of the Writer Festival organized by the Centre for Creative Arts, spoke about and read from their work on the 6<sup>th</sup> April 2005. Poetry Africa (African Poets Seminar) took place on the 13<sup>th</sup> October 2005 when three poets from the Poetry Africa Festival organized by the Centre for Creative Arts spoke about and read from their work (CALS 2005a:8).

From the above it is evident that Gunner laid the foundation for future established CALS events in that the *Time of the Writer*, *Poetry Africa*, seminars and lectures continue. However, the Bloke Modisane Annual Lecture has not been held for some time and no further CALS doctoral fellows were awarded on account of funding constraints.

### **3.6.2 The UKZN objectives for the establishment of CALS**

In 2005 Van Dyk emphasised the importance of CALS as a centre for research in the humanities:

“Research in African literatures is central to the vision of the UKZN which sees itself as ‘the Premier University of African Scholarship’. In addition, it is crucial that research in the Humanities is encouraged and supported in South Africa, as statistics indicate that these disciplines are still not producing research at the level that is being seen in the Sciences. This is according to the National Research Foundation” (Van Dyk 2005b).

Furthermore, Van Dyk gave the assurance that

“the importance of the further development of this valuable research is paramount, and the University of KwaZulu-Natal commits itself, with the assistance of enlightened grant-makers to reserve and grow the Centre for the benefit of researchers in African literatures from Africa and further afield” (Van Dyk 2005b:5).

Of special note, the Board stressed the importance that “the Centre should not be regarded as a museum but should be the hub of a growing collection of literary works and cultural

studies from all parts of Africa. The Centre would be a place of research and not a lending library” (UN 2003:Minute 7.1).

According to the CALS’s Constitution (CALS n.d.): the mission is: “To be a Centre of Excellence for research in the field of African Literary Studies, with the aim of developing, disseminating and applying its expertise as widely as possible.” Furthermore, the aim of the Centre is to promote and sustain excellent research in the field of African literary studies.

To this end, its objectives are listed below:

- “To manage the Lindfors Library.
- To initiate and /or co-ordinate research projects.
- To liaise with key researchers in the field through colloquia, and joint and reciprocal visits by scholars.
- To establish and develop links and collaborations with leading institutions working in the field of African Literary Studies, both nationally and internationally.
- To encourage and stimulate the publication of new research in the field of African Literary Studies.
- To assist in producing well-trained graduates at doctoral level and to provide the opportunity for researchers and graduate students from institutions both within and from outside South Africa to conduct research relating to African Literary Studies” (CALS n.d.:3).

In accordance with the aims and objectives of the Centre, Van Dyk (2004) suggested that “CALS’s operation should be considered as that which is appropriate for a formal Research Collection or Research Centre, which has formal relationships with Humanities, other relevant departments, and any future research facilities that may be created at the University or beyond”. Furthermore, CALS’s internal relationships should be with: teaching departments; Research Office; libraries; Finance and CALS’s external relationships should be with donors; and research networks; institutions (Van Dyk 2004).

To enhance the research capacity of CALS, in 2004 Professor Abdool Karim (Pro-Vice-Chancellor Research) proposed ‘key markers’ of research centre suggestions. These included the importance of acknowledging CALS’s publications to bring accolades to the Centre; the

importance of keeping a listing of students' theses registered which depended on CALS and a record of the students who had actually graduated; and how many people were using the Centre. Income should be generated by means of donations, grants, contracts and so on (CALS 2004:Minute 9.2).

The original motive for the establishment of CALS therefore was to facilitate and promote the study of African literature and to be a centre for research.

### **3.6.3 The original custodial obligations: the role of the director and staff**

#### **3.6.3.1 The director**

CALS's Constitution (CALS n.d.:4:1) indicates that the aims, objectives and governance of the Centre will be supervised by a director who will be assisted by a board and a management committee:

The director shall manage the centre with advice from a board and assistance from a management committee.

“Specifically, the Director’s duties and responsibilities include the following: development and oversight of the collections and books; organising conferences and colloquia, programming and budget planning within University guidelines” (Kalu 2010:16).

The director of the Centre shall be appointed by the University at professional level on a permanent basis (see Appendix 12(b) for the responsibilities of the director).

The reference to “on a permanent basis” is a contentious issue. Although Mzamane is referred to as the first substantive director of CALS, the first director of CALS was Gunner (Kalu 2010:16). It bears noting that in conflict with CALS’s constitution which states that the director shall be appointed on a permanent basis, the only director so appointed was Mzamane (2007–2009).

#### **3.6.3.2 The board** (see Appendix 12b for details)

The key point relating to CALS’s board is that it is required by the CALS Constitution (CALS n.d.:4.2.7(i)) to meet twice a year. (Additional meetings may be called from time to time at the discretion of the Centre director.) The board failed to meet twice a year in 2006



and from 2013 onwards after the DVC, Ayee, left UKZN (Stilwell 2013a:13). The last recorded board meeting was held on 28 March 2012.

### **3.7 The governance of CALS (2001–2009): the development of policy regarding the collection, derived from an historical study of policy statements by UKZN and its antecedent institutions, as well as changes in policy**

By virtue of the CALS Constitution (n.d.:8), the Centre has obligations to the University:

“8.1 The Centre shall strive to be recognized as a Centre of Excellence of the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

8.2 The Centre shall promote the name of the University and enhance its reputation through excellence in research, teaching and community service.”

The merger of the Durban-Westville, Durban and Pietermaritzburg Campuses in 2004 brought about changes in that the policies and schools were reorganised to align with the ‘college model’. These changes had implications for CALS.

In 2005 it was noted: “As the Constitution is not applicable in several instances to the new Faculty and School structures, it was recommended that the [CALS] Constitution be modified.” Chapman was to pursue this matter (CALS 2005b:Minute 5).

On 28 June 2005, Professor Michael Chapman, Head of the School of Literary Studies, Media and Creative Arts, wrote a memo to Professor Ahmed Bawa (Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research); Professor Fikile Mazibuko (DVC and Head, College of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences); McCracken (Dean of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences) and Van Dyk (Executive Director of the UKZN Foundation) to inform them that, “as matters stand, there are several difficulties, some technical, others concerning policy, staffing and funding, that require attention (Chapman 2005a:1-3) (see Appendix 12(c) for the full letter).

Chapman reminded his colleagues that, “The Centre for African Literary Studies ... is regarded as a flagship and a potential centre of excellence in the University of KwaZulu-Natal ... Minister Pallo Jordan was the guest of honour at the launch, and the Centre has received national and international publicity” (Chapman 2005a). However, he also alerted his colleagues to several warnings regarding CALS.

Firstly, regarding technical issues, Chapman argued that the current CALS constitution was formed before the introduction of the college model and no longer complied with the organisational structures of the merger from UN to UKZN. For example, the School of Language, Culture and Communication (Pietermaritzburg) to which CALS was attached, ceased to exist. The changes would attach CALS to the Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences which meant that in the future the dean would replace the former head of the now defunct School of Language, Culture and Communication. Furthermore, and in line with CALS's mandate of representing African literature, Chapman recommended that rather than continue further representation of English, it would be appropriate to encourage future developments in all languages of Africa, including French. Thus he recommended that the heads of the relevant schools be represented on the board. These schools included: Literary Studies; Media and Creative Arts; Language, Literature and Linguistics; and isiZulu (Chapman 2005a:1-2).

Accordingly, Chapman attached the revised CALS Constitution in which the Centre which CALS was originally attached to (namely the School of Language, Culture and Communication which no longer exists) amended to read:

“Preamble: The Centre shall be attached to the Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences.”

Secondly, Chapman addressed policy, staffing and funding issues. It is disquieting that Chapman stated: “Behind the fanfare [of the launch of CALS], one encounters a less than satisfactory state of affairs which, if not addressed systematically and urgently, could tarnish the image of the University” (Chapman 2005a:2). Unfortunately, this urgent warning was never heeded as elaborated on throughout this study.

Chapman outlined the necessary staff complement and budget needed for the Centre to “flourish”. He compared this with the situation which prevailed at the time (2005), highlighting there was no permanent director as required by the CALS constitution. Van Dyk had urgently intervened to secure funds for the then acting director, Gunner's employment for the remainder (July to December) of 2005. Regarding Van Dyk's intervention, Van Dyk (2015) clarified to the researcher that no new money had been raised to cover the director's salary but that the amount from Atlantic Philanthropies was in euros and “we made a windfall on the exchange rate which gave us some latitude to ask to redeploy the additional funds we

had made”. Chapman recommended that Gunner, an internationally recognised scholar in African literature, “be granted a final one-year contract in 2006 which would take her to her 65<sup>th</sup> year”. The University did not act upon this advice. The acting director’s salary had, however, “been transferred to the English Department as her salary was donor funded for one year, 2004” (CALs 2004:Minute 6).

Furthermore, Chapman stressed that, as far as the other staff were concerned, there was no stability. This staffing crisis reverberates throughout the history of CALs.

Crucially, regarding the funding of CALs, Chapman pointed out that “the Centre has no guaranteed source of future income” (Chapman 2005a:3).

Chapman’s plea in 2005 for the University to stabilise the issue of staffing and address budgetary stability at CALs did not materialise. There was no clear commitment from the University, as urged by Chapman. Thus Professor Chapman had warned as far back as 2005, only a year after the prestigious launch of CALs, that if there was no policy on the future, the Lindfors collection could “freeze”, rather than “develop” (Chapman 2005a:2).

In a similar vein, on 25 October 2005, Gunner wrote to Mazibuko, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, warning her that the Centre that she had worked so hard to establish “will slide if left without leadership.” She warned:

“I would very much appreciate some indication of when the post of Director for the Centre is to be advertised. I think the situation is most urgent and the Centre which has built up a very solid reputation will slide if left without leadership next year ... I believe the Centre has a very important role to play as research generator in the Humanities and as repository for one of the most important collections of African literature in the region and I hope the University will give it the support it deserves. It is one of the flagships of the Humanities Faculty, and the whole University” (Gunner 2005b).

Gunner was not reappointed as CALs’s director after the end of 2005. Professor Jenny Clarence-Fincham, Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences, became CALs’s acting director in 2006.

In line with Chapman’s recommendations regarding the University’s merger, it was noted that the “Management of the Centre shifted to the Deanery in 2005”. Furthermore, it was anticipated “that the Campbell and CALs Collections would attract African literary

researchers and scholars from UKZN, Africa and globally”. However, “although the Director of CALS is linked to a school, CALS and the Campbell Collection are not part of an academic unit” (Kalu 2010:16) (see Section 3.7.1 below).

The first permanent CALS director, Mzimane assumed duties in February 2007.

At the board meeting of 28 February 2007 (CALS 2007a:Minute 3), the meeting noted that Senate had adopted a new CALS constitution with minor changes, as outlined above.

In 2006 the board only met once in the year (6 May). According to CALS’s Constitution (CALS n.d.:4.2.2), the board is to meet twice a year. Of particular significance is the fact that the board has failed to meet from March 2012 until the present, as mentioned in Section 3.6.3.2 above.

### **3.7.1 Proposal for the transfer of the Centre for African Literary Studies (CALS) as an autonomous unit within the Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences (HDSS) to a cluster of Pietermaritzburg-based schools**

Donal McCracken, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences (HDSS), chaired the CALS board meetings in 2005 and 2006. In February 2009 McCracken addressed the governance of CALS. His proposal made suggestions regarding the location, funding and staffing of CALS. Under McCracken’s leadership, the faculty board recommended that CALS should be reconstituted and transferred as an autonomous unit to the Faculty of HDSS. “Spurred by the vision to use CALS’s Collections to advance African Scholarship, the faculty convinced the Senate to agree with and complete the move of CALS to HDSS in May 2009.” A second reason for the move “was that it was now necessary for the university to take over the funding for CALS because its relationship with Atlantic Philanthropies ended” (Kalu 2010:16-17).

In a document dated 7 February 2009, McCracken wrote a proposal to be approved by Senate in which he proposed “the transfer of the Centre for African Literary Studies (CALS) as an autonomous unit within HDSS to a cluster of Pietermaritzburg Schools”. Among the motivations for the proposal put forward by McCracken was the recognition that the Centre contains a valuable and unique collection of books relating to the African continent. In this regard it was proposed that the Centre become “the heart of the Faculty’s drive to advance African Scholarship” (McCracken 2009:1).

Secondly, as predicted by Chapman in 2005 (Section 3.7 above), the initial external funding for CALS had been exhausted and so it had become necessary for the University to assume the financial responsibility and to integrate the Centre into the school network, especially at Pietermaritzburg. McCracken estimated the annual costs involved, including the salaries, to be in the region of R1.5 million (McCracken 2009:1).

Regarding necessary changes in policy after the merger, McCracken (2009:1) explained that

“when the Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences was established in January 2005, there were in the region of 40 centres in the new faculty. Three of these, the Multi-Media Learning Centre, the Centre for Creative Arts and the Centre for African Literary Studies, were autonomous units within the faculty” (McCracken 2009:1).

McCracken further explained that the director of CALS at the time [Gunner] was closely linked to one of the schools but with the appointment of the current director [Mzamane], the line management changed to the office of the dean. By then, however, McCracken noted that

“the pioneering work of the centre was far advanced – the establishment of a valuable core library specialising in African literature, including the literature of Francophone Africa. The cataloguing of the rare Bernth Lindfors collection was progressing well” (McCracken 2009:1).

McCracken (2009:1) pointed out that "the Faculty has found that centres operate and account most effectively through the school structure for various reasons, among them being:

- “There can be a lively and on-going intellectual interaction between centre and disciplines”.
- “It has also been found that such an arrangement is generally conducive to accountability and transparent governance”.
- “Such an arrangement results in inclusiveness and increased alignment to the core business of the centre and university and a feeling of belonging. Inevitably this is less pronounced in a free-floating entity.”

Moreover, in the school structure, a centre can more easily have direct contact with students and thereby directly enrich the academic programme.

McCracken (2009:1) warned:

“The Centre for African Literary Studies, through no fault of its own, finds itself isolated from the mainstream faculty endeavour. It also finds itself starved of funding resultant from the centre entering the concluding phase of its relationship with Atlantic Philanthropies, the original donor. Though the university does fund the salary of the Director, the shortfall of some R1.1 million will have to be addressed **as a matter of urgency**” (author’s emphasis).

It bears reminding that previous warnings about funding had been sounded by Merrett (2001:6); Arthur (2002); and by Chapman in 2005 (Chapman 2005a, see Appendix 12(c)) as discussed above.

McCracken (2009:2) made the following recommendations in order to achieve CALS’s “worthy goals”:

- “The full funding of the Centre for African Literary Studies should be taken over by the University. This would amount to approximately R1.6 million a year.
- The Centre should continue to be based in Pietermaritzburg.
- The name, the Centre for African Literary Studies, will be retained.
- The primary function of the Centre for African Literary Studies should be advancement of African Scholarship.
- The director should be appointed both as director and as a senior member of staff in one of the following four HDSS schools with bases in Pietermaritzburg: isiZulu, Languages, Literature and Linguistics; Literary Studies, Media and Creative Arts; Philosophy and Ethics; or Politics.”

McCracken (2009:2-3) recommended that the director would be expected to do the following:

(a) “Continue with the important work of building up and cataloguing the collection of periodicals and books.

(b) Organise conferences, workshops and seminars.

(c) Fundraise for the Centre.

(d) Integrate the Centre with the Teaching and Learning, the Community Engagement and the Research endeavours of the cluster of Pietermaritzburg HDSS schools.

(e) Establish linkages across the continent with such African universities as Makerere, Botswana, Dar es Salaam and Egypt. It is essential that the Centre forge a working relationship with the School of African and Oriental Studies at the University of London.

(f) Be involved in a limited amount of lecturing and supervision within his/her home school.”

If one examines the director’s responsibilities in the CALS Constitution (Appendix 11), the director’s responsibilities are quite vague when compared with the detailed and most relevant responsibilities as outlined by McCracken.

McCracken (2009:3) also stated, importantly, that

“the Centre should fall directly under whichever of the named four HDSS schools in Pietermaritzburg in which the director is located. The line manager and person responsible for ensuring that the academic and administrative functions of the Centre are in order should be the Head of the School in which the director is member of staff”.

Furthermore, the Centre should be run by the director answering to his/her head of school and assisted by a board management.

McCracken advised that if the faculty board and the academic affairs board accepted his proposal, a new constitution would have to be drawn up. The position of director would need to be advertised. The proposed date of implementation of the new CALS would be 1 January 2010 (McCracken 2009:3). To date, McCracken’s proposal has not been acted upon by the University. There is no evidence that a new constitution has been drawn up and the position of director has not been advertised.

In 2010 and 2011 a problem arose with the coverage of CALS in the Senate report. The then director of CALS (Mzamane), apparently did not respond to the request for information (UKZN 2010:161; CALS 2011b:3). It was suggested that the operation of CALS should be followed up to see whether CALS met policy requirements.

Stilwell’s assessment (2011) (Section 4.4.1) was in response to a request from the DVC, Ayee (Stilwell 2013a:15), who stated that the centres/units “which do not conform to the University’s policy on centres/units and are not viable must be de-established by the end [of 2011]” (Ayee 2011a).

Stilwell's assessment demonstrated that CALS offered an excellent service at very little cost (Stilwell 2011:2).

### **3.7.2 Mzamane's (CALS's Director 2007-2009) African-orientated plans to enable research in African Studies at CALS**

Mzamane, director CALS's from 2007 to 2009, had visions of aligning CALS with UKZN's Africanisation policy. He recorded:

“While initially CALS programmes and activities will centre on imaginative writing and literary studies, the ultimate goal is to develop African Studies as a trans-disciplinary programme and thus set the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) on the path to becoming the ‘Premier University of African Scholarship’ and the ‘University of First Choice’ in African Studies. It is imperative that an African University should prioritise African Studies, with CALS its recognisable face” (CALS 2007a:Minute 6).

McCracken expressed his excitement about the new emphasis on African Studies and encouraged the idea (CALS 2007a:Minute 6).

In 2007 Mzamane described the kind of dedicated Centre he envisaged CALS becoming. He described his aspirations to align CALS with UKZN's Africanisation policies, including the diaspora. To this end, Mzimane envisaged CALS to be one of the largest libraries dedicated to Anglophone writing and increasingly African languages, including isiZulu, Arabic, Lusophone and Francophone writing. This included a strong focus on South African and diaspora, largely Caribbean and African-American literature. In addition, Mzamane envisioned that CALS would become an important resource for learners and researchers, containing interviews with South African and other African writers in various languages, including audiovisual recordings of their readings, orature, the performing arts, the visual arts, heritage studies and African studies in general. Mzamane believed that the “Centre's objectives are thus best realised through interaction with various academic departments: African languages, French, Portuguese, Performing Arts, Visual Arts, Creative Arts, Film and Media ... The design is to eschew fragmentation and create a facility and an aptitude for trans-disciplinary studies.” He believed that this was the “most sensible way to study Africa” (Mzamane 2007:3).



Mzamane outlined his plans for research at CALS, which were endorsed at the Board meeting (CALS 2007a:3-4). It requires noting that after Chapman's recommendations (Section 3.7 above) regarding CALS now being attached to the Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences after the merger, the dean (McCracken) chaired the board meetings held on 12 December 2005 and 2 May 2006. In 2007 the chair shifted to the HDSS Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC). The plans put forward by Mzamane give an example of the envisaged Africanised role to be played by CALS in 2007 in enabling African Literary Studies. Unfortunately, lack of funds hampered these conscientious plans. The plans included:

(i) Residencies and Fellowships. Records reveal that two visiting academics, Professor James David Rubadiri, the ex-Vice-Chancellor of the University of Malawi and Dr Wangui wa Goro, a Kenyan academic, social critic and researcher, visited the Centre in 2009 (CALS 2010a:3).

(ii) It was anticipated that CALS would launch fellowships for translation. It was noted at the board meeting of 2007 (CALS 2007a:Minute 6d) that, through the work of one of CALS's Fellows, Rogier Courau, the Centre had identified a pilot project in translating some of Davidson Don Tengo Jabavu's writings which had long been overlooked by scholars. These writings included *E-America*, *E-Jerusalem*, and *E-Indiya naseEast Africa*.

Mzimane also outlined the forthcoming 2007 conferences which he had planned (CALS 2007a:Minute 6e). These conferences were in line with the new Africanisation paradigm being initiated at UKZN since its merger in 2004 (see Chapter 6).

The proposed conferences included commemorative (prospect-and-retrospect) conferences such as (i) the 40<sup>th</sup> year anniversary since the formation of the South African Student Organisation (SASO), which had broken away from the former National Union of South African Students (NUSAS) titled: 'SASO and its University of Natal/Durbanville Roots'; (ii) thirty years since the murder of Steve Biko, the leading exponent of Black Consciousness conference titled 'The Legacy of Black Consciousness in Literature, Culture and Politics'; (iii) the banning of Black Consciousness (BC) aligned organisations and newspapers titled 'Black Consciousness and the Media'; (iv) 'African Languages and the African Renaissance'; and (v) 'Redefining the New Parameters of our Nationhood', a one-day conference as part of the activities connected to the Encyclopaedia launch (see below) (CALS 2007a:Minute 6e).

The board approved the conferences. Mazibuko, the chair, reminded the board of the view that the period in our history (1967–1976) had brought about a new way of thinking in South Africa and this marked an important contribution by the University (CALs 2007a:Minute 6v).

It is noteworthy that SASO and the Black Consciousness movement (to which SASO gave rise) had its roots among students at the University of Durban-Westville (UDW) and University of Natal (Black section) (UN-B). The movement stayed ‘non-racial’ and became not so much ‘anti-white’ as ‘pro-black’. Vigorous debates ensued at the then University of Natal. These events galvanised multitudes and had far-reaching consequences for the liberation struggle, in general, and for the realignment of internal political forces, in particular. Mzamane envisaged the conference (i) above as a “homecoming” conference to celebrate the “Class of 1967” “and provide the reconfigured and amalgamated University of KwaZulu-Natal an opportunity to reclaim its distinguished alumni” (CALs 2007a:6).

Mzamane’s conferences as outlined above resonate with the framework of this study. Section 2.2 above explains how the UKZN is trying to reconfigure itself as an “African University in an African country” and Achebe talks about defining “Africanism” in finding an African identity. Asante’s Afrocentric theoretical position (Section 2.3.2.3) is essentially about geographical location. Mzamane’s proposed conferences were in line with these ideas. Black consciousness equates with the finding of an African identity. The “homecoming” expressed by Mzamane relates to the geographical aspect. The translation Fellowships above relate to the language and African identity aspect as “African language is intrinsically entwined with African identity” (Sections 2.4.1 and 6.3.1.1).

Regarding research at CALs, Mzamane proposed the following projects which would promote African heritage and culture (CALs 2007a:Minute 6h):

(1) *Encyclopaedia of South African Arts and Culture*:

Mzamane, announced a new project, in conjunction with the National Department of Arts and Culture (DAC), which would be housed at CALs. It was to be a multi-year project of national significance to produce a multi-volume, multi-media work of encyclopaedic scope on the verbal, performing and visual arts as well as on the many expressions of South African cultural heritage. The project was designed to address the serious dearth of reference material

in arts, culture and heritage studies that can also be of use in education, cultural industry and cultural diplomacy – in electronic and print forms. The *Encyclopaedia* thus aimed to provide South Africans and others interested in the field with comprehensive reference material for understanding (a) aspects of South African arts and culture from antiquity to the present and (b) the rich cultural diversity characteristic of South African society. The *Encyclopaedia of South African Arts, Culture and Heritage* (ESAACH), in four volumes, was to take five years to complete but, like other encyclopaedias, it would require periodic updating – as would the website that was to serve as the principal database for subsequent updates.

McCracken agreed that the ESAACH enterprise was good for the University. He proposed, however, that future agreements should be made with UKZN as opposed to Mzamane as an individual (CALs 2008b:Minute 3ii).

When Mzamane retired at the end of 2009, the encyclopaedia project was removed from CALs together with the remains of the funding for it. There are no records available to ascertain how far work on the encyclopaedia had progressed. The researcher did, however, contact Dr Michael Wessels (Wessels 2015) who was involved with the project. He stated that the *Encyclopaedia* was an ongoing online project.

A funding consequence of the encyclopedia project was that one staff member had been paid to underpin this project as a normal part of her UKZN salary. When the project was removed, UKZN had to continue to pay this salary which was above the grade of the incumbent. Fortunately for the funding she resigned from CALs to take up a permanent post elsewhere at UKZN.

(2) A history of South African broadcasting:

CALs's director announced another project in the offing, namely "a collaborative effort with the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), [which, if it got underway would] also be housed at CALs" (CALs 2007a:7). This "twelve-month-long project" would involve the history of broadcasting in South Africa from its conception in private hands in 1923 which would result in (a) a coffee table publication, in abridged form, and (b) in electronic form, which would be posted on the Internet and updated periodically. Research activities would include library and archival research, interviews, polls and surveys, and programme description, analysis and assessment. In addition, Mzamane envisaged that CALs would

“drive the research for an SABC appointed team to produce a documentary history of broadcasting” (CALs 2007a:Minute 6hii).

However, the researcher found no evidence that this project materialised.

### (3) Oral history:

CALS’s director, Mzamane, announced plans for the CALs Oral History Project (CALs 2007a:Minute 6i). “In conjunction with the school of isiZulu Studies and other cognate fields, the project [would] collect and analyse *Orature* principally from the province.”

CALS would “provide a platform for creative-writing workshops and other events that would connect with creative-writing publication. Such events would include poetry readings and ‘fireside’ story telling (given that a vast proportion of the African literary tradition is essentially oral)”. It was envisaged that this could branch into expressions of various other media of the oral tradition such as *izingoma* [traditional Zulu dance]; *isicathamiya* [Zulu a cappella singing, by male voice choirs]; *izibongo* [praise poems]; *kwalto* [alto] and various other spoken or sung texts. Ultimately this could lead to a process of collecting and preserving oral history through recordings, etc. – beginning with material collected by another CALs fellow, Nompumelelo Zondi, working on *izingoma* initiated with Gunner’s encouragement and still involving some CALs staff at the time. It was hoped to pursue collaboration with the Sinomlando Centre for Oral History and Memory Work in Africa, of which Professor Philippe Denis (Head of the School of Religion and Theology) was the director.

There is no evidence, however, that this worthwhile project took off.

### (4) Community outreach

The Director informed the meeting (CALs 2007a:Minute 6j) that CALs’s community outreach programmes would aim “to serve the larger community”. To this purpose the Centre was to launch creative writing workshops in collaboration with poetry and writing groups, such as the Poetry and Urban Activism Society, a student grouping on the Pietermaritzburg campus, in an attempt “to resuscitate student interest in poetry writing”. Mzamane stated that a partnership had also been struck with the Newtown Film and Television School “to offer fledgling film makers skills in story telling” (CALs 2007a:Minute 6j).

The above noble ‘Africanisation’ ideas envisioned by Mzamane which would have brought CALS into alignment with an Afrocentric paradigm as propounded by UKZN were challenged by funding and staffing shortages. It was revealed (CALS 2008a:Minute 3iv) that “with the balance in the CALS account at the end of February just slightly above R800 000, CALS is technically bankrupt, but for Atlantic’s funds that are committed funds” and are ring fenced for the purchase of books.

In 2009 the board agreed that CALS, with its incomparable Africana collection, needed permanent staff members if it were to live up to its billing as a flagship institute in a university that aspires to be the ‘Premier University of African Scholarship’. It expressed the view that the Centre holds one of the most unique collections of African literature that brings status to the University, and so, needs the corresponding financial support and acknowledgement. CALS needs to be properly aligned within the University’s potential vision as the Premier University of African Scholarship (CALS 2009b:Minute 3i). Financing and staffing factors point to a gap between the original visions of the founders and directors of CALS and the reality and is expanded on in the next two chapters.

### **3.8 Summary**

This chapter highlighted the original vision for the Centre for African Literary Studies. The history and provenance of CALS, which includes the origin of CALS as a special collection and the original motives and objectives of UKZN for the establishment of CALS were elaborated on in detail. The governance of CALS, which includes the development of policy regarding the collection, derived from a historical study of policy statements by UKZN and its antecedent institutions, as well as changes in policy, was comprehensively discussed.

The next chapter discusses the reality of the situation at CALS in fulfilling its mandate of enabling African literary studies at UKZN.

## Chapter 4

### The Reality of CALS

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the reality concerning the ability of CALS to enable African studies between the years 2010 and the review of CALS in 2013 (no policy documentation is available after 2013 as the board did not meet). The years 2001 to 2009 were covered in the previous chapter regarding the original vision and ambitions of the founders and the first two directors. The chapter describes the governance of CALS, the current UKZN policies which promote or hinder CALS in its contributions as a special collection for African studies, the mission, vision and goals of CALS, and how they promote the goals of UKZN.<sup>1</sup> In addition, the chapter considers the reviews of the work of CALS, the record of its accomplishments, and also an examination of the role played by CALS and its collection in African literary studies (including the role played in the University's academic curricula).

#### 4.2 The governance of CALS (2010–2013)

CALS is governed by a constitution and an advisory board.

Stilwell (2013a:13) gives an account of the governance of CALS in 2013:

“The CALS Advisory Board meets twice a year and is chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) and Head of College. The Acting Director reports on a day to day basis to the Dean of Social Sciences, who is based on the Pietermaritzburg Campus. The current Dean is Professor [Stephen] Mutula. The Acting Director reports to the Advisory Board twice a year and is advised by it. An Advisory Board is required by the South African National Heritage Resources Act of 1999. This Act also requires that the educational, research and conservation needs of Heritage Collections are met.”

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<sup>1</sup> After 2004 the shift in terminology from ‘objectives’ to ‘goals’ was in accordance with the change in terminology used by UKZN in its ambition to become ‘the Premier University of African Scholarship’.

As mentioned above, contrary to the constitution, the board did not meet in 2013, as the new DVC and Head of the College of Humanities, Professor Cheryl Potgieter, required that a review take place first.

From its inception, CALS had been attached to the Department of English Studies and drew its acting director from that school. However, the situation changed when, in May 2011, Stilwell, a Professor in the School of Social Sciences, was appointed the acting director. “Prior to this arrangement various configurations pertained with Deputy Deans [for example, Clarence-Fincham] performing this role and in one case a full-time Director operated independently of the UKZN school structures” (Stilwell 2013a:13). This was a key shift as McCracken (2009:3) had stipulated that “the Centre should fall directly under whichever of the named four HDSS schools in Pietermaritzburg in which the Director is located ...” (Section 3.7.1).

Thus there have been several changes since the inception of CALS in 2004.

CALS has two core components: (i) the collection which is essentially a special library collection together with archival documents; and (ii) the external seminar and promotions programme which is aimed at local and international students and researchers of African literature and studies more generally (Stilwell 2013a:13-14).

It was anticipated in 2011 that CALS would form part of the UKZN special collections and the College of Humanities would underwrite CALS’s salaries.

The acting director at the time (Stilwell) was invited to attend a meeting at the E.G. Malherbe Library at Howard College in 2011 as requested by Dr Nora Buchanan [the UKZN library director] and Mrs Joyce Myeza (Durban librarian and head of special collections) to meet with Ijumba (DVC Research) and Ayee (DVC and Head of the College of Humanities) about CALS being formally made one of the UKZN special collections in terms of its internal functions. She states that “this followed on a prior meeting with the UKZN Library Director, Dr Nora Buchanan and Dr Praversh Sukram [the Pietermaritzburg Librarian]. It was decided that this should happen with the College underwriting CALS’s salaries” (Stilwell 2013a:15-16).

The above initiatives did result in CALS working more closely with other UKZN special collections. For example, the CALS’s librarian, Mrs Fiona Polak, was invited to attend

regular meetings held by UKZN special collections. Myeza paid regular visits to CALS, and initiated the digitisation process at the Centre (Section 5.3.5). Furthermore, Stilwell (2013a:15) noted that Ayee proposed that CALS form a fourth unit in the UKZN special collections (see Section 4.4.1). It was to this end that CALS was included in the UKZN Special Collections Open Day in October 2011 (Section 3.3). However, Ayee left the University at the end of 2012 (CALS 2012a:3) and in 2013, as noted above, Potgieter insisted on a review of CALS before she would engage with the issues of CALS (CALS 2013a:3).

The fact that the CALS board had not met since 2012 was brought to the attention of the external review panel in 2013. The panel recommended that “[CALS’s] governance needs [be addressed] as a matter of urgency. The Chair of the Advisory Board needs to be very involved with and committed to CALS, as well as their most fervent advocate”. The panel also recommended that the “Advisory Board meet regularly twice every year” (CALS 2013b:4). This was an important recommendation since the advisory board had failed to meet its mandate.

### **4.3 The current UKZN policies (which promote or hinder) CALS in its contributions as a special collection for African studies**

This section defines the UKZN vision, mission and goals, as well as CALS’s mission, vision and goals and investigates whether or not they promote the UKZN goals.

#### **4.3.1 UKZN’s vision, mission and goals**

As highlighted throughout the study, the vision of UKZN is to be ‘the Premier University of African Scholarship’. The mission is to be “a truly South African university that is academically excellent, innovative in research, critically engaged with society and demographically representative, redressing the disadvantages, inequities and imbalances of the past” (UKZN 2015). (For a full list of UKZN’s goals see Appendix 12(d) and Section 4.3.2.)

#### **4.3.2 CALS’s mission, vision and goals and how they promote the UKZN goals**

As noted in Section 2.2 above, CALS’s mission is “to be a Centre of Excellence for research in the field of African Literary Studies, with the aim of developing, disseminating and



applying its expertise as widely as possible” (CALs n.d.:2). To this end CALs is committed to growing its holdings and extending its focus beyond African literature in English to become a world resource for the study of African literature, including Lusophone, Francophone and other African language literatures (Mzamane 2007:2).

In 2009 McCracken (2009:2) highlighted the core functions of CALs as:

- “African Scholarship should reign supreme at the Centre for African Literary Studies.
- The Centre should be a vibrant place of discourse and advanced research in the field.
- CALs should be a hive of activity with scholars from our university, Africa and the wider world coming and going, using the resource and publishing under the CALs banner.
- Conferences, workshops and seminar series should be the norm.
- Students should be registering for theses which are grounded on the CALs collection.
- The Centre should have a special relationship with UKZN Press and with the Campbell Collections in Durban.
- It is essential that within the new CALs, there is an interdisciplinary and intradisciplinary approach to teaching, research and community engagement. This should encompass such diverse disciplines as Literary Studies, isiZulu, French, History, Psychology, Politics and Media Studies, to name a few.”

Stilwell (2013a:4-5) outlines CALs’s goals and aims as follows:

- “Preserve and make available the literature of Africa in an excellent centre for African Scholarship.
- Be a Centre for the collection of the literature of previously marginalised languages and literatures of the continent to build in students a sense of the extent and value of African Scholarship.
- Be a Centre supporting excellence in Teaching and Learning.
- Be a Centre of Choice for students – to increase usage by students.
- Be a Centre with efficient and effective management systems and processes that provide a caring and responsive service in a pragmatic and flexible manner.
- Be a Centre of Choice for staff – providing a welcoming research and meeting space for staff.

- Be a Centre for building partnerships with and serving community organisations.”

It is noteworthy from the above core functions and goals that CALS should be a leading centre for African scholarship and as such attract national and international scholars who can participate in lively debate and research.

A discussion on whether CALS is successfully meeting its goals, as well as the goals of UKZN, follows below. The criteria are based on CALS’s self-evaluation report before the external review in 2013 (Stilwell 2013a).

Stilwell (2013a:6) affirmed that the “mission of CALS is core to the UKZN Goals and particularly to Goal One: *African-led Globalisation*:

Stilwell (2013a:6) claimed that CALS was achieving a level of excellence and was recognised locally, as well as internationally, as a centre for African scholarship, especially as its operations became more streamlined. Furthermore, CALS was closely connected to the focus of the College of Humanities in the fields of education, humanities, development, and social sciences. In addition, CALS drew users from other colleges, for example, Management and Law. There had even been occasions when CALS had the only copy of an item in UKZN and even in some cases in the country, or the world. UKZN inter-library loans (ILL) enable items to be made available through scanning or photocopying in accordance with copyright guidelines (Stilwell 2013a:6).

These developments are in line with CALS’s vision as stipulated by Mzamane (2007:2-3) who envisaged CALS as developing African literary studies “as an inter-disciplinary programme and thus [setting] the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) on the path to becoming the ‘Premier University of African Scholarship’ and the ‘University of First Choice’ in African Studies.” Initially CALS’s programmes and activities were centred on imaginative writing and literary studies, but in order to realise its global vision, “it is imperative that an African University should prioritize African Studies, with CALS as its recognisable ‘African face’”.

CALS also addresses Goal Two: *Responsible Community Engagement* in several ways. For instance, CALS engages in creating partnerships in the community and strives to serve community organisations. Examples include CALS being an integral part of the UKZN

Special Collections Open Day and being “a clearing house for donated items” as CALS donates duplicate donated books and journals to local libraries (Stilwell 2013a:29,31).

In fact, community outreach has been an important programme offered by CALS since its inception. CALS (2005a:22-23) cites the research projects undertaken by the Centre in this regard, including, amongst others, getting to know many groups locally in and around Pietermaritzburg who sing *isicathamiya* [a singing style that originated from the Zulus], the genre being made famous in many parts of the world by Joseph Shabalala and his Ladysmith Black Mambazo group. In 2013 CALS’s Open Day attracted 150 community people who enjoyed a day of presentations and recitals (Stilwell 2013a:29).

As far back as 2005, Van Dyk highlighted the fact that CALS is “a key player in building research both for the University where it is housed and for the wider region”. Moreover, it was envisaged that CALS would be a magnet for scholars from other areas of the world, who wished to research on African literatures either from a regional, national or trans-national perspective (Van Dyk 2005b:2). Therefore, it can be said that CALS’s goal is consistent with the University Goal Three: *Pre-eminence in Research*. As mentioned above (Section 3.6.2), CALS was launched as a centre for research with a mandate to facilitate and promote the study of African literature (UN 2003:7.1; CALS 2005a:5) and in this regard CALS has drawn researchers and postgraduate students since inception. Stilwell (2013a:7) points out that CALS provides a space for students to read, gather and share ideas. Furthermore, CALS focuses “on the previously marginalised languages and literatures of the continent and this is key in building students’ sense of the extent and value of African Scholarship” (Stilwell 2013a:7).

CALS also contributes strongly to Goal Five: *The Institution of Choice for Students*. An example is that of Matthew Keaney, a first-year PhD student from Yale University in the United States, who spent June to August 2012 at CALS. Each year a large group from Drake University (US) spend some days at CALS under the auspices of Professor Mbongeni Malaba, Head of the Department of English Studies. The Information Studies programme draws postgraduate students from many African countries (Stilwell 2013a:26).

CALS seeks to address UKZN’s Strategic Goal Six – *Institution of Choice for Staff* – in that CALS’s staff show dedication to the Centre despite “very precarious employment conditions”. However, “improvement in these conditions in terms of stability would greatly

enhance their sense of UKZN as institution of choice” (Stilwell 2013a:16). Lack of permanent posts and staffing instability have been an ongoing problem at CALS. In 2009, the board agreed that CALS, with its incomparable Africana collection, needed permanent staff members if it was to “live up to its billing as a flagship institute in a University that aspires to be ‘the Premier University of African Scholarship’” (CALS 2009b:Minute 3i).

In line with UKZN’s Strategic Goal Seven, *Efficient and Effective Management*, Professor Stilwell, an extremely well-published full professor of many years’ standing and a professor of library and information studies was appointed as the acting director of CALS in May 2011 (Stilwell 2013:12). Stilwell worked tirelessly “on developing efficient and effective systems for the various categories of materials at CALS”. In the staff submissions for the self-evaluation report (SER) for the 2013 review (authored by Stilwell on behalf of CALS staff), the staff were full of praise for Stilwell’s successful directorship. One staff member stated:

“In my two years with CALS I have been privileged to witness ongoing brilliant progress at every level. This has confirmed to me the importance of placing a person with the right credentials into a position. From initially coming into an environment where staff morale was dismal, we are now in an environment where staff are all well motivated and happy” (Stilwell 2013a:12).

To further enhance Efficient and Effective Management, the CALS’s staff meet at least once a year for half a day of strategic planning and self-assessment and less formal meetings are also frequently held to discuss new developments (Stilwell 2013a:12).

From the above it is evident that a direct synergy exists between CALS’s policies and those of UKZN. As Kalu (2010:17) succinctly stated: “CALS’s mission is best suited to serving the larger UKZN’s stated vision of becoming ‘the premier institution of African Scholarship.’”

In promoting the UKZN goals, the UKZN “Special Collections are linked to the University’s academic libraries and play an important role in the University’s research endeavours and in supporting its academic curricula”. Furthermore, “CALS offers a special library service to UKZN staff, undergraduate and postgraduate students and to international researchers and the general public” (Stilwell 2013a:5). Furthermore, as mentioned in Section 3.3, CALS’s programmes and activities centre in the main on the library and archives and their systems (acquisitions, cataloguing and so on), residencies and fellowships; lectures, seminars and conferences; research; publications; and community outreach (Mzamane 2007:2; Stilwell 2013a:5).

CALS strives to achieve its mission, vision and goals and can boast several achievements which confirm that it has been successful in its mission to enable African literary studies. However, it needs to be pointed out that CALS is presently hampered by lack of funding and the challenges of sustained fundraising and staffing constraints, and this is expanded on below. However, despite these severe limitations, Stilwell (2013a:32) argues that it is evident that CALS has an excellent record of achievements.

Stilwell (2013a:32-33) lists some of these achievements as follows:

- “Serving as a centre for local language and literature.
- Hosting notable research and student-centred events and seminars.
- Beating the backlog: all the different categories of material dating from 2004 have been processed and are accessible for use.
- CALS is noted for its sustained soliciting and acquiring of valuable donated material.”

Looking to the future, Malaba stated: “CALS ... is dedicated to providing quality support for research in the Humanities” (Stilwell 2013a:33-34).

#### **4.4 Reviews**

As explained in Section 3.5.2 and 4.4.3, all UKZN centres are expected to be reviewed every five years. If a review is delayed beyond a five-year period of existence, a separate review may be instituted. In the case of CALS, as noted in Section 1.2.2, besides review reports by Kalu (2010) and McCracken (2011), the Buchanan library report in 2011, which included an advisory committee on special collections, and the assessment by Stilwell (2011), there had been no substantial evaluation of CALS’s effectiveness as a special collection.

Despite the fact that as at 2013 no substantial evaluation by the Quality Promotion and Assurance Unit (QPA) had taken place at CALS, CALS had been the focus of two important reviews. In November 2010 Professor Anthonia Kalu from the Department of African American and African Studies of the Ohio State University in the US reviewed the Gender Studies Programme (School of Anthropology, Gender and Historical Studies) and CALS, and she recommended the establishment of a Centre for African Studies (CAS) at UKZN (CALS 2011d:10). The McCracken report considered CALS as one of UKZN’s special collections as

part of a larger review focus and made useful recommendations, while the Buchanan library report included an advisory committee on special collections to discuss and gather data.

At CALS's board meeting (CALs 2010d:5) it was suggested that CALS be restructured, its mandate expanded, and be renamed the 'Centre for African Studies' (CAS). The new interdisciplinary Centre would therefore become a college centre which would provide a congenial atmosphere for researchers from all the different schools in the college. In this connection, Kalu would come to CALS in November to see to its re-branding.

In 2011 (CALs 2011b:4-5) it was recommended that the composition of the board be revisited according to the CALS constitution and reconstituted. The board agreed and the acting director accepted the responsibility for taking up this matter. Members of the reconstituted board were to be notified accordingly.

#### **4.4.1 The Kalu (2010) and Stilwell (2011) reviews**

Despite the recommendation in the McCracken report (2009) (Section 3.7.1), no new or revised constitution for CALS was drawn up or implemented in January 2010. Instead, the Kalu review took place in November 2010 whereby guidelines were proposed for the establishment of a Centre for African Studies (CAS), which would include CALS, but all the problems relating to CALS, as outlined above, were never considered at this review.

Of significance is the fact that the review by Kalu, (which included a review of Gender Studies) in 2010 and the formation of a Centre for African Studies (CAS) was then mooted and CALS was simply told to prepare for that event (Stilwell 2013a:14-15).

Stilwell (2013a:14) elaborates:

“In 2011 Professor Ayee, the then DVC, proposed that CALS, the Campbell Collections (Durban) and the Alan Paton Centre would form the Special Collections component of the UKZN libraries supporting the work of CAS on the five campuses. The collections were together seen as the internal programme which should fall under the aegis of UKZN libraries while the external programme of research programmes, attracting international scholars etc., outreach and events would fall under CAS. CALS's input into the proposal for the establishment of the Centre was again discussed at the last Advisory Board meeting in 2012 as still being a possibility. In 2013 it appears to have been shelved, however.”

With the reorganising of the colleges it had become necessary for the University to rationalise its centres, units and research groups. The centres, units and research groups which had been in existing schools now resorted under the new schools, while those not originally placed under a school had been found a home (Ayee 2011c). Ayee (2011c) had also stated that “cognizance should also be taken of the Senate Task Force Report on Institutes, Centres, Units and Research Groups of July 2010, which asked Colleges and Faculties [to ensure, among other points] that the centres and units be viable and support themselves without relying on the faculties; [and] that the centres and units are relevant and promote the mandates of the University, especially in the areas of research and postgraduate training ...”

Ayee (2011c) alerts us to the fact that there are sometimes inconsistencies in UKZN reports regarding the ‘home’ of UKZN special collections. It is important to note that

“In the UKZN Reports on Institutes, Centres, Units and Research Groups in the University of KwaZulu-Natal (2010) it is stated that the Specialized Libraries sometimes fall under the University Library and sometimes under a Faculty but were grouped together in the Report for the sake of consistency. There are several other specialized libraries in the University but these four are all in the nature of archival or museum-type collections. The four entities were listed because although the Killie Campbell Collection does not bear the name ‘Centre’, the other two do, yet all three are virtually identical in what they do” (UKZN 2010:158).

The two important points here relate to the Centre’s being viable and self-funding and whether or not CALS should fall under the university library (like the Alan Paton Centre) or under the Faculty of Humanities as an autonomous unit.

Responding to the point above, which states that “the centres and units be viable and support themselves without relying on the faculties”, Stilwell emphasised that “Special Collections, like libraries, cannot be self-funding despite the nomenclature of ‘centre’ which at UKZN implies that self-funding is required” (Stilwell 2013a:15). (See Section 3.7.1 where McCracken (2009:1) had pointed out that “the Faculty has found that centres operate and account most effectively through the school structure” and McCracken’s argument for funding in Section 4.4.2.)

UKZN had, however, acknowledged the value of the special collections, and in particular CALS, stating that “together with the Alan Paton Centre and the Campbell Collections the

three collections complement one another and are major resources for historical and anthropological research, perhaps rather undervalued by the University” (UKZN 2010:162). Furthermore, as mentioned above, it was proposed that CALS form a fourth unit at UKZN (Stilwell 2011:2).

Stilwell’s response was that “the key point here is that the Centre report clearly states that the policy guidelines are not applicable to the three special libraries. This suggested that the situation should be the same for CALS as for the other special libraries” (Stilwell 2013a:15).

Stilwell’s comprehensive report (2011:2) affirmed that the main purpose of CALS “is to serve as a centre for the study of African literature”. Stilwell outlined the history of the Centre and its collections and programmes, emphasising that the Centre is active in research. A list of extensive publications is included in the report, including the research capacity of the acting director [Professor Stilwell]. The report highlighted that CALS was running very economically with a small staff of three full-time members on fixed-term contracts. The CALS board had agreed that the curator’s and administrative posts be made permanent as was the case with the director’s post. The curator’s post had not been filled because of a moratorium on advertising. Importantly, the assessment included the funding and financial oversight, and outlined the governance of CALS.

#### **4.4.2 The McCracken review**

On 15 October 2011, McCracken submitted a report to the University Review Panel. McCracken stated that he had “either worked in or at some time or other run all four of the Special Collections: CALS, Campbell, Alan Paton and the Documentation Centre” (McCracken 2011:1).

Regarding CALS, McCracken (2011:1) made reference to the proposal relating to CALS which he had placed before Senate in 2009 (Section 3.7.1).

In 2011 McCracken argued that at the end of his term of office, when he left the post of dean of humanities in 2009, “the University [had] little alternative but either to incorporate the Centre into the Library System” or to go along with something similar to what he had proposed in 2009, namely, that CALS be an autonomous unit within HDSS and the University take over the funding. This would secure proper funding for CALS. However,



McCracken expected the former to be more realistic, namely to incorporate CALS into the UKZN library system. It can be argued that this should have been done from CALS's inception as self-funding was unsustainable from the outset as pointed out by several people (see Sections 3.5 and 3.7). It is noteworthy that McCracken's proposal in 2009 had been accepted by Senate but no funding was promised by UKZN (McCracken 2011:1).

In his University Library Review (2011), which also includes suggestions regarding the Campbell Collections, the Documentation Centre and the Alan Paton Centre, McCracken (2011:1) made the following observations regarding CALS:

- “A good collection, but dated in some respects.
- Needs to be revitalized with a full postgraduate seminar programme, visiting scholars, conferences, new [manuscript] additions and so on.
- Requires to be closely associated with our colleagues from isiZulu, Literature, Politics, Fine Art, Psychology, History and Media.
- It is very important that the French and Portuguese element of the collection be retained and expanded. The French section in Humanities needs to be encouraged to get involved.
- The Centre could very well be part of a wider African Studies Programme.
- Permanent staff members need to be budgeted for and appointed.”

McCracken advocated lively activity and debate within the special collection. It is essential that the special collections are used and seen to be active within the university, through students, researchers, conferences and seminars. McCracken (2011:3) points out the importance of governance of the collections, taking the position that “free-standing collections tend to be neglected”. Thus, in addition to an advisory board, he recommended an over-arching executive board of control chaired by a single director. This could negate the “we-are-neglected ethos” which, according to McCracken, tends to prevail among various staff members at the special collections. Furthermore, a single special collections budget would be beneficial in the long term.

One of the concerns brought to attention in the McCracken review regarding special collections is that although the three collections “are divided into three separate collections and there is delegation of authority to staff at these collections and reasonably good lines

of communication between the collections and their Advisory Committees”, the collections “are physically very scattered and do not seem to interconnect in any way although they do have monthly meetings” (McCracken 2011:22). McCracken is concerned that “thought should be given to consolidating these (in particular amalgamating the Campbell Collection and Documentation Centre) as indigenous knowledge systems and in that way support the University’s strategic focus [of being the Premier University of African Scholarship]” (McCracken 2011:22). He argued that it is the University’s custodial duty to preserve its unique and valuable special collections. He reminds us: “Fashions of study (especially in the Humanities) come and go. What is relevant and central today is forgotten tomorrow as new themes, concerns and passions emerge, only to re-emerge in the future” (McCracken 2011:3).

McCracken (2011:22) praised the staff and highlighted the “dire staffing issues”. He acknowledged that “to the credit of the staff at these collections they are very well thought of and known internationally, although the panel feels they should have greater visibility at UKZN”. He explained that “staffing at the Special Collections in terms of educational officers, conservators and public relations people should be highlighted”. He stated that “the panel was made aware of the dire staffing issues and that succession planning for these collections is urgent”. It is important that there are qualified persons “to enable access to research holdings via cataloguing, digitisation [and] exhibition, and publications are essential in the Special Collections, fulfilling their Heritage mandate” .

Furthermore, the review panel “praised the success with external funding for interns achieved through the School’s Development Act as this has helped to relieve some pressure on staff” (McCracken 2011:22).

By 2012 CALS was in fact working more closely with the other UKZN collections, sharing their Open Day and staff skills and expertise (see Sections 3.3 and 4.2). For instance, in accordance with *the South African National Heritage Resources Act, No. 25 of 1999*, that requires that conservation be carried out by heritage libraries, CALS was carrying out conservation (as advised in the UKZN Senate report), drawing on the expertise of a trained paper conservator, Dr Estelle Liebenberg-Barkhuizen. CALS was also served by the UKZN Special Collections Education Officer, Miss Karen Ijumba, based at the Campbell Collections in Durban (CALS 2011d:5). However, the education

officer position has been vacant since 2013 and Liebenberg-Barkhuizen retired at the end of 2014.

It is noteworthy at this juncture that points of common focus emerge through the reviews. It is recognised by all the reviews that CALS holds an extremely valuable collection but funds are required to update the collection, especially in African languages. In order to function at full capacity, CALS needs to have a 'home', either attached to the College of Humanities as an autonomous unit, or as part of the UKZN library. CALS cannot stand alone as an isolated and self-funding unit as it is unsustainable. Permanent staff members need to be appointed and budgeted for. McCracken emphasised that "the budget for the Special Collections is inadequate and external funding has been heavily relied on in the past. The Special Collections activities require a substantial budget to achieve a more prominent academic and research profile" (McCracken 2011:22).

It is important to point out that CALS's budget takes at the very least five key areas into consideration: seminars; purchasing, insuring and shipping of additional books, journals and so on; staffing; fellowships; and equipment requirements (University of KwaZulu-Natal Foundation 2005).

To date there is no evidence that UKZN has acted on the important issues identified and the recommendations put forward by the reviews.

McCracken (2011:22) recommended that the University highlight the value of its special collections "with a view to attract internal, national and international researchers".

Thus McCracken advocated the consolidation of the UKZN special collections and he expressed concern regarding the "dire" staffing and funding situation.

#### **4.4.3 Review and disestablishment of centres and units**

According to the UKZN Policy on Institutes, Centres and Units (UKZN 2014b:7):

"All centres are to be reviewed every five years. Units will be reviewed as part of the review of the school to which the Director belongs. If this review is delayed beyond a five-year period of existence, a separate review may be instituted" (see Appendix 12a for details of the review process).

According to the Dissolution Policy of the Centre for African Literary Studies Constitution CALS, n.d.:10.1-2), a review committee can recommend dissolution of a centre should the review committee deem it necessary: “In terms of the University’s policy on the establishment and review of Centres, the Review Committee, after consideration and consultation, shall recommend continuation or disestablishment of the Centre.” Furthermore, “on dissolution, all assets of the Centre shall be assigned to a body within the University with similar aims and objectives to those of the Centre”. (See Appendix 12(a) for full details pertaining to the review and disestablishment of centres and units at UKZN.)

In view of the UKZN Policy on Institutes, Centres and Units (UKZN 2014b:7) whereby the units are to be reviewed every five years, CALS was reviewed in 2013.

#### **4.4.4 CALS review 2013**

As stated in Sections 1.2.2 and 4.2, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) and Head of College, Potgieter, requested a review of CALS.

In an e-mail to all the “colleagues and friends of CALS” (Appendix 12(e)), Stilwell provided some background concerning the CALS review, citing the main motivations as being that centres should be self-funding and that CALS had missed the last Senate review of the UKZN centres in 2010 and 2011. CALS had not been formally part of the UKZN libraries but was now recognised as one of the UKZN special collections. (For full letter see Appendix 12(e).)

CALS was reviewed by the Quality Promotion and Assurance (QPA) Unit of UKZN on 16 and 17 October 2013 (CALS 2013a:16).

The review panel consisted of Extraordinary Professor Pikita Ntuli (Chair) from Tshwane University of Technology, Anusha Kisten (QPA), Dr Lumkile Lalandle (QPA Director), Dr Nora Buchanan (UKZN Library Director), Professor Sihawukele Ngubane (Head of isiZulu Department, UKZN) and Mrs Joyce Myeza (then Head of UKZN Special Collections) (University of KwaZulu-Natal 2013b:9).

The review panel chaired by Ntuli from Tshwane University of Technology and including Lalandle, paid a site visit to CALS. They spent two days interviewing an extensive list of

experts drawn from various categories, such as board members, former directors, authors, publishers and donors, students, other librarians and the staff of CALS.

The staff of CALS submitted an 80-page self-evaluation report (SER) as well as two large files of supporting documents. This SER was structured around headings suggested by the QPA team and covered how CALS engaged with the UKZN's Strategic Goals (UKZN Strategic Plan 2007–2016) and those of the College of Humanities (2012–2016). The process of preparing the report entailed CALS staff members contributing their views on the strengths and challenges of CALS and areas for change within CALS.

Users of the Centre and students were also asked to submit their views by e-mail. Other content was drawn from minutes of staff meetings, annual reports and newsletters, as well as content from the former UKZ*Nonline* and local newspapers. The staff of CALS agreed with the findings. The QPA Unit invited other interested parties to an open session.

(For the Terms of Reference for the review see Appendix 12(f), University of KwaZulu-Natal 2013b:5.)

The review panel then met and “deliberated over a period of three days, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> 2013, in accordance with the terms of reference agreed upon” (University of KwaZulu-Natal 2013b:9-10). The review included meetings and interviews with a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including:

- “Programme leaders in Pietermaritzburg and Howard College
- Senior academics including former Deans and Heads of Department
- Lecturers
- Administration support staff
- Library staff
- Stakeholders in the private sector
- Students, both under- and postgraduate” (UKZN 2013b:9-10).

**The panel commended CALS on the following:**

1. “The panel commends the dedicated leadership of the current Director of CALS [Stilwell] as was acknowledged and appreciated by all panel members.

2. The panel commends the dedicated commitment of staff working in less than perfect conditions while employed on short-term contracts. The attitude of staff and their inclination to serve users was also noted. The review panel feel the University should express its appreciation of their efforts.
3. The panel commends CALS on the collection which is both rare and excellent.
4. The panel commends the cleanliness and maintenance of the building and the ideal conditions under which the collections are stored.
5. The panel commends the restoration and preservation of materials.
6. The panel commends the control of the budget” (University of KwaZulu-Natal 2013b:6).

The panel listed a total of 15 recommendations for CALS (see Appendix 14).

Of particular significance are the recommendations that there should be an “improvement of the identity of CALS to situate UKZN at the centre of African Literary scholarship”; that “CALS should follow the Alan Paton Centre model for a Special Collection”; “Provision of adequate space for centre activities and growing collection;” the “appointment of key permanent staff for functioning of the Centre”; and “secure budget for digitisation of CALS’s resources, e.g. photographs, and rare and fragile documents”.

In common with the previous reviews, the review identified the “dire staff situation” at CALS regarding the appointment of permanent staff and the necessity of a controlled, secure, budget.

The staff and acting dean [Mutula] received the preliminary findings of the report-back sessions, and these were found to be most positive. The panel was impressed with the dedication and passion of the staff who operated in extremely difficult circumstances.

They also commented on the high calibre of the interviewees who included Lindfors, Professor Stephen Gray and publisher James Currey.

“Hopefully the QPA review has set [CALS] on the path to a new recognition for CALS within the institution. It is already greatly valued beyond its walls,” stated Professor Stilwell (CALS 2013a:4).

#### **4.5 An examination of the role played by CALS and its collection in African studies (including the issue of repatriation and the role played in the University's academic curricula)**

On 18 May 2005, the Minister of Arts and Culture, Pallo Jordan, made a speech in Parliament in which he referred to his opening of CALS and highlighted the importance the government places on repatriation policies:

“In September 2004, I performed an important act of restitution, unveiling one of the largest collections of modern African literature in the world, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg ... This is one of the many heritage projects to restore the African continent's scholarly work done by Africans and about Africans, also to restore to Africa and its people those aspects of our continent's rich past, which have been lost to us.”

Furthermore, Jordan affirmed the government's commitment to repatriation policies:

“Our government has made a commitment to rescuing the Timbuktu manuscripts and ensuring that they are restored and the information they contain preserved for posterity ... There will be other projects ... which we shall be embarking on. We trust that our scholars and our universities will be prepared to play a role in their realization. The Department of Arts and Culture is already cooperating with a number of tertiary institutions in our endeavours to preserve our cultural treasures. We are also metaphorically excavating what has been lost or misplaced” (Jordan 2005:9-10).

Various accounts affirm the goal of UKZN as being the ‘Premier University of African Scholarship’: “As you may be aware, the University of Natal merged with the University of Durban-Westville to create a new single premier University of African Scholarship known as the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The Lindfors library fits in very well with this vision” (Makgoba 2004); “While initially CALS will concentrate on imaginative writing and literary studies, the ultimate goal is to develop African Studies as a trans-disciplinary programme and thus set the University of KwaZulu-Natal on the path to becoming the ‘Premier University of African Scholarship’ and the ‘University of First Choice’ in African Studies, with CALS its recognisable ‘African face’” (Mzamane 2008b:5).

This is corroborated by the Final Report of the External Review of CALS: “CALS's main role in the College is an interdisciplinary resource for students, academic staff and both local

and international researchers of African Literature written in English” (UKZN 2014a:14) and is affirmed by Stilwell (Section 4.3.2) (Stilwell 2013a:5).

At the board meeting (CALs 2010c:Minute 4) the importance of integrating CALs into a school like Literary Studies, Media, and Creative Arts was discussed. CALs has good resources and a good collection which is a “gold mine” that cannot be overlooked. Ayee made the bold statement: “The Centre needed to rebuild as it is too valuable to be ignored. It should become *the* Centre of the University.”

In line with the theoretical framework of this study, Malaba (2010) stressed the pivotal role special collections, and in particular, the Alan Paton Centre and Struggle Archives and the Centre for African Literary Studies in the Humanities cluster at UKZN, could play in “nurturing Afrocentric research”. Malaba observed: “Sadly, these two units attract more interest from people outside the University and our borders, than from within currently...”

He suggested that closer ties be forged with the English, French and isiZulu departments. Furthermore, he highlighted the necessity for sufficient funds to be raised to attract visiting research fellows, academics on sabbatical leave and postdoctoral fellows “who would be formally attached to appropriate Departments and could thus help mould budding researchers” (Malaba 2010:1-2).

A positive example of the important role played by CALs as one of UKZN’s special collections was highlighted at the UKZN Special Collections Open Day where researchers addressed their use of the collections (Section 3.3). Dr Vukile Khumalo, a history lecturer at UKZN made use of the Campbell Collections to explore the story of Ndongeni Zulu, Dick King’s companion, as ‘silent maker’ of history. “It is possible that rare material of this nature is not to be found elsewhere” (Ijumba 2011a:1).

It was recorded at the Open Day that “the Special Collections are of [significant] importance because they hold historic and rare information objects that researchers can uncover and use to give voice to the past”. The special collections, “as custodians of a wealth of data and information were key to the achievement of UKZN’s research ambitions as a whole; as they serve as research spaces for postgraduate, local and international researchers on various aspects of African and indigenous knowledge” (Ijumba 2011a:1).



Ijumba (2011a:1) pointed out that “the establishment of this partnership and the Open Day are crucial events that not only celebrate history, but are platforms that were created to make more accessible the rare historic material held at the collections, thus contributing to an increase in African research conducted within UKZN and South Africa as a whole” [and will, it is to be hoped, also play an important role in promoting and disseminating African scholarship internationally].

In line with African identity, Stilwell succinctly articulated the reality of the CALS Collections: “The CALS Collections offer a uniquely African perspective on the world and could become a key intellectual and cultural resource and cornerstone for a scholarly contribution towards the African renaissance ...” (Ijumba 2011b:5).

#### **4.6 Summary**

In this chapter, the governance of CALS, the current UKZN policies which promote or hinder CALS in its contribution as a special collection for African studies, CALS’s mission, vision and goals and how they promote the UKZN goals, the CALS reviews, CALS’s accomplishments, and an examination of the role played by CALS and its collection in African literary studies, as well as the role played in the University’s academic curricula, were discussed in detail.

The next chapter discusses the gap between the vision and reality, and how to close it.

## Chapter 5

### **The Gap Between the Vision and the Reality, and How to Close It**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter describes the GAP (GAP Analysis Project) meeting in 2004 which identified the factors which hinder CALS in its ability to fulfil its role as a UKZN special collection. These challenges include promotion of the collections, collection development policies, preservation strategies, technology and digitisation, physical access and space issues, financial constraints and staffing. The chapter also offers suggestions for closing the gap between the initial vision of CALS and the reality of whether or not the Centre is fulfilling its role in its contribution to African Literary Studies within UKZN and the wider academic/research community.

#### **5.2 CALS's GAP Meeting: An idealised planning exercise which identified some of the early factors which hindered CALS in its contributions as a special collection for African literary studies**

In 2004 it was proposed that future research collaborations be discussed at a GAP Analysis Project meeting (CALS 2004:8). This meeting was duly held on 30 November 2004 and was chaired by Van Dyk. The meeting was attended by Gunner; CALS Acting Curator, Mrs Fiona Polak; the Acting PMB University Librarian, Mrs Carol Brammage; Ms Colleen Vietzen and Ms Homba Reve (CALS librarians); three CALS board members (Professors Philippe Denis, Terence King and Ms Melissa Stobie); three English postgraduate students (Robert Mowatt, Stephen Smith and Sean Rogers) and a voluntary worker (Mr M.S. Shezi). For the purposes of the exercise the attendees were divided into two groups, and it was ensured that there was a combination of the stakeholders in each group (Van Dyk 2005b:1-2).

CALS's stakeholders [and users] were identified as:

- (1) "UKZN staff members in English Studies who work particularly in Southern African and African literature, and trans-national, postcolonial or world literature.

- (2) UKZN staff members in disciplines such as history, theology, philosophy, sociology, geography and so on, all of whom are likely to have an Africa-related focus and research interest.
- (3) UKZN graduate students, particularly at master's and PhD level, working in the broad field of African/South African/postcolonial/world literatures.
- (4) Other UKZN graduate students in disciplines with an Africa-related focus.
- (5) Senior researchers (staff, doctoral and post-doctoral) from other universities in South Africa and from other African universities.
- (6) Senior researchers from the North (Europe, North America) and from India, China, the Caribbean, Brazil.
- (7) Members of the broader community: teachers, librarians, younger scholars and members of the public who wish to have access to the rich resources of the Collection.
- (8) The Centre's donors: Atlantic Philanthropies, Anglo-American Chairman's Fund, Department of Arts and Culture" (Gunner 2004c:1).

The meeting reinforced the fact that CALS's internal relationships should be with: teaching departments; the Research Office; libraries; and finance. The external relationships should be with the donors and the research networks/institutions (Gunner 2004c; Van Dyk 2005b:3).

In an e-mail (Van Dyk 2004), Van Dyk explained that the GAP meeting would consist of five distinct phases, but only three of them would be considered at that meeting as the other two had to do with "means planning", namely what human and physical resources are needed to make the future of CALS possible. The two groups formed worked through the first three stages of the planning exercises. The stages included:

1. A description of CALS as it existed "at the present moment", and "what it will look like in the future if it remains the same".
2. A consideration of where the stakeholders of CALS would "like the Centre to be in three to five years' time", namely "an idealised future". A significant deliberation was to "design a CALS which will be robust within a changing UKZN environment".

3. “What constitutes the gap between the idealised future and the present (or the future that is anticipated, if no changes are made) and how can this gap be minimised?” (Van Dyk 2004:1).

It is evident from the above that the proposed ‘GAP meeting’ was to be a platform to identify problems as well as to formulate future CALS policies. However, there is no evidence that all of the “five distinct phases” mentioned above were carried out.

At the 2004 meeting it was recorded that

“CALS’s operation should be considered as that which is appropriate from a formal Research Collection or Research Centre, which has formal relationships with Humanities, other relevant departments, and any future research facilities that may be created at the University or beyond” (Van Dyk 2005b:3).

The deliberations at this meeting identified the reality of some of the problems and challenges which plague CALS to this day, notably impediments such as space restrictions, funding and staffing which have never been rectified, creating the present-day gap between the original vision of CALS as discussed in Chapter 3 and the reality today. Thus the inadequacies that prevailed at CALS as far back as 2004 revealed that there was “a mismatch between expectations and reality, between how CALS is being and should be organized. This disjuncture led to major organizational ‘strain’” (Van Dyk 2005b:4,5-6). Furthermore, it was acknowledged that the original organisational plan as depicted in the original funding proposal (Section 3.5) regarding the initial purchase of the collection) was totally inadequate to meet the needs of the operations. There were 13 000 books and documents that needed to be processed [in 2004], and the original plan called for a director and one half-time person, which was “a naïve view” (Van Dyk 2005b:4). Moreover, as the cataloguing process was incomplete in 2004 it resulted in much of the collection administered by CALS being ‘hidden’ from potential researchers. Although CALS had “managed to do a lot since inception, the labour-intensive nature of the cataloguing [had] not been built into the vision or mission, and can be seen as a current weakness”, acknowledged Van Dyk (2005b:10). It was suggested that a three-year staffing plan needed to be put in place to meet the staffing requirements. There is no record that such a plan materialised.

Thus one can deduce that the present-day financial and staffing problems at CALS were identified as potential problem areas from the outset and these two crucial issues remain unresolved. The need for efficient “collection management and custodianship” was

considered an internal impediment in 2004 (Van Dyk 2005b:7) but this was remedied in 2011 and 2013 and is discussed in Sections 5.3.2.2 and 5.3.3 below.

In terms of the ‘happiness’ of CALS in 2004, the consensus of the two groups was that, although there existed a “very good work environment”, this ‘happiness’ was being compromised by uncertainties and lack of clarity around portfolios/job descriptions and conflicting demands (as a result of the capacity of staff, the lack of adequate training, and the limited experience of staff).

During the first stage of the GAP meeting the question was posed: “Consider the future financial viability of CALS as it functions today” (Van Dyk 2005b:7-8). The responses to this question by the two groups at the meeting/workshop were: “The future financial viability of the collection will only be secured through fundraising and investments” and, ominously, “If there is no additional funding, the collection will not grow; the collection will not be properly managed or be adequately accessible; research activities will flounder; [and] the collection will not survive.” It was predicted that if there was no additional funding, the Centre would run out of money in approximately two years and the collection would stagnate and physically disintegrate as a consequence (Van Dyk 2005b:7). This correlates with Section 3.6.2 above, repeated for emphasis, whereby CALS’s board resolved to recommend to Senate that CALS “should not be regarded as a museum, but should be the hub of a growing collection... a place of research and not a lending library”. However, “for the Centre to grow it would require a substantial budget to reach its full potential” (UN 2003:Minute 7.1). These predictions were not far off the mark as in 2010 McCracken wrote that the funding for CALS had run out (McCracken 2010).

Suggestions offered at the meeting for raising money included: money from publishing (50% to English, 50% to CALS), from grants, from student subsidies, and from hosting conferences. “These measures would be required to ensure sustainability and thus ongoing access to the collection,” recorded Van Dyk (2005b:8). Within the first three years of the idealised future envisaged at the GAP meeting, in the absence of any records to this effect, it must be concluded that CALS failed to earn substantial money through publishing and conferences, barring a significant conference held by Professors ten Kortenaar (a visiting CALS Fellow from Canada) and De Meyer (Professor of French Studies UKZN (PMB)). The Centre for African Literary Studies organised the conference on African Literature on the

Pietermaritzburg Campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal from 21 to 23 March 2006. This resulted in a publication titled *The Changing Face of African Literature* (CALS 2006a:Minute 5; De Meyer and Ten Kortenaar 2006).

Stage Two of the GAP meeting was “to design an idealized future for CALS, that is, where would the stakeholders like the Centre to be in three years’ time (an idealized or desired future”)? (Van Dyk 2005b:8).

To this purpose, a mission statement was selected for CALS, namely

“As a university-wide centre of excellence in African literary scholarship, CALS commits itself to creating a community of UKZN, and sub-Saharan<sup>2</sup> researchers in African Literary Studies and cognate disciplines. We need to commit to major fundraising and collection maintenance and acquisition in order to continue our work in networking, intensive workshopping and hosting of seminars and conferences, and engaging internationally in the theatre of intellectual discussion” (Van Dyk 2005b:10).

To date there are no records of successful fundraising of note. Regarding an international engagement, see Section 5.3.2.1 below. In 2010 McCracken (2010) had lamented: “Yes, there were occasional conferences and workshops, but it should have been buzzing with students”, teaching of honours classes, seminars, book launches and so on. Under Stilwell’s directorship (2011–2013), seminars and workshops did take place (see Appendix 11). The establishment of the isiZulu Literary Museum in 2012 has attracted many undergraduate students (see Section 6.5). However, the Centre has failed to attract serious researchers, both local and international.

In the final stage, Stage Three of the idealised planning on how CALS would achieve its ideal future (and close the problematic gaps) while considering the variables that stand in the way of achieving this future, which of the variables could be controlled and which not, and how these variables could be manipulated over time to achieve the particular desired future, the groups cited the following variables: the necessity for adequate funding and administrative support; a once-off forum for interested persons (postgraduate and

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<sup>2</sup> “Sub-Saharan” is a misconception as the CALS Collection strives to be representative of all African and diasporic literature.

researchers) to advise the management of CALS; and a survey of similar collections, both local and abroad to ascertain their management practices and income-generating methods.

In order to survey similar collections, Polak (2006b) undertook a trip to the National English Literary Museum (NELM) in Grahamstown and to the Centre for African Studies (CAS) at the University of Cape Town (see Appendix 13). It was also emphasised that CALS needed to engender a significant research relationship with English, isiZulu and French studies, and a technical relationship with the library to process the material, and establish communication with the donors.

Further tangible success measures offered at the 2004 GAP meeting were: a productivity portfolio for 2005; recognisable cataloguing progress (targets all met by June 2005); periodical binding targets met by December 2005; hosting of a conference: African literature and ethics: July 2005; attracting students; 200 users per annum (in 2013, according to CALS statistics, there were 344 users and this figure was surpassed by August in the 2015 statistics); and host the Bloke Modisane Memorial Lecture (Van Dyk 2005b:12-13).

Regarding the relationship with the Main Library, “for what appear to be historical reasons CALS has largely operated independently of the UKZN libraries” (Stilwell 2013a:14). This was despite earlier comments by Merrett (2001) (see Section 3.5), regarding a more positive form of relationship. In an attempt to discover why CALS has operated independently of the UKZN libraries, the researcher contacted the ex-acting university librarian, Mrs Carol Brammage. In an e-mail, Brammage stated that the Pietermaritzburg (PMB) university librarian at the time when the CALS concept was first conceived, Dr Christopher Merrett, thought that it was “appropriate for CALS to fall under the Library in the same manner as other special collections such as the Alan Paton Centre”. However, “despite the best endeavours from the Library to bring CALS under its management, university academics and administrators thought it appropriate that CALS be set up as a research centre with its own Director with links to the appropriate faculty (now college) rather than to the Library”. The University Librarian (PMB) was merely a member of the CALS board (Brammage 2015).

Brammage elaborated that both Merrett and later herself as acting librarian (PMB) after the merger in 2004

“wished to form and maintain a collegial relationship with CALS. This relationship included CALS’s holdings being added to the then CATNIP [Cataloguing Network in Pietermaritzburg] joint catalogue network, library cataloguing staff assisting CALS’s staff with cataloguing, as well as other links with library staff. But it is important to note that this relationship was due to a spirit of cooperation and was not a formal relationship ...”

The merger was in itself a long process that introduced significant structural changes in the library. Brammage (2015) explained that

“the three previously separate library systems (Durban, PMB and Westville) were merged into one system. The libraries now fell under the Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and subsequently the Vice-Chancellor (Research), who was in overall charge of library services on all campuses. There were several vice-chancellors in quick succession during this period of change ... The merger had an effect on the library’s informal relationship with CALS”.

Brammage (2015) stressed that Merrett and herself “always thought it would be best for the CALS Collection in the long and short term to fall under the auspices of the Library, but others outside the Library thought differently”. Brammage added that, during the merger period, she “strenuously” fought against “a strong move to remove all the Special Collections from Library auspices and even to centralise them physically in Westville or Durban”.

After the merger process was completed, Dr Praversh Sukram was appointed deputy director of library systems. He became the university librarian in 2006.

Thus, despite Merrett’s and Brammage’s effective initial efforts and recommendations over a period of time and in different contexts for CALS to resort under the library, CALS was regarded as a ‘research centre’ rather than a ‘collection’ (Brammage 2015). (Section 3.6.2 above confirms that CALS was indeed established as a research centre rather than a lending library.) Recently Merrett told the researcher that there was “a strong belief in an integrated catalogue (CATNIP) and optimisation of library resources”. After all, the library “had plenty of expertise to offer and were full of optimism about co-operation” (Merrett 2015).



### **5.3 Challenges facing CALS (the gap) and how CALS has addressed them**

This section addresses the research focus regarding CALS's ability to enable African literary studies and the challenges which hamper CALS in enabling African literary studies at UKZN.

Some of the internal impediments discussed at the GAP meeting in 2004, such as the need for electronic newsletters, more computer terminals, dehumidifiers/airconditioning and security at access have been successfully addressed and this is expanded on below.

#### **5.3.1 Publicity and promotion**

CALS actively publicised its collections by means of its website; newsletters (*CALS News* was introduced in 2007); the media, especially Stephen Coan, the assistant editor at the *Witness*, Pietermaritzburg's daily newspaper; and complementary bookmarks and brochures between 2004 and 2013. CALS's directors hosted several successful promotional activities and seminars, as well as community development/partnerships/outreach over the years. However, *CALS News* has not been published since December 2013. For details pertaining to CALS's activities and branding between 2004 and 2013 see Appendix 13.

#### **5.3.2 Book acquisition policy**

Unlike other institutions, such as NELM, Campbell Collections, Alan Paton Centre and Struggle Archives (APC) and CAS, which have documented collection development policies, CALS, from the outset, did not draw up a formal collection policy.

##### **5.3.2.1 Collection development policies**

The drawing up of suitable collection policies is no mean feat and can provide many challenges. This is particularly so in South Africa. Prior to 1994, university curricula were largely Eurocentric in content. Hence librarians now need to take a more critical look at what they are collecting, and to take note of who their users are.

It is important that "African Scholarship is – or must become – crucial to all who work in African Studies and in the libraries that support and sustain African Studies," urges Bundy (2002:14). Limb (2004:155-156) specifically highlights the important role played by African librarians: "African reference librarians have an increasingly important role to play in twenty-first century scholarly endeavours on Africa." It is interesting to note that he mentions that in

the US, there are specialist Africana librarians, whereas in Africa there are no formally trained, specialist Africana librarians. One must conclude that the lack is not consistent with an Afrocentric paradigm focusing on African agency.

Hart (2002:60) noted that once the University of Cape Town (UCT) curricula started being ‘Africanised’, students realised that much of the recommended reading was available in the African Studies library, rather than in the main university library. IsiZulu students at CALS have reported similar findings (see Chapter 9). Kilyobo (2015:72) also made this observation: “Regarding the availability of the African writers’ work at the PMB [Cecil Renaud] Library, an interviewee stated that ‘many books that originally were available from [the] Cecil Renaud Library [are] now all found at CALS.’”

Hart (2002:60-63) lists the following challenges in building a collection for African libraries:

- The trend toward electronic resources and how these fit into the long-term preservation requirements of a research library (see Section 5.3.5 below).
- On a very limited budget there is the need to identify those regions on which the collection would focus, and to take decisions about languages to acquire (discussed below).
- Closed access, non-loan library? It remains non-access and non-loan mainly to ensure that materials are always available and for security reasons [although, unlike CALS, browsing is permitted, if requested].

“The prominent Africana dealer, Mr C. Struik, gave this advice: ‘It is necessary today for every library to specialise, as it is not possible to collect over the whole field of Africana’” (Pim 1990:101).

A meeting to discuss the partnership between CALS and the main PMB library was held at the PMB library on 17 February 2004. The meeting was attended by Gunner and the Pietermaritzburg campus librarians, Mrs Margie Bass, Mrs Carol Brammage, Mrs Margie Gray, and Mrs Liz van der Berg, whereby it was agreed that the library should prepare a document raising certain points that from a library point of view needed clarification or discussion and also to note some suggestions (Bass, Brammage and Van der Berg 2004:1). Regarding the acquisition/purchasing of new material, it was recorded that “once a policy is

agreed and funding identified, it is feasible that the PMB Campus Library's Acquisitions section is used to purchase new material for the Centre but this would require careful planning in collaboration with the Finance division". Importantly, it was noted that "the Library has established systems for dealing with agents, publishers and retailers, and clearing customs, for example" (Bass et al., 2004:3).

Various attempts were made to discuss policy regarding journals with discussions centring around whether or not to duplicate journals with the main library and which titles CALS should subscribe to. Despite the fact that no formalised policy was established, the main library agreed to assist with subscriptions of 25 titles. Ms Vorster, the CALS librarian, had compiled an inventory of all 474 titles from which the 25 renewable titles would be extracted (CALS 2004:2). The library also agreed to assist CALS with the cataloguing for two hours a week (CALS 2004:Minute 5). This agreement ended in June 2006 (CALS 2006b:Minute 3c).

In 2004 Ms Colleen Vietzen (a retired university librarian, Pietermaritzburg campus, who had been employed on a part-time basis in November 2004 to assist Ms Vorster with the cataloguing process) pointed out that periodical systems needed "to be set up immediately". She stated that periodicals are "another gold field on the journal shelves" and they were "very vulnerable" (Vietzen 2004:2). Vietzen suggested that CALS should use the library's infrastructure for transferring funds as "this would alert [one] to duplication and save endless headaches with claiming for missing issues, sourcing, agents and pre-payment requirements". In a similar vein to Bass et al. (2004:3) above, Vietzen stated that it would be advisable to use the library's infrastructure for orders, agents, customs clearance and data capture of new books (Vietzen 2004:2).

There are no records of new orders having been submitted to the main university library in 2005. Use of the main library infrastructure for book and periodical orders had been accepted in principle but not yet implemented. In 2006, after extended and fruitful discussions requesting greater collaboration between CALS and the main library, it was agreed that book and journal ordering would in future be facilitated by the main library staff with the main library debiting CALS's acquisitions cost centre. Furthermore, the duplication of journal subscriptions would cease (CALS 2006a:Minute 6, Acting Director's Library Report; Polak 2006a:1). This agreement changed in 2007 (see below).

CALS's early initiatives strived to be representative of African literature, including Francophone and Lusophone writings. CALS's collection consists of both purchased as well as donated material. In 2004 the Stephen Gray collection had been purchased for R22 000; gifts and donations had been received from private donors and the Natal Society Library (renamed Bessie Head). A full set of the Stuart volumes, signed by Professor Colin Webb, had been generously donated by Mrs Fleur Webb, his widow. Gunner had stressed that people viewed CALS as a centre of enormous literary value. She referred to the decision at the board meeting (in 2004) to build up the collection so that the library was more representative of African literature across the range of Francophone and Lusophone writings, as well as the Anglophone core. Gunner visited Maputo (5–10 December 2004) as per the agreement at the first board meeting of 2004, that the Lusophone holdings of CALS should be expanded. Dr Stephan Helgesson (a postdoctoral fellow in English studies) had advised her on Lusophone purchases and contacts in Maputo (CALS 2004:Minute 5.3).

CALS has relied mainly on, and has received, many donations to enhance its collections, as well as new books and journals which are regularly sent by Lindfors and some new acquisitions sourced by CALS staff. "CALS scouts for, solicits and receives many donations" (Stilwell 2013a:9). (For a list of CALS donations, see Appendix 9.)

In 2005 CALS was fortunate to "inherit papers and journals from the extensive Lusophone collection of the late Professor Gerald Moser", a United States-based pioneering scholar and professor of Lusophone African literatures (CALS 2005a:4). Parts of the work are devoted to general bibliographies and national literatures of Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, and São Tomé & Príncipe, divided into sections on oral literature, creative writing and literary history and criticism (Stilwell 2011:3).

A particularly interesting donation was received from Mrs Else Schreiner, who donated a rare book, *Cameos from the Kraal*, officially to CALS on 7 December 2012. The book was published by the Lovedale Institution Press and contains oral tales collected and transcribed by Mary Waters. The book is thought to have originated between 1900 and 1923 and has been reprinted several times. Mrs Schreiner also donated a copy of her children's book *Lesothosaurus and the Ancestor's Bones* to CALS (CALS 2012a:5-6; CALS 2012b:2).

At the meeting in 2004 (Bass et al., 2004:2), the question of policy and funding also included “if another collection is added will it be integrated into the existing collection or kept distinct?” This had never been formally resolved and became especially problematic when CALS purchased the Priebe collection in 2009/2010.

On 2 December 2010 the CALS’s acting director (Professor Mbongeni Malaba) and librarians (Polak and Vietzen) held an informal discussion to discuss a CALS policy on new acquisitions. It was decided that, given the fact that the initial acquisition, the Lindfors Collection, had a wealth of Nigerian and West African material, CALS should try to build up its collection of literature from that region, but should also buy strategically, to augment its southern African material. Thus the collections would be combined (CALS 2011b:Minute 6).

In terms of international relationships envisaged at the GAP meeting in 2004, the collection of retired Professor Richard Priebe of the Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) and a former president of the African Literature Association (ALA), was acquired by CALS and launched on 13 October 2010 at the Centre. A number of dignitaries from different fields of literature, including representatives from VCU, attended the event (CALS 2010b:2). Priebe stated:

“I think the UKZN holdings in African literature make it the best research library in the world for many, if not the most, of the many literatures of Africa and the diaspora. I know that already it is the most comprehensive library for the study of African literatures. I feel honoured to have my collection join the great collection you already have” (Priebe 2009).

The Priebe Collection covers African literature and ancillary subjects such as art and history, folklore, Caribbean literature, and African-American literature. The collection is unique in its holdings of popular writing from Ghana. These are commonly known as ‘chapbooks’, which are small pamphlets containing tales, ballads, or tracts, and were published and sold by peddlers in Nigeria and Ghana in the 1960s. Its other unique feature is African Narratives of Childhood, a project Professor Priebe’s scholarship has focused on over the years, among several areas. It also contains rare tapes, magazines and folkloric material (CALS 2010a:2).

In a similar vein to Lindfors, regarding repatriation, it also struck Priebe as “both right and important that the material now be returned to Africa and housed in an African university

where future scholars could study popular culture material published in Africa by Africans and for Africans in the 50s, 60s, 70s, material no longer available anywhere” (Priebe 2009).

Since its inception in 2004, very little systematic book acquisition has in fact been possible at CALS, mainly because of a shortage of staff and uncertain funding. There were, however, two periods when some valuable new titles were acquired: 2008–2009 when Vietzen did some country-by-country searching and placed orders through the main library’s acquisition’s department; and 2012–2013 when Stilwell ordered useful new material. During these latter two years, journal subscriptions were also rationalised.

Stilwell worked tirelessly between 2011 and 2013 to ensure that systems were in place. Vietzen developed guidelines for systematic ordering for the CALS Procedures Manual written in March 2009 (Vietzen 2014). In 2013 Stilwell noted: “We have at last started purchasing a limited number of items of current literature. A systematic process to do this has been set in place and a system for recording the items on order has been devised. In the past orders were done through the UKZN library” (CALS 2013a:5-6).

Compared with CALS’s holdings in 2004, “13 000 in all” (Gunner 2004a:1), at present CALS’s collection

“boasts some 16 000 books [which include poetry, plays, novels, literary criticism, reference works, theses and dissertations and children’s books written in Africa], journals and rare sound and video material and is especially notable for its holdings of material published in Africa, such as a full collection of Onitsha market literature from Nigeria. Also in the collection is a large body of remarkable photographs of African authors and wide-ranging bibliographical resources for criticism about African literature ... CALS also has a wealth of documents and original letters from authors” (Stilwell 2013a:6-7).

CALS’s history has a strong focus on South African poetry, fiction and drama, as well as an emphasis on diaspora literature, attempting to reach beyond the confines of continental or even national boundaries. While the strength of the CALS collection is in Anglophone writing, CALS is also “committed to the study of other language literatures on the African continent” (CALS 2005a:4). CALS is “committed to preserving and adding to the collection in order to maintain the largest library of African literature on the continent” and thus to serve as a centre for the study of African literature within Africa (CALS 2005a:3).

### **5.3.2.2 The dangers of a lack of a systematic process for monitoring the acquisition of donations**

There are several dangers when libraries and special collections do not have a systematic collection policy. The examples below are drawn from CALS's experiences.

#### **(i) Missing donation: Professor Harold Waters**

Professor Chris (Harold A.) Waters, who retired from the University of Rhode Island in 1991, made CALS a donation of material of mainly Francophone (including Caribbean, West African and North African) theatre literature. The Water's consignment consisted of 11 plastic containers of about 100 books each. Arrangements were being made to ship the Waters material to CALS (CALs 2010a:1).

On 9 February 2007, an e-mail (Waters 2007) was cc'd to Mzimane. It read as follows:

“This is more or less a progress report on my desire to donate my African collection ... My speciality was black francophone theatre but my holdings encompass other genres and other languages. I've assembled them by general categories into 12 containers – 58-liter plastic crates with tops. I'm in contact with Professor Mbulelo Mzimane, Centre for African Literary Studies (CALs) and my collection will find a good home there. It is part of the University of KwaZulu-Natal ... I wonder what my next step should be?”

Signed Harold A. (Chris) Waters

The donation never arrived and was never followed up by the director or the staff. “This happened at the time when Professor Mzamane was ill,” reported Stilwell (CALs 2012e:Minute 2.6.3.2). Five years later the acting director, Stilwell, spent a considerable amount of time and effort, even tracing and contacting Waters, trying to locate the lost donation. Stilwell reported that Booksmart had sent a consignment through which ended up at the Mkambathini Library in Camperdown. It was traced that the boxes did arrive. The person who received the boxes said there had been too many to sort and the University was not notified. The boxes then went to schools in the area. Two local school teachers helped Stilwell and endeavoured to trace the missing boxes. If the Waters collection had materialised, then there would have been more French books at CALs (CALs 2012e:Minute 2.6).

The loss of this valuable donation was a poor reflection on the follow-up processes of CALS.

(ii) Duplication:

Before arrangements are made to purchase costly collections, it is important that they be appraised as was done with the Lindfors collection by Zell. Costly and unnecessary duplication can be avoided.

(iii) Gaps in the collection:

Because CALS lacked a dedicated acquisitions librarian and funding was uncertain as mentioned above, gaps in the collection invariably arose over the years. Between 2011 and 2013 Stilwell tried to address this problem by spending a small annual book budget to address the gaps and to keep up to date with current fiction and other publications that had not yet been received by donations (CALS 2011c:Minute 10.1.4). The ringfenced book fund from the original Atlantic Philanthropies grant was used to purchase some items.

Collection development policies are crucially important in enabling special collections to fulfil their role of collecting, promoting and preserving scholarship.

### **5.3.3 Cataloguing**

In November 2004 Vietzen, aware that “crisis action” was necessary regarding the access and documentation of CALS’s material, drew up a document “to initiate dialogue on the overall strategy for speeding up the processing of CALS’s material”. Vietzen stated in November 2004 that she felt “disturbed that we are within four months of granting ‘limited access’ to the CALS’s Collection and yet so little progress has been made with essential basic documentation and securing the material”. Lack of dedicated full-time person-power and lack of dedicated uninterrupted workspace were two concerns cited by Vietzen (2004:1). The latter issue was finally addressed in 2013.

Vietzen suggested a four-phase strategy to speed up the cataloguing process, namely:

Phase One: Immediate term – Secure the collection; Phase Two: Short term – Capture basic bibliographic records (descriptive cataloguing); Phase Three: Medium term – Classification



and first-level subject analysis; Phase Four: Long term – In-depth subject analysis of original works (Vietzen 2004:1-2).

Furthermore, Ms Homba Reve, the technical assistant, was working “on the highest priority (security)” on a voluntary basis. Vietzen suggested that she receive some remuneration (retroactive and current) (Vietzen 2004:2). This was duly done. Ms Reve can be regarded as one of the ‘unsung heroes’ of CALS. The researcher worked side by side with her between 2004 and 2006. Despite her poor health, Reve worked diligently and took pride in her work, was methodical and made an immense contribution to the initial technical processing (spine labelling and shelving) of CALS’s books before her untimely death in 2010 (CALS 2010a:4).

What makes special collections so important is that many of their holdings consist of unpublished manuscripts which are ‘gold’ to researchers. The processing of CALS’s material was essential to enable CALS to fulfil its mandate of facilitating and enabling the research of African literature and unlocking the true potential of its material.

In retrospect, the cataloguing and journal binding was an impossible task to complete by 2005, as proposed by the 2004 GAP meeting, especially with very limited staff. Lack of leadership in the form of a permanent director who understood library procedures also severely hampered the cataloguing progress. A full-time administrative assistant was employed in 2005. Polak, the ex-acting curator (October 2004–March 2005), was employed from March 2005 to March 2007 to catalogue the books, and again from 1 December on a contract basis with the task of processing the newly acquired Priebe collection and the cataloguing of CALS’s periodicals (CALS 2011a:2). Ms Barbara Gentil was appointed in 2011 in a temporary and part-time capacity to archive the special collections (unpublished material) (CALS 2012a:16).

By the end of 2012 Vietzen had prepared approximately 673 Afrikaans and isiZulu books for data capture. Polak had captured all CALS’s journal holdings (some 503 titles in total) on the UKZN libraries system, including the Afrikaans journal titles. Polak, with help from Gentil, had completed the processing of all of the single copies of journals (120 items). CALS had taken over the ordering and maintaining of its own journal subscriptions to current titles. The binding of the journals processed had been completed. Duplicate journals had been offered to other special collections countrywide ... The Lindfors photographic collection had been sorted (some 77 items). Finding lists for the single copies of journals and the photographic

collection were placed on the iCatalogue and the CALS website. Gentil had completed the processing of five archival collections, namely, the Bernth Lindfors, Catherine Woeber, Gerald Moser, Richard Priebe and Liz Gunner documents (CALS 2012a:5-6).

By the end of 2013

“Vietzen [had] processed the isiZulu books, with Mr [Wiseman] Masango [CALS’s technical librarian] as a proof reader ... Polak [catalogued] some 190 items which were theses, some rare materials [and had started cataloguing the] AV materials ... All classification and subject cataloguing of the existing stock [had been] complete[d] with the exception of some translations of Nigerian literature and a few recent donations as well as a small number of books from the UKZN Afrikaans Department collection. All other titles, including the Moser Collection, [had] been fully catalogued, spine labelled and shelved” (CALS 2013a:5-6).

The weakness of “the labour-intensive nature of the cataloguing [which had] not been built into the vision or mission ...”, as cited by Van Dyk (2005b:10) above, was thus remedied years later under Stilwell’s directorship (2011–2013). “Beating the backlog: CALS’s superlative achievement is that of beating the backlog which dates from 2004 and getting all the different categories of material processed and accessible for use” (Stilwell 2013a:33).

At the end of 2013 it was recorded that CALS could be commended as systems had been set up for the processing of the journals, archiving of the documents, photographs and newspaper clippings, converting the audiovisual materials to more stable formats, as well as the compilation of an operations manual to ensure continuity and to counteract the loss of knowledge and skills (CALS 2013a:4).

The collections are no longer ‘hidden’ to potential researchers. As Yakel (2005:97) reminds us: “Inaccessible collections hinder research” and “understaffed repositories result in backlogs which are difficult to overcome”. The documentation of CALS’s material has contributed significantly to enhancing and enabling African scholarship at UKZN and has unlocked the true value of the collections.

Despite all the challenges, it is evident that the collection has been well maintained, as is discussed in Section 5.3.4 below.

### 5.3.4 Preservation strategies

Preservation management programmes are essential for all special collections and can present challenges.

As mentioned in Section 4.2 above, the *South African National Heritage Resources Act, No. 25 of 1999*, stipulates that an advisory board is required. “This Act also requires that the educational, research and conservation needs of Heritage Collections are met” (Stilwell 2013a:13). CALS has an advisory board despite the problem with the DVC and the issue of calling of meetings.

Craig (1995:8) advises that “assessment is the first step in the development of a preservation management programme. It occupies a key place in the development of subsequent policies, procedures and programmes”. A ‘preservation-needs assessment’ is advocated which includes nine important factors: organisational context; collections management; access and use; bibliographic control; environmental factors; training needs; security; disaster management; condition of the collections (Eden 1998:230). Dr Estelle Liebenberg-Barkhuizen, a qualified paper conservator from the Alan Paton Centre, advised CALS on the correct preservation and archival procedures and in 2013 restored the Waters book donated by Elsa Schreiner (see Section 5.3.2.1 above).

CALS qualifies in most of these categories in that the book collection has been systematically classified according to the Dewey Decimal system and is protected by a “closed access” system (Bass et al., 2004:1,2). In 2005, CALS staff noted there was an urgent need to get mesh on the windows to prevent book theft. The windows were duly secured (CALS 2005c:Minute 11). The collection has been catalogued and appears on the UKZN library system; the temperature in the stack rooms is carefully monitored and recorded and the staff were trained by Dr Liebenberg-Barkhuizen regarding strict temperature control (a second hygrometer was purchased to ensure that both stack rooms are at the correct humidity levels to ensure the preservation of materials); the Centre also has a tattle-tape detector gate, a heat detector and alarms to alert Risk Management. As part of a development policy must include the control of biological deterioration of the library materials, fumigation takes place annually (CALS 2011c:2 Acting Director’s Report, Annexure 1).

Gentil, a qualified librarian with some years of experience in academic libraries with records and documents management training by Mrs Jewel Koopman of the APC “in the *respect des fonds* principle of archival work”, prepared the inventories for the boxed collections. The materials were cleaned, filed and boxed in the correct acid and chlorine-free packaging with lists to facilitate retrieval [as is the photograph collection] (Stilwell 2013a:7).

The CALS Board Library Report (CALS 2006a:Minute 6) lists an update on the state of the building whereby window security was installed; remedial work on the shelving commenced and an additional shelf per unit was inserted to provide five shelves in each and support strips were fitted to all uprights [incorrect factory shelving had been installed when CALS had been established]; and white-ant pest control had been completed in the new part of the building. It was suggested that the building be checked every six months for termites.

In 2009, CALS then acting curator, Ms Andrea Vorster (2007–2009), in her library report had commented on the poor state of the CALS building. Vorster stated: “Heavy rain has caused much damage and much time and attention has been spent on repairs and maintenance. Leaks have been attended to and skirting in the curator’s office and passage is in the process of being replaced” (CALS 2009a:Minute 6). According to the acting director’s reports, many of these building problems were rectified under the directorship of Professor Stilwell (CALS 2011c:Minutes 1 and 2) and the entire ceiling in the curator’s office was replaced as it was mouldy (CALS 2012c:Minute 1).

No library development policy would be complete without provision for the safety of the collections and disaster preparedness. Mrs Joyce Myeza (the UKZN special collections librarian at the time, now the university librarian) speaking at the South African Preservation and Conservation Group (Myeza 2012) highlighted the three most important points, namely prevent, respond and recover. Myeza informed her audience: A regular formal risk analysis needs to be undertaken and procedures to eliminate risks developed, and the plan needs to be communicated to the stakeholders who are the personnel, the collection, the building and equipment. There are four types of risk categories, namely probability high with a high effect, such as fire, cyclones, flood, civil unrest, dust storms, burst water main; probability high with a low effect such as leaking tap, poor environmental conditions, theft and vandalism; probability low with a high effect such as earthquake, nuclear war, civil unrest; low probability with a low effect such as collapse of bookshelf, theft, vacuum cleaner

malfunction. There is a need for the personnel to be trained to know what to do in such events and allocation of responsibilities is essential.

In relation to disaster management, Mrs Darlene Holtz (CALs administrator) replaced Mrs Peters in July 2011 as the Safety Committee member and regularly attended Safety Committee meetings. She upgraded the signage and other measures regarding safety and provided instructions ready to hand. Staff were given access to panic buttons. The matters relating to the issue of disaster management were under review (CALs 2011c:Minutes 1 and 2 Acting Director's Report; CALs 2012c:Minute 1).

The collaborative measures taken above bear witness to the common goal of the UKZN special collections to work together to preserve the African heritage to promote African scholarship.

### **5.3.5 Technology and digitisation**

Besides the scope of Africanisation in African library development policies, there is another problematic aspect to consider concerning acquisitions and collection development policies, namely digitisation and the argument driven by technology as well as by the need to provide access to collections.

Deciding whether or not to digitise poses challenges to special collections. This has proved challenging for CALs, especially in view of the exorbitant costs of digitisation and the staff shortages at CALs. This overview is pertinent to the present situation at the UKZN special collections, which are considering the need to digitise their material, a project which has been started by the Alan Paton Centre and Struggle Archives and the Campbell Collections.

Given CALs's limited financial resources, as well as low user demand, weighed against all the imperatives to improve access, the question is: would it be appropriate and/or cost effective for CALs to digitise? There are also questions of where the ownership of digital material resides, as Mrs Jewel Koopman (the APC librarian at the time) points out (Polak 2009:82-83).

An important point raised by Michel is that special collections by their very nature need to remain 'rare' to entice users to the Centre. Photocopies should be restricted and discouraged

to maintain the “integrity of the institution’s collections”. Crucially, “How much of our Special Collections can we digitize before we have surrendered our image and identity as an exclusive repository of unique objects?” asks Michel (2005:394). Michel (2005:391-394) suggests that seeing that most archival manuscripts are usually stored in boxes from which items are selected by the researcher, to copy on demand should be considered “as a viable alternative to digitizing large masses of low-use material”.

CALS’s material is neatly stored in boxes and quite accessible to researchers on demand.

In contrast to Michel’s considerations above, when undertaking digitisation projects Page-Shipp (2009:56) believes that it is generally widely recognised that:

1. “Digitisation has definite short-term value, especially in terms of access and rescue of decaying items from oblivion.
2. Preservation in the long term is desirable for the sake of future users.”

In a telephonic discussion and subsequent e-mail correspondence with Koopman (Polak 2009:83), Koopman stated that

“the main problem for us [the Alan Paton Centre, UKZN] is that when the Digital Imaging Africa project (DISA) [UKZN] scans the documents, they then take ownership of copyright of the scanned images. The copyright of the original documents still belongs to the archive of origin, but the version that goes onto the Internet becomes the property of DISA”.

Thus APC was not in favour of this particular digitisation project because of the copyright issues involved and the fear that Africa could lose its intellectual property.

Page-Shipp (2009:56) reminds us that “there will be future preservation costs, including storage media migration, provision of back-up copies, augmenting and consolidating collections and weeding of low-relevance material and duplicates. Unfortunately, many South African, and especially archives in other African countries, are not in a financial position to afford these future costs” (Polak 2009:84).

Britz and Lor address concerns regarding digitisation projects in Africa. They raise the valid point that digitisation problems “are not only technical, but also economic, political, legal and [in particular] moral” (Britz and Lor 2003:1). They argue that “information-based human rights (which are based on and derived from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights) can provide such a moral framework.” Their concern is that Africans may not benefit from the material that is digitised, nor will they be able to access it. Further concerns revolve around the beneficiaries of the material, which is often to the advantage of the wealthy Western countries, especially as “English is largely the language employed on the Web [and] American culture on the Net is an overwhelming influence”. There is a danger of “cultural imperialism” which will exclude the accommodation of the communal rights of African people (Lor and Britz 2004:79). They make the point that in documenting Africa’s heritage, there is a need for “individuals and groups to own, use and control information they have generated for themselves” (Britz and Lor 2003:6). In order to “ensure a just and fair application” of digitisation, they offer “a moral framework based on social justice”, which will be globally acceptable as well as “ethical guidelines for digitization projects in Africa” (Britz and Lor 2003:6-9; Lor and Britz 2004:82-92).

Since its inception CALS had considered the viability of digitising some of its material but it had never been followed up (CALs 2005c:Minute 11; CALs 2008b:Minute 4; CALs 2010a:2). CALS did collaborate with DISA, encouraged by James Currey, in agreeing to the digitisation of the journal *The New African*.

Under the directorship of Stilwell, CALS became proactive regarding the digitising of its material. Postgraduate Diploma in Information Studies (PGDIS) students under the supervision of Myeza (then head of special collections) began conducting their digitisation practicals at the Centre. It was suggested that Myeza would be approached to train staff to digitise the CALS Collection. For digitisation, CALS had acquired the necessary equipment and software, and a scanner dedicated to the digitisation project had been borrowed from the School of Social Sciences for the project (CALs 2012c:Minute 10.5.1).

In 2013 Postgraduate Diploma Students in Information Studies (PGDIS) and Records and Archives Management (PGDRAM) undertook a pilot study at CALS as part of their Digital Libraries Module presented by Myeza and Mrs Patricia Liebetrau of Digital Innovation South

Africa (DISA). CALS made a big investment of time and space to support the students who were busy at CALS most days (CALS 2013a:7; CALS 2013c:Minute 2.11.1).

Ms Bridget McBean, who replaced Van Dyk as Executive Director of the UKZN Foundation Trust in November 2012, invited CALS to apply for a R1.5 million grant for digitisation. The proposal had a French language emphasis and covered the funding for a digitisation project (CALS 2013c:3).

In 2015, in an e-mail to the researcher, Mr Athol Leach, Senior Lecturer in Information Studies, explained that PGDIS students had intended to digitise parts of the CALS collection as part of the practical component of the module ‘Digital Libraries and Repositories LIIS644’. However, it was realised that this would not be possible “due to time constraints in terms of getting the students to the necessary level of expertise” (Leach 2015).

There is no evidence at present that CALS material is being digitised.

### **5.3.6 Physical access and space issues**

Jimerson (2003:13) contends: “Personal interaction between the archival staff and the user still provides the most reliable means of conducting research in archives and manuscripts.” Thus visits to archives for research are still relevant and suitable space is crucial in order to assist researchers. An ongoing concern at CALS, since its inception, is that of a shortage of space. The reading room is doubling up as a work room and the stacks are becoming rather full. Space problems were identified at the GAP meeting in 2004 as mentioned in Section 5.2 above.

The CALS board was fully aware from the outset that the space at CALS was inadequate. As far back as 2005, Bawa wrote that there would be an eventual need for an extension to the current facility to accommodate cataloguing, as well as space for fellows and graduate students (Bawa 2005).

Gunner also voiced her concern about the size of the building. The board responded that once CALS had sufficient users, then CALS could motivate for more space (CALS 2005c:Minute 11). In 2008 the matter was raised again: “Suitable working space and LAN access for users needs to be addressed” (CALS 2008a:6). According to CALS user statistics, in 2013 nearly 350 users used CALS and this figure had been surpassed by August 2015.



In 2011, Acting Director, Professor Malaba, suggested that in the future the board should look at another building to house the CALS collections, preferably together with the Alan Paton collection in one building, and that the current CALS building be used for researchers and users (CALS 2011b:5). In 2013 Myeza submitted a proposal for such funds on behalf of both centres to Atlantic Philanthropies and confirmed that she had received an e-mail stating that “Atlantic Philanthropies will contribute to the building of a new space” (APC 2013:Minute 1). There is no further documentation relating to the matter.

In 2011 McCracken alludes to the space and storage issues regarding the special collections: “Unique conservation and preservation issues face these Collections as well as space and storage issues, and vast quantities of these collections are not catalogued. Space issues are critical as most collections are running out of space ... These space issues threaten a moratorium on collections development and other activities” (McCracken 2011:22). In his report, McCracken had warned that “the Campbell Collection is facing complicated issues in terms of retaining occupation of space – this collection is perhaps the most valuable and endangered” (McCracken 2011:22). Sadly, this came to pass and a moratorium was placed on the intake of new archival material by the Campbell Collection while storage issues were being addressed (UKZN 2012).

As CALS and the Alan Paton Centre also experience space issues, in 2011 McCracken (2011:23) recommended: “Maintenance planning and scheduling needs to take place on a regular basis and critical space issues need to be resolved as a matter of urgency.”

For three consecutive years Stilwell, in her acting director’s reports, emphasised that “space must remain a key issue on the agenda for more ambitious future planning of space for CALS and the Alan Paton Centre” and “CALS lacks a reading room and visitors and scholars use the boardroom which is not ideal since the boardroom is often booked for seminars” (CALS 2011c:Minute 5; CALS 2012c:Minute 1; Stilwell 2013a:25).

It was originally estimated that the main stack room would accommodate 16 200 monographs on 360 shelves (of standard length 900mm) arranged in 60 six-shelf bays. The density considered was 45 volumes per shelf. The subsidiary stack room would accommodate 4 860 monographs on 108 shelves in 18 bays. Another 900 books, (possibly reference material) could be fitted onto shelves in alcoves on either side of the chimney breast (Van Dyk 2002b).

At present CALS has reached full capacity with over 16 000 monographs, journals and other material.

Under Stilwell's directorship there was a concerted effort and ongoing planning and work to improve the physical space at CALS. Stilwell freed up spaces in the stacks by the removal of unneeded duplicate books from the Priebe Collection and duplicate journals to make space for the Afrikaans collection. Furthermore, top shelves are now being used in some sections and two small sets of steps were purchased to enable staff to reach this height. Space was also made by opening the courtyard where a bench and table have been provided and another small table was placed at the Reference section for users to work at (CALS 2011c:Minute 9, Acting Director's Report).

On a positive note, CALS updated the equipment needed for the efficient functioning of CALS: a digital camera was bought to enable easy uploading on the website and for media and publicity purposes; a networked photocopier/printer lease was signed; personal computers were replaced; a colour printer was purchased; a data projector and screen were purchased for the boardroom to enhance its functionality and to attract research presentations and seminars to CALS. Attractive display boards were mounted to hold display material in the foyer and boardroom and a booking diary for the boardroom was instituted (CALS 2011c:Minute 2, Acting Director's Report).

The CALS Review (University of KwaZulu-Natal 2013b:5) recommended that "provision should be made for the maintenance and eventual replacement of specialized equipment" which includes, dehumidifier, data projector, security detection system, media players, and scanner.

Despite concerted efforts to alleviate the shortage of space, lack of space remains a challenge. The CALS Review (University of KwaZulu-Natal 2013b:3) recommended that "whatever model is finally decided upon, and wherever CALS eventually finds a home, there should be adequate space in order to accommodate the range of activities undertaken by the Centre".

### 5.3.7 Funding

CALS “holds one of the most unique collections of African literature that brings status to the University, and so, needs the corresponding financial support and acknowledgement” (CALs 2009b:Minute 4).

As mentioned throughout this study, funding has been a problem with CALS from the outset. This is especially in view of the fact that CALS was to be externally funded. As far back as 2001, Merrett had warned: “An endowment of at least R3,000,000 would be needed if annual fund raising is to be avoided” (Merrett 2001). As pointed out in Chapter 3, there were many ‘red flags’, warning of potential future budgeting problems, including those by Arthur in 2002 concerning special collections being under financial pressure because of lack of funding and resources, and McCracken in 2009 (Section 3.7.1) who stresses “the shortfall of some R1.1 million will have to be addressed **as a matter of urgency**” and that “the **full** funding of the Centre should be taken over by the University” (author’s emphasis). Chapman also warned as far back as 2005 that the problem of funding needed to be addressed “systematically and urgently” if the collection were not to “freeze” (Section 3.7). In 2007, Mzamane referred the board to the budget which he had “inherited” and noted its inadequacy (CALs 2007a:9). In 2008 it was revealed that “with the balance in the CALS’s account at the end of February just slightly above R800 000, CALS is technically bankrupt, but for Atlantic’s funds that are committed funds. CALS requested the University for funding that could (a) convince funding agencies of UKZN’s commitment; and (b) urgently provide operational and bridging funds (CALs 2008a:3). However, these many warnings were not heeded.

In 2010 Malaba notified the board that the University’s view “that centres should be financially independent is not a viable position, as the centre clearly needs support”. It was also pointed out that “external funding is no longer available and CALS should not be dependent on external funding for staffing and operations” (CALs 2011c:2).

In an e-mail from McCracken (McCracken 2010) to Malaba, McCracken highlighted the problems at CALS as three-fold. Firstly, “the funding ran out and the University showed little interest in helping. The UKZN Foundation did not find a new external funder”. Alarming, McCracken stated that he had two options: “Close the Centre and send the books to the Library, or, pay the salary bill out of the Faculty tutor fund.” It is fortunate

that McCracken chose the latter. The second problem is that “the Centre is in reality *of the university but not a working part of the faculty and university*” (author’s emphasis). McCracken was concerned that, although there were a few occasional conferences and workshops, the Centre was “fairly dead from the point of view of staff and students being there. It should be buzzing with students”, with active honours classes, seminars, book launches and so on. The Centre needed to be brought into the faculty. The third problem that McCracken highlighted in 2011 was that the Centre was “an African library **divorced from our other South African collections in our university**. Africa is not separate from South Africa” (author’s emphasis). McCracken was “now more convinced than ever that what is required is an umbrella consortium of interconnected collections within the College of Humanities”: CALS, Killie Campbell, and the Alan Paton Centre. “Under a top publishing academic, CALS would make such a powerhouse of intellectual endeavour that it would have international stature,” suggested McCracken (2010). Furthermore, the Centre needed to be closely associated with isiZulu, literature, political science, fine art, psychology, history and media (McCracken 2011).

McCracken’s suggestions of faculty funding for staff and the creation of a vibrant centre under an umbrella of the UKZN special collections led by a distinguished academic would attract researchers and ‘close the gap’ between the original vision of CALS as an active research centre, rather than the present static collection. The current reality of the challenges mentioned above have handicapped CALS in many of its original visions, including the programmes envisioned by Mzamane (Section 3.7.2). However, as Stilwell stated in her assessment in 2011 (Section 4.4.1): “CALS runs very economically with a small staff of three fulltime staff on fixed term contracts” (Stilwell 2011:4).

In the same year Stilwell noted: “The Lindfors have bequeathed half their considerable joint estate to CALS. CALS could be seen as a good investment for this reason” (Stilwell 2011:3). This has been brought to the attention of the present executive director of the UKZN Foundation, Professor Jane Meyerowitz.

The challenge in sustaining CALS’s future lies in “sustained fundraising, to continue the purchases, run colloquia and seminars, and fund PhDs, post-doctoral and research fellows, especially from elsewhere in Africa,” especially in view of the fact that “guests from all over the world are deeply impressed by the resources at our disposal” (Malaba 2013).

Malaba (2013) exhorted UKZN to act:

“It is thus our hope that the University will continue to support the staff at CALS, given the 8:1 return on the initial investment and the prospects of a significant bonanza in the years to come. But, of course, mindful of the University’s claim to be the ‘premier institute of African learning’, we hope that the academic merit of the Centre, its international stature, and its potential for promoting postgraduate studies will ensure appropriate support” (Malaba 2013:1; Stilwell 2013a:34).

As indicated in Section 3.7.1, McCracken estimated the annual costs involved to run CALS, including the salaries, to be in the region of R1.5 million (McCracken 2009:1). In his proposal, McCracken stated that to achieve CALS’s goals, “the full funding of the Centre should be taken over by the University. This would amount to R1.6 million a year” (McCracken 2009:2). This funding never materialised. In order to close the gap, CALS requires adequate funding to develop.

Despite the excellent progress made by CALS, the budget was drastically reduced in 2013 by the college. CALS was funded via the School of Social Sciences with respect to salaries and a small operating budget of R30 000 in 2013 which was half of its 2012 budget (Stilwell 2013a:16). This was a tumultuous period for UKZN in terms of financing and governance issues.

In 2013 funding suggestions were recommended by the CALS review committee. The CALS review committee (University of KwaZulu-Natal 2013b:4,6-7) recommended that CALS could consider recruiting a prominent writer in literary arts to be resident at the Centre and to conduct short courses to generate some income for the Centre. “CALS should take note of the requirements of being classified as a Research Centre and aim to undertake activities that will attract external funding”; and “CALS should explore existing opportunities for integration with the academic project of the University, especially in research, to enable it to generate some productivity units to assist with funding challenges”. However, and crucially, the review committee stated that the generation of productivity units “is contingent on the permanent appointment of the Curator and Librarian positions”. Thus stable staffing and financial stability go hand in glove in ensuring CALS’s ability to fulfil its mandate in enabling African literary studies at UKZN.

### **5.3.8 Staffing** (see Appendix 8 for CALS's organogram)

The staffing situation at CALS has been fraught with problems since its inception, especially regarding the director's post which was the only established permanent post (as described in Section 3.6.3.1). Moreover, there has only been one permanent director, Mzamane 2007–2009.

In 2005 the question was raised by Professor Jones, Advisor, University of KwaZulu-Natal Foundation Development Fund (UKZNFDf), as to why the CALS staff contracts were short term, offering little staff security; it was noted that short-term contracts were not in the interests of the Centre. Longer appointments were needed. Jones reminded the board that donors such as Atlantic Philanthropies were concerned about staff security (CALs 2005c:3-4). Van Dyk gave his reassurance that the board did, however, want to look after the Centre's staff (CALs 2005c:5).

Despite the Planning and Vision for 2006 document as devised in December 2005 for an adequate staff complement, including master's, doctoral and post-doctoral fellowships (CALs 2005c:5), they failed to materialise. Heed was not taken of Jones's warning above that donors such as Atlantic Philanthropies were concerned about staff security. All the subsequent board meetings and directors noted the concern. In 2006 the dedicated small team of library staff were working effectively and were complimented by Clarence-Fincham "for their high levels of commitment and energy". However, Clarence-Fincham emphasised that "CALs lacks established posts to ensure ongoing growth and maintenance of the collection and library service" (CALs 2006a:Minute 7, Library Status Report).

In 2007 Mzamane also pressed for permanent staff appointments. He stated:

"The contract nature of the appointments of CALs's staff reduces its operations to a series of crisis management strategies elevated into a principle of operation and also militates against securing and retaining high calibre personnel. CALs is thus doomed to train for other institutions owing to large staff turnover unless UKZN can absorb, minimally, the three posts of Director, Curator, and Administrator" (CALs 2007a:8-9).

Although CALs's board endorsed the suggestion, the "precarious issue of contract renewals" was never addressed. The library report presented by Vorster in November 2009 refers to the "insecurity of staff as having a negative effect on the productivity of the Centre" (CALs

2009b:3). The board noted that a huge collection like the CALS collection required very skilled people whom the institution should endeavour to retain (CALS 2009b:3Minute 6l).

In 2010 Malaba was alarmed at what he observed at CALS, especially in view of the unstable staff situation. He stated, “If the centre is to realise its true potential, it needs stability in terms of staffing and the University needs to show its commitment, before it can realistically expect donors to contribute significant resources” (CALS 2010c:1, Provisional Report).

Stilwell was appointed as CALS’s sixth acting director from 1 May 2011 (CALS 2011a:2). She commended the CALS team and emphasised the importance of staff security: “CALS is operating with a small staff of three full-time people and one part-timer and Ms Gentil on a short fixed-term contract to work on the archival material. This staff does the work of seven plus full-timers in Professor Mzamane’s directorship ...”

At the end of 2011 Stilwell alerted the CALS board that she had not been able “to get clarity about CALS’s staffing in January 2012 and it is a source of immense concern” (CALS 2011c:Minute 3, Acting Director’s Library Report).

Under Stilwell’s directorship, student interns for the Information Studies Programme (CALS 2011d:15) were introduced to CALS and staff development was encouraged.

In 2013 the CALS board yet again agreed that the curator, librarian and administrative posts be made permanent as was the case with the director’s post (CALS 2012a:5).

Between the years 2004 and 2013 permanent posts were continually promised but never materialised.

Before the external review in 2013 Stilwell (2013a:35) succinctly pointed out that “CALS is poised at a watershed and what the review committee recommends has the power to sentence CALS to more demoralizing years of struggle against great odds or to take CALS to new heights and assist it to occupy its rightful place as the flagship of African Scholarship at UKZN”.

“Basically [CALS] owns a gold mine, have provided shovels and trucks and shafts and lifts, but not enough people to dig” (Vietzen 2004). “Virtually all of the problems encountered by CALS are due to staff instability” (CALS 2011c:Minute 3, Report of the Acting Director; CALS 2012c:Minute 3, Report of the Acting Director). A matter of concern highlighted by

Stilwell was the fact that “CALs has had [seven] Directors/Acting Directors in the nine years since the 2004 launch [Stilwell had been on sabbatical leave for six months in 2012]. The effect of this upon policy, practice, morale and day-to-day administration is one of the sets of issues which the review needs to take into account” (Stilwell 2013a:14). Since this observation, by 2016 CALS has had nine directors/acting directors in 12 years.

The CALS review that took place in October 2013 made staff recommendations with time frames. The CALS review (UKZN 2013b:3.4) recommended that a permanent (rather than acting) director be appointed with an appropriate vision and strategy to build on the work of the current director [Stilwell]. Stilwell (2013a:34) suggested that “the Director should be a senior academic with an appropriate profile, ideally drawn from UKZN on a five-year secondment or a five-year appointment from outside the UKZN. This post would generate funds through postgraduate work, research grants and the running of short courses”.

The vision should encompass the establishment of strong ties with centres of similar nature, and the panel recommended that other staff appointments be filled on a permanent basis, including those of curator, librarian, library assistant technical services, and administrative assistant (see Appendix 14).

To date, these recommendations have not been met. At the end of June 2013, Mrs Polak resigned (CALs 2013a:3). The contract of the part-time archivist, Ms Barbara Gentil, who had been employed in a temporary and part-time capacity to archive the special collections, came to an end in August 2013. Mrs Darlene Holtz, the administrator, left at the end of December 2013 to take up a permanent position elsewhere.

Stilwell, who had been acting director of CALS since May 2011, with the exception of a six-month period in 2012 when she took long leave and Dr Hoskins acted as director, retired from UKZN at the end of 2013 after having served the UKZN and the former University of Natal for 27 years as a member of the permanent staff and eight years on the temporary staff prior to this. Stilwell also served as Professor of Information Studies in the School of Social Sciences. She is the author of numerous articles and chapters in books and is on the editorial boards of several journals, including that of *Innovation: a Journal of Appropriate Librarianship and Information Work in Southern Africa*. Stilwell also served on the advisory board of the Alan Paton Centre and Struggle Archives.



As at the beginning of August 2016, only two staff members remained: Mr Wiseman Masango (technical services) who had joined CALS in 2004 when he worked as a research assistant to Gunner on the Isicathamiya Project as well as the Radio and Drama Project: Radio Ukhozi FM. In June 2013 he took over the monitoring of the temperature and humidity in the stacks and he has the additional task of assisting Vietzen with proof-reading the records for isiZulu entries. Among his other library duties he assists “the increasing number of users of CALS who appreciate his helpful approach and isiZulu language skills” (CALS 2013a:25-26). The other staff member is Ms Colleen Vietzen (part-time Librarian) who joined CALS in November 2004 to speed up the cataloguing process. Professor Mandy Goedhals, the acting director (January 2015 to July 2016) has retired. CALS has no current director.

To date the promised permanent posts have neither been advertised nor filled. The staff insecurity which “brought about a great deal of unhappiness” and was highlighted at the GAP meeting since the inception of CALS (Van Dyk 2004:5) has never been resolved.

CALS’s board has not met since 2013. The senior officials have not given CALS’s director the go-ahead to invite the board to a meeting. The issue of who should chair the board has not been resolved.

#### **5.4 Closing the gap: A consideration of what role the collection could play in UKZN and beyond – the wider academic and research culture**

In order for CALS to fulfil its mandate of facilitating and promoting the study of African literature as part of the UKZN mission to become the ‘Premier University of African Scholarship’ to staff and students of the University and to other universities and institutions, as well as to members of the public, both national and international, two crucial problems need to be addressed, namely staffing and funding.

CALS is clearly important as a research centre. The GAP meeting in 2004 had determined that CALS’s main roles were to support the academic programmes and create a community of UKZN and international researchers (seen as a key role) in African literary studies. It sees itself as a resource for interdisciplinary thinking in respect of literature regionally and trans-nationally. UKZN has particular expertise in research and CALS is a collection of rare African texts. CALS’s activities were considered to be in line with UKZN’s vision of being

the ‘Premier University of African Scholarship’. However, in 2004 it was felt that CALS should be doing much more collaboration with researchers in English studies, and interdisciplinary research projects (Van Dyk 2005b:9-10).

If CALS is to be the research centre at which it is aiming, then it is vital that active steps be taken to provide a suitably supportive and user-friendly environment which will attract researchers. To meet this, the University needs to provide financial, advisory and administrative support. CALS is the only special collection at UKZN which is historically externally funded and linked to a school. The other special collections are funded by the library.

Ayee highlighted the fact that “the Centre for African Literary Studies is unique and holds good potential” (CALS 2011c:3).

An example, from a researcher and donor, Professor Gray, highlights the importance of CALS:

“It was my very great pleasure from 7–9 May to visit your Centre for African Literary Studies in order to browse through your holdings and collect material which I would not have found elsewhere for future research projects. I became absolutely convinced that, in serving African Literary Studies, you have become the premier repository in the country, if not in all of Africa itself, with an abundance of material not available anywhere else. Your resources are truly valuable and should be retained at all costs. I must also most warmly thank you and your most capable and cordial staff for their invaluable assistance” (CALS 2013a:10; Stilwell 2013a:26).

Furthermore, in 2013 Stilwell indicated:

- “There is growing international interest in CALS with the website now thoroughly overhauled and featuring regular news and updates.
- International researchers visit CALS in person and interact with the centre via e-mail.
- There is increasing interest in the unpublished materials that are now accessible via the catalogue.
- Inter-library loan requests for the journals as well as for books are made regularly” (CALS 2013a:8-9).

CALS has hosted conferences which have included both national and international researchers. CALS elicits wide academic and research interest (see Appendix 13). For example, CALS hosted two visitors on 15 February 2015, Professor Philip Whyte and Dr Guillaume Cingal, from the University of Tours. “The French visitors were very excited by the collection of books, especially the Onitsha market literature, and the newly archived unpublished materials.” They pointed out that they found “several items that they had searched for previously but never been able to locate” and “Each shelf cries out for a conference about its holdings!” said Dr Cingal.” It was hoped that future research exchanges would take place (CALS 2013a:12; Stilwell 2013a:27-28).

James Currey, the world-renowned publisher of the Heinemann African Writers Series, visited CALS in 2013 and stated in his letter to Guy Baxter, the University of Reading archivist, that CALS, as an archive, “stands out as exceptional and is steadily being expanded”. Baxter agreed to the copies of the Reading papers being lodged at CALS (with suitable acknowledgements). The documents are copies of Heinemann correspondence with authors such as Bessie Head and Mazisi Kunene (CALS 2013a:12). In a personal communication with the researcher, Currey states: “I last visited CALS in March 2014 to give a lecture to the English faculty seminar. That visit reinforced my belief that CALS is of singular importance to the scholarly community in southern Africa and to visiting international scholars” (Currey 2015).

In 2013 Malaba paid tribute to “the generosity of Bernth Lindfors and his wife Judith” and cited Geoff Davis who said:

“There really is not another scholar in African Literary Studies like Bernth Lindfors. For decades he has worked tirelessly to enhance our knowledge of African literature, writing with authority, insight and wit, constantly filling gaps in our critical awareness, forever unearthing material we should have known about but did not” (Malaba 2013:1).

Malaba (2013:1) urged UKZN: “It is thus our hope that the University will continue to support the staff at CALS ... mindful of the University’s claim to be the ‘premier institute of African learning’, we hope that the academic merit of the Centre, its international stature, and its potential for promoting postgraduate studies will ensure appropriate support ...”

Furthermore, Malaba noted that CALS,

“like the other branches of the special collections ... notably the Alan Paton Centre and Struggle Archives and the Killie Campbell Africana Museum and Library, is dedicated to providing quality support for research in the Humanities. Looking ahead, the challenge we face is sustained fundraising, to continue the purchases, run colloquia and seminars, and fund PhDs, post-doctoral and research fellows, especially from elsewhere in Africa” (Malaba 2013:2).

Lastly, Malaba noted that “Guests from all over the world are deeply impressed by the resources at our disposal. Professor Leon de Kock, who was a guest speaker at an English studies seminar programme meeting also commended the Centre, stating that it epitomises the expression ‘stumbling across information’” (CALS 2013a:18-19; Malaba 2013:2).

The above serves to highlight the importance of CALS as a research centre. However, CALS’s inherent problems, as highlighted throughout this study, have been lack of funding and staffing instability. The University needs to invest in CALS to “revitalize” the centre (McCracken 2011:1), thus closing the gap between what the Centre *could be* and the current status of the Centre.

## **5.5 Concluding comments**

Many of the core functions as mentioned by McCracken (Section 4.4.2), the goals and aims listed by Stilwell (Section 4.3.2) and those addressed at the GAP meeting (Section 5.2) have been accomplished. The research relationship with English and French studies as well as conferences and seminars which were strong under Gunner’s directorship (2004–2005), again gained momentum under the directorship of Malaba from 2010–2011 and Stilwell from 2011–2013. Furthermore, CALS plays a valuable role in postgraduate programmes and is also linked to various undergraduate programmes. Students use CALS’s resources on a daily basis. “The Centre is well used by the local language departments (French, isiZulu, and English) and for weekly seminars addressed by local and international visitors,” affirmed Stilwell (2013a:27).

However, the Centre has failed to become the active research centre originally envisioned for it as outlined in Chapter 3.

In conclusion, CALS strives to achieve its Mission, Vision and Goals but is hampered by staff and financial challenges.

## **5.6 Summary**

This chapter outlined early factors identified at the GAP meeting in November 2004. It examined the role played by CALS and the challenges facing CALS in its endeavour to enable African literary studies at UKZN. Aspects foregrounded were promotion of the collections; collection policies; access and documentation; preservation strategies; technology and digitisation; physical access and space issues; financial constraints; and staffing. The chapter suggested ways to close the gap, with a consideration of what role the Centre's collection could play in UKZN and beyond (the wider academic and research culture). The chapter concluded by commenting on CALS's achievements.

The chapter is a culmination of the examination of CALS policy documents. The survey (Chapters 8 and 9) was necessary to throw further light on these events.

The next chapter discusses the 'Africanisation debate' concerning what constitutes African literature and whether there is a need for separate African collections in Africa.

## Chapter 6

### CALS and the Africanisation Debate

#### 6.1 Introduction

This is the last of the literature review chapters. The previous chapter addressed the gap and reality issues at CALS and this chapter returns to a key aspect of the title of the study, *African Identity in the Making*. This chapter discusses how CALS fulfils its reason for being in seeking to contribute to and facilitate African scholarship at UKZN and more widely. In doing so it returns to the issues of Afrocentric versus Eurocentric approaches and the repatriation of African literature; the Africanisation debate, namely what constitutes ‘Africanisation’, and attempts to define what constitutes ‘African identity’ and African literature. The chapter also addresses the geographical location of African studies: should African literature be separated from academic libraries or be an integral part of all academic libraries, thus reflecting the continent in which it exists?

#### 6.2 Afrocentric versus Eurocentric approaches and the repatriation of African literature as “an act of restitution”

In accordance with the Afrocentric paradigm of the study, which focuses on location and agency (as indicated in Section 2.3.2.2), namely an African Centre in an African university on an African continent, the study draws on relevant literature as a means to establish whether or not the previous Eurocentric approach is no longer necessary in the new South Africa, bearing in mind that historically most formal libraries in Africa have been established and influenced by colonial powers.

Regarding the role of UKZN and its pronounced vision of becoming the ‘Premier University of African Scholarship’, Zondi, a reporter from the *Daily News*, indicated: “At the official opening of the Centre by Arts and Culture Minister, Pallo Jordan, the University took a first major step towards becoming a premier institution of African Scholarship” (Zondi 2004).

Zondi recorded that Pallo Jordan called the collection “an act of restitution”; an achievement for the continent with many possibilities still ahead. “The archive is probably one of the larger collections of modern African literature in the world,” stated Jordan.

Jordan “commended the University for returning the collection to the shores of the continent”, while UKZN Interim Vice-Chancellor, Professor M. Makgoba, called the collection “historic” and said the launch was a significant step towards the goal of making the university the premier institution of African scholarship. A number of African writers from South Africa and a number of scholars from African countries attended the opening ...” (Zondi 2004). As mentioned in Section 5.2, UKZN was forged from an amalgamation of the University of Durban-Westville and the University of Natal’s Howard College, Durban, Medical School, and the Pietermaritzburg campuses as well as the Edgewood campus. It is important to note that the merger also created a merge between the libraries of the universities (Buchanan 2008).

However, despite the jubilations surrounding the opening of CALS, many challenges lay ahead.

### **6.3 UKZN’s readiness for a “paradigmatic shift”**

With UKZN’s vision to be “the Premier University of African Scholarship”, the University of KwaZulu-Natal draws inspiration from an African identity. Furthermore, UKZN proclaims “to take seriously its responsibilities to the development of the African continent” (Top Universities 2015:paragraph 1).

However, to become the premier university of African scholarship, UKZN needs to focus on African studies, the umbrella under which African literary studies forms one of the important components.

It is important to note that CALS was envisaged from the outset to be an intellectual home for the Lindfors Collection of African Literature and was not initially constructed as an African studies centre, per se. The Centre was conceived as a means to provide a major boost to research in the African humanities and to be a drawcard for postgraduate students and researchers in African literature (see Section 9.2.2). It is therefore not the intention of this study to discuss African studies in great depth.

However, it is relevant to make brief reference to African studies in the context of UKZN. Professor Anthonia Kalu, currently of the Centre for African Studies, Ohio State University, commented on UKZN’s potential regarding African studies and Africa-related courses taught in the Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences. It requires stressing at this

juncture that CALS's original mandate was to facilitate and promote the study of African literature, rather than African studies. It is in this sense that CALS enables African scholarship at UKZN. In 2010 Kalu was thinking in terms of aligning CALS with UKZN's vision of being the 'Premier University of African Scholarship'.

Kalu indicated that the UKZN courses ranged from African economics, South/African literatures, African languages, religion, anthropology and geography, among others. Kalu (2010:21) was, however, concerned that UKZN lacked an interdisciplinary Honours and postgraduate degree programmes in African studies which enabled students to earn a degree in African studies with specialisation in African literary studies, African political economy, African history, and so on. She noted: "Although many of these courses are not offered from the undergraduate through the postgraduate programmes in ways that indicate the existence of sustained analytical, research methodology and theoretical frameworks within the relevant disciplines' focus on Africa, the fact that these courses are being taught, indicate UKZN's potential for consolidating academic programming in African Studies" (Kalu 2010:18).

Kalu highlighted the importance of African studies materials at the library, stating that they needed to be more fully utilised "if teaching and research in African Studies is to reach its capacity at UKZN". Thus we can deduce the importance of CALS in facilitating African studies at UKZN. However, the failure of UKZN to have a dedicated and consolidated academic programme in African studies at present could hinder UKZN in its pursuit of African scholarship (Kalu 2010:18).

Professor Guy, the prominent Natal and Zulu historian at the Killie Campbell Collections in Durban, stated that during his tenure at the Campbell Collections as a research fellow, he found that there was definitely an increased interest in African collections (UKZN 2007).

Kalu acknowledged that "What is needed is a paradigmatic shift in knowledge production and dissemination in and about Africa" and she believed that "UKZN has expressed readiness for the task. In that regard, UKZN's vision to become the 'Premier Institution of African Scholarship' promises a change in the dynamics of teaching and research about Africa" (Kalu 2010:20).



Professor Fikile Mazibuko, DVC and Head of the College of Humanities, believed that the opening of the CALS in 2004 would foster African identity at UKZN. In an interview with Sibusiso Mbotso from *The Witness* she stated: “The collection of the material and establishing a home for it in Africa marks a huge leap in the quest to establish an African identity.” Furthermore, Mazibuko related: “There is now no excuse for the younger generation to remain unfamiliar with African literature ... children from all walks of life will be able to relate to the vast array of readings that are offered [at CALS].”

Mazibuko went so far as to offer her personal link to African identity, taking pride in an African renaissance in literature. She stressed the importance of the African renaissance idea and she personally identified with and specifically highlighted the unique Kenyan market literature collection at CALS:

“For instance, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s description of the market in Kenya enables me to relate to it when I am at the Durban market. We need that kind of writing to be accessible to young readers ... The African experience, from the political to the social, is covered by these books which capture the past and offer alternative views ... This augurs well with the African renaissance concept, which places emphasis on being proud of what is produced by the continent. In the past it has been felt that Africans were not proud of their heritage, a perception that is hoped will change with the establishment of the Centre” (Mazibuko, cited by Mbotso 2004).

When questioned why CALS was “hailed as such an important place, Professor Abiol Irele, professor of African and African American Studies at Harvard, and who has written widely on African literature and writers, is quoted in a dialogue with the *The Witness* reporter:

“When I heard the centre was being formed, my first sentiment was ‘how wonderful’. African literature needs this kind of central focus. Although it is taught in universities, it is always in a subordinate position as part of a department of something else. This is the first time a whole centre has been devoted to African literature – it is an event for the region” (Irele, cited by Von Klemperer 2004).

From the above it is evident that UKZN is in the process of a paradigmatic shift in closing the gap between Eurocentric and Afrocentric curricula and CALS has played a role by repatriating African literature to Africa. As Mazibuko articulates above: “The collection of

the material and establishing a home for it in Africa marks a huge leap in the quest to establish an African identity.”

### **6.3.1 African orality**

Owomoyela (1992:92) acknowledges that literary scholars have long recognised “the intrinsic value of African oral traditions and the significant influence they have on African writing”. Orality and language have long been considered important attributes of national identity. So, too, has literature.

Section 3.7.2 of this study alludes to Mzamane’s proposed oral history projects at the Centre (CALs 2007a:7-8). Owomoyela (1992:92) poignantly describes African orality as characterised by its “vitality (it is ‘live’ rather than ‘canned’), by its immediacy (it permits a close rapport between audience and performer), and by its spontaneity (it responds to the context of each performance)”. Owomoyela (1992:93) believes that the promotion of orality “remains the most effective way of restoring African languages to primacy in all aspects of African life ... If we wish to assert and preserve distinctly African ways of being and distinctly African ways of living, we must cultivate distinctly African ways of speaking”.

Many African writers have turned to oral literature for inspiration. As mentioned in Section 2.4.2 of this study, “the original African stories were never recorded but handed down orally, generation after generation”. This accords with Mzamane’s observations, that “a vast proportion of the African literary tradition is essentially oral” (CALs 2007b:9). Irele concurs. He explains that “the oral preceded the written, and there is a huge amount that still continues. Orality is a major part of expression in Africa – there may be a high rate of illiteracy but that doesn’t mean Africa is not intelligent and articulate” (Irele in Von Klemperer 2004). Mzamane aimed to establish poetry readings, “fireside” storytelling and various other spoken or sung texts at CALs (Section 3.7.2). In a similar vein Irele also envisaged such a role for the Centre, namely that of recording the oral literary tradition of Africa, as well as housing the printed collection.

The poetry readings as envisaged by Mzamane have taken place annually at CALs as part of the Time of the Writer, a Creative Arts initiative. However, “fireside” storytelling and various other spoken or sung texts at CALs are yet to materialise.

South Africa is especially rich in oral history and good oral history projects can be an effective means of capturing the voices and untold stories of the former oppressed, especially as such a large proportion of the South African population is illiterate or semi-literate. It is unfortunate that, according to Hart (2002:65), so many institutions have reported that “they have not been able to continue or to start projects because of the lack of sufficient funds”. This would most certainly impede special collections in their ability to collect, preserve and promote African scholarship. Storing and accessing the African oral tradition should be prioritised. Bunmi Alegbeleye, referring to oral archives in Africa, points out that younger Africans rely less and less on the oral tradition as a way to pass on cultural information. In fact, Alegbeleye equates each time an old man dies in Africa, with the burning down of a library in Europe. He urges the collection of oral data but points out that “this collection can only be of value if researchers deposit it in the country where it can be publicly accessed” (Alegbeleye, cited by Frank-Wilson 2004:103). Sadly, Africans are relying less and less on oral tradition as a way to pass on cultural information.

In 2011 Professor Philippe Denis, a senior professor (UKZN Department of Religion, Philosophy and Classics and a CALS board member) reminded the board that collecting oral histories was also part of CALS’s brief (CALS 2011b:3). This accords with the Afrocentric theoretical framework of this study (Section 2.4.2) which states that “orality is traditional to the Africans”. As Hart (2002:65) above points out, oral projects as envisaged by Mzamane in 2007 are not able to take place because of the lack of sufficient funds. This impedes the implementation of African literary identity.

### **6.3.1.1 What is African language and literature and how does it relate to African identity?**

Determining what actually constitutes African literature, language and writers (Section 1.3.3) is challenging.

Darch (2004:203) and Hart (2002:61) concur that when drawing up collection development policies for an African studies library in Africa, it is important to collect materials by Africans, in African languages, as well as the oral tradition, to ensure that African voices are heard.

It is generally understood that Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* “[occupies] the inaugural moment of African literary history” (Gikandi 2001:5-6). Gikandi (2001:6) claims “Achebe is the person who invented African culture”. Achebe is the writer who “valorized” African culture by “disassociation from European ideas about Africa” (Gikandi 2001:7).

According to Menang (2001:paragraph 2), African literature is a combination of two traditions, oral as well as the more recent tradition of literature “produced in adopted foreign languages [which has] developed alongside the oral tradition” and that constitutes what is today “generally referred to as African literature.” Menang posits that “it is partly through literature that today's African nations are striving to build and consolidate their respective identities”. However, the question is, “in which language should Africans produce their literature” to be considered African?

Irele, in a dialogue with a *Witness* reporter, distinguished between first and second generations of African literature. He classified oral tradition as ‘first generation’. He classified ‘second generation’ as many of the writers whose names became known through the now discontinued Heinemann African Writers series [published by James Currey, who advocates the importance of CALS], writers such as Wole Soyinka, Senghor, David Diop, Amos Tutola and Chinua Achebe. CALS holds several copies and most of the titles of these African authors. It is noteworthy that “these authors wrote in European languages – a tradition that continues and that is the cause of a great deal of debate. One of Africa’s biggest literary names, Kenyan Ngũgĩ wa Thiongo, has turned his back on English and now writes in Kikuyu” (Irele, in Von Klemperer 2004). The reason that Ngũgĩ wa Thiongo wrote in Kikuyu, according to Menang (2001:paragraphs 7-9), was that he believed that it would provide “direct access to the rich traditions of African peoples” and, by using them, writers were participating “in the struggle against domination by foreign languages”, especially against imperial domination.

Although Irele sympathises with Ngugi’s stand as it enables people to relate “in a more immediate and intimate way to Kikuyu than they would in English ... A language gains status from having accomplished writers”. But for Irele, the main problem is one of competence. He can see no guarantee that a black writer, educated in English, will write successfully in another language. “The first requirement in writing is quality”, he insists.

And writers such as Achebe, who write in English, “have reached a very wide audience in Africa” (Irele, cited by Von Klemperer 2004). Achebe points out that “a European language offers an African writer better access to the international market place than an African language could” (Owomoyela 1992:92). Irele defends the use of modern languages by Africans and argues that Africans “have a valid claim on Western civilization in any case, because Africa has contributed significantly to its success” (Irele, cited in Owomoyela 1992:90).

In speaking to the *The Witness* reporter specifically about the CALS collection, Irele identified “two strands of writing”: there are the works of great literary standing from writers such as J.M. Coetzee, Ben Okri, Mozambican Mia Couto, and Wole Soyinka which form a part of CALS’s collection. “Their work may be able to compete with anything in world literature but is unlikely to be accessible to newly literate readers in their countries of origin” (Irele, in Von Klemperer 2004).

Irele referred to the “other strand” as publications that appeal to the semi-literate. He expressed the hope that CALS would reflect “both strands of writing” and referred to the rare Nigerian Onitsha market literature held by CALS, and “which is well represented in the Lindfors collection” (Irele, in Von Klemperer 2004). Irele expressed his hope that

“CALS will continue to reflect both strands of African writing – the literary and the popular. Whether they choose the strand sold in markets and airports, or serious post-modern writing, readers like something that speaks to their own experience [as it did for Mazibuko above, relating to the Durban market] ... It is this – the speaking to local experience – that makes African writing so important for people in Africa, and is at the root of the move to create the new centre. The 13 000 books and journals in the Lindfors Collection celebrate this and, as was repeatedly said at the centre’s launch, they have now come home” (Irele, in Von Klemperer 2004).

It is this popular market literature [CALS contains Onitsha, Ghanaian and some Kenyan popular literature] that Mazibuko hoped would relate to young African readers, as expressed above in Section 6.3.

According to Menang (2001:1.1), Ngũgĩ wa Thiongo and Obi Wali were the two main proponents of African literature written in the African language. Ngũgĩ wa Thiongo is quite adamant about all the works African writers have produced in English or in any other European language, believing that they are not African literature. Regarding African

works written in English, Ngũgĩ wa Thiongo (1990b:73) states: “What we have created is another hybrid tradition, a tradition in transition, a minority tradition that can only be termed as Afro-European literature; that is, literature written by Africans in European languages.”

African language is intrinsically entwined with African identity (see Section 2.4.1). The debate revolves around the fact that some African authors supported and used the language of the coloniser, while other authors utilised their mother tongue African languages, creating two diametrically opposed concepts of African identity, namely Afrocentrism versus Eurocentrism (Kalua 2009:26).

It is noteworthy that historically, many African literary works were written in the language of the colonial powers both before and after independence. The colonial powers usually “promoted literacy in their languages, often to the detriment of African languages” (Menang 2001). It was after independence that writers such as Ngũgĩ wa Thiongo decided to reject the European languages. Kenya became independent in 1963, and Ngugi’s first novels – published after that – were all in English. His decision to switch to Kiswahili was made after he had acquired an international reputation with his English language work. However, writers such as Chinua Achebe, Ezekiel Mphahlele and Timothy Wangusa “believed that English, or any European language that was well mastered by the writer, could equally be used by the African writer” (Menang 2001:1.2 paragraph 2).

“Is it the actual style of the writing which classifies it as African?” asks Jahn (1966:22).

Many African authors, including Achebe, Ayi Kwei Armah, and Ken Saro-Wiwa, used “pidgin English” in their novels. Others such as Wole Soyinka were known for their use of Standard English. Soyinka even “mocks colonials and their language patterns, and in so doing he contests the imposition of not only language but culture” (McLaren 2009:106).

To this objective, Achebe (1975:61) believes:

“The price a world language must be prepared to pay is submission to many kinds of use. The African writer should not aim to use English in a way that its value as a medium of international exchange will be lost. He should aim at fashioning a form of English that is at once universal and able to carry his peculiar experience.”

Banks and Owomoyela are both of the opinion that it is easier for people to identify more with those “who share their language and speech habits than with those who share their culture” (Banks 1988:22; Owomoyela 1992:86). According to Owomoyela (1992:86), when Africans adopt European languages, it tends to degrade their African cultural identity. This “has significant implications for contemporary Africa” because “the African elite who use European languages identify more closely with Europeans than with Africans who do not use these languages” (Banks 1988:22). This reinforces the problem of the oppressed versus the oppressor (colonisers) (Eurocentric versus Afrocentric) in the compilation of collection development policies for African studies and emphasises the need “to collect materials by Africans, in African languages, in European languages as well as the oral tradition” to ensure that the voice of the former oppressed is heard (Hart 2002:61).

After examining language-planning options, Menang (2001:4) concluded that a writer may choose “to use an indigenous African language to address fellow Africans who speak and identify with that language, because it is the language of their childhood, of their dreams and their ancestors”. Furthermore, “considered in strictly linguistic terms, Africa is a land of minorities. Any one language, be it of African or European origin, placed side by side with the multiplicity of languages in Africa, assumes minority status. So, too, are the literatures produced in each of those languages”. Therefore, Menang (2001:4) believes that “African literature is likely to remain multilingual”. Thus we can surmise that the style of African writing takes many forms, including pidgin English and standard colonial English, as well as indigenous African languages.

Professor Handel Wright, currently the director of the Centre for Culture, Identity and Education at the University of British Columbia, endorses the fact that “there is no one unified African language used by African writers”, and “continental Africa embraces ... a large number of ethnic societies, each with a unique culture”. Thus, not only is the term ‘African literature’ “hegemonic, but ... speaking of African literature is meaningless”. It is better to speak of ‘national literatures’, but “even the notion of national literatures is problematic in the African context since, culturally, African nations function not as units but as federations of ethnic groups” (Wright 2004:49). Appiah (1992:70) writes of “the myth of an African world” because “there are no discernible ties that bind Africans” nor are there

“comprehensive concepts of African culture or African literature”. African identity and African literature, he insists, are continually being actively constructed, and are not “always ready” in existence.

As noted above, Ngugi uses language as a criterion of definition, unifying all literature which is written in African languages as African literature; however Wright (2004) contends that this could cause serious problems. For instance, Ngugi does not take into account the European languages which Africans have acquired through colonial education as African literature, nor does he take this into account when articulating his stance “the fact that there is no hermetic relationship between language and racial or geographical identity” (Wright 2004:50). The issue of style is further complicated in that, although less likely, it is still possible that non-Africans can acquire and write in an African language which would raise a further question of whether, for instance, a text that is written in Yoruba by a white English writer could be called an African text. Irele (1990:11) acknowledges that the entire issue of drawing boundaries around African literature and coming to conclusions as to what actually constitutes African literature is “messy” and “complex” and he declares the entire issue “a false problem”. There is no easy answer as to what actually constitutes African language and literature, so the question of style is in reality impossible to define.

What is of importance here is the recognition and acceptance by many language scholars, “that unless the peoples of Africa are able to use their own languages for all the main transactions of their daily lives, they are doomed to a life of dependency in the shadow of European and other ‘Northern’ powers” (Alexander 1999:4).

African literary collections, especially at UKZN, which aims to be ‘the Premier University of African Scholarship’, need to acknowledge and represent as many African languages as possible. As some of Africa’s greatest authors have chosen to write in the language of the coloniser (English, French, Portuguese, Afrikaans, and so on), and other great African writers such as Ngugi in their indigenous language, the CALS collection needs to ensure that it contains literary works by both the languages of the coloniser as well as indigenous African languages to be fully representative of African literary studies.



### 6.3.1.2 The African diaspora and the language debate

Research questions in this study (Section 1.3.3) include: does African literature consist solely of literature written in Africa, or is it literature written about Africa, the author's language (as discussed above), or place of birth or ethnicity that determines African literature? (Zell and Silver 1971:vii). Darch (2004:192) questions: "Should an Africa-focused collection in Africa include the diaspora studies, or collect works on the Black experience in the United States, the Caribbean and Brazil?" (see Section 1.3.3).

In terms of the African diaspora, Africans in the Americas who have been uprooted have lost their African languages. However, "Africa is relevant to Americans, no matter how distant or exotic it may seem" and 12.9% of Americans can trace their ancestry back to Africa (Walsh and LaFond 2004:1). Owomoyela (1992:88) points out that "Africans on the African continent, with their linguistic patrimonies still intact, are objects of envy, not pity". Thus if African ways of being and living are to be preserved, then it is important to "cultivate distinctly African ways of speaking" (Owomoyela 1992:93).

McLaren (2009:100) describes the diaspora as "the collision of languages, which, for the most part, was the result of enslavement of Africans and their dispersal into the Western Hemisphere". Ebonics, a term which Asante helped to popularise in the 1980s, is considered by him "the prototypical language of African Americans" (Asante 1987:35). However, Ebonics is viewed by African-American spokespersons, including Jesse Jackson, Maya Angelou and Kweisi Mfume, in a negative light and as a concept "that assume[s] African American youth incapable of mastering Standard English" (McLaren 2009:101). Moreover, the situation in the Caribbean regarding languages is equally complex, says McLaren, "because there are numerous linguistic varieties which include the various creoles or patois in Haiti, Guyana and Jamaica" (McLaren 2009:102).

A question to ponder is: "If African languages are considered the mother tongue of many African writers, should pidgin, Ebonics, Creole or patois also represent a first language for certain African and Diasporan writers?" (McLaren 2009:108). "The social denial of the value of these languages suggests a 'double consciousness', a term coined by Du Bois describing a person whose identity "is divided into several facets" (DuBoisopedia 2013:paragraph 1). The dilemma that diasporic Africans find themselves in is that "of the

divided self – torn between Westernization and surviving African retentions” (McLaren 2009:108).

Wright has written extensively on the African diaspora, and offers answers to the question above. Wright claims that “rather than limiting African identity to Black Africa, one can expand the concept of African identity to include an African diaspora” (Wright 2002:14). Furthermore, Wright points out that “one of the principal premises of the diaspora is the assumption that continental Africa is the spiritual homeland for diasporic Africans”. However, Wright adds that “the diaspora itself is not considered a potential homeplace for continental Africans” (Wright 2003:6). Thus, according to Wright, there is no distinction between literature written in Africa or diasporic literature about Africa, as there is a direct connection between diasporic and continental Africans which links their literature. Thus Darch’s question, “Should an Africa-focused collection in Africa include diaspora studies, or collect works on the Black experience in the United States, the Caribbean and Brazil” can be answered in the affirmative. An African collection should be representative of all African works, including the diaspora.

Wright (2004:50), while acknowledging the complexity surrounding any attempt “to define and draw boundaries around African literature”, considers dividing African literature into two categories: “African literature” and “African literature studies”. “In attempting to articulate a utilitarian African literature studies”, he believes that it is preferable to work within the Pan-Africanist conception of Africa, one which “embraces both the African continent and the African diaspora”.

Darch (2004:194) points out that some proponents of the new Afrocentric paradigm which emerged in the 1960s argue that “it is the experience of African people, wherever they are, that is the object of study, and African Studies collections may thus expand to enfold and include African-American Studies and such topics as the Black experience in Brazil, Cuba, the Caribbean and throughout the entire diaspora”.

To be fully representative of African literature, it is essential that CALS includes African diasporic literature. The CALS collection includes a small collection of diasporic American, South Pacific and Caribbean literature, including that of countries such as Jamaica, West Indies, Bahamas, Barbados, Guyana, and Trinidad and Tobago. One of the challenges for CALS is to rectify the omissions regarding diasporic literature.

### 6.3.1.3 African identity in the making

Many markers and viewpoints have been put forward in an attempt to establish African identity. Menang explains that it is extremely difficult to determine national identities in Africa in view of the fact that African countries lack unity in terms of language, social structure, economy and religion. In reality there is a lack of identity as nearly all the African countries are “marked by linguistic diversity within their borders”. Furthermore, many countries have adopted the languages of their oppressors as their official languages. A solution proposed by theorists, in particular a Frenchman named Towa, is the idea of Pan-Africanism (Menang 2001:2.2), and the theory advocated by Wright (Section 6.3.1.2 above), as it embraces both the African continent as well as the diaspora.

After the Second World War imperialism was on the wane and this gave way to self-determination. The debate about African identity was taken up through movements such as Pan-Africanism, Negritude, and more recently, the African Renaissance (Kalua 2009:27). However, the origin of Pan-Africanism (“using race as the signifier of continental unity”) is actually attributed to black people outside Africa in the diaspora in the late nineteenth century (Kalua 2009:28).

Pan-Africanism is the idea that “peoples of African descent have common interests and should be unified ... Pan-Africanists envision a unified African nation where all people of the African diaspora can live ... In more general terms, Pan-Africanism is the sentiment that people of African descent have a great deal in common, a fact that deserves notice and even celebration” (Kuryla 2015). Another African ideological movement is Negritude, the term coined by Césaire in his *Cahier d'un Retour au Pays Natal* (1939). The movement was led by French-speaking black writers and intellectuals and characterised by “its rejection of European colonization and its role in the African diaspora, pride in ‘blackness’ and traditional African values and culture, mixed with an undercurrent of Marxist ideals”. The Negritude movement argued for “a consolidated version of African identity ... and was also linked with African-American blacks in Europe” (Kalua 2009:28).

In recent times South Africa has initiated debates regarding an African renaissance or rebirth. In the 1990s, President Thabo Mbeki “launched his own version of African renewal”, based largely on the characteristics of both Negritude and Pan-Africanism. In

his famous speech, “I am an African”, delivered to the South African Parliament in 1996, Mbeki launched a cultural and political plan for Africa known as the African Renaissance (Vambe 2010:256). Several scholars, however, do not support the idea of an African renaissance because of its European connotations. Mistry (2001:13) cites two pertinent examples: “[It] is a term steeped in the discourses of Western Enlightenment ... To propose the term ‘renaissance’ carries with it the historical, cultural and philosophical implications of the Western/Northern World.”

Like its precursors, Pan-Africanism and Negritude, “Mbeki’s plan adopts and embraces an exclusive and unitary African identity” (Kalua 2009:28). All three movements discussed contain the central notions of tradition and race. However, Tomaselli (1999:45-46) contends, “there is no single Africa” so “there can never be a ... continent-wide renaissance”. Professor Keyan Tomaselli was, until March 2015, a senior professor at the Centre for Communication, Media and Society (CCMS) at UKZN.

Afrocentricity (see Section 2.3.2.1) is a paradigm based on the idea that “African people should re-assert a sense of agency”. The paradigm examines information from ‘a black perspective’ as opposed to what has been considered a ‘white perspective.’ Afrocentricity “[asserts] the central role of the African subject within the context of African history, thereby removing Europe from the centre of the African reality” and in the process basing all knowledge on the authentic interrogation of *location*” (Asante 2009a: paragraphs 1 and 3). This study has continually mentioned the importance of location as advocated by the Afrocentric paradigm, especially in placing UKZN and CALS in an African context. However, it is difficult to try to pinpoint exactly what constitutes African identity.

Wright refers to his own frustrations and the “daunting” and “potentially frustrating task” when attempting to define African identity.

Wright’s strategies overlap and they fall under the umbrella theory adopted by the study which includes the dominant Eurocentrism and European imperialism, colonisation and “speaking from the voice of the oppressed” approaches as opposed to African voices. Wright adopts refreshingly innovative and, in his words, “breaking out of the mundane” strategies in attempting to define African identity. Wright does not take established approaches for granted but rather “(re)considers them as part of a problematic [sic] and,

furthermore, opens up multiple ways of articulating African identity” (Wright 2002:5-6). He is not particularly interested in what he terms the “overly positive, romanticised constructions of African identity” or the repatriation Pan-Africanism or Negritude viewpoints mentioned above. Wright is more interested in

“deconstructions ... of these more sure-footed constructions; in new, questioning, less assured, and multiple formulations of African identities, in fresh discourses and theoretical frameworks (e.g. poststructuralism) that will allow us to see Africa(ns), not in the glaring static white light of certainty but (re)discovered in various, more exciting, fractured and shifting, procedural, muted, multicoloured lights” (Wright 2002:5-6).

However, Wright (2004:50) states that in attempting to articulate literature studies, he believes it best to “operate within a Pan-Africanist conception of Africa, one which embraces both the African continent and the African diaspora” ... while Pan African identity “has been variously articulated in discourses which emphasize the similarities and continuities between continental and diasporic Africans” such as Afrocentrism.

In exploring the topic of African identity, Wright (2002:3-4) asserts: “The African is always already misrecognized, and against the blare and glare of outer-continental identifications, the contemporary African cannot speak.” This accords with African views regarding colonial oppression and is similar in context to Darch’s concern with “oppressed African voices” (see Section 1.3.3). Wright poses the pertinent question: If the African cannot speak as a creative writer or an academic, then how is one to articulate and explore African identity? Wright (2002:3-4) “rather frustratingly” identifies four possible strategies of articulation as strategies for moving African voices “from global margin to centre”. Briefly, these strategies include, firstly, the need for “an assertion of African identity that is articulated in direct opposition to dominant Eurocentric discourse” (Wright 2002:3). In other words, Wright believes that Africans need to assert themselves and speak out loudly against the assimilation of European imperialism and make it known that they are proud to be black and gifted; secondly (and Wright admits impossibly) to “identify with the former colonizer” and speak “in the master’s voice” thus “[leaving] Africa behind and [becoming] completely westernized” (Wright 2002:3); thirdly to acknowledge a continental version of “double consciousness” [looking at oneself through the eyes of others] “and speak to and write for both Africans and the West, simultaneously

contributing to the evolution of African discourses and entering the fray of Western hegemonic discourse in the name of contributing to the evolution of a truly global dialogue” (Wright 2002:4); and fourthly “speaking of and from the specificity of distinct locales or ethnic groups” such as Yoruba or Zulu. However, Wright (2002:4-5) does not believe that the latter strategy of articulating specificity is one that can be carried out in a sustained manner.

After identifying these strategies, Wright (2002:6) “approaches the topic from a personal perspective as a way for the African to speak”. Wright (2002:6-10) adopted five strategies in attempting to “break out of the mundane” as pointers to alternative ways of speaking to and conceptualising African identity.

Regarding the first strategy, Wright made a decision not to write a single authored treatise on the topic, but rather to enjoin others in putting forward their ideas about what constitutes African identity in a multi-stage project which would include a number of voices and perspectives.

The researcher followed up to ascertain the outcome of the proposed project. Wright (2015) stated:

“When I pointed to the five strategies, I was making a point about ways in which breaking out of the mundane could be accomplished. I have not taken this on as a literal project that I have systematically followed and accomplished. So there is no separate book that neatly and specifically brings all those recommendations/pieces together per se. My work on African cultural studies and on identity issues remains ‘scattered’ in that sense.”

Wright approached the *Critical Arts* journal to publish his articles on the topic of African identity and the diaspora because the journal had already initiated themed issues on African ethnicity and identity. The first issue in which this themed approach appears is Volume 14(1-2):1-16, 2000 edited by Oosthuysen and Tomaselli.

Secondly, Wright employed an interdisciplinary anti/inter/post-disciplinary field of African cultural studies as the framework for contextualising these essays. He admitted “that no single discipline would serve as an apt and sufficiently expansive framework to contextualize these essays. While it would be tempting to frame them using the discourse

of African Studies”, he preferred “to employ cultural studies because it is distinctly interdisciplinary and furthermore takes the popular seriously” (Wright 2002:7).

Relating to this topic of what actually constitutes African studies, Darch grappled with this. He states that “African Studies do not constitute an easily demarcated discipline” and “its meaning has changed and continues to change over time” (Darch 2004:192). Furthermore, “The difficulties are not only geographical [but also entail] which social sciences fall within the framework [of African Studies] and which ones are excluded” (Darch 2004:192). “Are African Studies like law, or music, or fine-arts disciplines typically supported by a literature that is so physically or bibliographically ‘different’ that practice requires separation?” (Darch 2004:190) (see Section 1.3.3). Wright’s solution would be to incorporate the disciplines under ‘African Cultural Studies’.

This is interesting in view of the fact that Kalu (2010:20) above (Section 6.3) points out that “in many institutions of higher education around the world, African Studies refers to the study of the different societies and cultures of the continent; there is no understanding of this area of study that includes, for example, Africa’s geography, geology, zoology, botany, technological innovations, and so on, in the service of Africa and Africans”. Furthermore, Kalu (2010:20) reminds us that “throughout the existence of the western academy in Africa, the teaching, research and study of the continent, its peoples and their experiences have remained outside the traditional disciplines”. Thus Wright’s interdisciplinary approach to African studies is appropriate. The Centre for African Studies (CAS), a department within UCT's Graduate School of Humanities, whose teaching and research focuses on interdisciplinary studies within an African and global context, builds on the work of the School of African Studies [thus expanding the discipline] (University of Cape Town 2015).

Thirdly, Wright decided “to make the inclusion of popular culture forms and the obfuscation of high/low culture a principal criterion in selecting papers for the project” (Wright 2002:7). Thus Irele’s two strands of African literature described above, and which are both included in CALS’s collection, would be included.

Fourthly, Wright was attracted to Achille Mbembe’s (2001) “refreshingly innovative construction of the geography and geo-politics of Africa” and territory (Wright 2002:9).

Mbembe's explanation of territory is that "it is fundamentally an intersection of moving bodies. It is defined essentially by the set of movements that take place within it" (Mbembe 2001:24). Following Mbembe (2001), Wright's recommendation "is that we (re)conceptualize Africa as a territory or number of territories rather than as a place or number of places (Wright 2002:9-10). "Regions of Africa are best (re)conceptualized, then not as fixed places with well-marked boundaries but rather as more vibrant, more active, shifting, transitory and ever evolving geo-political territories" (Wright 2002:10).

A parallel can be drawn between Mbembe's and Wright's focus on geography and the importance of location in the Afrocentric paradigm as well as the fact that it is an evolving process. Mbembe and Wright place Africa as territories rather than as fixed places or countries with boundaries. This broadens the concept of African identity. Darch grappled with the geographical issue associated with African collections (Section 1.3.3). According to Mbembe and Wright, these territories are not fixed, but continually evolving. Thus "Africa" as an entity is more important than separate individual countries.

Fifthly, Wright was interested in the application of contemporary European theoretical frameworks, which he collectively termed 'the posts', [post-] Lacanian psychoanalytic, post-modernist and especially, post-structuralist theory, to our understanding of African identity. Wright states that "post-structuralist theoretical category has considerable potential for exploring and articulating African identity" (Wright 2002:10). Wright's interest is not merely to impose post-structuralism on Africa; rather Wright is guided by Soyinke's rebuke that Africans should first consider whether the messages of Western ideologies are not already present in African worldviews before they enthusiastically try to adopt Western writing (Wright 2002:10).

In the context that historically writers in Africa have been influenced by colonial powers, an interesting aspect to consider is that many of the characters depicted by Achebe in his works depict conflict whereby the characters "strive to come to terms with their identity" (Gandhi 2012:61). Achebe attributes the greatest change in African societies to having been accelerated by colonialism:

"Achebe depicts characters struggling to discover their identities in an uncertain terrain, the consequence of being flung in the cultural mire ushered in by British colonization. In their search for identity, these cultural hybrids question both African and Western values and ultimately come



to terms with the complexities of change even as they act as agents of change, demonstrating the vigour and flexibility of African society and its intrinsic adaptability” (Gandhi 2012:61-62).

Just as many African literary characters “are products of a society in flux, they serve as the source for a transformative energy that ultimately allows them to come to terms with complex and multiple identities and assist in the dynamics of change” (Gandhi 2012:61).

Wright (2002:12) postulates two strongly held premises: first, that identity (and especially group identity) “does not have a singular point or moment of origin but is always being constructed” and secondly, that “identity is not given and fixed but rather is constantly (re)produced in and as performance”. He has resisted trying to establish a starting point but rather has sought to identify a way of entering what he considers already an ongoing discussion about the nature of African identity. He has tried to speak of African identity from the premise of performance rather than static and given characteristics. This ties in with Kalua (2009:23) and Gandhi (2012), who note that African identity is fluid, relational, of a shifting nature and always in flux. Society is continually evolving.

Many African writers have grappled with a definition for African identity. Appiah (1992:176) states: “If an African identity is to empower us ... what is required is ... that we acknowledge first of all that race and history and metaphysics do not enforce an identity; that we can choose, within broad limits set by ecological, political and economic realities, what it will mean to be an African in the coming years.”

According to Wright (2002:12,15), Soyinka was a strong advocate “of turning to and building traditional African worldviews, cosmology and forms” and he “asserted repeatedly through his creative work and criticism that traditional African culture is in fact pliant and adaptable, open to new influences and change” (Wright 2002:12).

Defining African identity is thus complex, challenging and multifaceted. In a personal communication with Professor Wright (Wright 2015), he states: “I don't know [if] there is a definitive answer [to African identity] and I guess much of what you are exploring will produce various different answers and nuances based on the politics of the sources/authors.” Wright (2002:16) referred to the title of his article, “Notes on the (im)possibility of articulating African identity”. In other words, it is possible to find definitions but they will vary depending on their source.

Furthermore, an accomplished writer like Achebe was aware of the difficulty in defining ‘African identity’ and one cannot deny the influence that colonialism has had on African writers as the two are interconnected. Gandhi (2012:61) states that Achebe

“is more than aware that there can be no rigid definition of identity as it is always in flux, always in a process of construction. As a matter of fact, a definition of cultural identity which arrests itself in a period of time simultaneously estranges itself from the complex history of colonialism and neo-colonialism” (Gandhi 2012:61).

This accords with the title of the study: ‘African identity in the making’. As indicated in Section 1.3.3, Makgoba (2005:13) and Seepe (2004:18) referred to Chinua Achebe who, in the early eighties, discussed the difficulties of defining the ‘African identity’ and stated, importantly, that “the African identity is still in the making. There isn’t a final identity that is African. But at the same time, there is an identity coming into existence”. All these years later, the concept of an African identity is still evolving because society is never static: “[African] identity itself is multifaceted and variable” (Gandhi 2012:61) and continually developing. Although identity is a fluid concept, “it can also, if used wisely, be a constructive, unifying and enabling force” (Makgoba 2005:14). This is especially important if one thinks in terms of the African continent as “gradually becoming part of the postmodern and globalized world” (Kalua 2009:24).

CALS has the potential to become “a unifying and enabling force” for the dissemination of African literary studies as enlarged on below.

#### **6.4 The coming-of-age of UKZN as a premier university of African scholarship**

Historically libraries in Africa have been influenced by colonial powers, and much of the information offered by these libraries is thus irrelevant to African needs. Kalua (2009:26) contends that African identity is a contentious issue as it has usually revolved around two opposing concepts, namely Afrocentrism against Eurocentrism. LaFond (2004:209-212) concurs that historically the problem of colonialism as reflected by African collections has engendered Western domination to the detriment of Africans. When building library collections, Hart (2002:60-61) queried why an African library was necessary in an African country. “Should not all academic libraries in African countries be deemed African Studies Libraries in that their holdings should reflect the continent in which they exist?”

she asked. The answer to this question, according to Hart, is that “the focus on Africa in a research library allows us to assemble a wider range of material than would be collected in the average undergraduate library, and this is what gives the collection its depth and value to postgraduate research”. Hart (2002:61) highlighted material such as pamphlets, conference papers, microfilms, posters, political ephemera, oral histories and rare Africana as some of the types of records that can enrich Africana holdings. Hart (2002:61) reminds us that university libraries still need to be “diverse and international in coverage” but African studies libraries are still fundamentally important “to allow for focus and detail at national, regional and local levels”. Thus it is important when drawing up collection policies that the African (or oppressed) voice is heard to reverse the previous Eurocentric approach. There is a need to collect materials by Africans, in African languages, and in European languages as well as in the oral tradition to ensure that African voices are heard (Hart 2002:61). Although this collection policy does not relate to CALS in the strictest sense, as CALS is in essence an African literature library rather than an African studies library, CALS needs to ensure that as many African languages as possible (including oral records if available) are represented to enable African scholarship at UKZN (see Section 6.5 below). Furthermore, as Hart says above, one of the values of a separate African collection is to attract postgraduates and researchers.

In dialogue with a reporter at the opening of CALS, Makgoba emphasised the importance of African literary collections at UKZN: “We cannot have a vision that is not underpinned by authenticity in the form of books, journals and knowledge,” said Makgoba. “The main aim was not only to bring the collection back to Africa, but to also locate it at the university [UKZN] in line with its mission to promote African Scholarship.” Makgoba stressed that he acquired the collection to “ensure its accessibility to African scholars conducting research on African literature” (Jenvey 2004).

Mzamane (2008a:2-3) argued that the study of African literature “found fertile ground in institutions of higher learning after independence in the 1960s, invoking such notions as ‘decolonising the mind’. African institutions of higher learning from North to South ... overhauled the literature curriculum from its Eurocentric foundation to an African centred or Afrocentric curriculum”. Furthermore, “from these liberated zones the notion caught on like *veld* fire, until it became the common sense of our age reflecting the coming-of-age of our institutions”. Mzamane questioned: “Has the study of African literature lost its earlier

dynamism? Are there strategies we can devise to further stimulate the study of African literature?” (Mzamane 2008a:3).

One of the recommendations proposed by the CALS External Review Committee (UKZN 2013b:2) was that “the identity of CALS within the University be better defined. CALS has the potential to be an invaluable resource that could situate UKZN at the Centre of African Scholarship”.

One of the invaluable resources CALS offers to enhance African literature is the isiZulu Literary Museum, which was established in 2012 and is expanded on below.

### **6.5 The launch of the isiZulu Literary Museum at CALS**

In 2012 the launch of isiZulu Literary Museum at CALS was a positive step forward to enable African literary studies at the Centre.

South Africa’s first isiZulu Literary Museum was launched at CALS on 24 August 2012 during the Midlands Literary Festival. This was a historic occasion. Officially opening the facility, Professor Donal McCracken of the Centre for Communication, Media and Society, paid tribute to Zulu culture, quoting a former British Prime Minister, Benjamin Disraeli: “The Zulus are a remarkable people; they put an end to an empire, they convert bishops and they defeat generals.” McCracken said: “I trust that the isiZulu Literary Museum, here in an institution, will prosper, grow from strength to strength and comprehensively reflect the literary writings of that truly remarkable people” (CALS 2012a:8; CALS 2012b:1).

The publishing director for indigenous languages at the publishing house, Shuter and Shooter, at the time, Mr Ray Wela, saw the museum as critical for the preservation of the isiZulu language. “Someone had to take this initiative forward and we are grateful to the University and CALS for doing this,” said Wela (CALS 2012a:8; CALS 2012b:1).

The launch and festival attracted many local authors to CALS. It was a festive occasion with the visitors enjoying being re-united with many isiZulu books that they had not seen for some time. Among the distinguished guests were Miriam Tlali, Gcina Mhlope, Elana Bregin, Anton Harber and William Zulu (CALS 2012b:1; Stilwell 2013a:8).

According to Mr Darryl David, UKZN lecturer (Afrikaans) and the inspiration behind the isiZulu Literary Museum, no other African language literary museum has been opened in the 18 years since democracy. There is the National English Literary Museum in Grahamstown and the National Afrikaans Literary Museum and Research Centre (NALN) in Bloemfontein. For him, “A literary museum is truly the holy grail in literary circles” (CALSA 2012a:8; CALSA 2012b:2). However, there is a Sesotho Literary Museum at NALN, which was not mentioned at the launch.

David thanked the acting director of CALS, Professor Christine Stilwell, “for having the belief in my vision and for seeing it through”. Storyteller and author, Gcina Mhlope, added: “The museum is the brightest feather in our cap ... not just for KZN, but for the whole country” (CALSA 2012b:2; Stilwell 2013a:8).

A bonus for CALS was that Shuter and Shooter, which has “published isiZulu books since 1905 when J.W. Colenso’s *Zulu-English Dictionary* was published, followed by J.L. Dube’s *Insila kaShaka* in 1931”, donated a large number of isiZulu books to CALS. They also “sponsored large portraits of Zulu writers which have been mounted in the museum and CALS’s entrance foyer. A large banner and plaque record the details of the historic occasion which was featured in many of the local newspapers and other media” (CALSA 2012b:2).

Furthermore, “The Department of Arts and Culture (South Africa), in a drive to promote a culture of reading and celebrate and preserve the literary heritage of the country, entrusted the National Library of South Africa (NLSA) with the task of identifying and reprinting books regarded as classics in nine of the eleven local languages ... a panel of literary and publishing experts finalised the list. In the first two phases twenty-seven and then nineteen titles were reprinted. CALS received the forty-six titles plus some duplicate copies and these have all been processed and appear on UKZN’s iLink catalogue” (CALSA 2012a:9; CALSA 2012b:2).

In 2013 the isiZulu collection “was expanded with the donation by Moaba Sesotho, the Sesotho Writers Association, of isiZulu books to CALS. This was done through Mr Hlengwa from isiZulu Studies at UKZN. Mr Wela from Shuter and Shooter donated an additional copy of the isiZulu novel, *Ithemba Alibulali*, by Maphill Shange, as this is a title in high demand. It is one of the NLSA’s ‘Proudly South African’ classic reprints. Other

donations of isiZulu literature came from UKZN Press and the KZN Provincial Library and Information Services” (Stilwell 2013a:9). These are on Zulu culture, identities and history. KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Library and Information Services donated a large box of dictionaries, novels and children’s books (CAL S 2012b:2).

“The Centre for African Literary Studies made great strides in 2012 with the launch of the isiZulu Literary Museum. The Museum serves to ground the role of CAL S in the province as the ‘African face of the University’ ... Since the launch, CAL S has attracted many more students searching for isiZulu titles,” stated Professor Nhlanhla Mkhize, Acting Chairperson of CAL S and Dean of the Faculty of HDSS (CAL S 2012a:3).

The number of CAL S users increased after the publicity surrounding the launch of the isiZulu Literary Museum in August. The books are in great demand by isiZulu subject students, especially as isiZulu is now compulsory for all students at UKZN (CAL S 2012a:7).

Stilwell noted:

“Postgraduate and undergraduate students at UKZN are showing their appreciation of the fine collection of isiZulu and local language literature at CAL S. Usage has risen dramatically since the launch of this first Zulu literary museum and students visit CAL S daily for these books” (CAL S 2013a:5-6).

In addition, Professor Dietloff van der Berg (Afrikaans en Nederlands, UKZN), donated the valuable Afrikaans Department Collection to CAL S which augmented the small CAL S collection of titles in Afrikaans. CAL S now has a very fine Afrikaans collection which spans the drama, poetry and fiction of several decades. The collection was moved to CAL S in October 2011 and launched by Van der Berg on 8 December 2011 (CAL S 2011d:5).

To celebrate diversity, all African collections should be rich in African languages, being inclusive of both the languages of the oppressor as well as indigenous languages as discussed in Section 5.3.2.1. CAL S holds a collection which includes various African languages; however, until recently, held very little in indigenous South African languages. However, the opening of the isiZulu Literary Museum in 2012, the donation of books from NLSA and the addition of the Afrikaans collection, has addressed this deficiency.

CALS now reflects all the South African indigenous languages, at least to some extent. As mentioned in Section 6.3.1.1 above, African languages enhance a sense of African identity.

### **6.6 African scholarship and publishing (financial challenges)**

Hart (2002:61-62) highlights the financial and currency problems that challenge libraries and special collections in South Africa. Library budgets are often not sufficient for library needs. Most of the African currencies are weak against the dollar or European currencies, and this disadvantages libraries in Africa when purchasing books and journals on Africa that are published outside of Africa. This would have an adverse effect upon CALS's book and journal acquisitions. One of the problems is that Africa's own material is being published overseas "and then sold back to Africa at First-World prices". Another significant threat identified by Hart is the "poaching of collections by wealthy First-World purchasers".

In 2001, when Merrett was preparing a proposal for the acquisition of Africa's Literary Archive (the Lindfors collection), he also commented on the dire situation regarding the publishing of African literature in Africa. Like Hart, he voiced his concern that most African books are not published in Africa: "It is a source of anguish to many scholars in African Literary Studies that most of their work is written and published outside of Africa." He lamented the fact that "while it is true that the field has grown exponentially through the second half of the twentieth century (roughly since the publication of Chinua Achebe's classic *Things Fall Apart*, in 1958) that growth has been distorted to the extent that much of it has taken place outside the African continent." Furthermore, "The majority of the conferences, journals and books in which Africa's literature is discussed, are held or published in the United States or Europe ... Despite the efforts of the African Literature Association (ALA) and the relatively few conscientious scholars who regularly visit African Universities, the intellectual traffic continues to move from South to North" (Merrett 2001:1).

Merrett (2001:1) points out that publishing in Nigeria is "precarious". This is interesting in view of the fact that Nigeria has the largest writers' association on the continent and has produced a Nobel prizewinner in Wole Soyinka. Merrett (2001:1) also comments on a colloquium on 'The Power of the Word' at Churchill College, Cambridge, in November 2000, stating that Femi Osofisan, the director of Nigeria's National Theatre, remarked that "if Achebe were to have written *Things Fall Apart* today, he may not have found a publisher".

At an African Publishers' Network (APNET) meeting held in Harare on 2 August 1995, "which afforded librarians and publishers the opportunity to meet face to face, rather than via the pages of book catalogues", concerns were raised by librarians and three issues were identified which the publishers would want to put on their agenda: African publishing is generally at a formative stage, and little investment is directed to marketing and promotion; bibliographic information is not easy to find and, with few exceptions, reviews of new titles are rare; export trade is as yet very poorly developed on the continent, so, too, is the retail book sector. Publishers are not geared to supplying single copies, and the role of library-supply specialist has not developed; booksellers are thus crucially important.

The implications of this are serious as African scholarship is being undermined by the lack of access to African books; African authors fail to get the readership they deserve, even on their own continent; and African publishers lose potential income. African libraries have an obligation to collect and support African books. A librarian and bookseller in Lagos stated that she had received countless publishers' catalogues from Europe and the USA, but none at all from within Africa. As an example of the situation outside Africa, a librarian from Nevada spoke about the burgeoning US market for books by and about Africans. Libraries such as his, he stated, own and will buy whatever it is that their communities demand, and the libraries have substantial budgets, but, "The only books we get on the African experience are from the UK, and many of us have become sceptical about that" (McCarthy 1995:2-7).

In a personal communication with James Currey (2015), the publisher of the Heinemann African Writers Series and a life-long publisher of books from Africa, he stated that "James Currey Publishers is now thirty years old and still publishing work on the new generations of African writers and the journals *African Literature Today* and *African Theatre*". CALS's holdings include *African Theatre*. According to Currey, South African publishers now publish many new writers which should ease the currency exchange problem.

Currey emphasised the "unique importance" of CALS and that "the flow of new creative work needs a home at CALS".



## **6.7 The Africanisation debate: does post-apartheid UCT need a Centre for African Studies?**

In 2011, questions about the governance of the Centre for African Studies at the University of Cape Town generated much debate around the issue of whether or not a separate Centre for African Studies was needed on the African continent.

The students in the affected disciplines were outraged about a move to disestablish African Studies as a teaching department and to merge their department with three others.

The director and founder member at LekotaMazibuko Media, Ido Lekota, confirmed the move:

“According to the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Professor Paula Ensor, there is indeed a move to merge the departments of Social Anthropology, Linguistics, the African Gender Institute and the Centre for African Studies into a new department of Anthropology, Linguistics, and Gender Studies. As justification for the move the professor, among other academics, argues that the circumstances under which CAS was established in the 1970s ‘as a cross-faculty platform for debate about Africa, at a time when the study of Africa was marginalized at UCT, have changed. Now the study of Africa is deeply rooted across the institution’” (Lekota 2011).

Current students did not accept this change: “The CAS is a space of hope, one that UCT, in its apparent quest for transformation and Afropolitism, must accept and support,” said the students (Lekota 2011).

The students argued that they had been “excluded for more than a year of formal discussions around a ‘new school’”. They argued that what ‘Africa’ meant was itself contested and said they “do not know what ‘Africa’ signifies for these [other] departments as seen through their disciplines”. “Unlike when it was established in 1976, Africa is now taught broadly across the UCT curriculum. The students said “a handful of ‘Africa’ courses in different departments does not constitute the study of Africa—far less critical study”, according to the *Mail & Guardian's* education editor Mr David MacFarlane (2011). According to MacFarlane (2011), the students argued that: “[G]iven the history of bantu studies at UCT ... a post-apartheid university committed to transformation should prioritise the critical study of Africa.”

The “baffled, appalled, angered and enraged” *Concerned CAS Students* posted their many concerns on the Internet when they heard of UCT’s administrative decision to disestablish

the Centre for African Studies without their input or consultation (Africa South Art Initiative (ASAI) 2011). They affirmed their support

“of a uniquely multi-disciplinary department that cultivates critical intellectual work, which interrogates the study of Africa, the African Diaspora and the global South; a department that centralises Africa and its varied, nuanced and many times disparate intellectual histories and ways of knowing in order to challenge disciplinary paradigms and the relations between power and knowledge production” (ASAI 2011).

In line with the Afrocentric paradigm, they wished for a department that “centralizes Africa”. The students believed that “in supporting CAS or a CAS-centred new school, the faculty will be investing actively in its role as an African university that is really world-class”.

MacFarlane states that when Professor Garuba, the Director of CAS, was asked to explain what is at stake in retaining or losing a centre dedicated to the study of Africa, Garuba referred the *M&G* [*Mail and Guardian*] to his address at Michigan University in the US when it launched its Centre for African Studies in 2009, which stated: “The struggle for decolonization is at the heart of the issue” (MacFarlane 2011). “Our hope is that [the ongoing discussions] lead to an outcome that is best for CAS and the university,” stated Garuba (MacFarlane 2011).

The researcher contacted Garuba to enquire how the matter was resolved. Garuba stated that the eventual solution was to create two ‘arms’ consisting of four sections. The one ‘arm’ is a teaching one consisting of the Schools of African and Gender Studies, Anthropology, and Linguistics; and the other ‘arm’ is a non-teaching cross-faculty forum for promoting African Studies, namely CAS. CAS hosts undergraduate and postgraduate degrees, post-doctoral studies, supervision of students, and seminars (Garuba 2016).

Although CAS is essentially an African studies collection, whereas CALS specialises in literary studies, the situation regarding CAS can be considered a marker for CALS. It emphasises the importance students place on a separate Centre for African Studies as a space to focus on African studies.

Examples of the remarks voiced by the students arguing in favour of the need for separate African collections at universities on the African continent include: CAS offers “a space of

hope and transformation that asks us to imagine different ways of being”; “a unique intellectual environment – a department that cultivates critical academic work and encourages students to find and articulate their own voices”; “spaces such as CAS reflect our intellectual heritage, our pasts and our trajectories in the present by placing those writers, theorists, poets, artists, creatives, seminal thinkers and intellectuals from Africa, the Diaspora and the global South at the centre of our intellectual journeys and of our formal degree studies” and, most importantly, “a place that *centralises* Africa and its varied, nuanced and many times disparate intellectual histories and ways of knowing in order to challenge disciplinary paradigms and the relations between power and knowledge production” (ASAI 2011).

The above points concur with the Afrocentric paradigm of this study: the importance of location and agency. African centres centralise Africa and its knowledge production. This is in line with UKZN’s initiative to be the ‘Premier University of African Scholarship’.

## 6.8 Summary

This chapter discussed the debate concerning what determines African literature and African identity, UKZN’s readiness for a “paradigmatic shift” into becoming ‘the Premier University of African Scholarship’; the launch of the isiZulu Literary Museum at CALS; whether there is a need for separate African collections; and African scholarship and publishing.

In summary, the four literature review chapters examined the original vision for CALS, the reality of CALS, the gap between the vision and the reality, and how to close the gap. The emergent themes highlighted the staffing and financial constraints at CALS. The literature review also addressed the Africanisation debate, focusing on African identity as it relates to CALS and its contribution to African literary studies at UKZN.

The next chapter presents the methodology adopted by the study.

## **Chapter 7**

### **Research Methodology**

#### **7.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides details of the research design, the methodology and the procedures employed in conducting the study. In terms of the structure of the thesis, the literature analysis required a post-review. For this reason, it became important to present the research methodology and methods at this stage to define the parameters. The literature review contains much of the analysis of the relevant documents, followed by this explanation of the methods, particularly those used for the empirical section of the study.

This chapter covers the population studied, data-collection methods, tools for data collection, pre-testing of the instruments and data-analysis techniques. The chapter also discusses reliability and validity, and ethical considerations. It does not repeat details of the approach in terms of paradigm, principal theories and frameworks discussed in Chapter 2.

#### **7.2 The choice of methodology**

The study employed methodological triangulation using a number of methods which included historical research for the literature review, a survey of CALS's users (both undergraduate and postgraduate, and researchers) and members of staff (both current and past) by means of self-administered questionnaires; and semi-structured interviews with the owners of the original collections of CALS, the founders of CALS, and directors (both current and past).

##### **7.2.1 The research methodology and approach**

The historical research method was used to underpin the study.

Cohen and Manion (1994:38) explain that methods can be described as “that range of approaches used in educational research to gather data which are to be used as a basis for inference and interpretation, for explanation and prediction”.

The researcher endorses Cohen and Manion's (1994:38) view that “the aim of methodology is to help us to understand, in the broadest possible terms, not the products of scientific enquiry but the process itself”, and hence explaining the process is the purpose of this chapter.

Spector (1981:7) observes that

“Any scientific investigation, be it in the social or natural sciences, must begin with some structure or plan. This structure defines the number and type of entities or variables to be studied and their relationship to one another. Such a structure is termed a design.”

Mouton (1996:107) states that a research design “is defined as a set of guidelines and instructions to be followed in addressing the research problem. The main function of a research design is to enable the researcher to anticipate what the appropriate research decisions should be so as to maximize the validity of the eventual results”. He compares a research design to a route planner, a set of guidelines and instructions on how to reach the goal that one has set for oneself. In the case of this thesis the researcher chose the historical method because it was important to identify and analyse policy documents and reports pertaining to UKZN and in particular to CALS. This necessitated an analysis of historical documents (both primary and secondary sources) to establish the historical development of CALS.

The current study was also exploratory. Until now, there has been no substantial evaluation done on CALS from an academic perspective to assess its viability as a special collection in facilitating and enabling African literary studies at UKZN, as well as evaluating the service offered to its users. Babbie (1992:90,91) states that exploratory studies are “valuable in social scientific research [and] are essential whenever a researcher is breaking new ground, and they can almost always yield new insights into a topic for research”. Babbie outlines three of the most common and useful purposes of research that this study drew on as: (i) exploration (a desire for better understanding); (ii) description (to describe situations and events); and (iii) explanation (to explain why things occur rather than simply reporting or describing an event). Although it is useful to be able to distinguish between the three purposes of research as described above, it is important to note that most studies contain elements of all three (Babbie 1992:92).

All three purposes described above were useful in the case of the current research, which was original and exploratory in nature. A survey was conducted as well as descriptive analysis.

Creswell (2003:18) states that “the knowledge claims, the strategies, and the method all contribute to a research approach that tends to be more quantitative, qualitative, or mixed”.

The two basic approaches of research that the study adopted are the quantitative and qualitative methodologies of enquiry (the mixed-methods approach); however the study tends to be more qualitative. In general terms, the quantitative method involves collecting numerical data or data which can be counted. The qualitative method involves collecting textual or verbal data (Bertram 2003:44-45). Creswell (2003:18) describes a mixed-method approach as

“one in which the researcher tends to base knowledge claims on pragmatic grounds (e.g. consequence-oriented, problem-centred, and pluralistic). It employs strategies of inquiry that involve collecting data either simultaneously or sequentially to best understand research problems. The data collection also involves gathering both numeric information (e.g. on instruments) as well as text information (e.g. on interviews) so that the final database represents both quantitative and qualitative information”.

The current study used the quantitative approach in the form of the structured aspects of the questionnaires and a qualitative approach by collecting verbal data by means of the semi-structured aspects of the questionnaires. These types of data were collected simultaneously. Textual data were gathered through historical research. The researcher first surveyed a large number of individuals (CALS’s users, a group that included undergraduate and postgraduate students and researchers) and then followed up with interviews of a few selected groups “to obtain their specific language and voices about the [research] topic”. In the case of the current study, the advantages of collecting both closed-end quantitative data and open-ended qualitative data proved “advantageous to best understand the research problem” (Creswell 2003:22).

As mentioned above, although the two basic approaches to research adopted by the study were quantitative and qualitative, qualitative and historical research dominated the study as they were deemed the most suitable to answer the research questions relating to the origin of CALS as a special collection and its policies. Questionnaires and semi-structured interviews helped to inform the study regarding whether CALS is fulfilling its role in its contribution to African literary studies within UKZN and the wider academic and research community.

### **7.2.2 The historical research method (literature search and review)**

A good literature search is a necessary and extremely important component of any research. The purpose of literature reviews is to assist researchers to “limit the scope of their enquiry” as well as to convey the importance of the topic to readers (Creswell 2003:27).

The University of Southern California Libraries (USC 2014), suggests that the function of a literature review is to critically “survey scholarly articles, books and other sources relevant to a particular issue, area of research, or theory, and by so doing, [provide] a description, summary, and critical evaluation of these works”. Furthermore, it is necessary that literature reviews provide sources which have been utilised in the study to demonstrate to the readers how the research “fits into the larger field of the study”.

In the case of the historical research method, when “looking at a string of seemingly random events, the historical researcher develops a rational explanation for the sequence and causes of the events and makes inferences about the effects that the events had on individuals and the society in which they lived” (Leedy and Ormrod 2001:172). As one of the sets of criteria used in assessing the literature, the current study sought to arrive at “a rational explanation for the sequence and causes of the events” in the development of CALS and to make “inferences about the effects that the events had” on the achievement of its mandate by CALS in enabling research on African literature.

Connaway and Powell (2010:247) identify six types of historical research or documentary study: (i) biographical research; (ii) histories of institutions and organisations; (iii) the investigation of sources and influences; (iv) editing and translating historical documents; (v) studying the history of ideas; and (vi) compiling bibliographies. The study of histories of institutions is applicable to this study.

Connaway and Powell (2010:247-248) also list the various sources of historical information, which include: (i) official records, such as laws, deeds, and annual reports of organisations; (ii) newspapers and other periodicals; (iii) eyewitness accounts of events; (iv) archives; (v) manuscripts; (vi) letters and personal diaries; (vii) biographies, autobiographies and memoirs; (viii) historical studies; (ix) literary writings; (x) oral evidence; (xi) memorials; (xii) catalogues; (xiii) schedules and agendas; (xiv) archaeological and geological remains (non-

documents). This current study made use of many of these sources, especially official records in the form of board minutes and annual reports, letters and memorandums.

Written sources of historical information can be categorised as either primary or secondary documents (Neuman 1994:383-384). Connaway and Powell (2010:248) elaborate:

“Primary sources represent the data which lie closest to the historical event. They are considered to include the testimony of eyewitnesses, or observations made with one or the other senses or by some mechanical device. In most cases, primary sources are the written record of what the writer actually observed, or the firsthand expression of his or her thoughts.”

They state further, “Secondary (or second-hand) sources may be considered virtually everything not viewed as primary.” Thus “everything that historians and others have written about the past are secondary sources and include most textbooks, journal articles, histories and encyclopaedias”. Importantly, “the use of primary sources tends to ensure the integrity of a study and to strengthen its reliability. Their use provides the only solid base for conclusions reached in documentary research ... They are critical for the consideration of complex issues” (Connaway and Powell 2010:248).

For the purposes of this study, the researcher has striven to make use of primary data, unless otherwise stipulated. However, Connaway and Powell (2010: 249) warn that “it is seldom possible, or even desirable, for a historical researcher to base his or her work entirely on primary sources”. They advise that “secondary sources may provide important insights and conceptual development not available elsewhere”. Leedy and Ormrod (2001:173) explain: “The historical researcher digs deep. The researcher makes every effort to find first-hand accounts and artefacts of an event”, always bearing in mind that primary data is always closer “to the reality, or Truth, that the researcher wants ultimately to uncover”.

In their description of what historical research involves, Cohen and Manion (1994:45) note:

“The act of historical research involves the identification of a problem or an area of study; sometimes the formulation of an hypothesis (or set of questions); the collection, organization, verification, validation, analysis and selection of data; testing the hypothesis (or answering the questions) where appropriate; and writing a research report. The sequence leads to a new understanding of the past and its relevance to the present and future.”



To this intent, the researcher sought to understand the provenance of CALS and the original vision of the founders (the past), as opposed to the reality and the gaps that exist today (its relevance to the present) and how to close the gaps to ensure the future of CALS in its ability to enable African studies at UKZN and beyond.

The current study was guided by the steps outlined above and arrived at conclusions based on the vision, reality and the closing of the gap relating to CALS's original mission and vision.

### **7.2.3 The survey method (quantitative research methodology)**

“A survey gathers data at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature of existing conditions” (Bertram 2003:13). This is in accordance with Babbie (1992:92) who stated that one of the most common and useful purposes of research is to be descriptive. Cohen and Manion (1994:83) mention that the most commonly used descriptive method is the survey.

Cohen and Manion (1994:83) point out that

“whether the survey is large-scale and undertaken by some government bureau or small-scale and carried out by the lone researcher, the collection of information typically involves one or more of the following data-gathering techniques: structured or semi-structured interviews, self-completion or postal questionnaires, standardized tests of attainment or performance, and attitude scales.”

The nature of the particular research problem relating to the current study (that is, an evaluation of user perceptions of CALS and the challenges facing CALS) suggested that the most appropriate methodological approach to obtain the required information would be to conduct a survey using semi-structured interviews and questionnaires.

It is typical for surveys to “proceed through well-defined stages”, as Cohen and Manion (1994:85) suggest. Creswell (2003:154) outlines the components of a survey method plan: (i) the purpose of survey research, (ii) the population and sample, (iii) instrumentation, (iv) variables in the study, and (v) data analysis. The survey method of this study included these components but no sampling was employed as the population was fairly small (107).

The current study employed all three of the main types of survey methods described by Rea and Parker (1997:6) and Leedy and Ormrod (2001:196-197): (i) mail surveys; (ii) telephone [Skype] surveys; and (iii) in-person interviews, bearing in mind the advantages and disadvantages of each type of survey. Copies of the two separate questionnaires were administered to the undergraduate and postgraduate students and researchers and another to the CALS's staff members. Interviews using three different schedules were conducted with the directors, original owners and founders respectively.

### **7.3 Population of the study**

This section provides a description of the population that participated in the study as well as the characteristics of the population.

#### **7.3.1. The population of the study and the sampling frame**

“All research questions address issues that are of great relevance to important groups of individuals known as a research population” (Explorable 2015). The population can be regarded as the total of all the participants who have the required characteristics that are of interest to a researcher. For instance, in the current study the population entailed the users of CALS, as well as the owners of the original collection, the founders and the staff. A research population is “generally a large collection of individuals or objects that is the main focus of a scientific query” (Academia 2015: paragraph 1).

In survey research the identification of the population from which the sample is selected is essential.

Academia (2015: paragraphs 5 and 6) distinguishes between the target population and the accessible population. The target population “refers to the entire group of individuals or objects to which researchers are interested in generalizing the conclusions. The target population usually has varying characteristics and it is also known as the theoretical population”. The accessible population “is the population in research to which the researchers can apply their conclusions. This population is a subset of the target population and is also known as the study population. It is from the accessible population that researchers draw their samples” .

The researcher used a sampling frame to draw the sample of undergraduate and some of the postgraduate students. Rea and Parker (1997:11) describe the sampling frame as

“the population that is identified for formal interviewing [and they advise that] the researchers should be relatively certain that the selected population possesses the knowledge and information required to fulfil the requirements of the research project ... Once the population has been defined, a list of identifiable and contactable members of this general population must be obtained ... The researcher must attempt to select a sample that is an approximate microcosm of the working population. Generally speaking, given equal representative samples, larger samples yield a higher degree of accuracy than smaller samples”.

The aim of the current study was to investigate user perceptions of CALS as well as the challenges facing CALS. The sampling frame was the entire list of students who were registered on the UKZN database for isiZulu 202 and isiZulu 303 in 2015, as well as the postgraduate honours isiZulu and English students who were registered at UKZN in 2015. The justification for the sampling frame is that these students use the isiZulu literary museum located at CALS, as well as CALS’s material for their studies. They are also mandated by their lecturers to use CALS. The first-year module undergraduates were excluded because they had not yet started to use the Centre.

A list of contactable master’s and PhD students and researchers who had used CALS was drawn up from CALS’s records.

The current and ex-staff members enriched the study regarding staff perceptions concerning the ability of CALS in enabling African literary studies at UKZN. The original owners and founders were contacted to shed light on the key question regarding the provenance of CALS. The contact details of these groups were available from the administrative officer at CALS.

### **7.3.2 Size and known characteristics of the population**

The total population of the current study was 139.

The population for the current study consisted of:

**Table 1: The study population**

Undergraduate, postgraduate students and researchers	117 (Consisting of 100 undergraduates, 13 postgraduates, 4 researchers)
Current and ex-staff members	9
Owners of the original collections	2
Founders of the Centre for African Literary Studies	4
Current and ex-directors (including acting directors)	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>139</b>

The undergraduates were full-time mother-tongue isiZulu students and the postgraduates, researchers, directors and staff members were mainly employed professionals, some of whom have retired. Both men and women were included in the study.

#### **7.4 Data collection instruments and procedures**

This section describes the instruments used to gather data and the forms of the questions which were asked the respondents. The section also describes the process of peer reviewing and pre-testing of the questionnaire and semi-structured interview schedules.

##### **7.4.1 The research instruments**

The instruments that the researcher employed as methods of data collection were a self-administered questionnaire and semi-structured interviews.

In this study, two questionnaires were compiled: one for the undergraduate students, the postgraduate students and the researchers who use CALS (see Appendix 2); and the other for the current and ex-staff members of the Centre for African Literary Studies (see Appendix 3).

According to Connaway and Powell (2010:146), the questionnaire as “a form containing a set of questions, especially one addressed to a statistically significant number of subjects as a way of gathering information from a survey, offers several important advantages over other techniques or instruments for collecting survey data”.

Connaway and Powell (2010:146; Gay (1976:128) and Taylor (2014) list the advantages of questionnaires, which include: interviewer bias is eliminated; large amounts of data can be collected in a relatively short period of time; they are relatively inexpensive to administer; the need to travel and the resultant travel expenses are eliminated; and the questionnaire allows respondents to answer at their leisure (however, this can be a disadvantage if the researcher is more interested in obtaining spontaneous or immediate reactions). Disadvantages include: the mail questionnaire does not permit the respondent to qualify answers to ambiguous questions; personal contact is eliminated (but, as mentioned above, this can also be an advantage eliminating interviewer bias); persons who are highly opinionated regarding the subject of a questionnaire are more likely than others to be motivated enough to complete and return it; there can be a resistance to mail questionnaires, and in extreme cases, participants may attempt to sabotage a survey by purposely responding incorrectly; non response rates are relatively high for mail, e-mail and Web-based questionnaires; if the questionnaire is distributed electronically, it will reach only those who have access to and are comfortable with using e-mail and Web technology.

Although the advantages of the questionnaire tend to outweigh the disadvantages (Connaway and Powell 2010:146), the researcher took cognisance of the advantages and disadvantages when constructing and administering the questionnaire as part of the survey approach.

Three interview schedules were constructed for the original owners of CALS, the founders of CALS and the current and ex-directors (see Appendices 4, 5 and 6). The interviews are discussed in Section 7.6.1 below.

## **7.4.2 Forms of questions**

Connaway and Powell (2010:150) state that there are two basic types or forms of questions: open-ended questions and fixed response (or closed-ended) questions. They describe open-ended (or unstructured) questions as being designed “to permit free responses from participants rather than ones limited to specific alternatives. They are especially useful for exploratory studies”. Fixed response (or closed structured questions), according to Connaway and Powell (2010:150), “limit the responses of the participant to stated alternatives. The possible responses may range from a simple ‘yes’ or ‘no’, to a checklist of possible replies, to a scale indicating various degrees of a particular response”.

In this study the two questionnaires compiled for the survey consisted of both open-ended (unstructured) and closed-ended (structured) questions.

Neuman (1994:232-234) reminds us that there are advantages and disadvantages of both open and closed questions which the researcher took into consideration in the construction of both the questionnaires.

## **7.5 Administration of research instruments**

This section outlines the process of pre-testing the questionnaires and the administration of the research instruments, both the questionnaires and semi-structured interviews schedules, and the description of the questionnaire response rate.

### **7.5.1 Peer review and pre-testing the questions**

“It is absolutely vital to design the questionnaire properly to ensure that the respondents understand what you are asking them,” advises Bertram (2003:50), to eliminate some of the disadvantages mentioned above. It is imperative that the questionnaires are clear, well constructed, unambiguous, easily understood and relevant.

Rea and Parker (1997:12) state that

“after a draft questionnaire has been prepared and the researcher believes that the questions will obtain the information necessary to achieve the goals of the study, it is important to pre-test the instrument under actual survey conditions. During the course of the pre-test, poorly worded questions will be identified and the overall quality of the survey instrument refined. Based on the

experience of the pre-test, the questionnaire will be fine-tuned for use in the actual survey process..”

To further enhance validity, the questionnaire was pre-tested and examined for accuracy, legibility and completeness before it was given to the respondents to complete. An outcome of the pre-test was that some changes were made as described in more detail below.

#### **7.5.1.1 Population for the questionnaire pre-test**

In order to examine the questionnaires for content validity, relevance and appropriateness, as well as clarity, the instruments were pre-tested as follows:

- (i) Questionnaire 1 for undergraduate students, postgraduate students and researchers who use CALS (see Appendix 2).

This questionnaire was pre-tested on a senior lecturer in the Information Studies Programme, University of KwaZulu-Natal (Pietermaritzburg campus), as well as an Information Studies PhD student, and an Information Studies master’s student, both of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus.

- (ii) Questionnaire 2 for current and ex-staff members of the Centre for African Literary Studies (see Appendix 3).

This questionnaire was pre-tested on a senior lecturer in the Information Studies Programme, University of KwaZulu-Natal (Pietermaritzburg campus), as well as a subject librarian at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Pietermaritzburg campus), who holds a PhD in Information Studies.

- (iii) Semi-structured interview questions (Interview Schedule One) for the original owners of the CALS collections (see Appendix 4).

This questionnaire was pre-tested on a senior lecturer in the Information Studies Programme, University of KwaZulu-Natal (Pietermaritzburg campus).

- (iv) Semi-structured interview questions (Interview Schedule Two) for the founders of the Centre for African Literary Studies (see Appendix 5).

This questionnaire was pre-tested on a senior lecturer in the Information Studies Programme, University of KwaZulu-Natal (Pietermaritzburg campus).

- (v) Semi-structured interview questions (Interview Schedule Three) for CALS's directors and ex-directors (see Appendix 6).

This questionnaire was pre-tested by a senior lecturer in the Information Studies Programme, University of KwaZulu-Natal (Pietermaritzburg campus), as well as on the senior librarian of the Alan Paton Centre and Struggle Archives, University of KwaZulu-Natal (Pietermaritzburg Campus).

#### **7.5.1.2 Administering the questionnaire and interview schedule pre-test**

Copies of all five questionnaires were personally taken by the researcher to the senior lecturer in Information Studies on 18 May 2015. In addition, all five questionnaires were sent via e-mail to the pre-testers as outlined above on 22 May 2015. The respondents were given two weeks to complete the questionnaire. No reminders needed to be sent. At the end of the two weeks, all the questionnaires had been completed by the pre-testers, yielding a 100% response rate for the pre-test.

#### **7.5.1.3 Changes to the questionnaires and interview schedules for the pre-test**

As a result of the pre-test, minor changes in all the questionnaires, in the form of spelling and improvement in the grammar, were effected. Some questions were removed, reworded and/or the sequencing order changed to improve their relevance and clarity before the questionnaires were administered to the target population.

It was decided to eliminate the original questionnaire number three (specialists in the field of special collections) because the subject matter had been covered in the literature review.

All the questionnaires were then sent to the three research supervisors for final approval.

#### **7.5.2 Administration of the questionnaires**

Subsequent to the pre-testing of the questionnaires, the accommodation of the amendments, permission to conduct the study from the research supervisors and ethical clearance granted by UKZN to conduct the study, the questionnaires were administered. The questionnaires were accompanied by an introductory letter from the research supervisors confirming that the researcher was a bonafide student of UKZN (see Appendix 1). Because of limited time and financial resources available to this study, and in order to be more expedient and cost



effective, electronic mail (e-mail) was used to administer Questionnaire 1 (to the postgraduates and researchers) (Appendix 2) and Questionnaire 2 (to the current and ex-staff members) (Appendix 3) as well as the covering letter of consent (Appendix 1). The questionnaires were sent out between 4 June 2015 and 1 August 2015 to all contactable members of the population.

The cover letter explained the purpose of the study and requested recipients to complete the questionnaire and return it to the researcher. Respondents were given ten weeks to complete the questionnaire. To mitigate the effects of a low response rate, a reminder was sent to the recipients during the second week. During the third to eighth week, recipients were contacted either by e-mail or telephonically to remind them of the deadline for the survey. All of the respondents approached to participate in the study were amenable to being included in the study. The reason for the extended time given to respondents was that the questionnaires were sent out when many respondents were on leave because of the university vacation. Also, many directors were extremely busy marking and/or delivering papers both locally and internationally.

Questionnaire 1 for the undergraduates was dealt with differently. The researcher personally took copies of the questionnaires to the undergraduates to complete to ensure a good response rate. The isiZulu 202 questionnaires were administered on 29 July 2015 and the isiZulu 303 questionnaires on 27 July 2015. As mentioned above (Section 7.3.1), when the researcher administered the copies of the questionnaire at the beginning of the second semester (July 2015), the isiZulu 101 group was excluded because they had not yet used CALS so they would have been unable to answer the questions.

### **7.5.3 Questionnaire response rates**

Of the 126 copies of the questionnaires sent out to the undergraduates (100), postgraduates (13), the researchers (4), and CALS's staff members (both present and ex) (9), 105 were returned, indicating a response rate of 84.13% (see Table 2). The questionnaire return rates for this current study were considered very good.

This good response rate is possibly explained by the fact that the researcher allowed extra time and followed up with e-mail and telephone reminders.

**Table 2: The response rate for the questionnaires**

	Total Population	Response	Percentage
Undergraduate students (isiZulu 202 and 303 modules)	100	81	81
Postgraduate students (isiZulu honours; English honours; English master's and English PhD)	13	13	100
Researchers	4	4	100
Staff	9	8	88.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>84.13</b>

## 7.6 Qualitative research

Creswell (2003:179) states that qualitative procedures stand in stark contrast to the methods of quantitative research. Qualitative enquiry employs different knowledge claims, strategies of enquiry and methods of data collection and analysis.

Creswell (2003:180-183) outlines characteristics of qualitative research:

- “Qualitative research takes place in a natural setting.
- Qualitative research uses multiple methods that are interactive and humanistic. Data collection methods are traditionally based on open-ended observations, interviews and documents.
- Qualitative research is emergent rather than tightly prefigured and several aspects emerge during a qualitative study. The research questions may change and be refined.
- Qualitative research is fundamentally interpretive which means that the researcher makes an interpretation of the data. This includes developing a description of an individual or setting, analysing data for themes or categories, and finally making an

interpretation or drawing conclusions about its meaning personally and theoretically. The researcher filters the data through a personal lens that is situated in a specific socio-political and historical moment. One cannot escape the personal interpretation brought to qualitative analysis.

- The qualitative researcher views social phenomena holistically which explains why qualitative research studies appear as broad, panoramic views rather than micro-analysis. The more complex, interactive and encompassing the narrative, the better the qualitative study.
- The qualitative researcher systematically reflects on who he or she is in the inquiry and is sensitive to his or her biography and how it shapes the study. This introspection and acknowledgment of biases, values and interests (or reflexivity) typifies qualitative research today.
- The qualitative researcher uses complex reasoning that is multifaceted, iterative and simultaneous. Although the reasoning is largely inductive, both inductive and deductive processes are at work. Added to this are the simultaneous activities of collecting, analyzing and writing up data.
- The qualitative researcher adopts and uses one or more strategies of inquiry as a guide for the procedures in the qualitative study.”

The above characteristics guided the researcher during the qualitative research process.

### **7.6.1 Semi-structured interviews**

Cohen and Manion (1994:271) state that the research interview

“involves the gathering of data through direct verbal interaction between individuals. In this sense it differs from the questionnaire where the respondent is required to record in some way his/her responses to set questions... it has been pointed out that the direct interaction of the interview is the source of both its advantages and disadvantages as a research technique. One advantage is that it allows for greater depth than in the case with other methods of data collection. A disadvantage, on the other hand, is that it is prone to subjectivity and bias on the part of the interviewer”.

Thomas (2009:162-166) distinguishes between three types of interviews: structured, unstructured and semi-structured. Cohen and Manion (1994:273) identify four kinds of interviews which may be used specifically as research tools: the structured interview, the unstructured interview, the non-directive interview, and the focused interview.

Thomas (2009:164) states that “the semi-structured interview provides the best of both worlds as far as interviewing is concerned, combining the structure of a list of issues to be covered together with the freedom to follow up points as necessary. Because of this combination it is the most common arrangement in most small-scale research.”

Semi-structured interviews were deemed to be the most suitable for these groups in the population as they allowed greater flexibility and freedom and enabled the researcher to probe for further information when necessary. The researcher considered it important to include the oral conversations with the original owners, founders and directors as “quotes are also a way of ensuring that the voice of the interviewee is heard, and not only the voice of the researcher” (Bertram 2003:39).

The semi-structured interviews were administered to the owners of the original collections of CALS, the founders of CALS, and the directors (both current and ex).

Like the questionnaires, the semi-structured questions were peer reviewed and pre-tested by members of the University of KwaZulu-Natal Information Studies Department to ensure that the questions were clear, well constructed, unambiguous, easily understood and relevant. The interview schedules were then sent to academics in the Information Studies Programme for final approval (as described in Section 7.5.1.1).

### **7.6.2 Administration of the semi-structured interviews**

Semi-structured interviews used for this study to gather data to answer the research questions of user perceptions of CALS and the challenges facing CALS took place between 4 June and 3 August 2015. Three separate categories included: the original owners, the founders, and the directors (including acting directors) of CALS.

The researcher conducted all of the interviews herself (face to face and via Skype) to ensure that each was as similar to the others as possible. The flexible nature of semi-structured interviews allows new follow-up questions to be asked during the interview. This is useful

when more information is needed for clarity. Pre-determined questions were asked each respondent in a systematic and consistent order. The researcher asked probing questions that went far beyond the answers to the prepared questions to gain more insight on certain issues.

The interview content was captured using recording equipment, when the respondents consented, and notes were taken when respondents were not willing to be recorded. However, even where recording was permitted by the respondents, notes were taken as technical errors could occur with the recording device making the recorded work irretrievable.

The interview response rate was as follows:

**Table 3: The response rate for the interviews**

	Total Population	Response	Percentage
Original owners	2	2	100
Original founders	4	4	100
Directors (current and ex)	7	5	71.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>84.62</b>

The overall survey results, including both the questionnaires and the interviews, are as follows:

**Table 4: The overall response rate for the study**

	Total Population	Response	Percentage
Undergraduate students (isiZulu 202 and 303 modules)	100	81	81
Postgraduate students (isiZulu honours; English honours; English master's and English PhD)	13	13	100
Researchers	4	4	100
Staff	9	8	88.9
Original owners	2	2	100
Original founders	4	4	100
Directors (current and ex)	7	5	71.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>84.17</b>

The total population of the study consisted of 139 respondents from whom there were 117 responses, thus making a total response rate of 84.17%. The total response rate is considered very good.

### **7.7 Validity and reliability of the instruments (triangulation)**

In this section the validity and reliability of the instruments used are discussed.

The survey conducted in this current study used methodological triangulation (a term coined by Denzin (1989:236), which included both a quantitative approach by means of a questionnaire survey that included some qualitative aspects, and a qualitative approach by

means of interview schedules and historical research. Reliability and validity are important aspects of a questionnaire design. “The aim of a research design is, after all, to employ various measures to control for systematic bias, confounding variables and other sources of error” explains Mouton (1996:176).

In order to test for validity and reliability, Babbie and Mouton (2001:275) state that “triangulation is generally considered to be one of the best ways to enhance validity and reliability in qualitative research”. Cohen and Manion (1994:233) define triangulation (also known as a multi-method approach) as

“the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behaviour ... By analogy, triangular techniques in the social sciences attempt to map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint and, in so doing, by making use of both quantitative and qualitative data”.

An advantage of triangulation, according to Cohen and Manion (1994:233), is that when one relies exclusively on one method, the “slice of reality” that the researcher is investigating could be biased or distorted, whereas “when different methods of data collection yield substantially the same results”, one’s confidence in the results is increased”. A second advantage stated by Cohen and Manion (1994:234235) is that triangulation gives a ‘fuller picture’ as some researchers tend to simply use methods that they are familiar with or because they believe that their method is superior to another. Mouton (1996:156) confirms that “a first general principle in data collection is that the inclusion of multiple sources of data collection in a research project is likely to increase the reliability of the observations”.

In order to enhance validity and reliability, the survey used methodological triangulation, which included both the quantitative approach by means of a questionnaire survey which included some qualitative aspects, and a qualitative approach by means of interview schedules and historical research.

The researcher and two of her three supervisors used to be on the staff of CALS so triangulation is a useful method to assist in limiting personal bias when considering self-reflexivity. Another measure was the broad spectrum of the groups involved with CALS who made up the population and the bringing in of an external supervisor who had not had dealings with CALS for supervision of the thesis.

As mentioned above in 7.2.1, the research methods used in the current study were the questionnaires, qualitative semi-structured interviews and the literature (historical research). Mouton (1996:157) states that each type of method has its limitations “so by employing different methods of data collection in a single project we are, to some extent, able to compensate for the limitations of each”. Mouton (1996:157) also states, and which is pertinent to this study, that “where historical events are being investigated and memory decay may play an important part, the reliability of the information can probably be increased by the use of documentary sources like diaries and letters”. This current study drew on primary documentary sources of data such as e-mails, CALS’s management documents, including UKZN Senate minutes, minutes of CALS’s board meetings and annual reports.

The researcher believed that methodological triangulation was appropriate to answering the key questions. Questions 1 and 2 relating to the history and provenance of CALS draw on the literature. The questions relating to the challenges facing CALS were gleaned from the questionnaires and the semi-structured interviews.

To this end, the researcher “triangulated different data sources of information by examining evidence from the sources and using it to build a coherent justification for themes” (Creswell 2003:196).

To further enhance validity and reliability the researcher pre-tested the research instruments with staff members of the Information Studies Programme and Alan Paton Centre and Struggle Archives, UKZN, to ascertain whether or not the questionnaires would answer the study question and to ensure clarity.

## **7.8 Data analysis**

This section discusses the methods used in data analysis. The data collection consisted of a survey in the form of questionnaires for the CALS undergraduate and postgraduate students, researchers and staff (both ex and current); as well as semi-structured interviews of the initial owners of the collections, the founders of CALS, and the current and ex CALS directors. Historical research was undertaken. Thus both qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods were used, with the emphasis being on the qualitative research approach. Careful analysis was undertaken after the collection of the data and is explained below.



### **7.8.1 Documentary analysis of data**

Documentary analysis as a data collection instrument was used to gather written data which formed the base for the study. Most of these sources were historical in nature.

Leedy and Ormrod (2001:174) state that

“Once we have located historical data relevant to the research problem, we must decide what is fact and what is fiction. In other words, we must determine the validity of the data. The data of historical research are subject to two types of evaluation. First, we must judge whether a document or artefact is authentic [external evidence]. Second, we must decide, if indeed the item is authentic, what it, or perhaps a part of it, means [internal evidence]. In these two situations, we are reviewing the data to determine their external evidence and internal evidence, respectively.”

Cohen and Manion (1994:52-53) and Neuman (1994:387) also elucidate on external and internal historical evidence as above.

The purpose and objectives of this study as outlined in Section 1.3.1 formed one of the sets of criteria used in assessing the literature. To this end, both primary sources (for example, policy documents) and secondary sources (such as newspaper clippings) were used.

### **7.8.2 Quantitative data analysis**

The current study used IBM SPSS Statistics 2015 for the analysis of the quantitative data. This was employed for Questionnaire 1 (the undergraduates, postgraduates and researchers) and Questionnaire 2 (the staff). The quantitative data results are presented in Chapter 8. The data included the use of frequency tables and a graph (see Appendix 15: Tables 5–43.)

### **7.8.3 Qualitative data analysis**

Upon collecting the qualitative data (the interviews and literature reviews) from the semi-structured interviews, careful analysis was undertaken using thematic analysis whereby trends and patterns were identified. In qualitative analysis “data reduction means that the researcher looks for topics that emerge from the data” (Bertram 2003:44).

According to Creswell (2009:183), the researcher has to “conduct analysis, moving deeper and deeper into understanding the data ... and making an interpretation of the larger meaning of the data”. Creswell contends that the researcher has to ask “analytical questions”. Thus

qualitative research is a process whereby the researcher has to continually make sense of the text throughout the study.

Babbie and Mouton (2001:491-492) describe content analysis as a research method which

“examines words or phrases within a wide range of texts, including books, book chapters, essays, interviews, speeches as well as informal conversations and headlines. By examining the presence or repetition of certain words and phrases in these texts, a researcher is able to make inferences about the philosophical assumptions of a writer, a written piece, the audience for which a piece is written and even the culture and time in which the text is embedded. Due to its wide array of applications content analysis is used by researchers in literature and rhetoric, marketing psychology and cognitive science, as well as many other fields”.

The researcher collected the raw data, and carefully transcribed, read and scrutinised it before analysing it. The data was organised into themes. Creswell (2009:188) states that there are two techniques that can be used in the field of social sciences for coding the data. These include computer coding or qualitative computer programs and software (such as NVivo) which can code, organise and sort the information. Despite the advantages of using these programs, they entail a difficult and time-consuming learning curve for beginners (Creswell 2009:188). The other technique involves hand coding. It was this latter technique that was used by the researcher through which all the data was organised into themes, sub-themes and categories.

According to Maxwell (2004:246-247), there are three main groups of strategies for qualitative analysis. These include “categorizing strategies (such as coding and thematic analysis), contextualizing strategies (such as narrative analysis and individual case studies), and memos and displays”. Maxwell notes that coding in qualitative analysis differs from that in quantitative analysis in that “it is not to produce counts of things, but to ‘fracture’ the data and rearrange it into categories”. Categories make it easier “to develop a general understanding of what is going on, to generate themes and theoretical concepts, and to organize and retrieve your data to test and support these general ideas”. Furthermore, Maxwell stresses that both categorising as well as contextualising strategies are “legitimate

and valuable tools” in qualitative analysis, especially in identifying general themes in the data (Maxwell 2004:246-247).

Babbie and Mouton (2001:493) list eight steps which constitute the process of thematic analysis. However, they advise that there is no specific order to this process. These eight steps guided the researcher:

1. Deciding on the level of analysis (one word, a key phrase or a string of words).
2. Deciding how many concepts to code. (One has to determine the important and relevant key terms or codes beforehand.)
3. Deciding whether to code for the existence or frequency of a concept.
4. Deciding how to distinguish among concepts.
5. Developing rules for the coding of texts.
6. Deciding what to do with irrelevant information.
7. Coding the text.
8. Analysing the result.

Regarding the analysing of historical data, Leedy and Ormrod (2001:185) state that “it is vital that the researcher works out a systematic process in which to gather and control the data so that it is organized in a format that facilitates retrieving, interpretation and analysing”. The two approaches they suggest include

“a paper-pencil approach using note taking and colour coded cards; and a computerized approach whereby instead of using the note card and manual copying of the data, data are dictated directly into a cassette player or typed directly into a computer instead of first transcribing them and then entering the notes into a database or word processing file”.

In a similar vein Babbie and Mouton (2001:493) suggest that the process of trying to make sense of emerging patterns and themes can be done either by colour coding the segments of the code, or else one can cut and paste segments of texts to index cards which are labelled according to these segments. The latter method was used by the researcher. This involved cautious reading of the data in order to dig deep and gain a deeper understanding of the emergent themes. Pieces of text that belonged to the same theme were pasted onto cards under specified headings. Furthermore, the researcher used the “linear, hierarchical approach building from the bottom to the top” as suggested by Creswell (2009:185).

Bertram (2003:44) states that there are various ways in which qualitative data can be presented, and these include “text through quotes or short case studies, diagrams, matrices, tables or graphs”. Text, tables and quotes were deemed to be the best way to present the data in this study.

### **7.9 Evaluation of the methods used**

Evaluation of the research methods employed in the study is essential to demonstrate the study’s efficacy and potential for replication by other researchers.

The survey research instruments in the form of two self-administered questionnaires and three interview schedules were used to guide the research procedure. Pre-testing the questionnaires and interview schedules before collecting the data minimised the possibility of ambiguity of the data-collection instrument.

The response rate for the questionnaires sent out was very good.

More than one method of collecting data was used to enhance the validity and reliability of the results. The study adopted a triangulation method using both qualitative and quantitative approaches.

This was considered successful.

### **7.10 Ethical issues in social research**

Ethical issues are of paramount importance in social science research.

Babbie (1992:464-467) states that “social research often, though not always, represents an intrusion into people’s lives” as “the arrival of a questionnaire in the mail signals the beginning of an activity that the respondent has not requested and one that may require a significant portion of his or her time and energy”. Furthermore, social research “often requires that people reveal personal information about themselves, information that may be unknown to their friends and associates”.

Leedy and Ormrod (2001:107-110) list the following ethical issues in research: protection from harm; informed consent; right to privacy; and honesty with professional colleagues.

To this end, the researcher needed to be sensitive to voluntary participation on behalf of the participants, not to harm the participants, and to assure the respondents of anonymity and

confidentiality if requested. The researcher sought permission prior to recording the interviews.

The research undertaken was in accordance with the policies and guidelines as set out by the College of Humanities, UKZN, with the understanding that ethics promotes good research. The ethical considerations which were applied to the methods of data collection, presentation and interpretation of the findings, citations and referencing were outlined in Section 1.8.

Prior to the commencement of the study, approval was given by the UKZN Internal Review Board. Permission was granted in April 2013.

### **7.11 Summary**

This chapter focused on the key components of the research methods and procedures utilised in this study. The chapter included the paradigm underpinning the methods, the design suitable for the study, the population, instrumentation, validity and reliability, data collection, and an explanation of the statistical procedures used to analyse the data. Evaluation of the methods used as well as ethical considerations were also described and discussed.

The research methods adopted for the study were found to be appropriate for the research problem investigated. The results of the investigation are presented in the next chapter, titled ‘Results of the Survey: Responses from Users and CALS Staff’.

## Chapter 8

### Results of the Survey: Responses from Users and CALS Staff

#### 8.1 Introduction

Chapters 3 to 7 present the outcomes of the literature and document analysis. Chapters 8 and 9 serve as the culmination of this part of the research. The survey was necessary to throw further light on these events and to give insights into the problems identified.

This chapter presents the results of the survey of the population of this study, which was conducted by means of self-administered questionnaires sent to the undergraduate and postgraduate students and researchers who use CALS, and to CALS staff. The interviews with the original owners of the two main CALS collections, the founders and present and ex-directors of CALS, are presented in the next chapter (Chapter 9). The purpose behind each question asked is explained and the results are reported.

#### 8.2 Response rate

Questionnaire 1 for the undergraduate isiZulu 202 and isiZulu 303 students was administered personally on 29 and 27 July 2015. Questionnaire 1 was administered (e-mailed) to the postgraduate isiZulu and English students and researchers between 4 June and 3 August 2015. Questionnaire 2 to CALS staff members was also e-mailed between 4 June and 3 August 2015.

Of the 126 copies of the two questionnaires distributed, 106 were returned, indicating a response rate of 84.13%. The two separate questionnaires targeted undergraduate students, postgraduate students and researchers who use CALS, and the staff of CALS, respectively. This high response rate for an online questionnaire is explained by the fact that various measures, as outlined in Chapter 7, were undertaken to ensure a good response rate.

The designation of the respondents constituted 51 undergraduate isiZulu 202 students; 30 undergraduate isiZulu 303 students; six postgraduate isiZulu honours students; two postgraduate English honours students; one postgraduate English master's student; four postgraduate English PhD students; four researchers; and eight CALS staff (past and present) (see Appendix 15(i) Table 5).

The results for the students and researchers are discussed separately from those of the staff. The two questionnaires contained some common content to enable comparisons to be made.

### **8.3 The responses from undergraduate students, postgraduate students and researchers who use CALS**

The results for each section of the questionnaire for undergraduate students, postgraduate students and researchers who use CALS are discussed below.

#### **8.3.1 Basic information concerning the respondents**

This section sought to determine basic information about the respondents. This information included their year of study and/or research interest. The respondents in this section were drawn from undergraduate and postgraduate CALS users and CALS researchers (see Appendix 15 Figure 1)

The majority of the respondents were drawn from undergraduate isiZulu 202, which accounted for 48.11% of the total respondents. There was only one master's respondent. Undergraduates accounted for 76.42% of the total respondents while the postgraduates and the staff accounted for 16.17% and 7.55% respectively.

##### **8.3.1.1 Respondents' research interests**

The study sought to determine the research interests of the respondents to ascertain CALS's resources that are most in demand (see Appendix 15(ii) Table 6).

The response rate regarding the undergraduate area of interest was 59 out of 81 which represents a 72.84% response. The majority of the undergraduates studying isiZulu 202 were enrolled for a bachelor's degree in social science (BSS), and six were studying towards a Bachelor of Arts (BA). Six of the students who responded to this question said they were studying isiZulu, and one was studying drama and performance. Among those who were studying undergraduate isiZulu 303, the majority were enrolled for a BSS, with four studying towards a BA, two doing isiZulu and education, and one doing drama and performance. None indicated isiZulu as a research interest.

The respondents studying honours in isiZulu did not specify their research interest while most of the researchers were involved with African literature. The English honours students were

interested in English and English literature. The PhD respondents' interests ranged from South African literature and post-colonial studies, gender, power and contemporary women's songs to French and Francophone literature.

### **8.3.1.2 The respondents' usage of CALS**

It was of interest to the study to ascertain in more depth which disciplines, as well as which postgraduates and researchers, actually use CALS. It was determined that the majority of users are isiZulu 101, 202 and 303 students. When the researcher administered the copies of the questionnaires at the beginning of the second semester (July 2015), the isiZulu 101 group had not yet used CALS so they would have been unable to answer the questions. It was deemed appropriate to thus target the isiZulu 202 and 303 groups. It was established that English undergraduates generally did not use CALS. The honours classes did. It was on this basis that the groups were chosen. The researcher successfully contacted the four PhD students and the one master's student who had used CALS since its establishment in 2004, as well as the four contactable researchers who had been identified.

Most of the respondents had used CALS before, representing 85.71%. Only 14 (14.29%) of the respondents said that they had never used CALS. Only one isiZulu honours student out of five (1.23%) had used CALS. Most of the undergraduate respondents had used CALS (see Appendix 15(iii) Table 7).

### **8.3.1.3 Reasons why some respondents have never used CALS**

Those who had never used CALS said they either did not know of the existence of CALS or they were never referred to it by their lecturers.

**Please note:** The results and discussions that follow **are based only on the respondents who said that they have used CALS before, thus  $n = 84$  and not 98.**

### **8.3.1.4 How the respondents found out about CALS**

This question was asked to ascertain the effectiveness of CALS's publicity (see Appendix 15 (iv) Table 8).

Of the **84** individuals **who said they had used CALS**, 56 (66.67%) responded indicating how they had heard about CALS. Almost all undergraduates either had been referred to CALS by



their lecturers or had heard about CALS from their friends, with two exceptions who had found out about CALS from the Internet. The majority of the students stated that they had found out about CALS from their lecturers/professors. Those who had found out about CALS from the library or the university did so during first-year orientation. This finding strongly underpins the importance of using the links to lecturers to draw attention to CALS, and also the very limited impact of other channels.

#### **8.3.1.5 CALS's library service**

This section explores the quality of service and the level of satisfaction experienced by the users of CALS. This is an important section as it helps to identify the areas that are performing well, areas that need improvement, and inform on the strategies and decisions to be taken to improve the CALS user service. Respondents were asked to comment on various aspects such as whether the staff are friendly, approachable, professional, knowledgeable, show interest in the respondents and their needs, whether the staff are attentive to their enquiries and whether these enquiries are clearly and accurately addressed, as well as the quality of the service offered by CALS's staff.

##### **(a) CALS's staff are friendly and approachable** (see Appendix 15(v) Table 9).

The response rate for this question was high. Of the 84 respondents, only three did not respond. The overwhelming majority, 73 (90.12%), thought that the staff at CALS were always friendly and approachable. Two (2.47%) of the isiZulu 202 undergraduates said that they did not know whether CALS's staff were friendly and approachable as they had not interacted with the staff yet. The respondents who thought that CALS's staff were not always friendly and approachable (that is 'sometimes') were mostly undergraduates. This suggests that CALS's staff are either treating undergraduates differently or possibly that the undergraduates need to change their approach to CALS's staff. No respondents answered 'never' to this question.

##### **(b) CALS's staff are knowledgeable and professional in their dealings with me** (see Appendix 15(vi) Table 10).

The response rate was also good for this question. There were 68 respondents (83.95%) who thought that CALS's staff were always knowledgeable and professional in their dealings with them. A small percentage (five or 6.17%) did not know whether or not the CALS's staff were knowledgeable or professional in their dealings with them. All the PhD students thought that

CALS's staff were knowledgeable and professional in their dealings with them. Only seven undergraduates (8.64%) and the one master's student thought that staff dealings with them were not always professional and knowledgeable. No respondents answered 'never' to this question.

**(c) CALS's staff are willing to help me** (see Appendix 15(vii) Table 11).

Of the respondents, 66 (81.48%) thought that CALS's staff were always willing to help. Twelve (14.81%) of the respondents thought that CALS's staff were sometimes willing to help. Two undergraduates (2.46%) did not know whether CALS's staff were willing to help, suggesting that they had never or rarely needed to ask for assistance. One undergraduate student (1.23%) thought that CALS's staff were never willing to help.

**(d) CALS's staff take interest in me and my needs** (see Appendix 15(viii) Table 12).

The number of the respondents who thought that CALS's staff took an interest in them and their needs is lower than those who thought that CALS's staff were friendly and approachable, knowledgeable and professional in their dealings with them and willing to help them (59 or 72.84% as opposed to 66 or 81.48%). Those who thought that CALS's staff were sometimes interested in their needs were 18 (22.22%) of the total responses. The number of respondents who thought that CALS's staff were not interested in them and their needs was three (3.61%). This is an increase from the question above in (c) regarding respondents who perceived CALS's staff as being never willing to help.

**(e) CALS's staff give my enquiries appropriate time and attention** (see Appendix 15(ix) Table 13).

The majority of the respondents who indicated that CALS's staff gave their enquiries appropriate time and attention totalled 57 (70.37%), while those who felt that CALS's staff sometimes gave their enquiries appropriate time and attention were 19 (23.46%). All of the respondents (2 or 2.47%) who thought that CALS's staff never gave attention and appropriate time to their enquiries were undergraduates. Three undergraduates (3.69%) did not know whether or not the CALS's staff gave appropriate time and attention to their enquiries.

**(f) CALS's staff respond clearly and accurately to enquiries** (see Appendix 15(x) Table 14).

Most of the respondents, 64 (80%), believed that CALS's staff responded clearly and accurately to their enquiries. Of undergraduates studying isiZulu 202, 34 (75.55%), and 22 (84.62%) of those studying isiZulu 303 said that CALS's staff always responded clearly and accurately to their enquiries. The percentage of the respondents who believed that CALS's staff sometimes responded accurately and clearly to their enquiries was 13, representing 16.25%. There were only three respondents (3.61%) who did not know whether CALS's staff responded clearly and accurately to their enquiries. No respondents stated 'never'.

**(g) CALS's staff provide high-quality service** (see Appendix 15(xi) Table 15).

There was a high positive response as to whether CALS's staff provide a high-quality service. The number of respondents who thought that the CALS's staff always provided high-quality service was 61 (75.31%) compared with 15 (18.52%) who said that CALS's staff provided high-quality service sometimes. A large number, 54 (75%) of undergraduates who responded to this question thought that CALS's staff always provided a high-quality service compared with 14 (19.44%) who said that they did so some of the time.

#### **8.3.1.5.1 CALS's library facilities**

This section sought to ascertain whether the facilities available at CALS were accessible, whether they were adequate or not, and whether they were attractive and comfortable. These factors individually or combined play an important role in student satisfaction at CALS. For instance, if CALS's facilities are inaccessible, inadequate or uncomfortable, many of CALS's users may find that it hinders their research. Furthermore, it can negatively impact on CALS's potential to attract users.

**(a) I am able to access computer workstations at CALS** (see Appendix 15(xii) Table 16)

Fewer than half of the respondents, 32 (39.51%), stated that they were always able to access the computer workstations. The number of those who could access the computer workstations some of the time was 35 (43.21%) of the respondents. Seven respondents (8.64%) stated that they were never able to access the computer workstations. This was the same response rate as for those who did not know whether the computer workstations were accessible. Most

respondents who were not able to access the computer workstations all of the time, or did not know whether the computer workstations were accessible, were the undergraduates.

**(b) The photocopying facilities at CALS are adequate** (see Appendix 15(xiii) Table 17).

Of the respondents, 53 (65.43%) declared that the photocopying facilities at CALS were always adequate. The undergraduates represented the highest group of respondents, 17 (20.99%), who said that the photocopying machines were not always adequate (sometimes). Seven of the respondents (8.64%) felt that the photocopying facilities were never adequate. There were three respondents (3.61%) who said that they did not know whether the photocopying facilities were adequate, suggesting that they never needed photocopying services.

**(c) The facilities at CALS are attractive** (see Appendix 15(xiv) Table 18).

Many of the respondents felt that the facilities at CALS were attractive. The total number of respondents who thought that CALS's facilities were always attractive was 52 (64.20%) of the respondents. Three of the respondents found that the facilities were not at all attractive, while four did not know whether the facilities were attractive or not. Of the undergraduates, 45 (62.5%) said that the facilities were always attractive. Of the respondents, 22 (27.16%) of the total response felt that the facilities were sometimes attractive. This suggests that CALS's staff need to pay attention to book displays.

**(d) The facilities at CALS are comfortable** (see Appendix 15(xv) Table 19).

The majority of the respondents to the questionnaire indicated that the facilities at CALS were comfortable. In particular, 60 (74.07%) of the respondents felt that the facilities were comfortable. The number of respondents who felt that CALS's facilities were sometimes comfortable was 16 (19.75%) of the total respondents. There were only two individuals who felt that the facilities at CALS were not comfortable. Three of the respondents (3.61%) stated that they did not know whether the facilities at CALS were comfortable or not. Most of the undergraduates and all the PhD students agreed that the facilities were always comfortable.

### **8.3.1.5.2 CALS's resources**

In this section, the study sought to establish the availability and usefulness of the resources at CALS. In particular, the study attempted to gauge user perceptions of CALS's resources by asking whether the resources are appropriate for their research, whether they are up to date, and if CALS's staff refer users to appropriate alternatives to CALS's resources where necessary. The respondents were also required to respond to whether they always find the materials they need, if they use CALS's website and consult the iCatalogue. The responses in this section should help to inform the Centre regarding the availability and relevance of its resources.

**(a) Resources at CALS are appropriate for my research needs** (see Appendix 15(xvi) Table 20).

All the individuals who responded to this question felt that the resources at CALS were at least appropriate for their research needs. In particular, 51 (62.20%) always found the resources at CALS appropriate for their research needs. The number of respondents who said that the resources at CALS were only sometimes appropriate for their research needs was 30 (36.59%) of the total respondents. Only one (1.22%) of the isiZulu 202 undergraduates said that he/she did not know whether the resources at CALS were appropriate for his/her research needs. This finding points to the fact that there are gaps in CALS's collection.

**(b) Resources at CALS are up to date and relevant** (see Appendix 15(xvii) Table 21).

Slightly fewer respondents thought that CALS's resources were up to date compared with those who thought that the resources were appropriate for their research. Of all the respondents, 48 (58.54%) thought that CALS's resources were always up to date. Twenty-five (30.49%) isiZulu 202 and 19 (23.17%) isiZulu 303 undergraduates thought that the resources were always up to date. Half of the PhD respondents thought that the resources were always up to date. A high number of respondents, 29 (35.37%), felt that the resources at CALS were sometimes up to date. One undergraduate felt that the resources at CALS were never up to date while four of the respondents did not know whether the resources were up to date or not.

**(c) Suggestions by CALS's staff to find resources elsewhere are good** (see Appendix 15(xviii) Table 22).

The number of respondents who said that the referrals given by CALS's staff to find resources elsewhere was high, 75 (92.60%), suggesting that a majority of CALS's users also used other resources for their studies. Of the respondents, 48 (59.26%) felt that the suggestions or the referrals by CALS's staff to seek resources elsewhere were always good, while 27 (33.33%) felt that they were only good some of the time. All PhD respondents felt that these referrals were always good compared with the undergraduates where only 41 (56.94%) felt that these referrals were always good. One respondent felt that the referrals to find resources elsewhere were never good.

**(d) I usually find the resources I need at CALS** (see Appendix 15(xix) Table 23).

From the results it is clear that not all the resources that are required are available at CALS. Of the respondents, 49 (59.76%) stated that they did find the resources they needed at CALS, while 32 (39.02%) said that they did not always find the resources they needed at CALS (that is, only 'sometimes'). All the PhD respondents were only able to find the resources they needed at CALS some of the time compared with 25 (34.26%) of the undergraduates. All of the respondents at least found a resource they needed at CALS, except for one who stated that he/she did not know if he/she had ever found the resource needed at CALS.

**(e) I use the CALS website** (see Appendix 15(xx) Table 24).

The results indicated that very few respondents always used CALS's website. The number of the respondents that always used CALS's website was 15 (18.52%), while those who used the website some of the time was 24 (29.63%) of the respondents. Many of the respondents, 37 (45.68%), had never used CALS's website. There was only one (1.23%) regular user of the CALS's website from the PhD group and one who had never used it. Five (6.17%) of the respondents did not know about CALS's website, four (4.94%) of them being undergraduates.

**(f) I consult the iCatalogue** (previously UKZN iLink) to locate items at CALS (see Appendix 15(xxi) Table 25).

The number of respondents who always consulted the iCatalogue was equal to the number of those who never consulted it. In particular, there were 24 (29.27%) individuals for both cases.

Four (4.88%) of the respondents, all from the undergraduate group and studying isiZulu 202, did not know about the iCatalogue. The iCatalogue was consulted some of the time by 30 (36.59%) of the respondents, the majority being the undergraduates.

#### **8.3.1.5.3 User perceptions of various other aspects of CALS**

This section sought to capture the respondents' opinions concerning various aspects of CALS. These aspects ranged from whether they felt that a special collection of African literature was justified at UKZN in view of the fact that there was an academic library on the campus, opinions on the adequacy of the signage directing users to CALS, the suitability of the space at CALS, the uniqueness of CALS's material, the user friendliness of CALS's website, and whether the coverage of CALS's holdings on the iCatalogue was adequate. User perceptions help to ascertain the ability of CALS in enabling African literary studies at UKZN.

**(a) It is important to have an African Literary studies special collection at UKZN** (see Appendix 15(xxii) Table 26).

All of the individuals who responded to this question felt that it was important to have an African literary studies special collection at UKZN. There were no responses in the negative.

**(b) The signage directing me to CALS is adequate** (see Appendix 15(xxiii) Table 27).

Most of the respondents felt that the signage to CALS was adequate. In particular, 40 of the 61 respondents (65.57%) felt that the signage to CALS was adequate, while only 13 (21.31%) felt that the signage was not adequate. Six of 60 (9.83%) felt that the signage was adequate sometimes, while only two (3.28%) were not sure whether the signage was adequate or not. This suggests that some of the respondents are not observant regarding the signage. The signage to CALS was updated by Stilwell in 2012.

**(c) The study space at CALS is quiet and suitable for my study and/or research needs** (see Appendix 15(xxiv) Table 28).

The majority of the respondents felt that the study space at CALS was quiet and suitable for their study and/or research needs. This represented 58 (81.69%) of the total response. Only four of 71 (5.63%) respondents felt that the study space was not quiet and suitable for their study and/or research needs. There were nine (12.68%) undergraduates from the isiZulu 202 group who felt that the study space at CALS was only suitable some of the time.

**(d) CALS is useful for my research** (see Appendix 15(xxv) Table 29).

Most of the respondents agreed that CALS was useful for their research. There were 59 (79.73%) of the respondents who agreed that CALS was useful for their research compared with only one (1.35%) who said that CALS was not useful for his/her research. Of the respondents, 14 (18.92%) felt that CALS was useful for their research only some of the time. Almost all of the undergraduates and all the PhD respondents felt that CALS was useful for their research at least some of the time.

**(e) I was able to find material at CALS which I was unable to find elsewhere** (see Appendix 15(xxvi) Table 30).

Almost every respondent found material at CALS which they were not able to find anywhere else. The number of respondents who said they found material at CALS that they could not find anywhere else was 57 (78.08%) of the total responses. Those that were able to find material unique to CALS some of the time were 12 (16.44%). Only two (2.74%) out of 73 respondents were not able to find materials unique to CALS and only one had never used the material at CALS at all. One PhD student (1.37%) was not sure whether the material at CALS was unique to CALS or not. The high number of respondents who stated that they could find material at CALS that they could not find elsewhere corroborates Kilyoba's findings that "many books that originally were available from Cecil Renaud Library [the PMB Main Library] [are] now all found at CALS" (Kilyobo 2015:72).

**(f) CALS's website is easy to use** (see Appendix 15(xxvii) Table 31).

A large number of the respondents stated that they had never used CALS's website. This accounted for 26 (37.13%) of the total responses. Those who had used it were split between the opinion that the website was either easy or not easy to use, with some saying it was easy to use but not all of the time. Of those who had used the website, 23 (32.86%) said that it was easy to use, while seven (10%) said that the website was not easy to use. Seven (10%) also said that the website was easy to use some of the time. Most undergraduates had never used the website.

The researchers did not comment, barring one who stated that the website "needs professionalization".



**(g) The contents of CALS’s website are useful** (see Appendix 15(xxviii) Table 32).

Almost half of the respondents (31 out of 63) or 49.21% thought that the contents of the website were useful. Only one respondent stated that the contents of the website were not useful, while four found the contents useful some of the time. There were 15 respondents (23.81%) who had never used the website out of the 63 respondents that responded to the question. Of the respondents, 12 (19.05%) were not sure whether the contents on CALS’s website were useful or not. The researchers did not comment, barring one who stated that the website “needs digitization”.

**(h) The coverage of CALS’s holdings on the iCatalogue** (previously iLink) is adequate (see Appendix 15(xxix) Table 33).

There were 33 (58.93%) of the respondents who thought that the coverage of CALS on the iCatalogue was adequate. Only two respondents said that the coverage was not adequate and four believed that it was adequate some of the time. The number of respondents who had either never used it or were not sure whether the coverage was adequate or not, represented 17 (30.36%) of the responses.

#### **8.3.1.6 Suggestions for additional features and information on CALS’s website**

This question sought to establish the features and/or the information that the users find lacking on CALS’s website. The feedback gathered from the users should assist CALS in enhancing its website by making it user friendly with more information and additional features. The responses are categorised under headings by research interest groups, namely undergraduate isiZulu 202 and 303, postgraduate English and isiZulu honours, English master’s, and PhD students and researchers. There was no response to this question from postgraduate English honours and postgraduate and postgraduate isiZulu honours.

##### **a. Researchers**

Only one researcher responded to this question. His/her feeling was that CALS needed to digitise its materials.

b. PhD students

The PhD students had a range of recommendations. Some felt that the history of CALS should be included and also the website should notify them of new acquisitions. Some recommended that the website should include a searchable index.

c. English master's

The English master's student felt that the website should contain the history of CALS and CALS events (which it actually does contain which suggests she had not used it recently).

d. isiZulu 202 and 303 Undergraduates

A few respondents suggested features and information to be included on the CALS website. Many undergraduates had not yet used the website. A few were satisfied with the website while some felt that CALS should enhance the appearance of the website to make it more attractive. The suggested features and information included South African history, especially isiZulu history. The website should also list the available CALS resources, as well as those that are not available. It was suggested that information concerning books and their authors, as well as African lifestyles and African traditions, should also feature on the website. The website should also have more images in the gallery on various issues such as apartheid. It was recommended that books should be digitised and made accessible in PDF format.

The question, 'Is the CALS's material easy to identify on the iCatalogue' was intended to determine whether the iCatalogue was efficient, effective and user friendly or if it needed improvement (see Appendix 15(xxx) Table 34).

There were fewer individuals who responded to whether CALS's material was easy to identify on the iCatalogue. Of the 50 who responded, 37 (74%) of the respondents said that CALS's material was easy to identify on the iCatalogue. Six (12%) of the respondents did not know whether or not CALS's material was easily identifiable, while seven (14%) stated that it was not easy to identify CALS's material. The majority of the respondents who stated that the CALS's material was not easy to identify on the iCatalogue were undergraduates. Only one postgraduate (2%) said that the material was not easily identifiable. The following reasons were given per group:

a. Researchers

One respondent did not know how to locate the resources on the site, while the others either did not know about it or did not use it.

b. PhD students

The majority of the PhD students had done their research at CALS a few years ago. They stated that they were able to find their material on iLink. Furthermore, they stated that published rare texts were easy to find but the archival documents/papers were not available through the website at that stage.

c. English master's

This student stated that it was not clear on the iCatalogue as to the location of the material.

d. Postgraduate English honours

According to this group, the material reflected on the iCatalogue was easily accessible.

e Undergraduates

Few undergraduates responded to this question. Some said that the iCatalogue was easily accessible, while some were directed to it by the main UKZN website. Other respondents stated that the iCatalogue was not easy to find as it was complicated. Many of the undergraduates had never used the website before nor the iCatalogue. One respondent said he/she found it easy to use CALS because they were assisted by the staff, rather than by the iCatalogue. The undergraduates appear to be unaware of the ALS prefix identifying the CALS books on the UKZN library catalogue.

### **8.3.1.7 Have you experienced frustrations or problems at CALS?**

This question sought to identify user frustrations experienced at CALS (see Appendix 15(xxxi) Table 35).

Most of the respondents had not experienced frustrations at CALS. In particular, of 68 individuals who responded to whether or not they had experienced any frustrations at CALS, only 11 (16.18%) stated that they had experienced frustrations, of whom 9 (13.25%) were

undergraduates. The responses below relate to the study groups. Neither the researchers nor the PhD students described frustrations that they had experienced at CALS:

a. English master's

This student was enrolled for a PhD at the University of the Witwatersrand as an extension of his MA at UKZN in 2005. He stated that he was unable to gain access to materials held at CALS.

b. Undergraduates

The frustrations experienced by the undergraduates are described as follows:

- The charges they incur in order to use the facilities at CALS, such as the photocopier.
- Not being able to take books home.
- Not enough copies of books in demand which means that users have to wait for a student to finish with the books before they could use them.
- Space was problematic as CALS could at times get full, leaving no room for other students to work.
- One student had trouble opening the door.

**8.3.1.8 CALS is closed access and is not open during the weekends. Does this affect your research needs?**

This question was asked to determine the impact that the weekend closure of CALS has on students' studies (see Appendix 15(xxxii) Table 36).

Most of the respondents agreed that the closing of CALS at weekends affected their studies. In particular, 55 (87.30%) of the 63 respondents agreed that closing CALS over weekends affected their studies. Almost all the undergraduates stated that closing CALS during the weekend affected their studies.

The respondents stated that they were unable to access resources during the weekend as CALS was closed.

Visiting researchers complained that with limited time during their visits, most of the research that could have been done during the weekend could not be done because CALS was not open. Conversely, other respondents agreed that closing CALS and other archives was standard practice worldwide and hence it did not affect them as they rescheduled their timetable to correspond with CALS's operating hours. The main complaint voiced by the undergraduates was the limited time they had during the week which they could make up for during the weekends. In view of the fact that it is not possible to borrow books from CALS, opening hours during weekends could compensate for this. Some undergraduates suggested an extension of the closing hours (later than 4 pm), as most students only finish lectures at 4 or 5pm.

#### **8.3.1.9 Situations when information from CALS was adequate and helpful or inadequate and unhelpful**

In order to ascertain the effectiveness of CALS's service to its users, it was necessary to establish the areas where CALS was effective, and the areas where CALS was ineffective in its service delivery (see Appendix 15(xxxiii) Table 37).

The number of respondents who experienced an incident where the information they were searching for at CALS was helpful was greater than those who found CALS unhelpful. There were 25 (42.37%) respondents who had had at least one incident where the information they were searching for was not helpful, compared with 34 (57.63%) who stated that they had had incidents when they were searching for information and had found CALS helpful or adequate.

Those who responded in the affirmative said that CALS had a wonderful collection of rare and original texts; others appreciated the fact that CALS's staff were there to help them locate the information they were looking for. The copies of newspapers printed by the Black Literature and Arts Congress were particularly helpful as they contained unique documents. CALS was particularly helpful to undergraduates when they were looking for material to assist them with their assignments. However, the majority of the respondents either did not respond to this question, or if they responded, they did not give an explanation for their responses.

#### **Comments from respondents regarding areas which require improvements**

The following section was intended to gather information concerning attitudes, feelings, experiences and opinions of CALS's users. Opinions were drawn from all the user groups. Unfortunately, there was a poor response rate to these questions.

### **8.3.1.10 Areas where CALS can improve**

#### a. Researchers

The researchers suggested that specialised staff should be given tenure. Collaboration with Aluka [an international collaborative initiative building an online digital library of scholarly resources from and about Africa] to interface with scholars and digitisers on an international level was also recommended.

#### b. English PhD

The PhD students proposed that postgraduate students be attached to the Centre as that would make the Centre vibrant. Another suggestion was that CALS should include an online searchable index. Space was also an issue and it was suggested that CALS expand its space to accommodate more students.

#### c. Postgraduate English master's

CALS needs to become far more visible and accessible to researchers and students of African literature from across the continent.

#### d. Postgraduate English honours

A postgraduate English honours student suggested that CALS improve its signage.

#### e. Postgraduate isiZulu honours

The respondents in this group felt that they were unable to spend enough time with the books because they were not allowed to take them home. They proposed that CALS should allow them to take the books home (open access). They also believed that more computers were needed to help students with their research.

#### f. Undergraduates

This group recommended the following:

- The signage to CALS needs improvement.
- More work space is needed to enable students' research.
- The extension of weekday hours and weekend access to provide students with more time for their studies.

- Cards should be allowed for printing and photocopying (like the LAN) so that students do not have to pay cash.
- Duplicate copies should be added for high-demand titles.
- Students prefer to be allowed to find the books themselves as opposed to being helped by CALS staff.
- Students want to be allowed to borrow books overnight.
- CALS should add more computers and plugs to charge laptops.
- Resources need to be updated.

#### **8.3.1.11 Services unavailable at CALS**

There were no responses from the researchers, the postgraduate English PhDs or English honours students. Responses identical to those reported above are not duplicated here. The other groups stated that:

- a. English master's

Specific short-term scholarships and fellowships should be provided to potential students to study at CALS. CALS should be more accessible to African researchers, scholars and students of African literature from universities other than UKZN.

- b. Postgraduate isiZulu honours

Here there was some overlap with the previous question. It was suggested that there should be additional staff members to assist students.

- c. Undergraduates

The undergraduates suggested the following:

- More staff.
- Additional isiZulu books.
- More computers.
- Books should also be issued on short loan.
- The seating space should be expanded.
- The payment system should change so that students are able to pay for photocopying using cards or via the LAN.

- The access to CALS should also be via card access.
- Coffee and tea facilities should be available.
- CALS should sell cultural items at a reduced price.
- Books should not lie on the tables.

#### **8.3.1.12 Areas pertinent to CALS not addressed above**

There was no response from the researchers or English honours group. Responses that have appeared above are not duplicated here. Responses from the other groups were:

##### a. PhD students

Leadership was a cause for concern. CALS has been without a director for a long time and this has negatively affected its performance. Spatial issues were also a cause for concern.

##### b. English master's

This concerned respondent stated: "I find it deeply sad and worrying that an African resource of such great value is so far removed from the African researchers and students to whom it would mean so very much."

##### c. Postgraduate isiZulu honours

More space should be created to enable the separation of postgraduates and undergraduates as postgraduates require more time for their research.

##### d. Undergraduates

CALS needs to advertise itself more so that students are aware of its existence.

#### **8.3.1.13 CALS: user stories**

In order to add a personal dimension to the study, respondents were asked to include personal experiences at CALS, whether good or bad. Only good experiences were reported by this group of respondents.

##### a. Researchers

Researchers commented that the environment at CALS was stimulating and good for research. One researcher stated that when s/he was at CALS, "Liz Gunner, the [Acting] Director of



CALS, organized several colloquia that were very inspiring, one on Yvonne Vera, one on Zulu Radio Drama, and one on the *Drum* authors.” The researcher commented that he had organised the conference in 2006 on ‘The Changing Face of African Literature’ with Professor Bernard de Meyer, which he regarded as a great experience.

b. PhD students

One respondent was particularly pleased to have been involved in the establishment of CALS as a graduate assistant. The tasks involved unpacking the collections, making spine labels, participating in CALS’s programmes, shelving, organising and inviting scholars for seminars, including guests such as radio personalities and singers for conferences. A PhD respondent cited the *Drum* magazines as the most notable. Respondents were also pleased to have found resources at CALS that they were unable to find elsewhere.

c. English master’s

“CALS had such great energy and promise when it was opened and developed in 2004,” stated the master’s student. The seminars featured addresses by world-renowned professors.

d. Postgraduate English honours

The respondents found CALS to be very helpful for their study topics.

e. Postgraduate isiZulu

CALS enables their research to a great extent.

f. Undergraduates

Some respondents commended and appreciated the services offered at CALS. Others felt that they would be in a position to obtain more material if CALS collaborated with other institutions worldwide. The environment at CALS is considered conducive for research and study.

#### **8.4 CALS’ staff responses**

This section reports on CALS’s current and ex-staff responses to the questionnaire for staff. This information includes their role at CALS, the challenges they face at CALS, comments on various aspects of CALS, and suggestions proposed to improve the functioning of CALS. A

total of eight staff members were surveyed. As the group is small, percentages have not been provided.

#### **8.4.1 Role of the staff**

The roles of staff varied. They included an archivist, librarians, library assistants, administrators, and curators. The roles of these individuals varied from assisting students with research needs, administrative duties, cataloguing and classifying the collection, marketing the library services and resources through departments, campuses and outreach opportunities, and maintenance of the Centre's website.

#### **8.4.2 Years of service**

The average years of service for CALS's staff was six years, with the minimum years served being two years, and the maximum years of service 12 years.

#### **8.4.3 Facilities at CALS**

This section examines the current and ex-CALS's staff members' responses on the availability, quality and adequacy of the facilities at CALS.

**(a) The computer workstations at CALS are adequate** (see Appendix 15(xxxiv) Table 38).

Half of the staff thought that the computer workstations available at CALS were adequate. One said they were never adequate, while three said that they were adequate some of the time.

**(b) The photocopying and printing facilities at CALS are adequate**

All eight staff members agreed that the photocopying and printing facilities at CALS were adequate.

**(c) The facilities at CALS are attractive** (see Appendix 15(xxxv) Table 39).

There were five staff members who said that the facilities at CALS were always attractive. One respondent believed that the facilities were never attractive, while two said that they were attractive some of the time.

**(d) The facilities at CALS are comfortable** (see Appendix 15(xxxvi) Table 40).

Half of the staff surveyed agreed that the facilities at CALS were comfortable. Three staff members indicated that the facilities were comfortable some of the time while one staff member thought that the facilities at CALS were never comfortable.

#### **8.4.4 Resources at CALS**

This section sought to capture the current and ex-CALS staff members' perspectives regarding the resources available at CALS, for example, whether the resources were appropriate for user research, up to date and relevant, the availability of the resources, and usage of the website and iCatalogue.

**(a) Resources at CALS are appropriate for researcher needs**

Three staff members indicated that the resources at CALS were always appropriate for research needs, while five believed that the resources were appropriate for research needs only some of the time.

**(b) Resources at CALS are up to date and relevant** (see Appendix 15(xxxvii) Table 41).

Most of the staff (five) thought that the resources at CALS were up to date some of the time. Two staff members thought that the resources at CALS were always up to date, while only one thought that they were never up to date. CALS staff were concerned that the collection building was not maintained and that some sections and countries were not represented.

**(c) Researchers at CALS get referred elsewhere if necessary**

Three staff members said that researchers were referred elsewhere if necessary, while five stated that the researchers were referred elsewhere some of the time.

**(d) The resources are usually found when requested**

Five respondents affirmed that the resources requested by users were always found, while three expressed the opinion that the resources were found only some of the time. Some users, however, ask for obscure material which is difficult to trace. Some give inaccurate information, thus making the item difficult to find.

#### **(e) I consult the CALS website**

Very few staff members (two) consult the website on a regular basis. The rest of the staff (six) consult the website some of the time.

#### **(f) I consult the UKZN iCatalogue to locate items at CALS**

Most of CALS's staff members always consult the iCatalogue. There were six staff members who said that they always visited the iCatalogue, while two said that they did so some of the time.

Some staff members commented on this resource section, stating that there were seldom serious researchers, as most of the usage was by isiZulu undergraduate students and their needs were adequately met. There were, however, occasional researchers, but the fact that the collection has not been kept up to date is a major stumbling block. For example, a query from someone researching 21<sup>st</sup>-century African diaspora could not be catered for as most of the CALS collection was acquired before 2004. The collection was therefore ten years out of date for that particular researcher's needs. It was noted that the website had not been maintained and was outdated because of staff shortages. [However, the website was updated in 2016.]

#### **8.4.5 Staff comments**

CALS's current and ex-staff members were asked to comment on various aspects of CALS. The comments were as follows:

##### **a. It is important to have an African literary studies special collection at UKZN**

All the staff members agreed that it was important to have an African literary studies special collection at UKZN, particularly as it is consistent with UKZN's policy of advocating 'African Scholarship'. The collection is valuable academically, especially regarding its material on Nigeria, Ghana and South Africa, rare journals and archival material. The importance of CALS at present lies in the isiZulu Literary Museum, as it attracts the most users.

##### **b. Signage to CALS**

Most of the staff members felt that the signage to CALS was appropriate. However, some felt that it was not, as visitors sometimes got lost and therefore the signage needed improvement.

### **c. Study space is quiet and suitable**

Most of the staff members felt that the space at CALS needed improvement and was insufficient for researcher needs. For instance, some respondents pointed out that there was no reading room and the boardroom was used by readers; this presented a challenge when the boardroom was needed for seminars. Many students use the foyer which becomes noisy and cramped and is most uncomfortable. Computer access is limited. The library is housed in an old house with shelves which are not appropriate for books. The shelving is inflexible, with protruding screws which damage the books, and books fall through the unprotected ends of the shelves. This results in wastage of space. The cloakroom is inadequate. The kitchenette is small and difficult to use for a function. There are very few sockets for laptops and the display area is confined.

### **d. CALS is useful for researchers**

Most of the staff members agreed that CALS was always useful for researchers, including international researchers, pointing to unique material for specific scholarship fields, while a few thought that it was only helpful some of the time. Some suggested that it could be more helpful if CALS partnered with other local and international African literary study centres. Furthermore, it was stressed that if a researcher was reading post 2004, CALS's holdings would be inadequate. "Poor leadership for many years, current staff shortage and uncertainty about funding, have stunted systematic acquisition of new material," commented one respondent. CALS seldom has researchers, which is also a point for concern.

### **e. Researchers are able to find material at CALS that they are not able to find elsewhere**

Seven out of the eight staff members believed that some of the material held at CALS was unique. This includes rare editions and literature that is not commercially available or is out of print. The Onitsha market literature and Ghanaian chapbooks were cited as being particularly unique to CALS and the *Drum* magazines held by CALS of special value. One staff member was unsure regarding this aspect.

**f. The CALS website is easy to use** (see Appendix 15(xxxviii) Table 42).

Half of the staff find the CALS website easy to use, one was not sure, while one said that the website was not easy to use. Two staff members said that the website was easy to use some of the time. One of the challenges highlighted was that the website is not kept up to date.

**g. The contents of CALS's website are useful** (see Appendix 15(xxxix) Table 43).

There was the same response to this question as to the question above relating to the ease of use of the CALS website. Most staff agreed that even though the contents were useful, they had not been updated because of the shortage of staff.

**h. The coverage of CALS's holdings on the iCatalogue is adequate**

About a half of the staff members agreed that the holdings on the iCatalogue were adequate. However, it was pointed out that the catalogue was still incomplete. A number of collections have been catalogued, for example the monographs and journals. There is room for more analytics and digitisation of the unique material, thereby rendering the catalogue and website more useful.

#### **8.4.6 Additional features**

Question 5 was asked to determine whether or not the staff had suggestions for additional features or information for the CALS website, especially relating to easy identification of CALS's material.

The majority of the current and ex-staff members (five) felt that the CALS website needed no additional features. Only three respondents stated that the website needed some additional features to make it more user friendly. These features included links with other African literary libraries and available items, more information reflecting the nature of the collection, and links to other useful databases. The website was cited as a useful marketing tool. Others felt that it was not a priority, especially in view of the shortage of staff to maintain the website.

The respondents were also asked whether CALS's material was easy to identify on the iCatalogue. This question was asked to establish the usefulness of the iCatalogue for user research.

Most of the respondents (six) said that the material at CALS was easily identifiable. Only two out of the eight staff members surveyed said that the material was not easily identifiable. The ALS prefix identifies material and it is possible to search only the CALS collection on the online catalogue.

However, it is important to note that the old iLink was replaced by iCatalogue in 2014, and so the ex-staff members would be unfamiliar with the new system. A current staff member pointed out that “the new catalogue is usable once you know how to use it. But many undergrad[uate]s flounder in the use of the catalogue because it is no longer systematically taught at Main Library. Being a closed access collection we often do their searches for them at CALS”.

#### **8.4.7 Frustrations and problems experienced at CALS**

This question was asked to determine areas where CALS can improve.

Most of the CALS’s staff members (six) had experienced some form of frustration. Only two out of eight indicated that they had not experienced frustrations. These frustrations include lack of funds, the fact that UKZN has not honoured its commitment to the Centre, and poor remuneration. Job insecurity (month to month contracts) and lack of permanent posts and qualified staff were cited as the main frustrations by most respondents, including the constant threat of closure. Building problems included electrical problems and infestation by white ants. Further problems highlighted by one respondent included leadership problems, in that the directors, barring one, have been appointed on an acting part-time basis; the collection is outdated, owing to the staff not being enabled to maintain book acquisitions, journal subscriptions, AV (audiovisual) acquisitions, digitisation, updating displays and the many academic activities that would make CALS a dynamic research unit. Furthermore, reading space for researchers and students is severely restricted; there are few serious researchers; the recommendations by the 2013 review committee were never implemented; the main library no longer has the infrastructure to support CALS (the cataloguing department at the PMB library has been discontinued and acquisitions and periodicals are handled in Durban, hence weakening the PMB infrastructure); all UKZN periodical subscriptions were cancelled in 2014 with the consequence that although CALS is separately funded, its subscriptions were cancelled as well. This particular staff member was most frustrated by the migration of the catalogue to the new system, especially in view of the fact that s/he had received no notice that the old system was to be discontinued. There has also been little academic activity at CALS, except

for isiZulu activity. Moreover, CALS has not held a board meeting since 2013 and there was no annual report for 2014, with the CALS newsletter stopping in 2013.

One respondent voiced concerns by sounding an alarm to the UKZN authorities: “UKZN seems unable to grasp that millions were spent on an Africa-orientated treasure trove in 2004, only to become a ghost entity by 2015. It risks eventually losing a significant bequest from the Lindfors estate if it does not make a decision to support and promote the functions of CALS.”

#### **8.4.8 Closed-access and weekend closure**

Half of the staff felt that weekend closure affected researchers while half of them felt otherwise. Those who thought that weekend closure affected researchers indicated that since books are not issued on short loan, it would be prudent to open CALS on a Saturday. Conversely, staff members who supported the weekend closure concurred with the researchers above and stressed that serious researchers were familiar with closed access/non-loan conditions which usually apply to special collections, especially in view of the fact that CALS’s catalogue is searchable via the Internet, enabling researchers to ascertain the contents of the collection and the conditions of usage before their visit. It was mentioned that CALS’s staff make every effort to be helpful and even, in some cases, allow serious users to browse under supervision. This same respondent stressed that the problem was not closed access, but rather the reader accommodation and, specifically, the lack of researchers. Furthermore, closed access is appropriate for the collection, particularly as some material is rare and requires careful handling and management by knowledgeable and specialised staff.

#### **8.4.9 CALS’s collection is helpful or adequate**

The respondents were asked to cite examples of situations where they considered the collection to be helpful or adequate as part of the research question to ascertain CALS’s ability to enable African literary studies at UKZN.

Most staff members had experienced situations where they had found that the information they were searching for researchers was adequate and helpful. The two who said that they did not find the information that was needed, stressed that they were not involved in searching for information for students. The respondents stated that researchers had found material at CALS that was not available elsewhere. One respondent stated that a researcher referred to CALS “as a miracle place that contains Ugandan literary texts he didn’t know he would ever see with his eyes and touch with his hands”. Another respondent commented on the *Time of the*



*Writer and Poetry Africa* participants, “who make a one-off, hour-long visit, are allowed into the stacks under supervision, and are often delighted by what they find, especially if they find titles written by themselves”. Yet another respondent stated that on one occasion a visiting scholar was particularly interested in the multiple editions and publications of a particular novel, which included a first edition and other rare published copies. The collection holds a number of unique rare and first or signed editions.

Staff members have also had situations where they were searching for information at CALS and found it unhelpful and or inadequate. This situation mostly arises with material published post 2004. It was pointed out that *Time of the Writer and Poetry Africa* contingents noticed this immediately as very few monographs have been acquired since 2004. This respondent stressed the fact that:

- Journal runs are not current.
- Videos have not all been transposed to DVDs.
- Post 2004 material is defective (specific mention was made of 21<sup>st</sup>-century African diaspora material).
- South African languages are not well represented.
- Arabic Africa is not represented.

#### **8.4.10 Improvements at CALS**

Respondents were asked what CALS could do to improve to enable African literary studies at UKZN.

The suggested improvements at CALS are enumerated below.

- Be recognised by the UKZN management. Establish permanent posts and strategise to become known.
- Focus on both the library and the original academic vision and mission of CALS. For some years the focus was on academic issues, then the library, now neither. The two should go hand in hand and each should stimulate the other because the major focus is on the academic and library.

- Revive CALS's academic programme. Have regular seminars and meetings with guest authors and critics for undergraduate and postgraduate students.
- Be granted a regular acquisitions budget and staff to order and process material.
- Solicit donations from organisations and individuals who are involved in African/South African language and literature creation and teaching.
- Institute a systematic search and buying programme to ensure that the countries well covered (e.g. Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, and South Africa) are kept up to date and materials from other countries are acquired to match the quality of the foundation collection.
- Digitise rare material to help advance the collection and make it available to international scholars. It was suggested that this could be a research project for an Information Studies postgraduate.
- Scanning facilities and user work space or independent user partitions might be helpful.
- Reinstate journal subscriptions. Ensure funds for binding and ensure access to e-journals when subscriptions are not possible.
- Write regular annual reports and newsletters.
- Develop a dynamic academic programme: lectures, seminars, and so on.
- Update the CALS website once the above measures are in place.
- Liaise consciously and effectively with relevant academic departments and encourage them to base research projects on CALS's collection.
- CALS should employ more knowledgeable and specialist staff.

- CALS should be more visible, better marketed and better integrated with other centres and related facilities.

#### **8.4.11 Services currently unavailable at CALS**

Respondents stressed that CALS lacked professional library and support staff and academic initiative, thus disabling many services. UKZN has closed a number of language departments in Pietermaritzburg which would have been potential research units. As a service unit, CALS would be stimulated by active literature programmes on campus. An interesting suggestion by a respondent was that

“UKZN should combine the Alan Paton Centre (APC) and the Centre for African Literary Studies (CALS) on the Pietermaritzburg Campus in a new, custom-built building to form an Africa-focused Special Collection. Ideally a building extension should be made to the Main Library so that infrastructure could be shared but designed so that APC/CALS could fulfil functions beyond their purely ‘library’ role. There should be a Special Collections Librarian who oversees it in tandem with both the Library and relevant academic departments, with a vibrant lecture programme and a creative acquisitions policy. This would automatically attract researchers in a way that it is not happening under present circumstances.”

Importantly, CALS needs to be more proactive by holding seminars to integrate more dynamically with annual events such as the *Poetry Africa* and *Time of the Writer*.

#### **8.4.12 The role of CALS**

This section includes questions pertinent to whether or not the CALS staff believe that CALS is fulfilling its role as an African literary collection effectively.

The majority of the staff members believe that CALS is fulfilling its role effectively. Five staff members said that CALS was fulfilling its role, compared with three who said that it was not. An interesting point is that two of the respondents who stated that CALS was not able to successfully fulfil its role as a UKZN special collection were the two current staff members. CALS is crippled by lack of support and investment from UKZN and lack of knowledgeable staff, and does not appear to have a specific role, stated one respondent.

##### **a. Contributions CALS can make to the broader research community:**

The following points were put forward:

- CALS should attract more researchers through the quality of its resources and service and through an imaginative academic programme, both at CALS and on the PMB Campus.
- CALS should serve the needs of undergraduates who will later become researchers.
- CALS should integrate with other related departments and centres, and become more active in African literary research and publishing.
- Permanent staffing issues need to be resolved and a dedicated director put into place to ensure stability of the Centre.

#### **b. Ten-year vision for CALS**

Most staff members were doubtful that CALS would survive another ten years because of the many challenges, especially funding, and the fact that staff were on three-month contracts. The future of CALS is dependent on the vision of the parent body, UKZN. UKZN needs to develop a creative vision for African literary studies, which includes state of the art resources, personal service, and technology. However, if CALS does survive, the hope for the staff members is that CALS will continue as a research centre and maintain the valuable collection.

#### **c. Biggest challenges facing CALS**

The biggest challenge facing CALS is to “remain alive”, fulfil its original vision, become a vibrant service unit for both undergraduates and researchers, and have permanent staff with vision, commitment, confidence, energy and professional competence.

Furthermore, lack of institutional investment and support, lack of funding and inappropriate and insufficient space present challenges to the future of the Centre.

### **8.4.13 Work satisfaction**

This section sought to establish whether the staff at CALS were satisfied with work conditions at CALS.

#### **a. CALS has the necessary equipment**

Most of the staff felt that CALS had the necessary equipment at present. Only two of eight respondents felt that CALS lacked the necessary equipment and that the equipment needed upgrading. It was pointed out that the computers would be insufficient if the Centre were fully staffed and serving real researchers.

### **b. Hindrances to performing work at CALS**

Most staff members felt that UKZN did not recognise the potential of CALS and its staff, and UKZN did not finance CALS sufficiently. The major hindrance for the staff members was job insecurity and the uncertain future. As pointed out above, the current staff members are on three-month contracts which they struggle to renew. Lack of vision, direction and planning were also cited as hindrances.

### **c. Motivations to enhance work performance**

Personal professionalism and work ethic, expertise and a desire to see CALS flourish, as well as the satisfaction derived from the undergraduate group who use the Centre, were some of the motivating factors. The work environment, intermittent leaders who invested great effort, dedication and interest in the Centre, and friendly colleagues, were also cited as motivational factors.

### **d. Suitability of the CALS's building**

The CALS staff were asked to comment on the suitability of the CALS building in terms of storage, work and study space, and building defects. This is an important factor as CALS is both a library and a research centre. The majority of the current and ex-staff members (five) thought that the building was not suitable for storage, work and study. The building also has defects.

The following points were highlighted but only points not raised above are reported:

- There is no reading room conducive to research. The only available reading room is the boardroom which is often in use for seminars. Many students sit in the foyer which is noisy, cramped and uncomfortable. Office space is inadequate and cramped.
- There is no administrative officer to oversee the maintenance of the computers.
- “An old house does not convert easily into a library”. Security is difficult and work areas are uncomfortable for both staff and users.
- The archival shelving is wasteful of space.
- Load shedding negatively affects productivity. The stack rooms are totally dark when the lights go out and security is compromised. All electronic equipment

goes down. The boardroom is virtually unusable. CALS should have an inverter to enable users and staff to continue their work during outages.

#### **e. Staff working hours**

All the staff members were happy with the working hours.

#### **8.4.14 Staff observations**

##### **a. Changes anticipated relating to the need for the CALS collection**

There were few responses to this question. It was suggested that the nature of any changes would depend on the demands of CALS users. If their needs change, then CALS would have to, as a service department, acquire the appropriate resources and adapt its services and approaches to remain efficient and relevant. Other observations regarding changes included the necessity for new acquisitions, digitisation, separating the active library from the archival aspect, collection development and filling the gaps, hiring of specialist staff with knowledge of African literature and a capacity to integrate with academic researchers.

##### **b. CALS's ability to serve its users adequately**

A good percentage of staff members thought that CALS was not serving its users adequately. In particular, three staff members felt that CALS was inadequate in serving its members, while five thought otherwise. Staff commented that lack of funding, poor management, insufficient recognition and poor marketing hampered CALS's ability to serve its users adequately. However, respondents commended the dedicated staff who work under these conditions.

#### **8.4.15 Staff suggestions**

Questions were asked to determine how staff could improve CALS's current offerings to better serve its users.

All the staff members who responded (seven) to this question agreed that the services at CALS could be improved by adequate staffing. One staff member did not respond. Employing staff on a permanent basis, recognition by the university and good management were emphasised.

One respondent added that s/he thought that CALS had been “abused by lack of university commitment and general poor leadership up until [Professor] Christine Stilwell acted as Director”. S/he believed that the directors should be both academics as well as librarians, and not just literary academics with a “poor understanding or concept of managing, maintaining and developing a literary collection”. Another suggestion was to give the curator’s post more authority to manage the library and archival aspects of the Centre.

#### **8.4.16 CALS: Staff stories**

Participants were invited to share a story about CALS, whether good or bad, the purpose being to add a personal and honest perspective to the study.

Negative stories included the fact that from its inception, the Centre was poorly researched and planned for, including inappropriate shelving and temperature control. One respondent’s first experience of CALS [in 2004] was “walking into a damp building with fans blowing on boxes of books in a desperate effort to rescue the material that was soaked over a rainy weekend due to a leak in the room in which the newly arrived and ‘prestigious’ collection was initially housed”.

CALS used to have eight staff members and now they are down to two. Events, biannual board meetings, staff meetings and so on are no longer held. Permanent jobs are continually promised, but never materialise, resulting in staff resignations. Lack of leadership has impacted negatively on the Centre as most of the directors were appointed in an acting capacity. Sometimes the staff work without contracts as they are signed on late by the management, despite the fact that the staff have completed them timeously. One respondent reported that for one month the staff did not get paid until the middle of the following month.

Another respondent commented: “We had to wait patiently to hear whether our contracts were going to be renewed or not. The uncertainty and waiting were unpleasant and demoralising.”

Positive comments included the fact that CALS is conducive to work as it is quiet. One respondent stated that s/he “spent two extremely happy years” at CALS. S/he praised the “awesome” staff, and commended the director [Professor Stilwell] as “nothing short of amazing”. Furthermore, “the staff got on so well and served their patrons brilliantly”.

Another respondent stated that s/he loved working at CALS and meeting people at the workshops and conferences. Planning events, such as *Time of the Writer* and meeting with African authors was a highlight cited by two staff members.

### **8.5 Summary**

This chapter presented the results of the survey of the population of this study, which was conducted by means of self-administered questionnaires sent to the undergraduate and postgraduate students and researchers who use CALS, and CALS staff.

The interviews with the original owners of the two main CALS collections, the founders and present and ex-directors of CALS, are presented in the next chapter.



## Chapter 9

### Interview Results

#### 9.1 Introduction

Results from the interviews with the original owners of the two main CALS collections, the founders of CALS, as well as the present and past CALS acting directors are discussed in this chapter. Sadly, the one permanent director passed away before s/he could be interviewed. The term ‘director’ is used for both categories in reporting.

#### 9.2 Response rate

Of the 13 interviews, the response rate was 11: the two original owners of the two main CALS collections, four founders of CALS, and five of the present/ex-acting directors, yielding a response rate of 84.62%.

##### 9.2.1 The original owners of the two main CALS collections

Both the original owners are retired professors of African literature, the one from the University of Texas at Austin, and the other from Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). In order to establish the origin of CALS, it was necessary to ascertain how the original owners’ interest in African literature developed, and how they went about developing their large personal collections in African literature.

In this regard the one original owner stated in detail that it was while he was teaching in Kenya (1961–1963) that he first started reading African literature (as mentioned in Section 3.4). Before leaving New York, he had “picked up a copy of Janheinz Jahn’s *Muntu: African Culture and the Western World*, which had a chapter on African literature”. This inspired him to look for the books cited by Jahn at the university library. Thereafter he began to order and search in book shops for material on African literature. “There were not many books in English by African authors available back then, but there were enough to keep my interest up, and during the two years we were in Kenya, I had acquired a small shelf of the most accessible titles.” He states that during the 1960s there was a “heady period of growth for African literature, so there was a lot available through the Heinemann African Writers series and through new journals being created.” He collected mainly Anglophone African literature as well as a selection of significant titles in French, Swahili and several other languages. He

eventually became so fascinated with the new reading that he described himself as a “bookaholic” and he decided to work for a doctorate at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) in “this new literature rather than in American or British literature . . . ” “African Studies was a new but rapidly growing field at American tertiary institutions” in those days. He became an academic at the same institution. During his years at UCLA he continued to collect African books and journals wherever he could find them as he wished to build up a personal collection that would sustain his teaching and research interests, which included bibliographical research. He states: “As the field grew, so did my library.” Whenever he travelled to Africa on research trips he tried to “pick up as many locally published literary works, both books and journals” as he could find (see Appendix 8 for the full letter). Both the original owners stated that their collections were collected over a period of 40 years and they based most of their research and publications on their collections, with the one ex-owner adding that his collection grew with the “rate of accumulation increasing almost every year to keep up with the growth of publication of African titles worldwide”.

The other original owner of the two CALS main collections stated that his interest developed while he was “in the Peace Corps in Nigeria between the years 1964 and 1966, and later as a student of Bernth Lindfors at the University of Texas”.

In terms of establishing the value of the CALS collection, both of the original owners considered that their collections, which are now located at CALS, are unique, citing the outstanding features as:

- Locally published West and East African titles that were not acquired by other South African libraries, particularly during the days of apartheid. There is a fairly comprehensive collection of literary works banned in South Africa.
- The collections contain audio and video tapes, photographs, slides, ephemera of all kinds, as well as numerous photocopies of critical articles and newspaper reports on the activities of leading writers.

Both the ex-owners cited the popular literature (chapbooks), [Kenyan Onitsha and Ghanaian market literature] as well as the classic works by black African writers as being especially noteworthy, with one respondent emphasising that different editions of many of the literary works are important to researchers. [Most of the Ghanaian market literature at CALS was from the Priebe collection which alerted CALS’s librarians to the parallel category of

Ghanaian market literature which had been overlooked during the original shelving of the Nigerian Onitsha market literature].

To further determine how CALS came into being, the two owners were questioned as to why they chose CALS as the 'home' for their collections. They both believed that UKZN (PMB) "would be the best place in Africa" and they believed that UKZN "would take good care of the collection". Furthermore, one respondent stated that Professor David Attwell, who had earned his doctorate at UCLA, had thought that "Pietermaritzburg would be the right place" [for the collections]. He persuaded the administrators at UKZN that the collection would be "a valuable addition to literary and cultural resources" at UKZN, PMB.

Following on this question, both owners considered it a good decision to have sent their collections to UKZN as it "has helped to support the research of South African postgraduate students and teachers as well as some other African countries" and "several doctoral dissertations have been based on materials held at the CALS library". The one ex-owner was, however, more cautious, stating: "It may still be the best place for the collection, but I do not think that it has been well cared for." He was concerned that the chapbooks and other material on newsprint was deteriorating and he felt that the general security was not good. He didn't elaborate on the security aspect, despite a request from the researcher.

In terms of establishing whether CALS is successfully enabling African literary studies, the owners were asked if they were aware of how CALS was making the collection accessible. One ex-owner stated that he did not keep abreast of developments at CALS and was unaware of how CALS was making the collection accessible, which probably explained his inability to elaborate on security issues. There had been some unhappiness reported to staff about the rate of progress with processing his materials at the launch and also difficulties over the duplicated materials.

The other ex-owner does try to keep abreast of developments at CALS, but "not in any intrusive way". He trusts that the library is in good hands and he leaves its future development "to those in charge". He stated that he kept informed of CALS's activities by occasionally reading the CALS newsletters "to see what is happening". He also sometimes conversed with colleagues who have used the collection. He continues to donate material to the Centre.

Concerning the way in which CALS is making the collection accessible, he stated that he had noticed that CALS had organised a number of activities that brought scholars to campus and that CALS had supported the research of some postgraduate students. He believed that “a good number of visitors stop by to get a sense of what is held at CALS” and that “there is fruitful traffic in an archive of this kind”.

An important point highlighted by the one ex-owner is that he felt that “CALS would benefit from having a director who would run the Centre for a long period of time. This would help to provide some continuity in leadership”. Furthermore, the director should be “supported by a Board that has a strong interest in and commitment to literary scholarship”.

### **9.2.2 The founders of CALS**

As the founders were instrumental in the establishment of CALS, the study sought to ascertain whether the original founders considered an African literary studies special collection necessary at UKZN, their initial vision and intentions for the Centre, the challenges and processes that led to the founding of CALS, and their suggestions regarding the way forward. It requires noting that the founders’ perspectives differ in the sense that one founder is from the UKZN Foundation, two are distinguished African literature scholars, and one was a librarian/administrator.

All four of the founders considered that the Centre was desirable, rather than necessary, citing that it was a desirable way of raising the national and international profile of the Pietermaritzburg campus. It would provide a major boost to research in the African humanities (notably, not African studies per se). The project would have great potential as a major step forward in the direction of intellectual transformation. The vision and intention of the Centre was, as one founder stated, “predicated on the understanding that the collection was big enough to enable a reversal of the usual south-to-north travel in researchers and materials, whereby African scholars go to Europe or the USA to study African literature” [which that particular researcher had done to obtain his PhD]. Instead, it was hoped that they would go south, and specifically to Pietermaritzburg. One of the respondents had actually initiated the teaching of African literature “from countries north of the Limpopo” on the Pietermaritzburg campus in the late 1970s. All four of the respondents stated that they saw the acquisition of the collection as a way of asserting the University’s commitment to African literary studies and, importantly, as a resource to attract postgraduate students who were

interested in researching African literature to the Pietermaritzburg Campus. That this would raise the profile of the University as a whole, and the Pietermaritzburg campus in particular, “was an added bonus”.

One respondent stated that it was the belief of both Professor Bernth Lindfors and the University of Natal academics that the collection should be housed in its “spiritual home”, that is Africa.

Moreover, “the vision anticipated the continuing investment by the University in CALS” and one respondent was unsure as to whether this had taken place on the scale that was originally envisaged.

All four of the respondents stated that the opportunity to acquire this collection (two adding “through the good offices” of David Attwell) was too good an opportunity to miss. Two respondents mentioned the Alan Paton Centre and the academic library, stating that they saw the acquisition of African literature as a valuable addition to the existing library collection and that it was anticipated that it would reinforce the research and teaching roles of the English department. It was regarded as a “logical companion of the Alan Paton Centre, which at that stage functioned as a literary asset”.

In terms of a separate African literary collection still being necessary, all four respondents stated that they agreed, but for various reasons. One respondent stated that

“the point of the Special Collection was not to isolate African research materials from the rest of the library or from academic departments, but rather, to create an engine room of research excellence, devoted to the literature of the continent, a lively centre of research and debate with PhD students and visiting researchers engaging one another in a supportive and well-resourced institutional context”.

It was felt that CALS was more necessary than ever, because the younger generations of researchers (and activists) in South Africa were “increasingly unaware of their intellectual forebears in African and diasporic traditions”. This particular respondent was concerned that the intellectual resources of Africa and the diaspora play an inconspicuous role in debates and institutional transformation in South Africa – much of the “debate is rhetorical and many are unable or unwilling to engage with Africa’s actual intellectual history”. CALS as a separate

centre can provide a suitable space for these discussions to take place. Another respondent spoke from the library perspective and stated that CALS, ideally,

“should be part of a broader information services division so as to benefit from economies of scale. However, this should not be imposed where their distinctive characteristics are sacrificed, so where structural and other factors (human, financial, for instance) are adverse, separation is necessary. The bottom line is that their needs are broadly the same as any other library or archival collection (the term ‘special’ is unfortunate): issues of storage and conservation, documentation and retrieval are basically common”.

Regarding the original intention and vision for establishing CALS, one respondent stated that his particular interest “lay in the potential of assets such as CALS to reinforce the case for an independent university in (of) Pietermaritzburg divorced from the toxic influence of Durban institutions in the light of the forthcoming merger”. From an academic and professional interest, all four of the respondents were happy to see the “books brought home”. One respondent added that “from the fundraising perspective, I knew that obtaining the collection would resonate with donors, which was good for targets”.

When asked whether their original vision and intention for establishing CALS differed from that of the wider group of founders, such as the vice-chancellor of UKZN and the deputy director of the UKZN Development Foundation, two respondents stated that they did not differ, one respondent stated that they did, and one respondent did not know because he had left UN in September 2002 after a year as acting vice-chancellor. However, he had been involved in the initial discussions regarding possible fund raising (including with Atlantic Philanthropies) two years before the actual launch of CALS. The respondent that stated that the original vision did differ, contended that those in positions of influence in the University, such as the vice-chancellor mentioned above, who were located in Durban, had a separate agenda. Of the two who believed that the original intentions did not differ from those of the wider group of founders, one quoted Professor Liz Gunner in particular, and included the vice-chancellor, whom he believed to be very much of similar mind “in that they viewed the collection as being a tremendous complement to the strengths that UKZN had in African literatures”. The other respondent stated that he believed that the original vision for CALS was understood by the then vice-chancellor (Professor Brenda Gourley who left the University in 2001, three years before the Centre was launched) and especially by the DVC of research at the time, Professor Eleanor-Preston Whyte, and in particular by Professor

David Maughan Brown, a distinguished African literary scholar, who was instrumental in earmarking the house in which CALS is housed.

These individuals had been supportive of the project throughout. “When the Centre was opened by Pallo Jordan, this vision was well understood and widely shared.” However, this respondent was concerned that the vision was not later followed through by Professor Makgoba after the departure of Brenda Gourley. The respondent was of the impression that during the tenure of Professor Makgoba, “UKZN’s institutional support for CALS was diluted (possibly even neglected)”. This respondent regarded that as ironic in the sense that Professor Makgoba was committed to UKZN’s “becoming a premier institution for African scholarship.” The respondent expanded by saying that

“the intellectual resources needed to achieve this goal, at least in literary scholarship, were on the doorstep, but it required the university to invest in PhD scholarships, post-doctoral researchers and visiting fellowships (or it required institutional support for applications to the NRF for these purposes)”.

Regarding the events, the process and the challenges that led up to the establishment of the Centre for African Literary Studies, one participant stated that he was only involved in the very early discussions. Three participants responded (two in great detail) as follows:

- The purchase of the collection was inextricably connected to the refurbishment of a suitable venue to house the collection, which turned out to be the Old Gate House on the Pietermaritzburg Campus.
- This necessitated the drafting of two separate proposals by the UN Development Fund, one to purchase the collection and the other to refurbish the Old Gate House to the appropriate standard to house a valuable collection. It was agreed to set aside R1m as seed money, and to approach potential donors.
- Meanwhile the collection had been appraised and valued by the publisher and book dealer Hans Zell, who travelled from the UK to Austin, Texas to do the appraisal. The value was over \$400 000.
- After discussions with a number of potential donors, Atlantic Philanthropies agreed to support the project. On the strength of the existing support, both from the University and Atlantic Philanthropies, further donations were then received, from

the Anglo-American Chairman's Fund, and the Department of Arts and Culture (about R8m). The costs involved more than the purchase of the books: they included the refurbishment of the Centre, and potentially, further purchases from other collections, as well as start-up funds for staff and fellowships.

- This necessitated a number of protracted meetings and negotiations and ultimately a trip to Austin to oversee (with Liz Gunner) the packing of the collection for shipment to Houston by road and then to Durban by sea (with Safmarine Panalpina) to its final home in Pietermaritzburg.

One respondent said that, "While the arrangements took months to finalize and were intensive and exhausting, there was huge satisfaction acquiring and housing the collection," while another was concerned that his main issue was "extracting maximum benefit from a budget that was not growing fast enough to cope with price inflation".

Furthermore, two respondents noted that Lindfors made it clear that the proceeds of the sale would be donated to his undergraduate college until he and his wife passed away. The college could invest the proceeds but not touch the capital which would revert to UKZN on the passing of both him and his wife.

Regarding who was involved in formulating the initial UKZN policies regarding CALS, two respondents were unable to answer this question. Of the other two respondents, one stated:

"I wrote the initial policy documents that were presented to the University Research Committee and to the Development Office. There was active supportive and encouragement from Professors Eleanor Preston-Whyte [DVC Research]; David Maughan Brown [Principal, PMB Campus] and Brenda Gourley [Vice-Chancellor]. Thereafter it became a project more widely supported by the Humanities faculty and the library."

The other respondent stated:

"If my memory serves me right, the initial policies were formulated by the CALS Board which was chaired by the Dean of Research (I think!) while CALS itself was directed by Liz Gunner."

When asked if they thought that CALS had had an impact on the promotion of African studies, two respondents stated that they hoped so, but they were not aware of any as they had left the university before this was possible to judge. Of the other two respondents, one stated



that he was not close to the everyday research action of CALS but he did know from the board meetings (as he had sat on the board until he left UKZN in September 2012) that there was some research activity that did take place. With hindsight, he thought that “the activity was not commensurate with the quality of material that CALS represented”. However, he added that there were a number of colloquia and symposia that were arranged around the collection which he thought did have an impact, particularly citing the annual UKZN Time of the Writer festival.

The other wrote that he was not sufficiently familiar with CALS’s activities to be able to judge with any authority. He had heard, though, from visitors to CALS, that although the Centre seemed under-resourced, it functioned well. “Certainly, the Centre would have more impact if it published a journal, and ran a well-advertised and properly funded programme of visiting fellowships,” he added.

In terms of suggestions for CALS in the future, there was one non-response, while one respondent stated that he was “not in a position to do so. And like other people exiled and estranged from their university careers, there is little motivation to put thought into this”.

Of the other two responses, there were the following suggestions:

- Publishing a journal; running a programme of visiting fellowships; housing MA and PhD students.
- Become a centre for the recovery, translation and dissemination of African-language literatures, both oral and print culture. CALS could be linked to UKZN Press, which continues to publish exciting work in the African humanities.
- Support from the university in terms of person-power and start-up funds and to seek further funding from the National Research Foundation (NRF) and from the large, international foundations (notably Mellon).
- CALS should become a living collection that would be added to during the course of the years and thus grow in significance and be used far more expansively and regularly and grow to become a substantial and well-used source of African literature.

When the respondents were asked if they had anything else to add, two respondents responded as follows:

“I personally derived a great deal of satisfaction from being part of the team that acquired the collection and hope that it has attracted the academics and generated the scholarship that was anticipated at the start.” The other added:

“I was and remain proud to be associated with the founding of CALS, and would like to see it go from strength to strength.”

### **9.2.3 The present and ex-CALS directors**

Regarding the directors, the study set out to ascertain whether they believed that there was justification in having a special collection specialising in African literary studies in addition to the main academic library, which has a fairly extensive collection on African literature. They were also questioned on the original custodial obligations of CALS and whether or not they had changed, as well as on the current UKZN policies that either hinder or promote CALS in its contribution as a special collection for African literary studies.

In terms of having a separate collection on the Pietermaritzburg campus for African literary studies, all five of the respondents agreed that there was justification in having a separate collection for African literary studies, citing the following:

- Any relatively marginalised area of exploration (and African studies remains undervalued) benefits enormously from a special focus that such a centre brings as a crucial repository and point of reference with a clearly defined role as an adjunct to the holdings of a central library.
- Without the visible presence of a separate collection, African literary studies is in danger of disappearing “under the dominance of things Western”.
- Special Collections are important for researchers as rare and unique material is safeguarded.
- Special African literary collections offer an affirming and positive focus on African scholarship and heritage, particularly for the upcoming generation of Africans in South Africa.
- African studies are multidisciplinary and the whole university can “feed off” a special African literary collection.

Regarding what the present and ex-directors considered to be the original custodial obligations of CALS as in 2004 when CALS was established, the following custodial obligations were put forward by the five directors who responded as follows:

- The Centre was envisaged as a home to a unique holding of collections relating to the production and study of African literature (both oral and written production) and would serve as a growing repository for scholars on the African continent.
- To collect and provide access to a collection of African literature of all genres in Africa, including diasporic writers as well as commentaries on the literature and archival materials.
- The University would undertake to take care of the collection with support from Atlantic Philanthropies in terms of generating research in African literary studies as the Centre was to be the ‘flagship’ for African studies at UKZN.
- To make the Centre available to any students, academics or established scholars of African literature in order to enhance the status of African literature and literary research in key research areas.
- The Centre was conceived as far more than a library consisting of “a collection of books, journals and paper”; rather it was the start of a new endeavour of “giving back of an intellectual heritage” when viewed from the perspective of Africa’s dispossession over centuries.
- To begin to establish a network of African literary scholars via seminars, conferences and digital media.
- To raise funds to grow the collection over time.

When the five directors were asked whether they believed that the original custodial obligations had changed, they had various opinions. Four directors concurred – the original obligations had changed, and one director disagreed. Two of the directors felt that they were not in a position to have “hands-on knowledge” but they did elaborate. The directors who believed that the custodial obligations had changed offered the following reasons:

- The original vision was “allowed to shrink” and not given support at the highest level: those “who understood clearly what the original vision was, and what the Centre *could be*” ... “attempted to implement this in sometimes dismal circumstances.”

- There was a tension between the Centre’s original aspirations and the reality, and the Centre had become “politicised”.
- Established posts and permanent staffing and funding issues were ongoing and problematic.

The director who disagreed, stated that the original custodial obligations had simply become “broader to include all African writers, whereas Bernth focused mainly on black African writers ... Access now needs to include digital access and the level offered by CALS at present is limited due to lack of wider digitization”.

When asked whether the current UKZN policies (as the parent institution which informs CALS’s policies) hinder or promote CALS in its contribution as a special collection for African literary studies, all five directors felt that there were problems regarding the implementation of the UKZN policies. One director stated that the UKZN policies were clear, with good missions and statements, but there was a problem with the implementation.

For instance, the directors stated the following important points:

- Stand-alone self-funding centres like CALS are counter-productive to the University, and unsustainable.
- Funding is required to sustain postgraduates to create a more dynamic unit focused on research – early warnings regarding funding were ignored.
- Security of tenure – permanent posts are required based on experience rather than equity.
- The value of this collection is such that it warrants special institutional support, including financial support.
- Continuity in terms of strategic planning. For example, CALS has never been incorporated successfully into the governance and funding structures, which has undermined progress, despite continued efforts in this regard.
- The potential to have a strong research centre of holdings with Africa-wide importance, with special appeal to young scholars and established researchers in North America and Europe, has not been realised by the University’s leaders.
- The “almost complete absence of any visiting senior management” is conspicuous.

- The executives keep changing so new members need “re-educating” regarding CALS’s policies.
- The board has not been able to meet since 2013, despite great progress made in 2011 and 2013.

The directors were asked how they viewed the role of CALS as a University of KwaZulu-Natal special collection in enabling and promoting African studies. All five directors enthusiastically responded as follows:

- With the appropriate support, CALS as a special collection could add to the stature of UKZN in very significant ways, most especially in the light of the institutional missions and visions, and African studies “should be at the heart of its academic project”.
- CALS has the potential to promote interdisciplinary studies, especially regarding English, Lusophone and Francophone studies.
- The Centre is vital and is in line with the UKZN curriculum in promoting African scholarship. Despite the value of the collection, the vision to promote it has not been realised and has been undermined because of lack of funding.
- The wonderful collection at the Centre has a huge role, mainly because of “the UKZN mission, the support of its donors and previous owners of the collections [and] its capacity to serve as a place for the celebration of African thinking and writing”.
- CALS “is physically distinct and has its own ‘body’ which makes it important” (much like the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas at Austin in the USA). This enables it “to forge its own identity as a magnet for researchers who wish to do more than consult a single book or a cluster of books,” thus allowing for “lateral research where students can do cross-African research on literary and literary-related subjects”.
- CALS should attract researchers on a continent-wide basis and also forge links with the strong universities on the African continent, such as the University of Makerere in Kampala, Uganda.
- The Centre needs to be seen as a ‘Centre’ and not just a ‘Special Collection’, a research *Centre* which through its holdings strengthens the research reputation of UKZN both nationally and internationally.

When the directors were asked if they thought that CALS was fulfilling its role successfully in its contribution to African studies within UKZN and the wider academic and research community, there were two definite ‘no’ answers, one definite ‘yes’ and two who stated ‘yes and no’. All the directors, with the exception of the two who said ‘no’, elaborated:

- It has done well considering its “most slender of resources” and in spite of a very limited understanding of CALS’s role by those in executive positions in the University.
- It has been utilised, for example by English studies and isiZulu studies.
- Once the collections had been organised and gaps filled, CALS was starting to fulfil its role, but funding was needed to attract visiting scholars, writers in residence and to hold seminars, conferences and annual lectures such as the Bloke Modisane Annual Lecture.
- Although funding had been applied for to the UKZN Foundation for digitisation to enable wider access, there was uncertainty about the future at the present time.

The directors were asked to offer their opinions on how CALS could reach its potential to be one of the best centres for African literary studies in the world. They stated:

- It needs a dedicated budget for staffing and operations which is guaranteed by the University, as well as donor funding, research incentive funding and funding from conferences to drive the external programme, including funds for long-term projects such as fellowships.
- Funding needs to be acquired from sources such as the European Union (EU), the Mellon Foundation, and from other sources to fulfil its African role in South Africa.
- Permanent staff and institutional support were required.
- UKZN needs to fund postgraduate studies sufficiently to focus on research.
- There is a need for inspired support from the top and a commitment from humanities at the University.
- CALS needs to be seen as an intellectual and reputable resource by the University with the potential to grow.
- More space for researchers and storage required.

The five directors listed the following interesting points as challenges facing CALS and special collections in general:

- Competition for diminishing resources, both human and financial.
- Transparency regarding financing.
- Ignorance and apathy.
- Funding is required as well as specialised staff, including a manuscript librarian, and digitisation to open the collection up internationally and thereby widen the base of users.

One respondent commented that CALS is “in limbo” at the moment and “parked in cold storage”. S/he was unhappy about an “engineered shift” in 2010 by the dean from Literary Studies to other departments, such as Information Studies and African Studies. This point relates to Section 3.7.1, whereby McCracken recommended that CALS should be located “under whichever of the named four HDSS schools in Pietermaritzburg in which the director is located” (McCracken 2009:3). But other issues might well have been at stake here as suggested.

Regarding the kind of researchers that the Centre should attract, the five researchers stated:

- Anyone interested in African literature (both national and international scholars, students, young researchers and established academics) and especially those with links to or in collaboration with UKZN staff, to generate research incentive funds.
- With the new emphasis on African language literatures at the Centre, and the presence of a strong and growing isiZulu and Sesotho literary collection, this encourages cross-language work and research which the Centre “is in a strong position to champion and push” on behalf of the University and its perceived intellectual capital.

An interesting point put forward by one ex-director was that the Centre could do a lot more “by seek[ing] out other collections or documents which would otherwise simply be cleaned out by grieving families”, such as the papers and documents of Chenjerai Hove and Freedom Nyamubaya, “both of whom passed away in 2015, Hove in exile in Norway and Nyamubaya in Zimbabwe”. Furthermore, “it could be the Centre of cross-Anglophone–Lusophone work as it has a strong Lusophone collection. This could grow as the interest in regional cross-language literatures and research is on the increase”.

The directors, as the driving force behind CALS, were asked how they viewed the future of CALS. All five directors responded with the following viewpoints:

- “As an Acting Director, I felt that my mandate was challenged in that I could not realize the mission of the Centre when there was no continuity with short-term contracts and it was not my full-time job.”
- If there is not urgent institutional intervention in terms of staffing and funding for CALS, “I can’t envisage a rich future for the Centre.”
- It needs maximum support at the highest level because “its role as hugely important for the reputation of the Humanities at the University seems not to have been taken on board.”
- The resources are there but the Centre needs a “dynamic research hub of activities to showcase” its research potential.
- A fundraiser is needed.

In terms of funding, one ex-Director added that CALS “could be a huge money-spinner for the University and could attract exciting funding [from the European Union or Mellon Foundation mentioned above] and also the lottery if its role and its amazing possibilities were properly conceived and marketed”.

One ex-director stated that s/he was “quite dismal about what has happened. One has to fight all the way for CALS. It is essential to have a Board, Dean and DVC who value CALS and support the Director”.

The five directors outlined their goals for CALS as:

- To fulfil CALS’s mandate (to facilitate and promote the study of African literature) by organising and hosting research seminars and colloquia (including the Bloke Modisane Memorial Lecture), to attract postgraduate students/researchers and fulfil the usual library collection and preservation functions.
- Digitisation.
- Finance required to hold dynamic seminars and attract sabbatical researchers to create an intellectual body “to bounce ideas with” and benefit from their skills and expertise.
- To provide stability and sustainability for the Centre which could form the basis of a vibrant and growing community of scholars.



- Funding and permanent staff.
- An Africa-wide research centre and repository which could serve as a source of intellectual growth for literary awareness and research for the continent as a whole.
- As Africa looking after its own intellectual capital instead of exporting its riches and wealth elsewhere.

In terms of whether or not the directors felt that they were able to fulfil their goals, all five directors commented. The comments included:

Three directors stated that they were unable to fulfil their goals, and two directors cautiously commented that they were able to.

Comments from the directors who felt that they were unable to fulfil their goals at CALS included:

- Lack of institutional support and permanent staff.
- Lack of continuity and ability to implement the policy on research centres.

One director stated that in the limited time that s/he had had, s/he felt that s/he had made a good start. The other director felt that s/he had accomplished his/her goals in that: “Once the collections were in good shape, I felt that we could fundraise and had started to do so, especially once Bridget McBean became director of the UKZN Foundation.” Furthermore, s/he had a “reasonable staff complement and an operations budget besides the ring-fenced funds for material”. Moreover, s/he added that, “We had made huge strides with ICT equipment, policy and planning, and attracting collections, events and visitors/users, including students.” In addition, s/he was pleased that staff morale had improved considerably despite uncertainty about tenure.

When the directors were questioned on what they felt most passionately about regarding the promotion of CALS, all five directors responded with varying answers, which included:

- To provide stability and sustainability for the Centre which could form the basis of a vibrant and growing community of scholars.
- Promoting CALS through the website; announcements on the University publicity networks; seminars and research students; inter-university seminars; links with the

Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) administrators; and projects such as the Bamako Islamic Manuscripts project.

- To seek out the donation of important collections and individual books.
- Driving ideas such as the Centre as a place that attracted new debate on issues relating to culture regionally and continentally.
- Creating permanent and happy staff and to secure funding; making the best of what was available.
- CALS is a “goldmine of research” but it is not being used to the extent it should – in this regard it needs to attract institutional support.

The directors were asked to comment on funding issues at CALS, the staffing situation at CALS, and the digitisation of the collection. To this end, all five emphasised that funding and staffing were severely hampering and crippling CALS in its ability to enable African literary studies at UKZN, a problem that has been commented upon throughout this study.

The first acting director commented that, although the Centre had been well funded due to the presence of a large initial fund by donors such as Atlantic Philanthropies, further funding was clearly needed in later years and needed to have been solicited and motivated for. S/he also stated that the staffing was adequate in his/her time but added that “nothing that is any good stands still and funding to grow staffing should have been sought ... at the highest levels”.

Other comments included:

- If there is not urgent institutional intervention in terms of staffing and funding for CALS, a rich future for the Centre cannot be envisaged.
- According to the original documentation research centre policy, CALS is externally funded and was to become self-sustaining and self-sufficient; however this has not happened and CALS has failed to attract the necessary funding.
- The funding of CALS was never addressed properly and early warnings about what funds were required were not heeded. One ex-director referred the researcher to the McCracken financial warning in 2009 (see Section 3.7.1).
- CALS has never been incorporated properly into the governance and funding structures of the university and this has undermined access to funds.
- Short-term temporary contracts cannot sustain the institution.

One ex-director gave an account of the funding situation between 2012 and 2013. S/he stated that funding had improved in 2012 when staff “were paid by Faculty directly into a staff code and not from the book code (which previously then had to be refunded). We had an operating budget and were ready to go forward”. However, things reversed when “in 2013 the College started to cut back radically on funding and we were caught at the beginning of the way up for CALS and towards being able to show more to non-librarians of what we had achieved”. The ex-director emphasised that this budgetary change “hit CALS especially hard despite the very positive image of CALS in the UKZN newspaper and press more widely”.

As a consequence of the funding problems, the ability to achieve adequate staffing at CALS was undermined, and as one ex-director pointed out,

“especially being unable to appoint [staff] to permanent posts despite the go-ahead from the DVC and the Board. Staff were under huge stress as was the Director who was paid at a very low level for all the additional work and anxiety, and time away from [his/her] own students and research”.

Furthermore, this respondent stated:

“Despite this we had a small but very competent staff and we addressed all the library-related problems and backlogs and were starting to plan regarding digitization.”

Regarding digitisation, four of the directors agreed that digitisation was necessary. The one director stated that s/he felt that s/he was “not in a position to answer this question”.

Comments from the directors regarding digitisation included:

- The digitisation of the collection is important as it makes knowledge of its holdings far more accessible to a continental and global audience and also to national scholars/researchers.
- Digitisation at CALS is in its infancy. Trained staff are required and priority needs to be given to promoting the collection through digitisation.

However, one director stated that digitising the CALS collection was not a top priority since the value of the collection was to attract visitors to the Centre to “see what is there”, since “research is the body of scholarship”. However, samples should be digitised to draw people to the Centre.

A prior director stated that s/he had indeed applied for funds for digitisation and had acquired the software. S/he anticipated that it would be “the next step” when s/he left in 2013.

When the directors were asked if they believed that CALS promoted itself well, all five of the directors did not think so, especially in the last two years.

The comments from the ex-directors were:

- “I have not been aware of any promotional activities in the past few years” and “I have not seen a newsletter, annual report or any items on *NdabaOnline* since I left.”
- “No, not much is being done to promote the collection.”
- The last newsletter on the website is December 2013, “so things are behind.”
- A good digitally available newsletter and a good website are two important items as they are “the public face” of the Centre.
- The vamping up of the Centre could be part of a re-energized vision for the Humanities in the whole of the UKZN.
- [Between 2011 and 2013] “it was promoting itself well despite not having the funds for the annual lecture.”

The present director at the time of the interviews stated that “not much is being done to promote CALS” as there are no staff to fulfil this function.

When asked if there was anything else of importance concerning CALS that they would like to add, three directors commented, whereas two did not comment.

The final comments from the three respondents were as follows:

“CALS has many admirers and supporters nationally and internationally. It needs to be grown in a dedicated way and funding needs to be sought from a range of internal, national and international sources.”

Another ex-director stated that although s/he had been “warned against taking the job” s/he felt that s/he wanted to “help make a difference to CALS”. S/he did not expect to be deprived of institutional support [in common with the ex-directors above] and was “thwarted in so many ways regarding staffing and funding which got even worse after 2013 and despite the

review outcome being so positive”. Despite that, CALS “achieved a great deal, knew what we still needed to aim for and worked well with other programmes and colleagues to do so”.

A former director thought that one of his/her many great achievements was the launch of the isiZulu Literary Museum in 2012 (see Section 6.5). S/he stated that the Literacy Museum “had huge potential to attract funds from government and Arts and Culture in particular and donations had started to come in in the form of books, but one has to have a going concern to attract funds”. This achievement is something that s/he rightfully claims to be proud of, as it has attracted many isiZulu users to CALS.

In line with many comments voiced by the founders and directors, s/he states: “I am just amazed that UKZN does not make more of CALS especially after the extremely positive review in 2013 as the flagship collection of its vision of being the premier university of African Scholarship.”

As an African literary studies research centre, “a great injustice is being done” and the future is uncertain, stated another ex-director.

The main focus at present is simply to maintain the collection.

### **9.3 Summary**

The results from the study indicate that all the respondents of the survey and interviews believe in the immense value of CALS, despite its challenges. They regard the CALS collection in high esteem and as an asset to UKZN. The founders had great hopes that the collection would enable African literary studies at UKZN and attract many African literary postgraduate scholars, academics and researchers. It was envisaged that the Centre would be a dynamic hub of research, postgraduate programmes, seminars, colloquia, and so on. The directors, too, were all passionate about the Centre and had noble goals, but were/are severely hampered by financial and staffing constraints. Lack of institutional support has been continually cited as hampering CALS in enabling African literary studies at UKZN.

The next chapter discusses these survey results more fully.

## Chapter 10

### Interpretation of the Results, Summary of the Findings and Recommendations

#### 10.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the findings of the study are considered in the light of the research problem presented in Chapter 1. The research problem central to this study was to ascertain what the role of the Centre for African Literary Studies as a University of KwaZulu-Natal special collection comprises and to what extent the Centre is able to fulfil its role in facilitating and enabling the study of African literature at UKZN and in the broader community.

The research questions that guided the study were:

1. What is the origin of CALS as a special collection, and what were the original custodial obligations? Have these obligations been changed by subsequent policy development and/or by actual practice?
2. In what way do the current UKZN policies (as the parent institution which informs CALS's policies) hinder or promote CALS in contributing as a special collection for African literary studies?
3. Is CALS fulfilling its role in its contribution to African scholarship within UKZN and the wider academic/research community?
4. What are the challenges facing CALS and special collections in general?

The order of the discussion in this chapter follows that of the order of the research questions of the study. The research questions are discussed in light of both the literature reviewed as well as the results for each of the sections of the questionnaire and the interview. The findings of the questionnaires and interviews that are interpreted in this chapter relate only to the respondents of the questionnaires and interviews. Owing to the high response rates for the questionnaires which targeted the undergraduate and postgraduate isiZulu and English students (the main users of CALS), researchers who use/have used CALS, and the present and ex-CALS's staff, and the interviews which targeted the two original owners of the two

main CALS collections, the four main founders and the present and ex-directors of CALS, it is possible to make generalisations about the whole population.

Furthermore, on the basis of the data presented and interpreted, as well as the research experience gained during the research process, this chapter provides a summary of the findings of the study, the conclusions arrived at, and recommendations.

## **10.2 What is the origin of CALS as a special collection, and what were the original custodial obligations? Have these obligations been changed by subsequent policy development and/or by actual practice?**

With the African diaspora, African literature is scattered throughout the world and the collections need to be identified and methodically brought back to Africa. Two such collections successfully returned to the African shores are the Bernth Lindfors and Richard Priebe collections relating to this study.

CALS initially came into being to house the Lindfors Collection (Van Dyk 2002a:1), the private collection of a retired professor of English from the University of Texas in Austin (Zell 2001:3) UKZN purchased the collection in September 2003 (Gunner 2004b:1) which is explained in detail in Chapter 3.

Bernth Lindfors (of Austin, Texas) built up the collection over many years, often by purchasing books and other research materials directly from publishers during his travels, notably but not exclusively in west Africa (Nigeria and Ghana), in southern and central Africa (Zambia, Malawi, Lesotho, Swaziland, South Africa) and east Africa (Tanzania and Kenya). African language materials were rarely collected (Attwell 2015).

The study sought to elicit the reasons why the collection came to UKZN, and specifically the Pietermaritzburg campus. Chapter 4 (Section 4.3) describes the initiative that brought CALS into being, citing Professor David Attwell as being “actively involved” in the process (Jenvey 2004). The intention was to enhance research in the humanities at UKZN. Furthermore, Attwell had been a PhD student of Lindfors. Christopher Merrett, as the director of administration for the Pietermaritzburg campus and former university librarian when CALS was being established, was instrumental in drafting the ‘proposal for the acquisition of Africa’s Literary Archive’ which noted that the acquisition of African literature was seen as a

valuable addition to the existing library collection and would reinforce the research and teaching roles of the English Department. Merrett also believed that the establishment of CALS and the acquisition of the Lindfors collection was highly desirable as a way of raising the national and international profile of the Pietermaritzburg campus in particular (Merrett 2001:1). To this purpose Merrett was tasked with locating suitable premises, which necessitated the relocation of the existing occupants and the modification of the building identified to suit the needs of a library and research centre (Merrett 2001:2; Merrett 2015).

Attwell (2015), in a communication with the researcher, outlined his earliest discussions regarding the Lindfors collection, thus corroborating his intentions and providing the finer details:

“The point of departure was discussions of major capital expenditure for research in the University Research Council (URC). The DVC for Research at the time was Eleanor Prestyn-Whyte. After (another) lengthy discussion of the purchase of a mass spectrometer (or a piece of equipment on that scale) I proposed that there ought to be a Humanities equivalent, and if so, a suitable investment would be the acquisition of a major archive. I did so knowing that the Lindfors Collection (Bernth Lindfors had been my PhD supervisor at the University of Texas at Austin) would soon be up for sale, probably to a north American university. The point of departure, then, was to provide a major boost to research in the African humanities, not African Studies per se.”

In 2002 UN had not yet been through the merger, neither had it branded itself as UKZN: ‘The Premier University of African Scholarship’. However, as early as the 1970s there was an attempt to shift the English curriculum from a Eurocentric to an Afrocentric perspective, as explained by Maughan Brown below.

Maughan Brown was the Principal of the Pietermaritzburg campus (1992–1998), senior deputy vice-chancellor (1998–2001), and acting vice-chancellor of UN (2001–2002) and a distinguished African literature scholar who initiated the study of African literature at UN in the 1970s. He has written extensively and insightfully on Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, amongst others (News24 archives 2002). Maughan Brown corroborated that Attwell had initiated the acquisition of the Lindfors archive. He was most supportive of CALS’s initiative (Attwell 2015; Maughan Brown 2015). He also played an important role in starting the merging process with the University of Durban-Westville (News24 archives 2002).



Maughan Brown gave the researcher his insights on establishing the Centre on the Pietermaritzburg campus, as well as the Eurocentric English studies academic curriculum in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, which enriches the observations in respect of the research issues in this study (Maughan Brown 2015).

In supporting CALS's initiative, and regarding the fact that researchers often have to travel overseas to study African literature, as Attwell himself had to do, Maughan Brown (2015) stated:

“Apart from the obvious practical advantages of having easy access to the Lindfors collection in SA rather than having to trek off to Texas, there were symbolic and branding (if one has to use the commercial marketing terminology) advantages to setting up a separate centre. With the passage of time those advantages may well have been superseded.”

Supporting the establishment of CALS in terms of early literary transformation initiatives from Eurocentric to Afrocentric curriculums, Maughan Brown stated that:

“Symbolically the Centre was making a statement – both internally and externally – confirming the value of African Literary Studies. Although, following the example set by Guy Butler at Rhodes, there was some interest in teaching South African literature in the English Department in the 1970s – Olive Schreiner, Roy Campbell, Ciskei Manson (!) – I had an uphill, and at times very fraught, battle through the late 1970s and the 1980s, to get black African writers (for example Ngugi, Achebe, Armah, Soyinka) established at all levels on the curriculum of a very Great Tradition obsessed department. When I left a much less Great Tradition focused English Department in 1992 to take over as Campus Principal, the African literature which the Lindfors collection celebrated again assumed a lesser status on the curriculum” (Maughan Brown 2015).

In support of the ‘branding’ of the Bernth Lindfors collection and its being housed as a separate collection on the Pietermaritzburg campus, Maughan Brown (2015) elucidates:

“From a branding perspective, universities are always looking for high profile innovations that can give them an edge in a highly competitive market. It was hoped that the Centre would give PMB an advantage in attracting a higher proportion of the limited numbers of postgraduate

students in SA doing research in African Literary Studies and would bring scholars from other universities in SA and elsewhere to the campus to the benefit of our own students. Those aims would obviously be achieved more easily by having a stand-alone centre to publicise (again along the lines of the Alan Paton Centre) than by absorbing the collection into the main library's collection and not being able to say anything much more striking than: 'we've just received a whole lot more ALS materials than we had before and you can now find them on the library shelves.'”

Professor Maughan Brown (2015) also highlights the financial issues surrounding a ‘stand-alone’ African literary studies centre:

“The other obvious factor that needed to be considered was how to raise the funds for the Centre. Donors were, in our experience, very loath to fund what was seen as 'core business'. Merely adding to the library stock (however substantial the addition) was likely to be seen as core business, what universities should be doing on the basis of their fees and public funding. We needed to have a new stand-alone innovation to sell to potential donors. The Durban Campus equivalent at the time – also funded by Atlantic Philanthropies – was the Opera School. Once the collection had been purchased and the Centre established, that rationale for a separate stand-alone existence would no longer hold – not that that entered our thoughts at that stage. But I would have thought that the potential for the development of a community of scholars with a common interest in ALS would probably still be better facilitated by a separate centre than by absorbing the collection into the main library.”

The deputy director of the UKZN Foundation at the time, Van Dyk, also informed the researcher that, “from the fundraising perspective, I knew that obtaining the collection would resonate with donors, which was good for my targets, and from an academic perspective, I thought it appropriate to bring the books home, as it were” (Van Dyk 2015).

It is important to note that the Centre was originally founded to boost African humanities, rather than African studies and this was confirmed by Attwell as stated above in this section as well as by Professor M. Makgoba, in his inaugural address as vice-chancellor of UKZN on 30 September 2005 when he described the collection as “a unique collection of African literature in the world” (Makgoba 2005:18). Professor Ayeë’s 2011 assessment (as the deputy vice-chancellor of the College of Humanities) of CALS described the purpose of the Centre

as “to serve as a centre for the study of African literature within Africa” (Aye 2011b) (see Section 1.3.3).

Thus the study has established the earliest motives for the establishment of the Centre for African Literary Studies at UKZN, and in particular, on the Pietermaritzburg campus, citing the earliest founders, as well as the first attempts as far back as the 1970s to move the humanities (and specifically English studies) towards a more Afrocentric curriculum.

The original custodial obligations are detailed in Chapter 3 (Section 3.6.3), and include the provision of a ‘home’ for the collection; the creation of the CALS board and appointment of the director. However, the funding and staffing issues were fraught with problems from the outset, and were brought to the attention of the board by McCracken in 2009 (see Section 4.5.1), as well as Arthur (2002:1) and Merrett (2002) as explained in Section 4.3.1.2. The problem lay in the fact that when CALS was first established, it was intended to be a self-sufficient externally funded centre (UKZN 2013b:14).

However, the question the study asked is: Have these obligations been changed by subsequent policy development and/or by actual practice?

It is evident when comparing the original custodial obligations as described in the literature (CALS’s Board Minutes; CALS’s Annual Reports; the Report of the External Review of CALS 2013; *CALS News* and other relevant official documents) with the reality of CALS today, that the policy and implementation have ‘drifted’, not necessarily by subsequent policy development, but by actual practice and implementation.

The present and ex-CALS’s directors, when interviewed, generally considered that CALS’s custodial obligations had changed, but notably through implementation rather than through change of policy as described in Section 9.2.3. A tension exists between the Centre’s original aspirations and the reality, creating a gap. One ex-director pointed out that, regarding the collection, the original custodial obligations have not changed, but they have become broader, “to include all African writers, whereas Bernth focused mainly on black African writers”. The original collection reflected Lindfors’s particular interests. There was substantial attention in the collection to Francophone literature (including a complete run of the Paris-based Negritude journal, *Presence Africaine*, for example) (See

Section 3.4). CALS later acquired the Moser collection of Lusophone literature in 2005 and the Priebe collection in 2010 which enhanced the unique Ghanaian chapbook collection, as well as other collections and donations (see Appendix 9). The Centre has subsequently tried to include more local South African literature in the various local languages. For instance, the creation of the isiZulu Literary Museum as described in Section 6.5 is an example of an extension of the local languages.

A suggestion by one of the founders was that CALS should become “a centre for the recovery, translation and dissemination of African-language literatures”. In this regard, in June 2013, Ms Vera Leckie spent time at CALS working on the proofs of her translation of the work of West African author, Boubacar Boris Diop. The book is *L’Afrique au-dela du Miroir (Africa Beyond the Mirror)* (2007). The book has been translated into English from French and was published by Ayeibia Publishing in the United Kingdom on 22 May 2014. Leckie donated a copy in French to CALS (CALS 2013a:13; CALS 2013b: 5).

However, most of the acting directors felt that they had successfully attempted to implement the custodial obligations, notably without institutional support, by maintaining the valuable collection, making the Centre available to students, researchers and academics in African literature, and establishing a network of such scholars via seminars and conferences. It is against this background that the directors deserve credit. Lack of institutional support, permanent staff and funding have hindered the directors. As highlighted in Section 4.3.2, Stilwell (2013a:4-5) outlines CALS’s goals and aims and how CALS has successfully met these goals, despite minimum institutional support. CALS’s role, which is extremely important for the reputation of the humanities at the University, has failed to be properly supported at the highest levels at UKZN.

It was apparent that some of the directors included the vision of CALS when answering the question of whether CALS had fulfilled its original custodial obligations. Four of the directors felt that CALS had not satisfactorily fulfilled its initial vision that encompassed literary studies and research. As one director pointed out, it seems that the original vision has not been properly understood or acted upon and pursued by the University, and thus the original good intentions for the Centre have been allowed to dissipate.

One founder noted that “the vision anticipated the continuing investment by the university in CALS”; however he was unsure whether this had taken place on the scale originally envisaged. The University was required to invest in PhD scholarships, post-doctoral researchers and visiting fellowships. There was concern that UKZN’s institutional support for CALS had been “diluted”. A similar term was used by a director, who stated that the original vision had been allowed “to shrink”. Naturally this would have repercussions and negatively impact on UKZN’s becoming “a Premier Institution for African Scholarship”.

Furthermore, one founder stated that the vision for the Centre had included a programme of ongoing purchases, as well as lobbying writers and academics for further purchases and donations. Lindfors himself has arranged for a number of retiring faculty academics in US institutions to donate material to CALS. He continues to donate material to the Centre.

Interestingly, no founders or directors referred to the fact that the custodial obligations as they relate to a permanent director have not been met.

### **10.3 In what way do the current UKZN policies (as the parent institution which informs CALS’s policies) hinder or promote CALS in contributing as a special collection for African literary studies?**

Sections 4.3.1 and 4.3.2 of this study outline UKZN’s vision, mission and goals and state how CALS is successfully fulfilling these goals (Stilwell 2013a:4-5; UKZN 2015). This section concentrates on the aspects that all five directors determined were undermining CALS in its contribution to African literary studies.

The factors emphasised by the directors accord with the repeated early warnings as mentioned above by McCracken in 2009 (Section 3.7.1), as well as earlier warnings by Arthur (2002:1) and Merrett (n.d.:1-2) (Section 3.5.1). These relate to funding and permanent staffing posts. The value of this collection is such that it warrants special institutional support.

Another major problem is that CALS’s board has not been able to meet since 2013, despite great progress made between 2011 and 2013.

As highlighted in Section 1.2.1, in October 2013, Deputy Vice-Chancellor in the College of Humanities, Professor Cheryl Potgieter, requested that CALS undertake a review. This review is described in Section 4.4.4 (also see Appendix 14). The review recommended “the appointment of key permanent staff for the functioning of the Centre”. Further, “The panel recommends that CALS seek the urgent support it requires from the University’s senior management to resolve its current staffing and funding challenges.”

The university needs to ensure that CALS fulfils this mandate as well as interfaces with the goals and objectives of the University in furthering African scholarship.

#### **10.4 Is CALS fulfilling its role in its contribution to African scholarship within UKZN and the wider academic/research community?**

The mission statement for CALS reads: “To be a centre of excellence for research in the field of African Literary Studies, with the aim of developing, disseminating and applying its expertise as widely as possible” (CALS n.d.:2). Thus the original rationale for the establishment of CALS was to facilitate and promote the study of African literature.

Section 4.3.1 outlines UKZN’s vision, mission and goals and states how CALS is successfully fulfilling these goals (Stilwell 2013a:4-5; UKZN 2015) and thus is fulfilling its role in its contribution to African scholarship.

The question was asked to both the founders as well as the directors to gauge their perspectives on this issue. Two were unable to answer the question as they had left the institution many years ago. Hence it is evident that the founders had distanced themselves from current CALS events as they were no longer familiar with CALS’s activities and “unable to judge with any authority”. However, two of the respondents stated that they had “heard” that the Centre was under-resourced.

Only two of the directors (40%) stated ‘no’ to this question, one gave a definite ‘yes’ (20%) and two stated ‘yes and no’ (40%) which indicates that the directors deserve credit for their endeavours in this regard, despite the “most slender of resources” and in spite of a very limited understanding of CALS’s role and the lack of support by most of those in executive positions in the University. The Centre is utilised, especially by English studies and isiZulu

studies. The establishment of the isiZulu Literary Museum (Section 6.5) enhanced the Centre's use.

It is notable that under Stilwell's directorship, her great achievement was to "beat the backlog" which had dated from 2004 and get "all the different categories of material processed and accessible for use" (Stilwell 2013a:33). Once the collections had been organised and gaps filled, CALS actually started to fulfil its role, together with co-operation from English studies and French studies academics.

Crucially, though, funding is needed to attract scholars, resident writers, seminars, conferences and annual lectures such as the Bloke Modisane Annual Lecture. Because of lack of funding, CALS has been handicapped in creating the vibrant Centre that was originally envisaged by the founders. As McCracken (2010) states: "Yes, there were occasional conferences and workshops but it should have been buzzing with students," postgraduate classes, book launches and so on. An example is that CALS lacked funds to continue with the Bloke Modisane Annual Lecture initiated in 2004 by Professor Gunner, despite the modest sum required for such an event.

The CALS directors interviewed stated that with appropriate institutional support, CALS could add to the stature of UKZN in very significant ways, especially in its contribution to African scholarship.

It is evident from the interviews that the founders of CALS did not keep in touch and are not cognisant whether or not CALS is fulfilling the original vision concerning its ability to contribute to African scholarship at UKZN. The original owners have, to some extent, tried to keep abreast of developments at CALS, but "not in any intrusive way". However, of concern is the fact that one ex-director remarked that when she consulted the website, she noticed that it had last been updated in 2013. It has, however, been updated to some extent since then.

### **10.5 The challenges facing CALS and the viability of the collection**

The study focused on CALS and assessed its viability as a special collection in facilitating and enabling African scholarship at UKZN and the broader community, as well as evaluating the service offered to its users.

The directors who are/were tasked with the managing of CALS are/were hindered in their ability to fulfil their roles as custodians of heritage and conveyors of knowledge owing to a number of factors. These factors include policies and administrative challenges, staffing and financial challenges as discussed above, as well as topical challenges. These challenges include factors such as the justification for separate African collections and the relevant collection development policies, access to the collection, preservation issues, space issues and digitisation.

Challenges facing CALS and special collections in general are discussed in Chapter 5. One of the issues addressed in the study is that of whether there is justification in having a special collection in Africa on African studies in addition to the main academic library, which has a fairly extensive collection on African literature. The entire population of the study was asked this question. The response from the undergraduates, postgraduates, researchers and staff is discussed below.

Section 10.2 above gave the account by Maughan Brown as to why a separate ‘stand-alone’ collection was envisaged as being necessary to brand the collection, as it would attract postgraduate students, both from South Africa and throughout the world, doing research in African literary studies to the University and would attract funding more easily.

All four of the founders believed that **a separate African literary special collection was necessary**, and, as one respondent articulated,

“not to isolate African research from the rest of the library or from academic departments, but rather, to create an engine room of research excellence devoted to the literature of the continent, a lively centre of research and debate with PhD students and visiting researchers engaging one another in a supportive and well-resourced institutional context”.

One respondent believed that this was more necessary than ever because it seems that younger generations of researchers in South Africa are increasingly unaware of their “intellectual forebears in African and diasporic traditions”. One founder stated that “it would be untenable for Africans to have to travel to America to study their own literature, given our post-colonial world”; hence a space such as CALS lends itself to debates about institutional transformation in South Africa. It is exigent that African literary scholars



engage with Africa's intellectual history. In addition, it would make perfect sense for international students to come to Africa to engage with the texts so that they are able to experience the milieu at the same time.

In terms of Hart's (2002) contention, "should not all academic libraries in African countries be deemed African Studies Libraries in that their holdings should reflect the continent in which they exist?" the following emerged. Hart's position is "falsely holistic", stated one ex-director. The common census is that Hart may be writing from a perspective of comfort in the global North and not fully understand the dilemmas and position of libraries in the academic global South. It would be quite feasible to have a centre for European literary studies in Europe as an adjunct to a main academic library where it would be quite clear what the distinct perspective and holdings of such a centre for European literary studies was. So why not a Centre for African Literary Studies which exists with its clearly defined role as an adjunct to the holdings of a central library? A separate centre provides a crucial repository and point of reference. Furthermore, it provides an affirming and important space to focus on African scholarship and heritage and enhance the status of African literature, especially for the younger generation of Africans, and particularly in terms of the African renaissance and African identity. It is essential for researchers to safeguard rare African material, for example, the unique Nigerian and Ghanaian popular literature (chap books) referred to in Sections 5.3.2.1 and 9.2.1 above. Without such a visible presence, the value of such a library is likely to disappear under the dominance of things Western. The other option would be to give the current African collection in the library more prominence but that would be a weaker second prize. Many successful African writers who have visited CALS have been both surprised and delighted with CALS and what it offers in terms of African scholarship.

Both Hart (2002) and Darch (2004) are concerned about African collection policies, especially in connection with the focus being on the voice of the oppressed (Afrocentric) rather than on that of the oppressor (Eurocentric). This is discussed in light of the literature in Chapter 5 (Section 5.3.2.1). UN and later UKZN started to address this problem in the humanities as early as the 1970s (Section 10.2). As UKZN has committed to becoming a 'Premier University of African Scholarship', it is essential that the special collections should reflect this and bring about a "change in the dynamics of teaching and research about Africa", as recommended by Kalu (2010:19-20) in Section 6.3 above.

Furthermore, in terms of the recent debates at tertiary institutions and in the press (as highlighted by Praeg and MacFarlane in the *Mail and Guardian* in March/April 2011) on whether universities should let centres such as CAS at UCT be autonomous bodies or be incorporated into a larger interdisciplinary school of critical studies as mentioned in Section 1.3.3 and explained in Section 6.7, the students determined that the CAS was a space of hope, a space that reflected their intellectual heritage and “centralizes Africa”, emphasising the Afrocentric paradigm adopted by this study. A point of concern highlighted by the literature (see Section 6.7) and corroborated by some of the founders and directors is that Africa needs to look after its own intellectual capital instead of exporting its riches and heritage elsewhere. Thus returning diasporic collections to Africa enables students in Africa to study their heritage in their own country. However, it is important that policies and structures are in place, including qualified staff, to ensure that the collections are safeguarded and preserved for future generations.

The digitisation of the collection is important as it makes knowledge of its holdings far more accessible to a continental and global audience, and also to national scholars/researchers. One ex-director pointed out that copies of *The New African* held at CALS have been digitised. However, she recommended that “much more needs to be digitized, along the lines that has been done at the British Library with its substantial holdings of Sound Archives”. One of the researchers also stressed that digitisation of the collection was important. However, digitisation at CALS is “in its infancy”. It is important to bear in mind the points highlighted by Michel (2005:394) (Section 5.3.5) that special collections by their very nature need to remain “rare” to entice users to the Centre. This was echoed by an ex-CALS director when s/he said that the value of the collection was to attract visitors to the Centre to “see what is there”, since “research is the body of scholarship.” CALS has been unable to digitise because of lack of funds (see Section 5.3.5).

The responses by the undergraduates, postgraduates, researchers and staff surveyed regarding the challenges facing CALS revealed detailed perceptions of the challenges.

As described in Section 8.3, the isiZulu undergraduates, isiZulu and English postgraduates and researchers, as well as CALS staff were surveyed to gauge their perceptions regarding the services offered and the performance of CALS in its contribution to African literary studies at UKZN.

Of note is that all the undergraduates, postgraduates, researchers and staff members concurred with the founders and directors regarding the importance of CALS as a UKZN special collection. Comments included: “absolutely vital”, “a unique resource both locally in the country and continent wide”, “irreplaceable”, “a unique African collection in Africa and in the world”, “a vital resource that should not be broken up”, “it’s essential”. In view of this highly valued collection, it is disturbing that all the groups cited lack of institutional support by UKZN as a factor regarding CALS’s uncertain future. Lack of staff and funding were common crucial concerns cited by the founders, directors and staff.

Common concerns cited were:

- CALS does not have the staff, nor the funds, to exploit the collection to its maximum potential, keep it up to date and promote it within the research community.
- Lack of institutional support: UKZN has not honoured its commitment to the Centre.
- Lack of vibrancy in the form of seminars, colloquia and workshops as envisaged by the founders: CALS has very few serious researchers.
- Lack of leadership in the sense of permanent directors.

At present, the importance of CALS in terms of attracting users lies principally in the isiZulu Literary Museum. CALS is successfully serving the undergraduate isiZulu students through its isiZulu Literary Museum. Space issues, a lack of computers, a need for duplicate copies of high-demand books, up-to-date resources and additional isiZulu books, and the photocopy payment system were the main challenges cited by the undergraduates. The website is not up to date because of lack of staff which impacts negatively on the marketing of CALS (it was, however, updated in 2016 after this observation). Users would like extended opening hours and more staff to assist them. All groups, including the staff, considered the amenities at CALS to be barely adequate for the present, with the caveat that if CALS were operating at full capacity with a full staff complement and a wealth of researchers, the amenities such as working space and computers would be inadequate.

All groups agreed that the CALS staff are knowledgeable, friendly and approachable and the current staff can be commended on their dedication, professionalism and work ethic.

To this purpose one can conclude that CALS is hardly the functional, dynamic unit, buzzing with activity, and a living collection that would be added to during the course of the years and grow in significance, as was envisaged by the original founders. To reach its full potential, CALS needs serious support from the University. As one current staff member so aptly stated: “A library is a service department and its mission is always determined by the vision of the parent body.”

## **10.6 Overview of the study**

The following conclusions are drawn from the findings of the study that relate to CALS’s ability to fulfil its mandate to facilitate and promote the study of African literature.

The mission statement for CALS reads: “To be a centre of excellence for research in the field of African Literary Studies, with the aim of developing, disseminating and applying its expertise as widely as possible” (CALS n.d:2). Thus the original rationale for the establishment of CALS was to facilitate and promote the study of African literature.

It is important to note that the Centre was originally founded to boost African humanities and in so doing enhance African scholarship at UKZN, rather than African studies per se (see Section 1.3.3). Professor Makgoba described the collection as “a unique collection of African literature in the world” (Makgoba 2005:18) and Professor Ayee stated that the Centre is “to serve as a centre for the study of African literature within Africa.”

The study investigated the four research questions elaborated on in Chapter 10:

1. What is the origin of CALS as a special collection, and what were the original custodial obligations? Have these obligations been changed by subsequent policy development and/or by actual practice?
2. In what way do the current UKZN policies (as the parent institution which informs CALS’s policies) hinder or promote CALS in contributing as a special collection for African literary studies?
3. Is CALS fulfilling its role in its contribution to African scholarship within UKZN and the wider academic/research community?
4. What are the challenges facing CALS and special collections in general?

In order to answer these questions, the study employed in-depth literature research as well as self-administered questionnaires for the undergraduate and postgraduate students and researchers who use/have used CALS, as well as CALS's present and ex-staff. In-depth interviews with the original owners of the two main CALS collections, as well as with the founders and the present and ex-directors were conducted.

The research problem central to this study (and thus the purpose and focus of the research questions) was to ascertain what the role of the Centre for African Literary Studies as a University of KwaZulu-Natal special collection comprises and to what extent the Centre is able to fulfil its role in facilitating and enabling African scholarship at UKZN and in the broader community.

In terms of the original custodial obligations, the review of the literature and CALS's documents state that CALS was established to house the African literary collection of Professor Bernth Lindfors, a distinguished scholar of African literatures at the University of Texas at Austin. It was the belief of both Professor Lindfors and the academics, including Professors David Attwell and David Maughan Brown at UN in 2002, that the collection should be housed in its "spiritual home" of Africa. UN was given the offer of first refusal in terms of purchase even though Professor Lindfors was offered a lot more for it by a German institution. When Dr Christopher Merrett left the Pietermaritzburg Library as the librarian, CALS was merely a concept. Merrett, as director of administration, drew up the "proposal for the acquisition of Africa's Literary Archive". The purchase of the collection was inextricably connected to the refurbishment of a suitable venue to house the collection, which turned out to be the Old Gate House on the Pietermaritzburg campus. Merrett was tasked with this and he worked closely with the architect, Mr Peter Howe, on the building alterations. The deputy director of the UN Foundation at the time, Mr Bruno van Dyk, put the bid together to acquire the collection. Two separate proposals were drafted by Van Dyk, one to purchase the collection (to the order of \$436 000) and the other to refurbish the Old Gate House to the appropriate standard to house a valuable collection. The negotiations regarding the funding were with Atlantic Philanthropies (which provided the majority of the funding) and the Anglo-American Chairman's Fund and the Department of Arts and Culture (which provided the smaller, but still substantial, components).

It was proposed and endorsed by CALS's founders that the Centre be situated on the Pietermaritzburg campus in an attempt to attract postgraduate students and to boost the humanities.

CALS was conceived as a research centre for the African continent and the University of Natal (later KwaZulu-Natal) and was to be the repository and custodian of what was envisaged as a collection that would grow and become a magnet and beacon for the intellectual life and literary heritage of the continent. This was particularly important when viewed from the perspective of Africa's dispossession over centuries, and the return of the original Lindfors collection was considered as the return of an intellectual heritage. Vice-Chancellor, Professor Makgoba, lauded the repatriation of the Lindfors collection as a significant step towards the goal of making the university the 'Premier Institution of African Scholarship'.

In one sense then, it was far more than merely "a collection of books, journals, papers" to be put in a library. Rather it was conceived as the start of a new, unique endeavour. It was this vision that inspired and convinced funders such as Atlantic Philanthropies to put its significant weight behind the project. Although the original custodial obligations have not been changed by subsequent policy developments, the implementation of policy has been affected by funding constraints, no permanent director as per the CALS constitution and lack of proper provision for staffing (although this was a shortcoming that was never initially provided for when the constitution was drawn up).

Regarding the collection, the original custodial obligations have become broader to include all African writers and more South African literature in the various local languages, whereas the original Lindfors collection focused mainly on black African writers writing in English.

The collection has subsequently been boosted by the acquisition of the Priebe collection in 2010, other collections such as that of Stephen Gray, and many donations, including unpublished papers (see Appendix 9).

Regarding whether or not the current UKZN policies (as the parent institution which informs CALS's policies) hinder or promote CALS in contributing as a special collection for African literary studies, the following was ascertained:

CALS is governed by a constitution and an advisory board.

The current UKZN policies and goals both promote and hinder CALS. The UKZN goals that the literature highlights that CALS are fulfilling, are as follows:

- CALS is recognised locally and internationally as *potentially* an excellent centre for African scholarship and its vision is to develop African literary studies as an interdisciplinary programme and thus set UKZN on the path to becoming ‘the Premier University of African Scholarship’.
- Responsible community engagement: for instance CALS was an integral part of the UKZN Open Day.
- CALS is closely aligned with UKZN’s goal of pre-eminence in research as it is a key player in building research. CALS has been a place for students to read, gather and share ideas and is key in building previously marginalised languages and literatures, thus promoting the value of African scholarship (CALS established the isiZulu Literary Museum).
- UKZN’s mission is to be the institution of choice for students and CALS has attracted a limited number of international PhD students and researchers.
- CALS’s staff have shown dedication to the Centre despite insecure employment conditions, thus addressing UKZN’s strategic goal of institution of choice for staff.
- In terms of UKZN’s goal of effective and efficient management, the directors have all been extremely eminent and well-published professors.

However, factors have hindered CALS in its ability to promote African literary studies. These include lack of institutional support at the highest level, and a lack of funding and permanent staffing. The staff are on short-term contracts, resulting in instability.

The board has not been able to appoint a permanent director as required by the CALS constitution and the board has not been convened since 2013.

In terms of whether or not CALS is fulfilling its role in its contribution to African scholarship within UKZN and the wider academic/research community, the study established that according to CALS’s constitution (CALS n.d.), CALS’s mandate is to facilitate and promote the study of African literature by managing the collection; to initiate and/or co-ordinate

research projects; to liaise with key researchers through colloquia, joint and reciprocal visits by scholars; to establish and develop links with leading institutions working in the field of African literary studies, both nationally and internationally; to encourage and stimulate the publication of new research in the field of African literary studies; to assist in producing well-trained graduates at doctoral level; and to provide the opportunity for researchers from institutions both within and from outside South Africa (the wider academic/research community) to conduct research relating to African literary studies.

In 2009 Professor McCracken highlighted the core functions of CALS, stating that “African Scholarship should reign supreme” at CALS and that the Centre should be a “vibrant place” and a “hive” of activity with scholars from UKZN, Africa and the wider world, a place “buzzing” with conferences, workshops and seminar series with students registering for these “which are grounded in the CALS Collection”. It is also essential that CALS has an interdisciplinary approach to teaching, research and community engagement which encompasses diverse disciplines such as literary studies, isiZulu, French, history, psychology, political studies, media studies, and so on.

The researcher established that CALS is underutilised. The majority of use is from isiZulu undergraduates, owing to the establishment of the isiZulu Literary Museum at CALS which has proved successful in drawing isiZulu undergraduate students. The researcher was only able to identify a handful of national and international researchers. CALS has held successful conferences and postgraduate English classes are held at CALS. The collection has been well maintained but CALS has failed to become the “hive of activity” as envisaged by the founders, attracting large numbers of postgraduates as well as national and international researchers. This is a direct consequence of lack of institutional support, funding and the appointment of a permanent (rather than acting) director.

Many challenges face CALS and special collections in general. Challenges which face CALS include collection and preservation policies, digitisation, and the promotion of the Centre.

CALS, similarly to other special collections in South Africa, has had to ensure that the collection caters for the Afrocentric policies of the University as opposed to the previous Eurocentric curriculum. Curricula in South African academic institutions have been changed to contain more African-related content. It is important that in aligning with the



Afrocentric stance adopted by this study, the Centre recognises its location in Africa and is able to claim its rightful place in the international community of scholars by promoting the mission of UKZN as the ‘Premier University of African Scholarship’.

Selected digitisation of the collection is important as it makes knowledge of its holdings far more accessible to a continental and global audience, and also to national scholars and researchers. Digitisation is connected to long-term preservation. However, funding issues handicap CALS in its ability to digitise.

An up-to-date website and newsletters are essential to promote the Centre.

### **10.7 The significant findings**

CALS strives to achieve its mission, vision and goals but it is presently hampered by funding, the challenges of sustained fundraising and staffing constraints, as discussed further below. However, despite these severe limitations, it is evident that CALS has an excellent record of achievements (Stilwell 2013a:32).

Importantly, CALS was deliberately established as a **separate centre** on the Pietermaritzburg campus to “symbolically” make a statement, and as a “brand” to attract postgraduate students doing research in African literary studies in South Africa to Pietermaritzburg. This would give the humanities in Pietermaritzburg “the edge in a highly competitive market”. It was believed at the time that these “aims would be achieved more easily by having a stand-alone centre to publicize” (see Section 10.2 above).

Regarding an identity of African literature, Chinua Achebe’s stance is that he does not see “African literature as one unit but as a group of associated units – in fact the sum total of all the national and ethnic literatures of Africa” (Zell and Silver 1971:vii). African collections need to be inclusive of diasporic literature. The concept of an African identity is still evolving.

The most significant finding of the survey was that the original noble vision of the founders, to create a centre that boosts the humanities and African literature at UKZN and especially on the Pietermaritzburg campus, has been handicapped by lack of funding and staff tenure. The Centre was established as an external funding centre which has proved unsustainable. This

has had a negative impact on the endeavours of the CALS's directors who, despite great efforts, have been significantly handicapped in their endeavours to manage CALS through lack of institutional support, funding and staff tenure. CALS has had nine directors since the launch in 2004.

### **10.8 The suitability of the theoretical framework**

A former principal of the Pietermaritzburg campus, Professor David Maughan Brown, began the process of transforming the English curriculum at the then University of Natal from a "Eurocentric" to a more "Afrocentric" curriculum by initiating the study of African literature at UN as far back as the 1970s, by getting black African writers such as Ngugi and Achebe "established at all levels on the curriculum of a very Great Tradition obsessed department" (see Section 10.2). Maughan Brown also played an important role in starting the merging process with the University of Durban-Westville which led to the transformation and new vision of UKZN to set the University on the path of being the "Premier University of African Scholarship". This accords with the Afrocentric framework adopted by the study, as the study draws on these African writers.

The theories of Africanisation and Afrocentrism as posited by Asante, and their impact on African studies centres, successfully guided the literature search in respect of the Africanisation debate and to determine the extent to which CALS is enabling African literary studies at UKZN. The challenges in this regard were highlighted.

Historical research was adopted to scrutinise historical documents and records (the primary sources) relating to the history and provenance of CALS.

The study successfully employed survey research using questionnaires and interviews within an interpretive framework to evaluate user and staff perceptions of CALS as well as the original motives of the founders. The study revealed added insights both from the literature and document analysis, as well as from the empirical aspects of the study.

Mann's nine questions (Section 2.8) were successfully adapted to construct the instruments which guided the research.

As discussed in Section 1.2.1, the study complies with the criterion of originality for a PhD. The originality of the work lies in the examination of the policy framework of the constituent institutions that have made up UKZN and the degree to which these policies have been both coherent and used to guide action. Prior to the 2013 review, no substantial evaluation of CALS as a UKZN special collection had been done. The review report (15 to 17 October 2013) is available for critique and some of the originality of this thesis lies in its being the first academic study to comment on and evaluate the review in the context of the history of CALS and in the light of subsequent events.

## **10.9 Conclusions**

The directors often made headway with the Centre even though they had varying levels of expertise and often little support from top management. Thus some understood clearly what the original vision was, and what the Centre *could* be. They attempted to implement this in sometimes dismal circumstances.

The study established (by means of questionnaires and interviews (see Appendices 2 to 6)) that the majority of students that use CALS are undergraduate isiZulu students and that the Centre is underutilised by postgraduate students and researchers.

The Centre needs institutional support, financing and stable staffing to create the vibrant Centre envisaged by the founders and to successfully promote African literature at UKZN.

## **10.10 Recommendations for practice**

To fulfil UKZN's mission of being the 'Premier University of African Scholarship', CALS needs to regain the original vision and mandate as set out by the founders in terms of promoting and facilitating the study of African literature. To this end, the collection needs to be managed, maintained and preserved; host undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, and fellowships made available; research projects need to be initiated and co-ordinated; liaising with key researchers through colloquia, joint and reciprocal visits by scholars needs to be fostered; links with leading institutions working in the field of African literary studies require establishing and developing, both nationally and internationally; the publication of new research in the field of African literary studies needs to be encouraged; well-trained graduates at doctoral level need to be produced; and the opportunity for researchers from

institutions both within and from outside South Africa (the wider academic/research community) to conduct research relating to African Literary Studies needs to be offered.

“African Scholarship should reign supreme” at CALS and the Centre should be a “vibrant place” and a “hive” of activity as advised by McCracken in 2009 – a place where research and debate with PhD students and visiting researchers can engage one another. It is also essential that CALS has an interdisciplinary approach to teaching, research and community engagement which encompasses diverse disciplines such as literary studies, isiZulu, French, history, psychology, political studies, media studies, and so on. The point of the special collection is “not to isolate African research materials from the rest of the library or from academic departments, but rather, to create an engine room of research excellence, devoted to the literature of the continent” as explained by Maughan Brown (2015).

In the interim period it is important that the curators of the UKZN special collections, as the custodians of our heritage and promoters of African scholarship, serve as a link to scholarship in this field to various undergraduate and postgraduate programmes at UKZN, as special collections are linked to the University’s academic libraries and should play an important role in the University’s academic curricula.

CALS has offered a service to students, researchers and the public since 2004. It is crucial for CALS to become a living collection that is augmented over the course of the years and thus grow in significance and be used expansively and regularly as a substantial and well-used source of African literature.

As far back as 2003, the CALS Board had resolved to recommend to Senate that CALS “should not be regarded as a museum, but should be the hub of a growing collection ... a place of research and not a lending library” [however] “for the Centre to grow it would require a substantial budget to reach its full potential” (UN 2003:Minute7.1). This study recommends that the UKZN Senate and the CALS Board meet and review their own recommendation in 2003.

A suitable budget and support from senior management would enable CALS to forge its own identity and become a robust centre and a magnet for researchers as was initially envisaged by the founders.

### **10.11 Recommendations for policy**

To meet the objectives above, the UKZN should take cognisance of the following:

- UKZN needs to invest more in the Centre for African Literary Studies to reinforce its mission of being ‘the Premier University of African Scholarship’.
- Institutional support at the highest levels is required.
- The board needs to sit twice a year in accordance with the original mandate.
- A permanent director, permanent curator, permanent librarian, and permanent administrator are recommended to manage, maintain and preserve the invaluable collection.
- A dedicated operating budget, materials budget and funding for the external programme are required.
- Space issues need to be addressed.
- Regarding digitisation, “samples” should be digitised “to draw people to the Centre” and for long-term preservation of the collection.
- The promotion of the collection via a good website and newsletter is vital.

Perhaps the strongest recommendation was put forward by one of the original owners (Section 9.2.1.): “CALs would benefit from having a Director who would run the Centre for a long period of time. This would help to provide some continuity in leadership.”

Furthermore, the director should be “supported by a Board that has a strong interest in and commitment to literary scholarship”.

### **10.12 The Review Committee (October 2013)**

The CALS Review Committee had similar findings and recommendations to the findings of this study, citing in particular the importance of CALS as a valuable collection and research centre that “could situate UKZN at the centre of African Scholarship”; funding; permanent staffing, including that of director; the establishment of an advisory board which meets twice a year; and the digitisation of, in particular, photographs and fragile documents; and, importantly, urgent support from the University’s senior management to resolve its current staffing and funding challenges (UKZN 2014a) (see Appendix 14).

It is vital that the Centre is supported “to fulfil its three roles of custodian of the collection, facilitating access to its collection and promoting use of the collection” (UKZN 2013b:5).

A budget was recommended for the implementation of many of these recommendations. Of particular note is the fact that the panel recommended that CALS seek the urgent support it requires from the University’s senior management to resolve its current staffing and funding challenges. Moreover, the final date for the implementation of the recommendations was the end of 2015. To date, no implementations have been executed.

### **10.13 Future research**

Future studies that are similar or relate to this study include an investigation into the viability of the other special collections at UKZN, namely the Alan Paton Centre and Struggle Archives, the Gandhi–Luthuli Documentation Centre and the the [Killie] Campbell Collections regarding challenges such as funding, usage, space and their ability to promote African scholarship at UKZN.

Future research could also be conducted which considers the viability of the model recommended by the CALS Review Committee:

“A previous review recommended the establishment of a Centre for African Studies within the University, within which CALS would be housed. The panel recommends that this model be pursued and the inclusion of other centres in addition to CALS be explored (for example the Alan Paton Centre).”

Again, a dedicated budget is required.

### **10.14 Summary**

This concluding chapter provided a summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study that examined the viability of CALS, its challenges and its ability to promote African scholarship at UKZN.

Areas for future research were also highlighted. The purpose of the study was to ascertain what the role of the Centre for African Literary Studies as a University of KwaZulu-Natal

special collection constitutes and the extent to which the Centre is able to fulfil its role in facilitating and enabling African scholarship at UKZN and in the broader community.

The literature review described CALS's original custodial obligations and whether these have been changed by subsequent policy development and/or by actual practice; whether the current UKZN policies (as the parent institution which informs CALS's policies) hinder or promote CALS in contributing as a special collection for African literary studies; whether CALS is fulfilling its role in its contribution to African scholarship within UKZN and the wider academic/research community; and the challenges facing CALS in general.

The use of both quantitative and qualitative research methodology guided the investigation of the study.

The analysis and interpretation of the data found that the majority of CALS's users are undergraduate isiZulu students.

Finally, the study proposes strategies in the form of recommendations which the University needs to consider.

From the above it is evident that there exists a direct synergy between CALS's policies and those of UKZN. As Kalu (2010:17) said: "CALS's mission is best suited to serving the larger UKZN's stated vision of becoming 'the Premier Institution of African Scholarship'." It is hoped that this thesis will make a contribution towards CALS fulfilling its role at UKZN and more widely.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Letter of consent

Dear Participant

I am a PhD student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal investigating the role of the Centre for African Literary Studies as a University of KwaZulu-Natal special collection and its contribution to African literary studies.

I am inviting you to participate in the research because of the valuable contribution you can make in terms of highlighting important criteria related to the topic.

If you agree to participate, I would like you to complete an attached questionnaire and/or be interviewed. The questionnaire will be e-mailed to you personally.

I commit myself to keeping the information you provide confidential. You have the right to withdraw at any point of the study, for any reason, and without any prejudice, and the information collected will be turned over to you.

There are no known risks from being in this study. Taking part in the research is completely voluntary.

I appreciate your participation in this research, partly in light of your time constraints. If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact me or my supervisors at the contact numbers below.

Thank you.

Sincerely

Fiona Polak (Mrs)

Tel.: (033) 330 7354

[fionap@telkomsa.net](mailto:fionap@telkomsa.net)

Prof. Christine Stilwell

University of KwaZulu-Natal

(028) 316 2514

[stilwell@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:stilwell@ukzn.ac.za)

Prof. Peter Underwood

University of Cape Town

(021) 761 8483

[pgunderwood@wol.co.za](mailto:pgunderwood@wol.co.za)

**Title of study:**

African identity in the making: The role of the Centre for African Literary Studies as a Special Collection of the University of KwaZulu-Natal and its contribution to African Studies

I, ....., hereby consent to participate in the study as outlined in the document about the study/ as explained to me by the researcher.

I acknowledge that I have been informed about why the questionnaire/interview is being administered to me. I am aware that participation in the study is voluntary and I may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any stage and for any reason without any form of disadvantage.

I, ....., acknowledge that I understand the contents of this form and freely consent to participating in the study.

**Participant**

Signed: .....

Date: .....

**Researcher**

Signed: .....Fiona Margaret Polak (Mrs).....

Date: .....5 June 2015.....

HSSREC Research Office contact details: Ms P Ximba, Tel: 031 260 3587, E-mail: [ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za)

## APPENDIX 2

### QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE CENTRE FOR AFRICAN LITERARY STUDIES (CAL S)

#### Questionnaire 1: Questionnaire for undergraduate students, postgraduate students and researchers who use CAL S

Dear Respondent

I am a PhD student in Information Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus. I am investigating the role of the Centre for African Literary Studies as a University of KwaZulu-Natal special collection and its contribution to African literary studies. The purpose of this questionnaire is to assess your perceptions of the Centre for African Literary Studies. Could you please help me by filling in this questionnaire in order to assist in the process of collecting data for my research topic. Any information provided here will remain confidential and you will remain anonymous. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

#### Question 1

Please circle or underline the statement that describes you as a user.

Undergraduate student

Postgraduate Student

Researcher

#### Question 2

Please state your study and/or research interests:

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#### Question 3

Have you used CAL S? Yes/No

**Question 4**

If you answered yes to question 3, then please continue with this questionnaire.

If you answered no, then please indicate why you have never used CALS by underlining or circling the relevant answer:

- (i) I do not know
- (ii) The lecturers never referred me to CALS
- (iii) Other
- (iv) If you answered (iii) above (other), then please elaborate:

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**Question 5**

How did you find out about CALS?

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### Question 6

Kindly indicate the answers for sections A–C by placing a cross under the statement [always] [sometimes] [never] [do not know] which best describes your answer.

#### Section A

<b>Library Service</b>	<b>Always</b>	<b>Some times</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Do not know</b>
1. CALS's staff are friendly and approachable				
2. CALS's staff are knowledgeable and professional in their dealings with me				
3. CALS's staff are willing to help me				
4. CALS's staff take an interest in me and my needs				
5. CALS's staff give my enquiries appropriate time and attention				
6. CALS's staff respond clearly and accurately to enquiries				
7. CALS's staff provide high quality service				

#### Section B

<b>Facilities</b>	<b>Always</b>	<b>Some times</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Do not know</b>
1. I am able to access computer workstations at CALS				
2. The photocopying facilities at CALS are adequate				
3. The facilities at CALS are attractive				
4. The facilities at CALS are comfortable				

## Section C

<b>Resources</b>	<b>Always</b>	<b>Some times</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Do not know</b>
1. Resources at CALS are appropriate for my research needs				
2. Resources at CALS are up to date and relevant				
3. Suggestions by CALS's staff to find resources elsewhere are good				
4. I usually find the resources at CALS I need				
5. I use CALS's website				
6. I consult the iCatalogue (previously UKZN iLink) to locate items at CALS				

### Question 7

Please write any comments or ideas you may have concerning each of the statements below in the space provided:

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Comment</b>
1. It is important to have an African Literary Studies Special Collection at UKZN	
2. The signage directing me to CALS is adequate	
3. The study space at CALS is quiet and suitable for my study and/or research needs	
4. CALS is useful for my research	
5. I was able to find material at CALS which I was unable to find elsewhere	
6. The CALS's website is easy to use	
7. The contents of the CALS's website are useful	
8. The coverage of CALS's holdings on the iCatalogue (previously iLink) is adequate	



**Question 8**

- (i) If you do make use of the CALS's website, what additional feature(s) or information would you like to see on the site?

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- (ii) In your opinion, is CALS's material easy to identify on the iCatalogue?  
(previously iLink)

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- (iii) Please explain your answer

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**Question 9**

- (i) Have you experienced frustrations/problems at CALS? Yes/No.

- (ii) If yes, please describe them.

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**Question 10**

CALS is closed access and is not open during the weekends. Does this affect your research needs? If so, please elaborate.

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**Question 11**

(i) Can you think of an incident when you were searching for information when you considered CALS to be helpful or adequate? Yes/No

(ii) If yes, please elaborate

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(iii) Can you think of an incident when you were searching for information when you considered CALS unhelpful or inadequate? Yes/No

(iv) If no, please elaborate

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**Question 12**

What can CALS do – or improve – that would help researchers?

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**Question 13**

Please comment on any services that you think should be offered at CALS that are currently unavailable at or through CALS

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**Question 14**

Please comment on any other areas pertinent to CALS or concerns that you may have that are not addressed above.

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**Question 15**

Would you like to share a story about using CALS, good or bad? If yes, please do write it down here.

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION**

### APPENDIX 3

## QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE CENTRE FOR AFRICAN LITERARY STUDIES (CAL S)

### Questionnaire 2: Questionnaire for current and ex-staff members of the Centre for African Literary Studies

Dear Respondent

I am a PhD student in Information Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus. I am investigating the role of the Centre for African Literary Studies as a University of KwaZulu-Natal special collection and its contribution to African literary studies. The purpose of this questionnaire is to assess your perceptions of the Centre for African Literary Studies. Could you please help me by filling in this questionnaire in order to assist in the process of collecting data for my research topic. Any information provided here will remain confidential and you will remain anonymous. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

#### Question 1

Please state what your role is/was at CALS

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#### Question 2

How long have/were you associated with CALS?

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### Question 3

Kindly indicate the answers for sections A and B by placing a cross under the statement [always] [sometimes] [never] [do not know] which best describes your answer.

#### Section A

<b>Facilities</b>	<b>Always</b>	<b>Some times</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Do not know</b>
5. The computer workstations in the Centre for African Literary Studies are adequate				
6. The photocopying and printing facilities at CALS are adequate				
7. The facilities at CALS are attractive				
8. The facilities at CALS are comfortable				

#### Section B

<b>Resources</b>	<b>Always</b>	<b>Some times</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Do not know</b>
7. Resources at CALS are appropriate for researcher needs				
8. Resources at CALS are up to date and relevant				
9. Researchers at CALS get referred elsewhere if necessary				
10. The resources are usually found when requested				
11. I consult the CALS's website				
12. I consult the UKZN iCatalogue (previously iLink) to locate items at CALS				

**Question 4 Please write any comments or ideas you may have in the space provided**

<b>Statements</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1. It is important to have an African Literary Studies Special Collection at UKZN as part of the academic library.	
2. The signage directing users to CALS is adequate	
3. The study space at CALS is quiet and suitable for study and/or researcher needs	
4. CALS is useful for researchers	
5. Researchers are able to find material at CALS that they are not able to find elsewhere	
6. The CALS's website is easy to use	
7. The contents of the CALS's website are useful	
8. The coverage of CALS's holdings on the iCatalogue is adequate	

**Question 5**

(i) Do you have suggestions for additional feature(s) or information for the CALS's website?  
Yes/No

(ii) If yes, please elaborate

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(iii) In your opinion, is CALS's material easy to identify on the iCatalogue? Yes/No

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(iv) Please explain your answer

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**Question 6**

(i) Have you experienced frustrations/problems at CALS? Yes/No.

(ii) If yes, please describe them.

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**Question 7**

CALS is closed access and is not open during the weekends. How do you think this affects researcher needs?

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**Question 8**

(i) Can you think of an incident when you were searching for information for a researcher when you considered the CALS's collection helpful or adequate?

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(ii) If yes, please elaborate

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(iii) Can you think of an incident when you were searching for information for a researcher when you considered the CALS's collection unhelpful or inadequate?

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(iv) If no, please elaborate

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**Question 9**

What can CALS do – or improve – that would help researchers?

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**Question 10**

Please comment on any services you think should be offered at CALS that are currently unavailable at or through CALS

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**Question 11**

**The role of the CALS**

1. Do you think that CALS is fulfilling its role successfully in its contribution to African Studies within UKZN and the wider academic/research community?

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2. What contributions to the University of KwaZulu-Natal and the broader research community would you most like CALS to make?

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3. Thinking 10 years into the future, what is your vision for the role CALS will play?

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4. In your opinion, what do you believe are the biggest challenges facing CALS?

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**Question 12**

**Work satisfaction**

1. Do you have the necessary equipment (e.g. computers and relevant programmes) and material (e.g. stationery) to undertake your work at CALS?

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2. (i) What hinders you in performing your work at CALS?

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(ii) What assists you in performing your work at CALS?

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3. Do you think that the building is suitable at CALS in terms of storage space; work space; study space; building defects? Yes/No

4. If no, please specify problematic areas.

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5. Are you happy with your working hours? Yes/No.

6. If no, please specify.

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**Question 13**

**Your observations**

1. What changes do you anticipate relating to the need for the CALS's collection?

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2. Do you think that CALS is serving its users adequately?

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**Question 14**

**Your suggestions**

1. Could CALS improve its current offerings to better serve its users? Yes/No

2. If yes, what services should CALS explore as potential services?

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3. Is there anything else of importance regarding CALS which you would like to add?

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**Question 15**

Would you like to share a story about CALS, good or bad? If yes, please do write it down here.

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION**

## APPENDIX 4

### Interview schedule 1 for the owners of the original (two largest) collections bought by CALS

Dear Respondent

I am a PhD student in Information Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus. I am investigating the role of the Centre for African Literary Studies as a University of KwaZulu-Natal Special Collection and its contribution to African literary studies. Could you please help me by answering the following questions in order to assist in the process of collecting data for my research topic. Any information provided here will remain confidential and you will remain anonymous. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

1. How did your interest in African literature develop?

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2. How did you go about developing your large personal collection in African literature?

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3. Do you believe that your collection located at CALS is unique? Yes/No?

4. If yes, what are the outstanding features of the collection?

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5. Why did you choose CALS as the 'home' for your collection?

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6. Do you think this was a good decision? Please elaborate.

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7. Do you keep abreast of developments at CALS? Yes/No

8. If yes, how do you keep informed?

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9. Do you agree with the way in which CALS is making the collection accessible?  
Yes/No? Please elaborate.

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10. Is there anything else of importance regarding your collection which you would like to add?

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION**

## APPENDIX 5

### Interview schedule 2 for the founders of the Centre for African Literary Studies

Dear Respondent

I am a PhD student in Information Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus. I am investigating the role of the Centre for African Literary Studies as a University of KwaZulu-Natal Special Collection and its contribution to African literary studies. Could you please help me by answering the following questions in order to assist in the process of collecting data for my research topic. Any information provided here will remain confidential and you will remain anonymous. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

1. You were instrumental in the founding of CALS. Why was an African Literary Studies Special Collection considered necessary at UKZN?

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2. Do you think that a separate Special Collection is still necessary? If yes, please elaborate.

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3. What was your original intention and vision for establishing the Centre for African Literary Studies?

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4. In your opinion, did this intention differ from that of the wider group of founders, such as the Vice Chancellor of UKZN and the Deputy Director of the UKZN Development Foundation? Please elaborate.

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5. Could you briefly describe the events, the process and the challenges that led up to the establishment of the Centre for African Literary Studies?

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6. Who was involved in formulating the initial UKZN policies regarding CALS?

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7. Do you think that CALS has had an impact on the promotion of African Studies at UKZN? Please elaborate.

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8. Can you suggest important directions for CALS in the future?

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9. Is there anything else you would like to add about the establishment of CALS?

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION**

## APPENDIX 6

### Interview schedule 3 for the CALS's director and past directors

Dear Respondent

I am a PhD student in Information Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus. I am investigating the role of the Centre for African Literary Studies as a University of KwaZulu-Natal Special Collection and its contribution to African Studies. The purpose of this interview is to assess your perceptions of the Centre for African Literary Studies. Could you please help me by answering the following questions in order to assist in the process of collecting data for my research topic. Any information provided here will remain confidential and you will remain anonymous. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

1. Hart (2002:61) states: "Should not all academic libraries in African countries be deemed African Studies Libraries in that their holdings should reflect the continent in which they exist?" Do you believe that there is justification in having a Special Collection specializing in African Literary Studies in addition to the main academic library, which has a fairly extensive collection on African literature? Please give a reason/s for your answer.

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2. Can you please outline what you consider to be the original custodial obligations of CALS as in 2004 when CALS was established?

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3. To your knowledge, have these original custodial obligations changed? Yes/No.

4. If yes, do you think that the original custodial obligations have changed due to changes in policy or by change in practice? Please elaborate.

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5. Do you believe that the current UKZN policies (as the parent institution which informs CALS's policies) hinder/promote CALS in its contribution as a Special Collection for African Literary Studies? Please elaborate.

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6. How do you (or did you) view the role of CALS as a University of KwaZulu-Natal Special Collection in enabling and promoting African Scholarship?

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7. Do you believe that CALS is fulfilling its role successfully in its contribution to African Scholarship within UKZN and the wider academic/research community?  
Yes/No.

8. How can CALS reach its potential to be one of the best centres for African Literary Studies in the world?

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9. What do you see as the challenges facing CALS and Special Collections in general?

10. What kind of researchers do you think the Centre wishes to attract?

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11. As the Director (or past Director) of CALS, that is the driving force behind CALS, how do you view the future of CALS?

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12. What were/are your goals and aspirations for CALS?

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13. Do you believe that you were/are able to fulfil these goals? Please elaborate.

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14. As the Director/past Director of CALS, what were you most passionate about regarding the promotion of CALS?

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15. Please tell me about your experiences concerning:

i. Funding issues at CALS

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ii. The staffing situation at CALS

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iii. The digitization of the collections

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16. Do you believe that CALS is promoting itself well? Please give examples

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17. As a Director/ ex Director, is there anything else important that you would like to add concerning CALS?

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION**

## APPENDIX 7

**(i) African Studies Libraries in Africa, North America and Europe indicating their programmes and publications (Kalu 2010: 3-4)**

University	Undergrad Programme	Postgrad Programme	Study Abroad	Postgrad Conference Seminar Programme	Journal Publications	Newsletter	Outreach Placement	Research Programme
Ghana	X	X	-	X	X	-	-	X
Cape Town		X	-	X	X	-	-	-
California, LA	X	X	-	-	X	-	X	X
Boston	X	X	X	X	X	-	-	-
Florida	X	X	X	-	X		X	X
Pennsylvania	-	X	X	X	-	X	X	-
Georgia	X	X	X	-	-	X	X	-
Cornell	X	X	-	X	-	-	-	-
Columbia	X	X	-	X	-	-	-	X
Texas, Austin	X	X	-	X	-	-	-	X
Texas, Arlington	-	-	X	X	-	-	X	X
Ohio State	X	X	-	-	-	X	X	X
Wisconsin, Madison	X	X	X		X	-	X	X
Rutgers	X	X	X	-	-	X	X	X
Carleton, Canada	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	-
Ottawa	-	X	-	X	X	-	-	X
Cambridge	-	X	-	X	X	-	-	X
Edinburgh	-	X	-	X	X	-	-	X
SOAS, London	X	X	-	X	-	-	-	X

Note: In addition to the above, Northwestern University and Yale University hold two of the most important African collections in the United States of America.



**(ii) National libraries of the world**

**A list of selected national libraries of the world is provided in the table.**

<b>Library</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Year founded<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Special collections, archives, papers</b>
Alexandrian Library	Alexandria, Egypt	2002 <sup>2</sup>	Ancient manuscripts, Egyptian heritage
British Library	London	1973 <sup>3</sup>	Charles Dickens, George B. Shaw
Central National Library of Florence	Florence	1861	Reformation, Galileo Galilei
Central National Library of Rome	Rome	1876	Jesuit collections, Gabriele D'Annunzio
German National Library Frankfurt am Main	Germany	2006	Bibliographies, exile literature (1933–45)
German National Library Leipzig	Germany	2006	Socialism, Anne-Frank-Shoah-Bibliothek
Jewish National and University Library	Jerusalem	1892	World Jewish history, Albert Einstein
Library and Archives Canada	Ottawa	2004	Hockey, portraits of Canadians
Library of Congress	Washington, DC	1800	Americana, folk music, early motion pictures
National Agricultural Library	Beltsville, MD	1962	Research reports
National Diet Library	Tokyo	1948	Japanese culture, Allied occupation
National Library	Rio de Janeiro	1810	Botany, Latin-American music
National Library	Warsaw	1928	Engravings, music

National Library of Australia	Canberra	1960	Asian and Pacific area
National Library of China	Beijing	1909	Art, early communism
National Library of Education	Washington, DC	1994	Research reports
National Library of France	Paris	1461	Denis Diderot, Jean-Paul Sartre
National Library of Greece	Athens	1866 <sup>4</sup>	Incunabula
National Library of India	Kolkata (Calcutta)	1903	Rare journals of vernacular languages
National Library of Ireland	Dublin	1877	Biography, Gaelic manuscripts
National Library of Medicine	Bethesda, MD	1956	History of medicine
National Library of Mexico	Mexico City	1867	Jesuit works, early Mexican printing
National Library of New Zealand	Wellington	1965	European exploration, missionary activity
National Library of Pakistan	Islamabad	1993	Manuscripts, censuses
National Library of Portugal	Lisbon	1796	Luís de Camões, Desiderius Erasmus
National Library of Russia	St Petersburg	1795	Rare books, Russian history
National Library of Scotland	Edinburgh	1925	Mountaineering, witchcraft
National Library of South Africa	Pretoria; Cape Town	1999	Africana, cookery
National Library of Spain	Madrid	1836	Manuscripts, Miguel de Cervantes
National Library of Sweden	Stockholm	1661	Scandinavian cartography and manuscripts

National Library of Venezuela	Caracas	1833	Politics and diplomacy, Simón Bolívar
National Library of Wales	Aberystwyth	1907	Publications of overseas Welsh settlements
Royal Library	The Hague	1798	Hugo Grotius, Constantijn Huygens

<sup>1</sup>In present institutional form. <sup>2</sup>Originally founded in the 3rd century BCE. <sup>3</sup>Originally founded in 1753 as the British Museum Library. <sup>4</sup>Originally founded in 1832 as the Public Library.

## APPENDIX 8

### **E-mailed letter from Professor Bernth Lindfors to the researcher dated 14 August 2011**

In 1961-63 my wife and I went to Kenya to participate in a program called 'Teachers for East Africa' (TEA) funded by the U.S. government. As East African countries were approaching independence, their high schools were in a difficult position because teachers were leaving to take up better paying jobs in government and industry, as British expatriates were departing. This left the high schools with a shortage of qualified teachers just at the time when these countries were eager to expand educational opportunities. The purpose of TEA was to supply American teachers to high schools in Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika and Zanzibar for a limited period of time until there were enough East African graduates to fill high school teaching positions again. TEA was later (some-time in the 1970s) taken over by the Peace Corps, which has continued to supply teachers to East Africa in more limited numbers. At its height in the 1960s TEA had over 600 Americans in the program.

My wife and I went over in the first wave and were placed in a boys' boarding school in Kisii, Western Kenya. Since we had MAs in teaching from Harvard, we could go directly into teaching; those without teaching certification or experience had to enrol in an MA program at Makerere University in Kampala for a year before being assigned to a school in East Africa for two additional years. We too had a limited experience of education at Makerere, for after three weeks of orientation at Columbia University in New York, we were given six weeks of orientation at Makerere, which included an introduction to the East African educational system, some practice teaching in local or regional schools, a little bit of instruction in the Swahili language, and involvement in campus activities.

It was at Makerere that I first started reading African literature. Before leaving New York, I had picked up a copy of Janheinz Jahn's MUNTU, which I had a chapter on African literature, and I began to look for the books cited by Jahn at the university

library. I read a few of them there and many others once I was out at Kisii. In those days Makerere had a very enlightened policy. They allowed anyone who had been associated with the university to borrow books from its library no matter where in East Africa they happened to be placed. So every couple of weeks I would send in an order and back would come a few books that I could read in my free time. I also began to search in book shops for such materials whenever I visited Nairobi. There were not many books in English by African authors available back then, but there were enough to keep my interest up, and during the two years we were in Kenya, I had acquired a small shelf of the most accessible titles.

I had joined TEA after completing an MA in English at Northwestern University, the year after doing my MA in teaching at Harvard. My original intention was to be a high school teacher, but my professors at Northwestern had encouraged me to go on for a doctorate, so I had that idea at the back of my mind when I left to join TEA. But while in Kenya I became so fascinated with the new reading I was doing that I decided that I would prefer to work for a doctorate in this new literature rather than in American or British literature, if I could find an institution that would allow me to do that. African Studies was a new but rapidly growing field at American tertiary institutions back then, and I approached several of them asking if I could work toward a degree in English with a dissertation concentration in African literature. Northwestern said no because, though they had a respectable African Studies programme, there was no one in the English department qualified to supervise such a dissertation; they suggested that I work on the image of Africans in eighteenth century British literature or on some such option instead, but this did not appeal to me. In fact, there were only two universities in the U.S. that were willing to accommodate a dissertation concentration of the sort I was seeking to propose. One was Columbia, the other the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA); both said they were willing to allow me to write such a dissertation provided I jumped all the usual hurdles in British and American literature specialization before going on to the dissertation stage. UCLA was building an impressive African Studies programme and was expecting to hire someone to teach African literature, so I decided to go there.

What helped me to make that decision was the availability of a fellowship awarded through the National Defense Education Act that provided support for postgraduate students who were willing to study a critical (i.e. politically important) language every term they were in residence for their doctoral studies. Chinese, Japanese, Russian, Arabic, were the most common languages chosen in such a scheme, but Swahili was also included among the critical languages available, so I applied for that one and was accepted in the programme. That paid my tuition and fees at UCLA for four years, and at the dissertation stage I was awarded a Foreign Area Fellowship from the Ford Foundation for two additional years, enabling me to complete my studies in 1969. Without such support, it would have been next to impossible for me to do doctoral work. My wife had had our first child in Kenya, a second was born just after we returned to the U.S., and a third arrived while we were in California. So without these fellowships, I would have wound up teaching in a high school somewhere in the U.S. or possibly somewhere else in Africa.

I was lucky too when I entered the academic job market. When I started my studies at UCLA, my brother used to ask me what I would do with a degree awarded for a specialization in African literature. There were no jobs available in such an odd speciality in the U.S. university system in the early Sixties, but by the time I finished at UCLA, there suddenly were opportunities galore, partly because there was an increasing demand for people who could help to staff new African American Studies programmes, most of which had an African component. Also, African studies had prospered in the Sixties, due to the changing circumstances in Africa, where new nations were being born almost every year. So I came out of graduate school at just the right time and found a good position at the University of Texas at Austin, where I was encouraged to start a journal called *Research in African Literatures* [RAL].

During my years at UCLA, I continued to acquire African books and journals wherever I could find them. I wanted to build up a personal collection that would sustain my research interests wherever I might be happened to be placed afterwards. I thought it unlikely that I would end up at an institution that had a substantial collection of African literature, so I started buying up everything in sight, or at least everything I could afford. The Sixties were a heady period of growth for African literature, so there

was a lot available through the Heinemann African Writer series and through offerings by other international publishers operating on the African continent. There were also lots of new journals being created. I concentrated mainly on anglophone African literature but also picked up a selection of important titles in French, Swahili, and several other languages. I in fact became a bookaholic, and my work at Texas, not only in editing RAL and teaching but also in bibliographical research required that I keep on top of what was coming out and acquiring as much of it as I could. As the field grew, so did my library, and whenever I travelled to Africa on a research trip, I tried to pick up as many locally published literary works, both books and journals, as I could find. So the collection that UKZN acquired at the end of 2003 was based on over forty years of this kind of activity, with rate of accumulation increasing almost every year to keep up with the growth of publication of African title worldwide.

I was very happy that my library wound up at UKZN, for I wanted it to be housed somewhere on the African continent in a place where it would be well maintained and could help to further research on diverse aspects of African literature. I hope CALS will continue to grow and prosper in the years to come.

## APPENDIX 9

### CALS: DONATIONS AND BOXED MATERIAL

Donations which CALS has received over the years include: the Stephen Gray Collection (including Cahiers du Sud which he acquired from the Johannesburg Public Library for CALS) and the works of Noel Langley, a locally born Broadway and West End play and script writer who is especially renowned for *The Wizard of Oz*; Stephen Coan from the *Witness* donated runs of various literary journals as well as 14 books, mostly poetry, as well as some novels. Professor Keyan Tomaselli donated some titles in French; Centre for Creative Studies in Durban (Peter Rorvik donations); visitors to CALS; French material from Carole Beckett; Jenni Couzyn; Carol Brammage; education material from Catherine Woeber [in November 2011, Dr Catherine Woeber, then Senior Lecturer in English Studies (UKZN) donated four boxes of articles which cover social, educational and ecclesiastical history during the decades when the first black South African autobiographers were at school (1930s–1950s). [She also donated two boxes of books containing South African, African and African–American titles relating to her PhD work on Peter Brahams and Es’kia Mphahlele]; the Gerald Moser Collection of Lusophone Literature from Mozambique, Angola, Cape Verde and other Portuguese speaking countries of Africa; the Richard Priebe Collection (purchased 2010); Eilersen-Stead donation of research notes on Bessie Head; Geslin donation (collection of South African literature from Nicole Geslin and Ruth Edgecombe); Brenthurst donation of monographs; John N. Jonsson donation of monographs and reference works; Liz Gunner donation; Shuter and Shooter donation of Zulu books; and Professor Dietloff van der Berg of the Afrikaans Department on the PMB campus has donated the Department’s Collection of Afrikaans literature. Afrikaans donations were also received from Estelle Liebenberg-Barkhuizen from APC, Fiona Polak and Rene Bohnen. Other donations include those of Dr Vicki Manus from the University of Stendhal-Grenoble, whose book is linked to CALS, and from Professor Kerry Haynie of Duke University. Professor Stilwell donated her collection of South African children’s books, as well as other items, to the Centre (CALS’s 2013a:6).



The National Library of South Africa donated preprints of 27 titles in nine previous marginalised South African languages (CAL S 2012d:3-4). The UKZN Press donated an autographed copy of *Children of Paradise* by Professor Mbulelo Vizikhungo Mzamane, the first permanent director of the Centre, to CALS.

Bernth Lindfors sends regular parcels of donations, both books and journals; Nii Ayikweh Parkes donated a copy of his book of poems *The Makings of You* (CAL S 2012a:5).

James Currie donated his papers from his book *Africa Writes Back: The African Writers Series and the Launch of African Literature* (2008) to CALS in 2014/5. (Stilwell 2013:9;29).

Regarding the Eilerson donation, Dr Gillian Stead Eilerson of the University of Aarhus, Denmark, offered CALS research material she collected for her book *Bessie Head: Thunder Behind Her Ears* (launched at CALS in June 2007). Dr Eilersen writes: “I would like to offer your centre these papers for several reasons: Head was born and spent most of her childhood in Pietermaritzburg; I did too and not only is the then University of Natal my own alma mater, but I began what I suppose could be called an academic career at ‘Hags’ (old building), barely a stone’s throw from the present location of CALS” (CAL S 2010a:2). This example shows that many donations are from people who have links with UKZN.

In 2013 the isiZulu collection “was expanded with the donation by Moaba Sesotho, the Sesotho Writers Association, of isiZulu books to CALS. This was done through Mr Hlengwa from isiZulu Studies at UKZN. Mr Wela from Shuter and Shooter donated an additional copy of the isiZulu novel, *Ithemba Alibulali*, by Maphill Shange, as this is a title in high demand. It is one of the NLSA’s “Proudly South African classic reprints. Other donations of isiZulu literature came from UKZN Press and the KZN Provincial and Public Library and Information Services” (Stilwell 2013:9).

Else Schreiner donated a rare book, *Cameos from the Kraal*, and her *Lesothosaurus* officially to CALS on 7 December 2012. Published by the Lovedale Institution Press, the book contains oral tales collected and transcribed by Mary Waters. Margaret von Klemperer, in an article in *The Witness* (Von Klemperer 2004:10) refers to “the charming illustrations” which are the work of an untrained and unnamed African artist. The book is thought to have originated between 1900 and 1923 and has been reprinted several times. Else also donated a copy of her

children's book *Lesothosaurus and the Ancestor's Bones* to CALS. In December 2012 Sally Howes of Watermark Publishing donated two books published by Pearson Educational to CALS. Sally is the editor of the series which includes the two items, *Great African Thinking* by Sharon Dell and *Great African Writing* by Arabella Koopman (CALS 2012a:5-6; CALS 2012b:2).

At present the CALS collection "boasts some 16 000 books [which includes poetry, plays, novels, literary criticism, reference works, theses and dissertations and children's books written in Africa], journals and rare sound and video material and is especially notable for its holdings of material published in Africa, such as a full collection of Onitsha market literature from Nigeria. Also in the collection is a large body of remarkable photographs of African authors and wide-ranging bibliographical resources for criticism about African literature ... CALS also has a wealth of documents and original letters from authors" (Stilwell 2013:6-7).

CALS maintains a file of relevant newspaper clippings.

CALS holds the following valuable boxed collections which are largely unpublished and are of special interest to researchers:

ALS 3 The Gillian Stead Eilersen Collection of Bessie Head Research Material.

ALS 4 The Bernth Lindfors African Literature Collection.

ALS 5 The Catherine Woeber Collection of Early Black South African Autobiography.

ALS 6 The Gerald Moser Collection of Portuguese, Brazilian and Lusophone African Literatures (Lusophone)

ALS 7 The Richard Priebe African Literature Collection.

ALS 8 The Liz Gunner Collection of African Literature.

ALS 9 The Stephen Gray Collection of African Literature (Stilwell 2013:7)

## APPENDIX 10

### CALS: staff organogram

The organogram below depicts the location of CALS within the UKZN structures and the CALS's staffing structure.

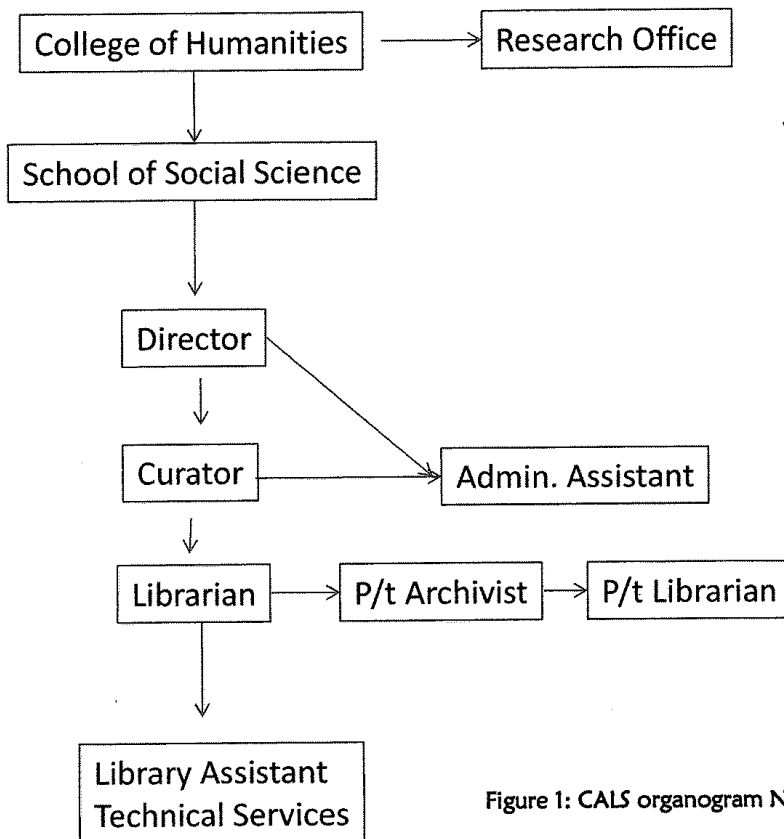


Figure 1: CALS organogram November 2012

## APPENDIX 11

### CALS: CONSTITUTION

#### CENTRE FOR AFRICAN LITERARY STUDIES (CAL) FACULTY OF HUMANITIES, DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL SCIENCES PIETERMARITZBURG CAMPUS

##### 1. Preamble

The Centre will be attached to the School of Language Culture and Communication (or its successor).

##### 2. Mission Statement

To be a Centre of Excellence for research in the field of African Literary Studies, with the aim of developing, disseminating and applying its expertise as widely as possible.

##### 3. Aim and Objectives

The aim of the Centre is to promote and sustain excellent research in the field of African Literary Studies. To this end its objectives are:

- To manage the Lindfors Library.
- To initiate and/or co-ordinate research projects.
- To liaise with key researchers in the field through colloquia, joint seminars and reciprocal visits by scholars.
- To establish and develop links and collaborations with leading institutions working in the field of African Literary Studies, both nationally and internationally.
- To encourage and stimulate the publication of new research in the field of African Literary Studies.
- To produce well-trained graduates at doctoral level and to provide the opportunity for researchers and graduate students from institutions both within and from outside South Africa to conduct research relating to African Literary Studies.

##### 4. Structure/Governance

The Director will manage the Centre with advice from a Board and assistance from a Management Committee.

##### 4.1 Director of Centre

The Director of the Centre will be appointed by the University at Professorial level on a permanent basis.

The Director will have the following responsibilities:

- Co-ordination of Centre activities and members
- Management of programme planning and budgeting
- Management of Centre finances in accordance with guidelines laid down by the University
- Maintenance of professional ethics

## **4.2 The Board**

The Board will

4.2.1 comprise the following members:

- Deputy Vice-chancellor (Research) or representative
- Dean of Faculty
- Head of School of relevant School (Chair)
- Director of Centre
- Head of the Southern African Literature Group
- Programme Director, English Studies
- University Librarian or nominee
- Two delegates from the Centre membership
- One elected representative from the Faculty
- One representative selected from local government or the broader community

4.2.2 meet twice a year. Additional meetings may be called from time to time at the discretion of the Centre Director

4.2.3 provide the overall vision and guidance to the Centre programme

4.2.4 monitor and evaluate progress of the Centre

4.2.5 review and endorse the annual report and financial statement of the Centre to ensure that the Centre's operation is in accordance with University administrative, financial and ethical guidelines

4.2.6 receive minutes of the Management Committee.

The quorum of the Board will be achieved by the presence of 5 of the members listed above.

## **4.3 Management Committee**

A Management Committee will be appointed by the Board to assist in the management of the Centre. The Management Committee will:

4.3.1 comprise the following members

- Director of the Centre (chairperson)
- At least two members of the Centre

4.3.2 meet quarterly or more frequently, as agreed by the Management Committee

4.3.3 assist in evaluating progress of the Centre programme and projects.

## **4.4 Membership**

- Any member of the academic staff of the University, whose primary interest is African Literatures or whose research activities complement the projects in the Centre, may apply to the Board to become a member of the Centre.
- Full-time contract staff members may be invited to become members at the discretion of the Board

**5. Accommodation**

The Centre will operate from the Gatehouse, Pietermaritzburg campus of the University.

**6. Administration**

The University Finance and Human Resources Divisions will administer the financial and staffing requirements respectively.

**7. Relationship to the University**

- 7.1 The Centre will be affiliated to the School of Language, Culture and Communication, or its successor, in the Faculty of Human and Management Sciences, or its successor, and as such, has no separate legal persona.
- 7.2 The Centre's affairs will be conducted according to the University's policies, procedures and regulations. All contracts entered into with third parties will be in the name of the University.
- 7.3 The Centre will be supported by the infrastructure of the University, particularly the Finance Division, Human Resources Division, Research Office, NUDF, Information Technology Division and the Library.

**8. Obligations to the University**

- 8.1 The Centre will strive to be recognized as a Centre of Excellence of the University of Natal.
- 8.2 The Centre will promote the name of the University and enhance its reputation through excellence in research, teaching and community service

**9. Amendments to Constitution**

A minimum of six members of the Board shall, by notice in writing signed by these members, be entitled to recommend an amendment to the Constitution, which shall be ratified by the Faculty Board

**10. Dissolution of the Centre**

- 10.1 In terms of the University's policy on the establishment and review of Centres, the Review Committee, after consideration and consultation, shall recommend continuation or disestablishment of the Centre
- 10.2 On dissolution, all assets of the Centre shall be assigned to a body within the University with similar aims and objectives to those of the Centre.

CALS council 3

## APPENDIX 12(a)

### (i) UKZN Policy on the Establishment of New Research Centres or Units

According to the UKZN Policy Research Policy IV on Institutes, Centres and Units 2.1 (2014:5) (unchanged since the UKZN Policy at the time of the establishment of CALS in 2004), the following requirements are necessary when establishing a new Centre at UKZN:

2.1. The prospective Head of the proposed Centre or Unit will, through the Board(s) of the appropriate Schools and Colleges, submit to the University Research Strategy Group for evaluation a completed application form (available from the Research Office) embodying:

- A constitution;
- A statement of objectives, goals and expected outputs;
- Confirmation of approval by the relevant College Academic Affairs Board(s); and
- The name and a short curriculum vitae of the proposed Director, and each of the members of the research team, together with their agreement to participate.

2.2. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC Research), in consultation with the University Research Strategy Group, will appoint not more than three external reviewers to review the application on the following criteria:

- Potential contribution to research and development;
- Impact on the academic activities of related Schools and Colleges;
- Research track records of the Principal Investigator and the research team; and
- Alignment of the goals of the proposed Centre or Unit with the University's Vision and Mission.

2.3. If the result of the review process is favourable, the DVC (Research) will recommend the establishment of the Research Centre/Unit to the College Academic Affairs Boards, Senate and Council.

2.4. If the review is not favourable, the reviewers' reports and reasons for rejection will be shared with the applicant. Generally, re-submissions addressing the comments will be encouraged.

2.5. If an application has been reviewed and rejected three times by the DVC (Research), in consultation with the University Research Strategy Group, the DVC (Research) may decide, at his/her discretion, not to accept it for further review.

(ii) **UKZN Policy on the Review and disestablishment of Centres and Units:**

According to the UKZN Policy for Establishment and Review of Institutes, Networks, Centres and Units Review and disestablishment of Centres and Units (UKZN 2014b:7):

All centres are to be reviewed every five years. Units will be reviewed as part of the review of the school to which the director belongs. If this review is delayed beyond a five-year period of existence, a separate review may be instituted. The criteria shall be:

- Whether the research output over the period of the review satisfies the expectations of the University as defined at the time the entity was established or at the time of the last previous review
- The potential for continuation of output at a satisfactory level

The review process will require

- The University Research Committee shall appoint a Review Committee
- The Director of the Centre or Unit shall provide a written report for the Review Committee
- The relevant member of staff to whom the Director is responsible shall endorse the report
- The Review Committee, after consideration and consultation, shall recommend continuation or disestablishment of the Centre or Unit and set objectives for the next review period



## **APPENDIX 12(b)**

### **(i) CALS: The duties of the Director**

The Director shall have the following responsibilities:

- Co-ordination of Centre activities and members
- Management of programme planning and budgeting
- Management of Centre finances in accordance with guidelines laid down by the University
- Maintenance of professional ethics (CALS's Constitution [n.d.]

Leadership of CALS resides with the Director for whom the requirements are that s/he is:

- A leading researcher with a strong record as a published author
- Able to promote and publicize CALS as a leading academic centre in Africa
- Run research programmes, seminars and colloquia
- Develop courses and postgraduate programmes
- Supervise graduate students
- Contribute to teaching in related disciplines
- Manage the daily activities of the Centre including its finances
- Be active in fundraising (Stilwell 2013:11-12)

### **(ii) CALS: The Board**

The Board shall comprise the following members:

- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) or representative

- Dean/Deputy Dean of the Faculty (Chair)
- Heads of the three relevant schools (namely Literary Studies, Media and Creative Arts; Language, Literature and Linguistics; *isiZulu*)
- Director of Centre
- Head of Southern African Literature Group
- Director/Campus Librarian (PMB), or representative
- Two representatives from Centre membership, elected for a period of two years
- One elected representative from the Faculty
- One representative selected from local government or the broader community

The Board shall:

(i) Meet twice a year. (Additional meetings may be called from time to time at the discretion of the Centre Director) [The Board failed to meet twice a year in 2006 and from 2013 onwards after the DVC, Professor Joseph Ayee, left UKZN].

(ii) Provide the overall vision and guidance to the Centre programme

(iii) Monitor and evaluate progress of the Centre

(iv) Review and endorse the annual report and financial statement of the Centre to ensure that the Centre's operation is in accordance with University administrative, financial and ethical guidelines

(v) Receive minutes of the Management Committee

(vi) The quorum of the Board shall be achieved by the presence of the six members listed above (any member of the Board may nominate a proxy)

(Centre for African Literary Studies Constitution [[n.d.]:4.2.2-4.2.7)

## **APPENDIX 12(c)**

### **Professor Chapman's memo (28 June 2005)**

Dear Colleagues

#### **CENTRE FOR AFRICAN LITERARY STUDIES PIETERMARITZBURG CAMPUS**

The above-mentioned Centre, which houses the Bernth Lindfors Collection, is regarded as a flagship and a potential centre of excellence in the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

As matters stand, there are several difficulties, some technical, others concerning policy, staffing and funding that require attention.

#### **Technical**

The current constitution no longer complies with the organisational structures of the new University [merger]. It was envisaged, for example, that the Centre would be attached to the School of Language, Culture and Communication (Pietermaritzburg): a School that no longer exists.

It was envisaged, in consequence of such attachment, that the Head of the School would chair their meetings.

Again, no longer practical.

As the Head of the School closest in affiliation to the holdings of the Centre – African literature in terms of current acquisitions means in effect African literature in English – I chaired a meeting of the CALS Board (22 June 2005), at which the necessary six members of the Board agreed to recommend to the Faculty and Senate changes to the Constitution.

The changes, in brief, attach CALS to the Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences, [from the original School of Language, Culture and Communication] which means that, in future, the Dean would chair meetings of the Board. As the Constitution was formulated before the introduction of the College model. The Dean and (as the Centre is linked to library matters) the DVC Research were members of the Board. The DVC of

the College was not. This matter needs to be discussed by the College Exco. It is left here in obedience.

Other changes concern the representation of the Board by English Studies. The reason for this was that, as stated above, the focus of the Lindfors Collection is African Literature in English. It was agreed that as the Head of the Southern African Literature Group would be from English (currently Professor Chapman), it was not necessary to continue further representation to English, but to encourage future developments in all languages of Africa, including French.

Thus it is recommended that the Heads of relevant Schools be represented on the Board. The relevant Schools would be: Literary Studies, Media and Creative Arts; Language, Literature and Linguistics; and isiZulu.

The recommended changes are incorporated into the attached Constitution ...

### **Policy, Staffing, Funding:**

As you will now know, the Centre was launched with generous funding from Atlantic Philanthropies, and the Lindfors collection was acquired with generous assistance from Anglo American and the National Arts Council. Minister Pallo Jordan was the guest of honour at the launch, and the Centre has received national and international publicity.

Behind the fanfare. However, one encounters a less than satisfactory state of affairs which, if not addressed systematically and urgently, could tarnish the image of the University.

For the Centre to flourish what is needed is:

- Permanent, high profile Director (Professor Level 6)
- A Curator (Peromnes 10)
- A Librarian (11)
- A Library Assistant
- A full-time Administrator (11)
- An annual operating budget
- An annual acquisitions budget
- An immediate sum (for 2005) of R150 000 for subscription to 40 relevant journals

- A policy on the future – is the Lindfors Collection to ‘freeze’, or is it to develop?  
– this question is linked to the previous bullets on funding.

Some of the above can be met by a ‘policy’ on the use of the Atlantic Philanthropies donation; some of the above require University financial commitment.

What prevails at present is:

- An Acting Director (Professor Gunner), who at the end of 2004 was refused a final two-year superannuation contract (she will be 65 in 2006).
- [Professor] Gunner was then re-deployed, together with her post and salary and without consultation, from English (Pietermaritzburg) to the Acting Directorship (January to June 2005). On [Mr] Bruno van Dyk’s intervention Atlantic Philanthropies agreed to underwrite [Professor] Gunner’s employment for the remainder (July to December) of 2005. As matters now stand, the Centre will cease to have a Director, whether acting or permanent, on 1 January 2006.
- As far as other staff are concerned, [there is no stability].
- The Centre has no guaranteed source of future income and, therefore, cannot afford the subscriptions of 40 journals, particularly as a subscription implies an annual ongoing commitment.

It is recommended that:

- Professor Gunner, an internationally recognized scholar in African Literature, be granted a final one-year contract in 2006. This would take her to her 65<sup>th</sup> year. She could have no expectation of further employment. Since this was written, however, it has been brought indirectly to my attention that Professor Gunner wishes to take furlough leave for the final term of 2005. This would put Atlantic Philanthropies in the position of having to underwrite both [Professor] Gunner’s salary and a replacement for [her]. In the light of such a development, the Centre would have to seek now for a replacement for [Professor] Gunner – a replacement who might then continue into 2006, until a permanent post were created,

advertised and filled. Such an arrangement would negate the initial recommendation, above.

- The University create a new post (Professor level 6) of Director, Centre for African Literary Studies.
- This position - a difficult one to fill - be advertised for 1 January 2007 (but see new developments under bullet 1 above)
- The issue of staffing and budgetary stability be addressed by the University.
- A clear commitment for the future be addressed by the University (As in the previous bullet, this issue would require a clear policy on the relationship between Atlantic Philanthropies funds and University funds. The development Fund unit would have to be involved).

As Head of the School of Literary Studies, Media and Creative Arts, I wish to make it clear that there was never any agreement that English Studies would simply lose a post and its budget in order to underwrite the Directorship of CALS.

As the one-off Chair of the CALS Board, I forward the issues in this letter to the relevant future line managers.

Yours sincerely

**PROFESSOR M J F CHAPMAN**

Head of School

## **APPENDIX 12(d)**

### **UKZN GOALS**

The goals of the University are:

1. African-led Globalisation:

To promote African-led globalisation through African Scholarship by positioning the University, through its teaching, learning, scholarship, research, and innovation, to enter the global knowledge system on it.

2. Responsible Community Engagement:

To contribute through knowledge to the prosperity and sustainability of our province, and to nation-building, by connecting with and committing ourselves to the communities we serve in a manner that adds value and earns their respect, admiration and trust.

3. Pre-eminence in Research:

To build a research ethos that acknowledges the responsibility of academic staff to nurture its postgraduate students, and to be a pre-eminent producer of new knowledge that is both local and global in context, and defines UKZN as the premier university of African Scholarship.

4. Excellence in Teaching and Learning: To promote excellence in teaching and learning through creative and innovative curriculum design and development, pedagogical strategies, and assessment practices in accordance with the highest quality management principles.

5. Institution of Choice for Learners:

To establish the University as an institution of choice that values students in all their diversity and has a student-centred ethos, providing students with curricula, teachers, infrastructure and support services designed around their needs and producing well-educated, competent, sought-after graduates.

6. Institution of Choice for Staff:

To establish the University as an institution of choice that attracts and retains

academic and support staff of the highest calibre by creating an intellectual environment that fosters and stimulates academic life, and a climate of organisational citizenship in which all staff recognise and understand their role in ensuring the success of the University.

7. Efficient and Effective Management:

To establish and maintain efficient, effective management systems and processes that provide a caring and responsive service to meet internal and external needs in a pragmatic and flexible manner (UKZN [2015]).

## **APPENDIX 12(e)**

### **The Review of CALS 2013 (Letter to Colleagues and Friends of CALS by Professor Christine Stilwell)**

“A motivation appeared to be that Centres should be self-funding. CALS also missed the last Senate review of the UKZN Centres. The other UKZN centres, including the Special Libraries that have the word Centre in their name, were reviewed for the Senate review in 2010. The libraries were again reviewed with the UKZN library review in 2011. CALS has not been formally part of the UKZN libraries but we are now recognised as one of the UKZN Special Collections.

For some reason the CALS’s Director did not respond to the UKZN Centre review request for information and the then DVC Prof Ayee requested information from me as Acting Director in 2011. I submitted all the details and presented that document to the Sept/Oct CALS’s Advisory Board, making the argument that CALS like the other UKZN Special Libraries should not be expected to be totally self-funding.

CALS is in good shape for the review from the perspective of its internal programmes. We need to do much more about the external programmes now that all the collections have been processed and are ready for use, and having the funding and staffing addressed will make this a lot more possible.



Staff contracts have been renewed, pending the review, until the end of December. At present Colleen Vietzen works one day a week and she and I are the only professional staff at CALS! My appointment at CALS is also part-time.

The review needs to make a strong recommendation to fund CALS adequately.

The UKZN Foundation, via the Director, Bridget Mcbean, invited us to submit a funding proposal which I have done. If we could get a guarantee from UKZN to continue to cover the basic staff salaries and operations we could fund CALS using a hybrid model with some donor funds, as well as funds generated by staff Productivity Units etc.

We have been pushing for a person with knowledge of Special Libraries to be on the QPA review panel.”

## **APPENDIX 12(f)**

### **The Terms of Reference for the CALS Review 2013**

1. Define the role of CALS within the College and the University including its location;
2. Consider appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency of the current structure, facilities, programmes, and services it offers;
3. Review the alignment of CALS to the vision, mission and identify with that of the University;
4. Look into leadership; governance and staffing of CALS;
5. Identify infrastructural capacity and needs for optimal performance of staff including training needs, equipment and software requirements;
6. Consider viability and sustainability of CALS taking into account the nature of funding
7. Examine UKZN Policies with regard to CALS and similar centres;

8. Identify areas where there is good practice and make recommendations for areas requiring focused attention (University of KwaZulu-Natal 2013b:5).

## APPENDIX 13

### **CALS: Publicity and Promotion: early CALS initiatives until 2013**

In 2004–2005, “As part of its mandate to facilitate and promote the study of African literature, the Centre for African Literary Studies organizes and hosts a series of research seminars and colloquia” (CALs 2005a:5). In 2004–2005, CALs organised five colloquia, two Bloke Modisane Memorial Lectures and a score of research seminars (CALs 2005a:6-9). “The annual lecture is in memory of the late writer and broadcaster Bloke Modisane” (CALs 2005a:5). William ‘Bloke’ Modisane (1923–1986) was a South African journalist, writer and actor (South African history online n.d.). In his report Mzimane stated that “the centre proposed that the Bloke Modisane Annual Memorial is renamed the Modisane – Kunene Annual Memorial Lecture. Mazisi Kunene (1930–2006) became the first South African poet laureate in 2005. Unfortunately lack of funds has prevented this memorial lecture from taking place since 2009 (Mzamani 2007:7).

CALS held its first Open Day on the 19<sup>th</sup> May 2004 with talks (CALs 2004:3-4).

On the research and literary events aspect of the Centre, Gunner planned a significant conference called *The Changing Face of African Literature* hosted by Professor De Meyer of the French Department, Pietermaritzburg, and Professor Neil, ten Kortenaar, the visiting CALs fellow from Canada (Gunner 2005a). This conference took place on the Pietermaritzburg campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal from 21 to 23 March 2006 in collaboration with the Centre for Creative Arts as part of the Time of the Writer Festival in March 2006. The conference resulted in a publication titled *The Changing Face of African Literature* (De Meyer. and Ten Kortenaar 2006). CALs has participated in the Time of the Writer Festival hosted by the Centre of Creative Arts in Durban every year since its inception.

Between 2004 and 2005 CALs held several successful conferences:

10 August 2004 (Learning Libraries and Timbuktu: Mali and the African Renaissance)

8–11 September 2004 (Imagining Texts: Media and Popular Literature in Africa)

6 May 2005 (Johannesburg: The Elusive Metropolis)

8 September 2005 (Yvonne Vera: Portraits of the African Present)

20 October 2005 (Shaping Identities: Radio and Writing in African Languages)

Annual Time of the Writer and Poetry Africa Festivals were established and research seminars were prolific (CAL S 2005a:6-9), creating a vibrant and dynamic Centre in the promotion of African Literary Studies. Stephen Coan of the [Natal] *Witness* published an article on Nigerian Market Literature, with the assistance of Sean Rogers, a master's student at CAL S and in English Studies, titled *How to Fall in Love and other Short Stories* (CAL S 2004:6).

In 2004 the anticipated number of scholars conducting research into African literature did not arrive. An 'announcement' was placed on the UKZN e-mail system by the Acting Curator, Mrs Polak, in April 2005, giving some background to the Centre and explaining that the Centre provides "a thriving atmosphere conducive to the research and the exchange of ideas". In the early years of CAL S there was an urgent attempt to publicise the Centre to attract users.

In 2009 and 2010, under Professor Mzamane's directorship, two writers took up residencies at CAL S: Wangui wa Goro (12 May–12 July 2009) and Professor James David Rubadiri (July to December 2009) (CAL S 2010a:3).

Publications:

CAL S published occasional papers based on conference proceedings, annual memorial lectures and seminars in 2004 and 2005. The first *CAL S News* was published in April 2007 and continued until December 2013.

### **Acting Curator's trip to NELM and CAS**

Having met participants at the conference, *The Changing Face of African Literature*, Mrs Polak, the Acting Curator, was granted permission by CAL S's Acting Director, Professor

Clarence-Fincham, to visit other similar centres in South Africa, with the purpose, among others, to establish links with other similar centres and to publicise CALS.

To this end, Polak visited the National English Literary Museum (NELM), the Cory Library and the International Library of African Music (ILAM), all in Grahamstown, and the Centre for African Studies (CAS) in Cape Town. Unfortunately, Mrs Polak was unable to accept the invitation to the Nasionale Afrikaanse Letterkundige Navorsingsentrum-en Museum (NALN) because of financial and time constraints. Mr Otto Liebenberg, the curator, however, was keen to forge links with CALS. This trip helped to publicise CALS.

At the CALS Board Meeting (CALS 2006a:2) the Acting Director of CALS (Professor Clarence-Fincham) stated:

“One of the most beneficial outcomes of the conference for CALS [The Changing Face of African Literature] which was opened by Professor McCracken and held on PMB campus in conjunction with the Time of the Writer from 21–23 March) was Mrs Polak’s visit to Grahamstown and Cape Town which aimed to set up links primarily with the National English Literary Museum and the Centre for African Studies. As her detailed report indicates, there are many potential benefits in such links and there is much the CALS staff have already learnt, most particularly about the establishment and maintenance of efficient records and the sourcing of materials.”

#### **Professor Mzamane’s trip to the US regarding the VCU–UKZN partnership:**

Mzamane had several successful meetings at the School of World Studies; the Media, Art and Text doctoral programme; English Department; Honors College and the School of the Arts at the Virginia Commonwealth University in the US where the following areas of academic collaboration were discussed:

(a) Teaching isiZulu has been identified by the School of World Studies at VCU as a priority programme in the VCU–UKZN Partnership and the *raison d’être* for the Study Abroad Programme at UKZN; (b) Besides isiZulu, discussion also veered to other areas of possible collaboration (i) to enhance the Study Abroad experience of VCU students; and (ii) to promote collaborative research between VCU and UKZN faculty (Mzamane 2007).

#### **Other important CALS publicity events**

A highlight of the second part of 2007 was a Bessie Head Conference convened by Emeritus Professor and Fellow of the University, Margaret Daymond. The conference: *Celebrating the*

*Life and Writing of Bessie Head (1937–1986)* drew participants from Botswana, Denmark, Germany, the USA and South Africa. In reference to the occasion, CALS staff passed a resolution to request that the CALS seminar room be renamed the *Bessie Head Seminar Room* (CALS 2010a:1). However, the researcher has found no name to this effect on the entrance to the room.

The Time of the Writers Festival was still held in 2010 despite the absence of a director. The administrator, Ms Ashnee Peters, expressed her gratitude to Professor Kunnie and to Professor Malaba for their guidance during the Time of the Writers Festival (CALS 2010c:5).

Drake University students from Iowa, US, visited CALS on 26 May 2010. “This visit played a huge role in marketing the Centre to an international community” (CALS 2010b:2).

Professor Malaba, the head of the English Department, conducts seminars on a regular basis at the Centre. The English honours module on “Contrasting Images of Africa” is also held at the Centre. As part of social responsibility and community outreach activities (part of the core mandate of CALS), the Centre hosts a variety of seminars focusing on creative writing and poetry, and this is an opportunity to introduce the members of the public to African literature.

The WorldWords Workshop was held from 30 September to 1 October 2010 and was sponsored by the British Council. It brought together 19 participants from six countries, five of them African, namely Botswana, Cameroon, Nigeria, Namibia, South Africa, and the United Kingdom “to support the development of revised literature and language curricula, teacher training, creative writing and radio production. “Participants included academics, curriculum development specialists, teachers and a student. A broad-based network was established and I [Professor Malaba] was invited to brief the Senior Management Meeting at the Department of Education, prior to the gathering. The Department is deeply concerned by the poor standard of English in the country, which has a severe impact on the learners’ educational progress and has initiated a process to address this.” An outcome was the suggestion that “CALS could serve as a resource centre for teachers seeking more relevant material for their learners” (CALS 2010c:[2]; CALS 2011d:7).

## **Branding and promoting CALS 2011**

During 2011 several interesting visits, developments and promotional activities took place at CALS. These included:

Professor Stephen Mutula from the University of Botswana's Department of Library and Information Studies (and current Dean of Social Sciences, UKZN) visited CALS on 30 May 2011. "Professor Mutula is well known for his book on digital economies and will be a valued advisor on digitization" (CALS 2011a:3).

Professor Kerry Haynie from Political Science and the Center for Study of Race, Ethnicity & Gender, Duke University, gave a lecture at CALS on 24 October 2011; on 12 September Professor Shane Graham (Utah State University) who gave a paper for the English Department's regular seminar programme (Howard College) titled "Peter Abrahams, Langston Hughes and the 'Black Atlantic'", visited CALS; Mr Steve Kerchoff, Information Officer at the US Embassy in Pretoria and staff from the US Embassy in Durban; Dr Lynda Spencer from the University of Stellenbosch gave a paper at CALS on Chick Lit in relation to four southern African novels as part of the English Studies Seminars (CALS 2011e:3-4).

Book Launch: On 30 March 2011, Professor Philippe Denis (in conjunction with the Alliance Française) launched his book *Lettres d'Afrique du Sud: La Nation Arc-en-Ciel à Croisée des Chemins* (2011d:8).

An Open Day to promote UKZN Special Collections (6 October 2011) took place at Killie Campbell African Library. CALS was represented by Mrs Polak and Professor Stilwell. Professor Stilwell made a presentation and established a link with Stephen Coan from the *Witness* who included CALS in the write-up of this event. Mr Coan also attended the Kerry Haynie lecture and again provided an excellent almost full-page report. CALS continued to liaise with UKZN Media and Publicity and they also sent a reporter to cover the Haynie lecture in *UKZN online* which also covered the Special Collections Open Day (CALS 2011d:7).

- CALS celebrated the 14<sup>th</sup> Time of the Writer as well as Africa Day on 25 May 2011; Short Story Day (21 June 2011) and the launch of Bernard de Meyer's and Neil Kortenaar's book (CALS 2011d:7).

The CALS's website was totally revamped by Mrs Holtz. The site provided a helpful link and source of information for would-be international and other visitors, especially as CALS also appears now with a link on the UKZN Special Collections site. In addition, CALS's pamphlets were updated, and *CALS News* was issued twice during the year. Mrs Polak attended and distributed pamphlets at the Msunduzi Heritage Forum at Msunduzi Museum (September 2011)

The Afrikaans collection was launched on 8 December 2011 (CALS 2011d:5).

### **Branding and promoting CALS 2012**

The MEC, Arts and Culture, KZN, Ms Ntombikayise Sibhidla-Saphetha, visited CALS in January 2012 with Mrs Joyce Myeza (UKZN Special Collections Head) as part of the ANC Centenary Celebrations; CALS continued to liaise with UKZN Media and Publicity and the updating of the website was ongoing; Professor Malaba scheduled three English Studies seminars at the Centre (CALS 2012a:3;5).

### **Other promotional activities at CALS during 2012**

The Elsie Schreiner donation: a function was held at CALS for the donation; launch of the Zulu Literary Museum, 24 August 2012; Poetry Africa was held at CALS in October 2012; Matthew Keaney, a first-year PhD student from Yale University in the United States, spent June to August 2012 at CALS; CALS hosted Professor Mbongeni Malaba's lecture to the Drake University students in May 2012; Professor Rosemary Gray from the University of the Witwatersrand paid her first visit to CALS on 4 December 2012.

**Institutional and other linkages:** In November 2012, Professor De Meyer from French Studies and a CALS Board member attended the regional conference (southern Africa and Indian Ocean) on French at universities in a multilingual context in November. He was responsible for the literature component. He represented CALS in an official capacity.

CALS's most regular postgraduate links are with English Studies and Information Studies. Professor Malaba held an honours module on Imaging Africa at CALS. Dr Jill Arnott held weekly seminars at CALS; Fiona Polak registered for a PhD in Information Studies; Postgraduate Diploma in Information Studies (PGDIS) students attended a module at CALS that featured fiction reading and children's literature. Examples were drawn from the

collection to illustrate the wealth of material from the continent. Some of these students produced materials development posters and pamphlets on CALS (CALS 2012b:3-5).

### **Functions and Promotional Activities in 2013**

Visitors from Tours, 13 February 2013: Professor White, University of Tours, gave a lecture on West African literature and met with the English lecturers at CALS on 14 February; Stephen Gray's tea: 1 March 2013; De Meyer seminars and training for Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie: training took place at CALS; Africa Day (24 May); the 17<sup>th</sup> edition of Poetry Africa brought some of the world's finest poets and musicians to UKZN and they had tea and went on a tour of CALS; poet Barnabé Laye from Benin held a seminar at CALS on 17 October hosted by Professor De Meyer from French Studies; Professor Archie Dick from the University of Pretoria visited CALS when he gave the 20<sup>th</sup> Alan Paton Memorial Lecture; students from Duke University visited CALS for a presentation and lunch with Centre staff; Darryl David from UKZN Afrikaans Studies organised the Midlands Literary Festival (23 August) in which CALS and the Alan Paton Centre featured (CALS 2013a:9-15).

**Publicity and Promotion in 2013 included:** CALS's website: Some words commemorating the passing of Achebe as well as a photograph of him and his poem were added to the home page of the CALS website; the *CALS Newsletter* available on the website; CALS Annual Report available on the website; CALS made various contributions to *UKZNdaba*; links with media: *Witness*, *College of Humanities Newsletter* (CALS 2013c:4).

**Branding** – complimentary slips and brochures; book plates are required for all donations using the terms 'donated by' or 'from the collection of' (CALS 2013c:4-5).

**Links with other libraries and departments:** Alan Paton Centre (Professor Stilwell sits on the Board); UKZNF: Bridget McBean, Executive Director, works from CALS most Mondays; Information Studies: use of the boardroom for English seminars as well as Professor Malaba's classes in both semesters 1 and 2; Policy and Development: use of boardroom for Policy and Development – once off, 30 April (CALS 2013c:4-5).

Stilwell (2013a:31) stated that "CALS pays special attention to branding and promoting itself and its services within the community" and she listed the following important features: CALS's website, which is the public face of CALS, has been totally revamped and recent



events and acquisitions are uploaded regularly reflecting the CALS collections; this provides a useful link and source of information for would-be international and other visitors; extensive coverage of the launch of the isiZulu Literary Museum appeared on the UKZN homepage as well as in the media; CALS is linked to the other UKZN Special Collections; CALS's pamphlets have been updated and are distributed, for example, at the Msunduzi Heritage Forum at Msunduzi Museum; the *CALS Newsletter* is produced twice a year; CALS continues to liaise with UKZN Media and Publicity; the *Witness* has offered CALS free publicity for events (Stilwell 2013:31-32).

From the above exhaustive list it is evident that, despite the challenging staffing and funding circumstances at CALS, CALS's successful publicity and promotional activities until 2013 contributed considerably towards the enabling of African Studies at the Centre.

## APPENDIX 14

### Final CALS Review Report

<b>Review Title:</b>	Centre for African Literary Studies (CALs)
<b>Date of Review:</b>	15 to 17 October 2013
<b>Head of School:</b>	Prof Stephen Mutula
<b>DVC/Head of College:</b>	Prof Cheryl Potgieter
<b>Date of Submission:</b>	July 2014
<b>Board tabled at:</b>	July 2014

#### Introduction to improvement plan:

#### Terms of reference of the review:

There was a broad framework within which the panel was required to undertake its task. The framework included the following aspects as set out in the Terms of Reference:

1. Define the role of CALS within the College and the University including its location
2. Consider appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency of the current structure, facilities, programmes and services it offers
3. Review the alignment of CALS Vision, Mission and identity to that of the University
4. Look into leadership, governance and staffing of CALS
5. Identify infrastructural capacity and needs for optimal performance of staff including training, equipment and software requirements
6. Consider the viability and sustainability of CALS taking into account the nature of funding
7. Examine UKZN policies with regard to CALS and similar centres
8. Identify areas where there is good practice and make recommendations for areas requiring focused attention

#### Commendations of the review panel:

1. The panel commends the dedicated leadership of the current director of CALS as was acknowledged and appreciated by all panel members.

2. The panel commends the dedicated commitment of staff working in less than perfect conditions while employed on short term contracts. The attitude of staff and their inclination to serve users was also noted. The review panel feel the University should express its appreciation of their efforts.
3. The panel commends CALS on the collection which is both rare and excellent.
4. The panel commends the cleanliness and maintenance of the building and the ideal conditions under which the collections are stored.
5. The panel commends the restoration and preservation of materials.
6. The panel commends the control of the budget.

<b>Recommendation<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Expected Outcomes</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Physical resources</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Budget Implications</b>
1. The panel recommends that the identity of CALS within the University be better defined. CALS has the potential to be an invaluable resource that could situate UKZN at the centre of African Scholarship.	Improvement of the identity of CALS to situate UKZN at the centre of African literary scholarship	Improved identity would include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved funding (staff, supplies and services, asset and acquisitions)</li> <li>• Permanent staff</li> <li>• Appropriate building facilities</li> <li>• Identification of CALS champion</li> <li>• Establishment of advisory board</li> </ul>	CALS advisory board, CALS curator/manager	Significant improved building space to house growing collection and office space for permanent staff	By December 2015	Budget for improved funding
2. A previous review recommended the establishment of a centre for African Studies within the University, within which CALS would be housed. The panel recommends that this model be pursued and the inclusion of other centres in addition to CALS be explored (for example the Alan Paton Centre).	The Centre for African Studies should be a virtual networked unit drawing together all African studies entities throughout UKZN. CALS would be part of the CAS structure. However, for the foreseeable future CALS should follow the Alan Paton Centre model for a special collection.	CALS would become a recognised special collection falling either under the School of Social Sciences or the Library.	CALS Advisory Board, CALS curator/manager	None	End of December 2014	Dedicated budget for irrespective of where CALS is positioned within the structures

<sup>3</sup>Note: Please order actions for recommendations from highest to lowest priority

<p>3. The panel recommends that whatever model is finally decided upon, and wherever CALS eventually finds a home, there should be adequate space in order to accommodate the range of activities undertaken by the centre.</p>	<p>Provision of adequate space for centre activities and growing collection</p>	<p>Office space permanent staff</p> <p>Dedicated reading room</p> <p>Space for researcher workstations</p> <p>Stack room or shelving space</p>	<p>CALS Advisory Board, CALS curator/manager</p>	<p>Building space</p>	<p>End December 2015</p>	<p>Budget for increased building space</p>
<p>4. The panel recommends a permanent (rather than an acting) director be appointed with an appropriate vision and strategy to build on the work of the current director. The vision should encompass the establishment of strong ties with centres of a similar nature.</p>	<p>Appointment of permanent curator/manager. CALS requires a curator rather than a director, given the proposed special collection model like that of APC, which should be followed.</p>	<p>Curator with appropriate library and information science qualifications and experience to manage and achieve the mission and vision of the centre</p>	<p>CALS Advisory Board</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>End December 2014</p>	<p>Budget for permanent curator position</p>

5. The panel recommends that other staff appointments be filled on a permanent basis	Appointment of key permanent staff for functioning of the centre	The following positions should be permanently filled:  Curator  Librarian  Library Assistant – Technical Services  Administrative Assistant	CALs board and curator/manager	None apart from financial resources	By December 2014	
6. The panel recommends that CALS could consider recruiting a prominent writer in literary arts to be resident at the centre and to conduct short courses in order to generate some income for the centre	Liaise with appropriate schools to identify literary arts writers	Literary arts writer should be attached to an academic programme in a school with a research interest directly supported by CALS. The writers are to conduct seminar programmes at CALS	CALs curator/manager	None	End of December 2015	None
7. The panel recommends that governance needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. The chair of the advisory board needs to be very involved with and committed to CALS, as well as their most fervent advocate.	Chair of advisory board must be advocate and champion for the centre	Chair should be a senior member of staff preferably from the College management committee with experience in terms of membership of library or special collection committees	Dean of the School of Social Sciences and CALS curator/manager	None	By end December 2014	None

8. The panel recommends that the advisory board meet regularly twice every year.	Appoint the chair and advisory board.	Mandatory for advisory board to meet twice a year	CALS curator/manager	None	By end of December 2014	None
9. Training of temporary staff, while essential, is expensive in view of the possibility of staff turnover. Therefore the panel recommends the appointment of permanent staff.	See recommendation no. 5 relating to the appointment of permanent staff					
10. The panel recommends that CALS be listed on the University's ICS replacement list.	ICS to be contacted and requested to include CALS on replacement list	CALS listed on ICS replacement list	CALS curator/manager and administrator	None required	By December 2014	None for CALS; budget will be carried by ICS
11. The panel recommends that provision should be made for the maintenance and eventual replacement of specialised equipment.	Acquisition, maintenance and replacement of specialist equipment	Purchase, maintain and replace specialised equipment e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dehumidifier</li> <li>• Data projector</li> <li>• Security detection system</li> <li>• Media players</li> <li>• Scanner</li> </ul>	CALS curator/manager and administrator	None required apart from financial resources	By December 2015	Assets/replacement budget should be motivated a year in advance

<p>12. The panel recommends that a dedicated budget is required to enable the centre to undertake its own digitalisation.</p>	<p>Secure budget for digitisation of CALS resources, e.g. photographs, rare and fragile documents. Budget to include ad hoc staff training and equipment</p>	<p>Digitisation and improved accessibility of CALS resources</p>	<p>CALS curator/manager</p>	<p>Digitisation equipment, scanners, high capacity PC</p>	<p>By December 2015</p>	<p>Digitisation budget should be motivated for a year in advance</p>
<p>13. The panel recommends that CALS seek the urgent support it requires from the University's senior management to resolve its current staffing and funding challenges. The development of a sustainability plan, which includes some core funding from the University is encouraged.</p>	<p>Resolution of current staffing and funding challenges</p>	<p>Appointment of permanent staff and positioning CALS correctly within the university structures</p>	<p>CALS advisory board</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>End December 2014</p>	<p>Allocation of a permanent staffing budget</p>
<p>14. The panel recommends t CALS should take note of the requirements of being classified as a research centre and aim to undertake activities that will attract external funding.</p>	<p>Classification as a research centre that attracts external funding</p>	<p>This is contingent on the appointment of a permanent curator</p>	<p>CALS advisory board</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>December 2015</p>	<p>Appointment of permanent curator</p>



<p>15. The panel recommends that CALS should explore existing opportunities for integration with the academic project of the University, especially in research, to enable it to generate some productivity units to assist with funding challenges.</p>	<p>Generation of productivity units is contingent on the permanent appointment of the curator and librarian positions</p>	<p>Curator and librarian to generate PUs through publishing articles</p>	<p>CALS Curator/Librarian</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>By end of December 2015</p>	<p>None</p>
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## APPENDIX 15

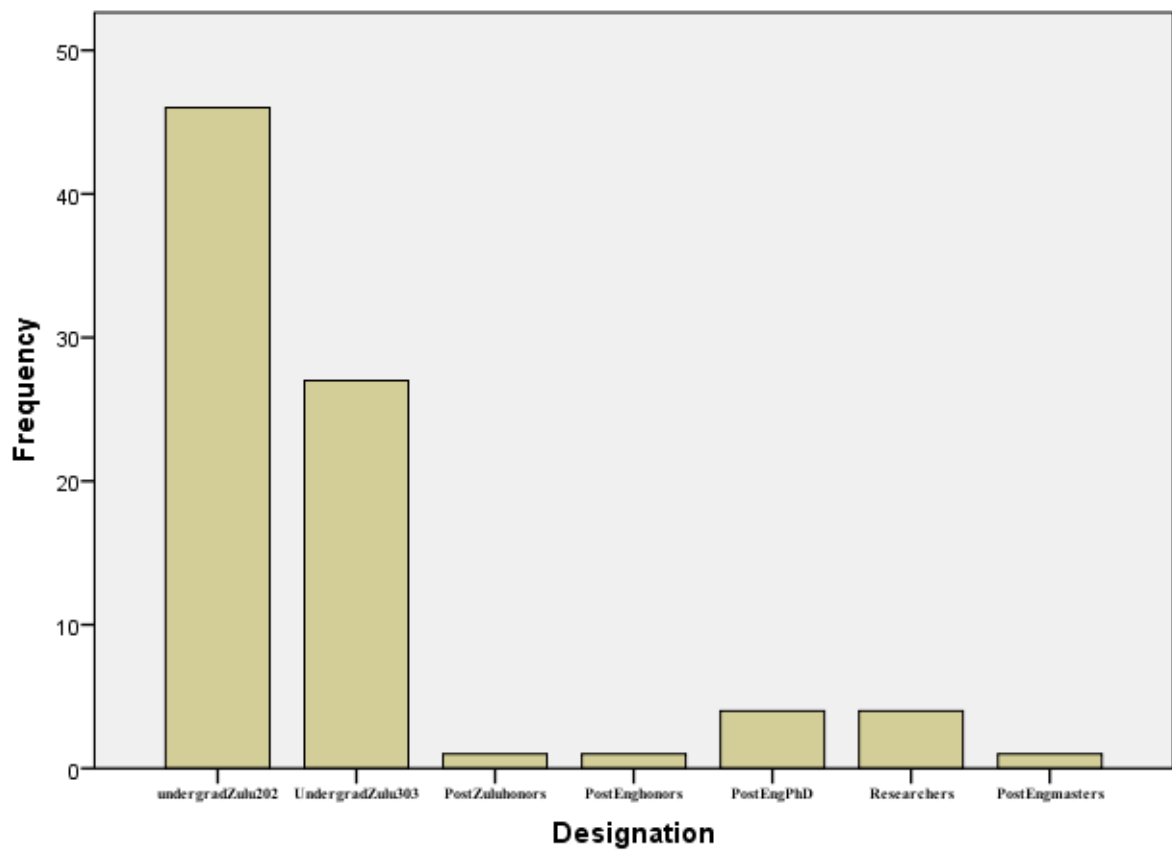
### Tables relating to Chapter 8 (Results of the survey)

(i) Table 5

**Table 5: Designation of the respondents**

*n* = 98

<b>Interest</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	51	48.11
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	30	28.30
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	6	5.67
Postgraduate English Honours	2	1.89
Postgraduate English Master's	1	0.94
Postgraduate English PhD	4	3.77
Researchers	4	3.77
CALS Staff	8	7.55
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	100.00



**Figure 1 Designation of students and respondents**

(ii) Table 6

**Table 6: Research interests of the respondents**

*n* = 81

<b>Research Interest</b>	<b>Responses</b>						<b>Percent</b>	
	<b>BSS</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>isiZulu &amp; Education</b>	<b>Drama &amp; Performance</b>	<b>isiZulu</b>	<b>Total</b>		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	20	6	0	1	6	33	40.74	
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	19	4	2	1	0	26	32.10	
No response							22	27.16
Total response							81	100.00

Key:

BSS = Bachelor of Social Science

BA = Bachelor of Arts

(iii) Table 7

**Table 7: Designation of those respondents who had used CALS**

*n* = 98

<b>Responses</b>				
<b>Level</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	5	46	51	52.04
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	3	27	30	30.61
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	5	1	6	6.12
Postgraduate English Honours	1	1	2	2.04
Postgraduate English Master's	0	1	1	1.02
Postgraduate English PhD	0	4	4	4.08
Researchers	0	4	4	4.08
Total Response	14	84	98	100.00

(iv) Table 8

**Table 8: How the respondents found out about CALS**

*n* = 84

How the respondents found out about CALS	Responses					Percent	
	Lecturer	Friend	Library/University	Internet	Total		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	22	5	0	1	28	33.33	
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	13	4	3	0	20	23.81	
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	0	1	0	0	1	1.19	
Postgraduate English Honours	2	0	0	0	2	2.38	
Postgraduate English Master's	1	0	0	0	1	1.19	
Postgraduate English PhD	3	0	0	0	3	3.57	
Researchers	3	0	0	1	4	4.76	
No Response						25	28.57
Total Response	44	11	3		59	70.24	

(v) Table 9

**Table 9: CALS's staff are friendly and approachable**

*n* = 84

<b>CALS's staff are friendly and approachable</b>	<b>Responses</b>			<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	<b>Always</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Do not know</b>		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	40	3	2	45	53.57
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	25	2	0	27	32.14
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	1	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Honours	1	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	0	1	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	4	0	0	4	4.76
Researchers	2	0	0	2	2.38
No Response				3	3.57
Total Response	73	6	2	81	96.43

(vi) Table 10

**Table 10: CALS's staff are knowledgeable and professional in their dealings with me**

*n* = 84

<b>CALS's staff are knowledgeable and professional in their dealings with me</b>	<b>Responses</b>			<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	<b>Always</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Do not know</b>		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	37	4	4	45	53.57
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	23	3	1	27	32.14
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	1	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Honours	1	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	0	1	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	4	0	0	4	4.76
Researchers	2	0	0	2	2.38
No Response				3	3.57
Total Response	68	8	5	81	96.43



(vii) Table 11

**Table 11: CALS's staff are willing to help me**

*n* = 84

CALS's staff are willing to help me	Responses				Total	Percent
	Always	Sometimes	Never	Do not know		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	35	7	1	2	45	53.57
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	24	3	0	0	27	32.14
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	0	1	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Honours	1	0	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	0	1	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	4	0	0	0	4	4.76
Researchers	2	0	0	0	2	2.38
No response					3	3.57
Total Response	66	12	1	2	81	96.43

(viii) Table 12

**Table 12: CALS's staff take interest in me and my needs**

*n* = 84

CALS's staff take interest in me and my needs	Reponses				Total	Percent
	Always	Sometimes	Never	Do not know		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	32	11	1	1	45	53.57
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	21	5	1	0	27	32.14
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	0	1	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Honours	1	0	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	0	0	1	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	3	1	0	0	4	4.76
Researchers	2	0	0	0	2	2.38
No Response					3	3.57
Total Response	59	18	3	1	81	96.43

(ix) Table 13

**Table 13: CALS's staff give my enquiries appropriate time and attention**

*n* = 84

CALS's staff give my enquiries appropriate time and attention	Responses				Total	Percent
	Always	Sometimes	Never	Do not know		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	30	11	1	3	45	53.57
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	20	6	1	0	27	32.14
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	1	0	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Honours	1	0	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	0	1	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	3	1	0	0	4	4.76
Researchers	2	0	0	0	2	2.38
No response					3	3.57
Total Response	57	19	2	3	81	96.43

(x) Table 14

**Table 14: CALS's staff respond clearly and accurately to enquiries**

*n* = 84

CALS's staff respond clearly and accurately to enquiries	Responses			Total	Percent
	Always	Sometimes	Do not know		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	34	8	3	45	53.57
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	22	4	0	26	30.95
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	1	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Honours	1	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	0	1	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	4	0	0	4	4.76
Researchers	2	0	0	2	2.38
No response				4	4.76
Total Response	64	13	3	80	95.24

(xi) Table 15

**Table 15: CALS's staff provide high quality service**

*n* = 84

CALS's staff provide high quality service	Responses				Total	Percent
	Always	Sometimes	Never	Do not know		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	34	8	0	3	45	53.57
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	20	6	0	1	27	32.14
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	1	0	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Honours	1	0	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	0	0	1	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	3	1	0	0	4	4.76
Researchers	2	0	0	0	2	2.38
No response					3	3.57
Total Response	61	15	1	4	81	96.43

(xii) Table 16

**Table 16: I am able to access computer workstations at CALS**

*n* = 84

<b>I am able to access computer workstations at CALS</b>	<b>Responses</b>				<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	<b>Always</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Do not know</b>		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	15	21	6	3	45	53.57
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	12	11	1	3	27	32.14
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	0	1	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Honours	0	1	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	0	0	0	1	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	3	1	0	0	4	4.76
Researchers	2	0	0	0	2	2.38
No response					3	3.57
<b>Total Response</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>96.43</b>

(xiii) Table 17

**Table 17: The photocopying facilities at CALS are adequate**

*n* = 84

The photocopying facilities at CALS are adequate	Responses				Total	Percent
	Always	Sometimes	Never	Do not know		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	30	12	2	1	45	53.57
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	18	5	4	0	27	32.14
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	0	0	1	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Honours	0	0	0	1	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	0	0	0	1	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	4	0	0	0	4	4.76
Researchers	1	1	0	0	2	2.38
No response					3	3.57
Total Response	53	18	7	3	81	96.43

(xiv) Table 18

**Table 18: The facilities at CALS are attractive**

*n* = 84

The facilities at CALS are attractive	Responses				Total	Percent
	Always	Sometimes	Never	Do not know		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	27	15	0	3	45	53.57
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	18	6	3	0	27	32.14
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	0	1	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Honours	1	0	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	0	0	0	1	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	4	0	0	0	4	4.76
Researchers	2	0	0	0	2	2.38
No response					3	3.57
Total Response	52	22	3	4	81	96.43



(xv) Table 19

**Table 19: The facilities at CALS are comfortable**

*n* = 84

The facilities at CALS are comfortable	Responses				Total	Percent
	Always	Sometimes	Never	Do not know		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	33	9	1	2	45	53.57
Undergraduate <i>isiZulu</i> 303	20	6	1	0	27	32.14
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	0	1	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Honours	1	0	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	0	0	0	1	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	4	0	0	0	4	4.76
Researchers	2	0	0	0	2	2.38
No response					3	3.57
Total Response	60	16	2	3	81	96.43

(xvi) Table 20

**Table 20: Resources at CALS are appropriate for my research needs**

*n* = 84

Resources at CALS are appropriate for my research needs	Responses			Total	Percent
	Always	Sometimes	Do not know		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	28	17	1	46	54.76
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	18	9	0	27	32.14
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	0	1	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Honours	1	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	1	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	3	1	0	4	4.76
Researchers	0	2	0	2	2.38
No response				2	2.38
Total Response	51	30	1	82	97.62

(xvii) Table 21

**Table 21: Resources at CALS are up to date and relevant**

*n* = 84

Resources at CALS are up to date and relevant	Responses				Total	Percent
	Always	Sometimes	Never	Do not know		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	25	18	1	2	46	54.76
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	19	7	0	1	27	32.14
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	0	1	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Honours	0	0	0	1	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	1	0	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	2	2	0	0	4	4.76
Researchers	1	1	0	0	2	2.38
No response					2	2.38
Total Response	48	29	1	4	82	97.62

**Table 22: Suggestions by CALS staff to find resources elsewhere are good***n* = 84

<b>Suggestions by CALS staff to find resources elsewhere are good</b>	<b>Responses</b>				<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	<b>Always</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Do not know</b>		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	25	15	1	4	45	53.57
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	16	10	0	1	27	32.14
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	0	1	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Honours	1	0	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	0	1	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	4	0	0	0	4	4.76
Researchers	2	0	0	0	2	2.38
No response					3	3.57
<b>Total Response</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>96.43</b>

(xix) Table 23

**Table 23: I usually find the resources I need at CALS**

*n* = 84

I usually find the resources I need at CALS	Responses			Total	Percent
	Always	Sometimes	Do not know		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	28	17	1	46	54.76
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	19	8	0	27	32.14
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	0	1	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Honours	1	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	0	1	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	0	4	0	4	4.76
Researchers	1	1	0	2	2.38
No response				2	2.38
Total Response	49	32	1	82	97.62

(xx) Table 24

**Table 24: I use the CALS website**

*n* = 84

I use the CALS's website	Responses			Do not know	Total	Percent
	Always	Sometimes	Never			
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	10	14	19	2	45	53.57
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	4	7	14	2	27	32.14
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	0	0	1	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Honours	0	0	0	1	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	0	1	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	1	2	1	0	4	4.76
Researchers	0	0	2	0	2	2.38
No response					3	3.57
Total Response	15	24	37	5	81	96.43

(xxi) Table 25

**Table 25: I consult the iCatalogue (previously UKZN iLink) to locate items at CALS**

*n* = 84

<b>I consult the iCatalogue (previously UKZN iLink) to locate items at CALS</b>	<b>Responses</b>				<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	<b>Always</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Do not know</b>		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	12	15	15	4	46	54.76
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	8	12	7	0	27	32.14
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	0	0	1	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Honours	1	0	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	0	1	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	1	2	1	0	4	4.76
Researchers	2	0	0	0	2	2.38
No response					2	2.38
<b>Total Response</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>97.62</b>

(xxii) Table 26

**Table 26: It is important to have an African Literary Studies Special Collection at UKZN**

*n* = 84

<b>It is important to have an African Literary Studies Special Collection at UKZN</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	<b>Yes</b>		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	40	40	47.62
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	23	23	27.38
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	1	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Honours	1	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	1	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	4	4	4.76
Researchers	2	2	2.38
No response		12	14.29
Total Response	72	72	85.71



(xxiii) Table 27

**Table 27: The signage directing me to CALS is adequate**

*n* = 84

The signage directing me to CALS is adequate	Responses				Total	Percent
	No	Yes	Sometimes	Not sure		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	6	24	4	0	34	40.48
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	4	13	1	1	19	22.62
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	1	0	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Honours	0	0	1	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	0	0	0	1	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	2	2	0	0	4	4.76
Researchers	0	1	0	0	1	1.19
No response					23	27.38
Total Response	13	40	6	2	61	72.62

(xxiv) Table 28

**Table 28: The study space at CALS is quiet and suitable for my study and/or research needs**

***n* = 84**

The study space at CALS is quiet and suitable for my study and/or research needs	Responses		Sometimes	Total	Percent
	No	Yes			
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	3	26	9	38	45.24
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	1	24	0	25	29.76
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	0	1	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Honours	0	1	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	0	1	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	0	4	0	4	4.76
Researchers	0	1	0	1	1.19
No response				13	15.48
Total Response	4	58	9	71	84.52

(xxv) Table 29

**Table 29: CALS is useful for my research**

*n* = 84

<b>CALS is useful for my research</b>	<b>Responses</b>			<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	0	32	8	40	47.62
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	1	19	5	25	29.76
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	0	0	1	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Honours	0	1	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	0	1	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	0	4	0	4	4.76
Researchers	0	2	0	2	2.38
No response				10	11.9
Total Response	1	59	14	74	88.1

(xxvi) Table30

**Table 30: I was able to find material at CALS which I was unable to find elsewhere**

*n* = 84

I was able to find material at CALS which I was unable to find elsewhere	Responses					Total	Percent
	No	Yes	Sometimes	Not sure	Never used it		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	0	29	10	0	1	40	47.62
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	2	21	1	0	0	24	28.57
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	0	0	1	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Honours	0	1	0	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	0	1	0	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	0	3	0	1	0	4	4.76
Researchers	0	2	0	0	0	2	2.38
No response						11	13.1
Total Response	2	57	12	1	1	73	86.9

(xxvii) Table 31

**Table 31: CALS's website is easy to use**

*n* = 84

The CALS's website is easy to use	Responses					Total	Percent
	No	Yes	Sometimes	Not sure	Never used it		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	1	13	6	2	17	39	46.43
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	4	6	1	5	8	24	28.57
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	0	0	0	0	1	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Honours	0	1	0	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	1	0	0	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	1	3	0	0	0	4	4.76
No response						14	16.67
Total Response	7	23	7	7	26	70	83.33

(xxviii) Table 32

**Table 32: The contents of CALS's website are useful**

*n* = 84

The contents of CALS's website are useful	Responses					Total	Percent
	No	Yes	Sometimes	Not sure	Never used it		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	0	18	0	6	11	35	41.67
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	0	10	3	5	3	21	25
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	0	0	0	0	1	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Honours	0	0	1	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	1	0	0	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	0	3	0	1	0	4	4.76
No response						21	25
Total Response	1	31	4	12	15	63	75

(xxix) Table 33

**Table 33: The coverage of CALS's holdings on the iCatalogue (previously iLink) is adequate**

*n* = 84

The coverage of CALS's holdings on the iCatalogue (previously iLink) is adequate	Responses					Total	%
	No	Yes	Sometimes	Not sure	Never used it		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	0	18	1	4	7	30	35.71
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	1	11	2	2	2	18	21.43
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	0	0	0	0	1	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Honours	0	1	0	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	1	0	0	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	0	2	1	1	0	4	4.76
Researchers	0	1	0	0	0	1	1.19
No response						28	33.33
Total Response	2	33	4	7	10	56	66.67

(xxx) Table 34

**Table 34: Is CALS's material easy to identify on the iCatalogue?**

*n* = 84

Is CALS's material easy to identify on the iCatalogue?	Responses			Total	Percent
	No	Yes	Do not know		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	4	16	1	21	25
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	2	15	3	20	23.81
Postgraduate English Honours	0	1	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	1	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	0	4	0	4	4.76
Researchers	0	1	2	3	3.57
No response				34	40.48
Total Response	7	37	6	50	59.52



(xxxi) Table 35

**Table 35: Frustrations/problems experienced at CALS**

*n* = 84

Frustrations/problems experienced at CALS	Responses			Total	Percent
	No	Yes	Do not Know		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	29	3	0	32	38.1
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	20	6	1	27	32.14
Postgraduate English Honours	1	0	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	0	1	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	3	0	0	3	3.57
Researchers	3	1	0	4	4.76
No response				16	19.05
Total Response	56	11	1	68	80.95

(xxxii) Table 36

**Table 36: CALS's closure during weekends**

*n* = 84

<b>CALS is closed access and is not open during the weekends. Does this affect your research needs?</b>	<b>Responses</b>		<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	3	26	29	34.52
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	0	26	26	30.95
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	1	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Honours	1	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	0	1	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	2	2	4	4.76
Researchers	1	0	1	1.19
No response			21	25.00
<b>Total Response</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>75.00</b>

(xxxiii) Table37

**Table 37: Information at CALS is adequate and helpful**

*n* = 84

<b>Information at CALS adequate and helpful</b>	<b>Responses</b>		<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	No	Yes		
Undergraduate isiZulu 202	16	9	25	29.76
Undergraduate isiZulu 303	8	17	25	29.76
Postgraduate isiZulu Honours	1	0	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Honours	0	1	1	1.19
Postgraduate English Master's	0	1	1	1.19
Postgraduate English PhD	0	3	3	3.57
Researchers	0	3	3	3.57
No response			25	29.76
Total Response	25	34	59	70.24

(xxxiv) Table 38

**Table 38: Adequacy of computer workstations**

***n* = 8**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Always	4
Sometimes	3
Never	1
Total	8

(xxxv) Table 39

**Table 39: Attractiveness of CALS's facilities**

***n* = 8**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Always	5
Sometimes	2
Never	1
Total	8

(xxxvi) Table 40

**Table 40: The comfort of CALS's facilities**

*n* = 8

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Always	4
Sometimes	3
Never	1
Total	8

(xxxvii) Table 41

**Table 41: Relevance of CALS's resources**

*n* = 8

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Always	2
Sometimes	5
Never	1
Total	8

(xxxviii) Table 42

**Table 42: Ease of use of CALS's website**

*n* = 8

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
No	1
Yes	4
Sometimes	2
Not sure	1
Total	8

(xxxix) Table 43

**Table 43: Usefulness of CALS's website**

*n* = 8

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
No	1
Yes	4
Sometimes	2
Not sure	1
Total	8