

Hans-Georg Wolf (Hong Kong)  
Kasper Juffermans (Tilburg)

■ Conceptions of globalization in African  
and Western newspaper corpora:  
A case study

## 1. Introduction<sup>1</sup>

Given the global dominance of Western news media, the discourse on globalization usually takes a first-world perspective.<sup>2</sup> This discourse focuses on the driving forces of globalization in Asia, most prominently China and India, and, to a lesser degree, on South America and the neo-liberal economies of Eastern Europe. While a high number of academic publications on Africa and globalization exist,<sup>3</sup> in the Western popular mind, if Africa is associated at all with globalization, the association is mostly made with issues of economic migration, the spread of HIV and AIDS, and international aid.<sup>4</sup>

With the marginalization of Africa in the international news concert, little is known about how globalization is perceived and conceived in Africa and by Africans themselves. The aim of this chapter is hence to gain an understanding of the extent to which and in which domains globalization is conceptualized in West African English newspapers, as compared to Western English newspapers.

---

<sup>1</sup> The topic of this chapter has been inspired by a talk by Kingsley Bolton (2003).

<sup>2</sup> For the Asian, particularly the Hong Kong context, this claim has been made in Shi-xu, Kienpointner & Servaes (2005).

<sup>3</sup> A meta-search through The University of Hong Kong library system with “Africa” and “globalization” or “globalization” as keywords generated an estimated number of 12,245,000 hits.

<sup>4</sup> For a random but representative example, take the Globalization Research Center – Africa (2007), based at UCLA, whose aim “is to engage in research on ways global forces impact upon African societies; the ways in which African societies have an impact upon the globalization process; and the comparative, cross-national and cross-cultural comparison of global processes as they relate to Africa.” Of their four “signature projects,” three pertain to African miseries and their hope for solutions, namely “HIV/AIDS,” “conflict and conflict management,” and “urban governance, water, and poverty alleviation” (the fourth one is an online curriculum for critical thinking about Africa).

Our data comes from corpora of English-language newspapers available online, comprising Gambian and Nigerian sources on the one hand, and American and British sources on the other. In that, our study is a contribution to a burgeoning field in linguistics, the investigation of the conceptual coding of socio-cultural phenomena by means of corpus linguistic methods (for a discussion and overview, see Wolf & Polzenhagen 2008fc: chapter 1.4). As Gerbig & Shek (2007: 308, drawing from Hall 1997) have argued in their recent article on the phraseology of tourism, “representations construe versions of the world,” and representations are in turn understood as “the uniting element between individual and cultural experience and cognition on the one hand and linguistic encoding on the other hand.” In a similar vein, Wolf & Polzenhagen (2007: 423) have suggested that linguistic patterns are activations of culturally salient conceptual patterns. It is by now almost a truism to state that because computer corpora “are repositories of a multiplicity of uses” (Gerbig & Shek 2007: 308), they are ideal for systematic empirical studies of “representations” (for a corpus study of common core representations in West African English, see Wolf 2003).

Within the wider scope of critical discourse analysis, the linguistic critique of representations in media reporting has also been a longstanding theme of conceptual metaphor research (see Dirven, Polzenhagen & Wolf 2007). The focus there has prominently been on economic (see, e.g., Boers 1999; White 2003) and political discourse (see, e.g., Musolff 2004). The combination of corpus linguistic methods with conceptual metaphor research (see, e.g., Deignan 2005; Charteris-Black 2005; Koller 2006) as part of a cognitive sociolinguistics (cf. Geeraerts 2003, 2005; Dirven 2005; Wolf & Polzenhagen 2008fc.) then yields an especially powerful approach to the study of socio-cultural patterns in language.

Our paper is structured as follows: In section 2., we outline the methodology and provide information on the compilation of the corpora. Section 3.1. includes the collocational patterns in the different corpora with their weighted occurrence and highlights some general observations, while sections 3.2. and 3.3. discuss the topics and perceptions of globalization across the corpora. Throughout, we take a comparative point of view, comparing both the two African corpora with the Western corpora and the two African corpora with each other. Given the constraints of space, our paper had to give precedence to the discussion of the statistical results over the extraction of conceptualization patterns that emerge from the texts. Section 4. finally summarizes the main findings and concludes our study.

## 2. Corpora used and corpus linguistic methodology

For the West African data, we will focus on Gambian and Nigerian online newspapers, representing the smallest and the largest ‘anglophone’ West African country, respectively. The Gambian Newspaper English corpus (GamNE) was compiled between 2005 and 2007 and includes texts from 2000-2006 published by the leading Gambian newspapers *Daily Observer*, *The Point*, *The Independent*, *Foroyaa*, as well as some additional online news resources. It consists of over 6.5m

words. The Nigerian Newspaper English corpus (NigNE) was compiled in 2007 and contains texts dating no further back than 2004. They come from three selected Nigerian newspapers available online: *Times of Nigeria*, *The Daily Independent* and *Business Day*. NigNE has 8.8m tokens. For the Western data, we compiled similar, but smaller (2m words), corpora from British and American online newspapers. The British Newspaper English corpus (BrNE) consists of newspaper articles published in 2005 by four British newspapers: *The Times*, *the Guardian*, *The Independent*, and *The Daily Telegraph*. The American Newspaper English corpus (AmNE) covers the same period and is also made up of articles from four national newspapers: *USA Today*, *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and *The Village Voice*. Only GamNE is comprehensive in the sense that it contains almost everything journalistic that has been published and made available online in the period covered. The other corpora are much smaller selections of the available online material. However, they are all sizeable representations of the respective varieties of English newspaper writing, and we tried to achieve an equal distribution of text types across all of the corpora as far as possible. The main selection criteria for the Nigerian, British, and American newspapers were the size and national standing of the newspapers, coupled with (free) online accessibility and user-friendly electronic transferability of the text files into the corpora. Thus, only large and well-established national newspapers with a well-developed online version are represented in our corpora.

In terms of the representativeness of the respective Englishes per se, we acknowledge that, especially in the African context, newspaper discourse is an elite discourse, due to a pronounced gap in literacy competencies of the masses and the elite. The Nigerian and Gambian corpora should therefore be understood as African elite writing and hence as expressions of elite conceptualizations. Not only in Africa, newspapers are important agents of standardization, yet few of the authors of the texts in our African corpora would think of their English as being standard Nigerian or standard Gambian English, as no such official standards exist. Gambian English and Nigerian English, though fully indigenized and identifiable as distinct varieties, are exposed to various influences. Gambian English is influenced by British English e.g., through BBC radio broadcasts, by American English through CNN news items borrowed by the Gambia Radio & Television Service (GRTS, the national television channel), by Sierra Leonean English due to the presence of many Sierra Leoneans in the teaching profession and a large number of (former) refugees from the civil war in Sierra Leone, by Nigerian English through Nigerian films that are immensely popular in The Gambia (and across West Africa in general), and further by a range of L1 and L2 Englishes spoken by tourists from a variety of countries in mainly northern and western Europe. The result is a national variety that is “Gambian” in many ways, but eclectically international in many others. Given the demographic size and economic importance of Nigeria, this country is linguistically more “self-referential” (cf. Peter *this volume*), yet international influences can be found in its English nevertheless (see Igboanusi 2003).

WordSmith Tools (Scott 1997), the software we used for our analysis, allows to investigate different kinds of collocational patterns. The default setting to find collocates is within the L5-R5 horizons. In this setting, collocates are defined broadly as words that occur within five places to the left and five places to the right of a specified word; we call these collocates “wider collocates.” In a narrower sense, a collocation could be understood as a recurrent combination of only two or three adjacent words, such as *political party*, *presidential elections*, *global economic growth*, etc., which we, for the purpose of this paper, call “immediate collocations”<sup>5</sup> (on collocations in corpus linguistics, see, e.g., McEnery & Wilson 2001: 23-24; Barnbrook 1996: ch. 5). In the following, we will look at both kinds of relevant collocations found in the corpora. The wordlists resulting from our “five left, five right” search are not inclusive, but a selection of those items that either topically relate to the immediate collocations or we deem otherwise relevant to our discussion, in terms of how globalization is contextualized and perceived. Due to the constraints of this paper, we could not verify the topical reference of every single wider collocation. For example, items like *level*, *effects*, *source* occur in a variety of contexts. We only discuss those whose topical reference is immediately apparent or was verified by us.

### 3. Results and analysis

#### 3.1. Statistical findings and general observations

This section presents the statistical results of our corpus analyses and gives an overview of the main findings. As specified above, table 1 lists the immediate collocations with *global* extracted from our corpora, and table 2 a selection of wider collocational patterns with *global*\*.

The results given in table 2 show, somewhat surprisingly, that *global*<sup>6</sup> occurs significantly more frequently in the African than in the Western corpora; the weighted average per 1m words for *global* in the four corpora is 176 for GamNE, 365 for NigNE, 130 for BrNE, and 122 for AmNE. This pattern is also reflected in the number of immediate collocations with *global*, as presented in table 1. It further appears that these collocations are not only more frequent, but also topically more diverse in the African corpora. *Global fund* (4.6%, i.e., 4.6% of all immediate collocations with *global*) and *global market(s)* (3.8%), the strongest collocations in the Gambian and Nigerian corpora respectively, are still much weaker than the strongest immediate collocations *global warming*, shared by the British (32%) and American (20%) corpora.

<sup>5</sup> “Immediate collocation” is also used, e.g., by Widdows (2003: 374). A synonymous term is “immediate collocate,” used, e.g., by Deignan (1999). Neither Widdows nor Deignan have theoretically specified their term. A number of theoretical concepts and terms with a similar scope, e.g. ‘node’ and ‘span,’ are, however, proposed and discussed by Stubbs (2002).

<sup>6</sup> We did not differentiate the to some extent overlapping senses of *global* and *globally* respectively.

Table 1: Immediate collocations with *global* in GamNE, NigNE, BrNE, AmNE (weighted per 1m words; cut-off point: 2 occurrences per 1m words).

	Gambian NE	Nigerian NE	British NE	American NE
5	<i>Fund(s)</i> 9 [4.6%]	<i>market(s)</i> 14 [3.8%] <i>economy</i> 11 <i>economic</i> 10 ~ <i>growth</i> 2 ~ <i>imbalances</i> 1 <i>financial</i> 9 ~ <i>institution(s)</i> 1 ~ <i>service(s)</i> 1 ~ <i>market(s)/marketplace</i> 1 <i>trend(s)</i> 6 <i>bank(s)</i> 6 <i>village</i> 5 <i>oil</i> 5 ~ <i>price(s)</i> 1 ~ <i>demand</i> 1 <i>standard(s)</i> 5 <i>energy</i> 5 ~ <i>studies</i> 1	<i>warming</i> 41 [32%]	<i>warming</i> 24 [20%] <i>fund</i> 7
4	<i>citizen(s)/ citizenship;</i> <i>level(s); warming;</i> <i>environment</i> <sup>7</sup>	<i>fund(s); environment;</i> <i>brand(s); trade;</i> <i>best practice(s); player(s);</i> <i>development(s);</i> <i>competitiveness;</i>	<i>economy</i>	<i>AIDS</i> ~ <i>Alliance</i> 2 <i>trade</i>
3	<i>economy; campaign;</i> <i>peace; pandemic;</i> <i>trading; village</i>	<i>banking; growth;</i> <i>business(es); imbalance(s);</i> <i>compact; demand(s); rating(s);</i> <i>community/ communities;</i> <i>system</i>	<i>climate; companies</i>	<i>pandemic; war; climate</i>
2	<i>management</i> <sup>8</sup> ; <i>community; health;</i> <i>network; finance;</i> <i>market(s)</i>	<i>level(s); Fleet</i> <sup>9</sup> ; <i>health;</i> <i>challenge(s); effort(s);</i> <i>Steel</i> <sup>10</sup> ; <i>credit;</i> <i>warming; Infoswift</i> <sup>11</sup> ; <i>practice(s)</i>	<i>brand(s); market(s);</i> <i>language(s);</i> <i>terrorism; sales;</i> <i>temperature(s)</i>	<i>climate; economy;</i> <i>market(s); threat</i>

<sup>7</sup> Most *global environment* collocations in both the Gambian and Nigerian corpus actually refer to the *Global Environment Facility*, an international organization promoting environmental projects.

<sup>8</sup> All immediate collocations of *global management* refer to *Global Management Systems*, apparently a fraudulent company that had taken over the electricity supply in the Gambia; the name of this company is itself an attestation of the popularity of the label “global”.

<sup>9</sup> Global Fleet is an oil company.

<sup>10</sup> Global Steel is the name of a company.

<sup>11</sup> Global Infoswift is the name of a Nigerian IT company.

Table 2: Wider collocates of *global\** in GamNE, NigNE, BrNE, AmNE (weighted occurrences per 1m words, after removing noise; cut-off point: 2 occurrences per 1m words).

	Gambian NE	Nigerian NE	British NE	American NE
	<i>world</i> 11	<i>Nigeria(n/s)</i> 26	<i>warming</i> 41	<i>warming</i> 26
	<i>fund(s)</i> 9	<i>bank(s)</i> 23	<i>company/companies</i> 5	<i>AIDS</i> 12
	<i>Gambia</i> 8	<i>market(s)</i> 16		<i>fund</i> 7
	<i>national</i> 8	<i>world</i> 14		<i>world</i> 7
	<i>against</i> 8	<i>company/companies</i> 14		<i>fight(ing)</i> 5
	<i>AIDS</i> 8	<i>country/countries</i> 14		<i>TB/tuberculosis</i> 5
	<i>Africa(n)</i> 7	<i>service(s)</i> 10		
	<i>trade/trading</i> 7	<i>oil</i> 10		
	<i>development</i> 7	<i>financial</i> 10		
	<i>system</i> 7	<i>industry</i> 10		
	<i>management</i> 7	<i>international</i> 10		
	<i>rights</i> 7	<i>year(s)</i> 9		
5	<i>HIVAIDS</i> 6	<i>growth</i> 9		
	<i>media</i> 6	<i>percent</i> 9		
a	<i>campaign</i> 6	<i>system(s)</i> 8		
n	<i>fight</i> 6	<i>development</i> 8		
d	<i>level(s)</i> 6	<i>practice(s)</i> 8		
	<i>peace</i> 6	<i>business</i> 7		
m	<i>economy</i> 6	<i>current(ly)</i> 6		
o	<i>country/countries</i> 6	<i>group</i> 6		
r	<i>economic</i> 5	<i>report</i> 6		
e	<i>environment</i> 5	<i>limited</i> 6		
	<i>network</i> 5	<i>economic</i> 6		
t	<i>international</i> 5	<i>local</i> 6		
o	<i>distributed</i> 5	<i>corruption</i> 6		
k	<i>reserved</i> 5	<i>up</i> 6		
e	<i>health</i> 5	<i>African</i> 5		
n	<i>security</i> 5	<i>leading</i> 5		
s		<i>management</i> 5		
		<i>sector</i> 5		
		<i>based</i> 5		
		<i>insurance</i> 5		
		<i>trade</i> 5		
		<i>against</i> 5		
		<i>compete</i> 5		
		<i>regional</i> 5		
		<i>director</i> 5		
		<i>US</i> 5		
		<i>part</i> 5		
		<i>prices</i> 5		
4	<i>regional; warming; problem(s); new; pandemic; community; action; human; poverty; group; malaria; US</i>	<i>reform(s); now; investment; major; emerging; gas; national; challenges; corporate; mobile; recent; role; energy; growing; line; million; poverty</i>	<i>economy; impact(s); market(s); language(s)</i>	<i>alliance; trade; war; market(s)/ marketplace</i>

Table 2. *continued*

	Gambian NE	Nigerian NE	British NE	American NE
3	<p>market; tuberculosis; citizens; children; million; people; project; forum; increasing; youth; challenges; phenomenon; programme; agenda; change; integration; response; united; village;</p>	<p>economy; high; rating; billion; institutions; people; PLC<sup>12</sup>; competitive; going; GSM; standard; best; environment; network; player; top; UBA<sup>13</sup>; consolidation; equity; governance; operations; products; share; access; facility; fight; government; important; intercontinental; place; term; today; boosting; capital; finance; imbalances; include; integration; issues; partnership; programme; benefits; communication; technology;</p>	<p>nuclear; air, benefits; climate, sale(s); challenge(s)</p>	<p>pandemic; policy; threat; health; contributors; research; terror; economy/economies; citizen(s)</p>
2	<p>facility; issues; war; implementation; nations; partnership; report; threat; week; finance; GEF<sup>14</sup>; information; water; conference; day; disease; more</p>	<p>banking; capacity; cent; demand; further; gateway; information; money; nations; private; united; IMF; position; time; chief; client; increase; investors; managing; opportunities; tier; advisor; alliance; domestic; driven; fund; impact; president; security; source; strong; changes; class; community; initiative; level; play; South; strategy; talks; women</p>	<p>energy; group; management; terrorism; brand(s); effect(s); standard(s); accounting; English; glacier; industry; London; power; regional; rising; scientific; sea; news; war; business(es); temperature(s)</p>	<p>avian; Bush; climate; disease; drugs; emissions; flu; gases; report; subject; talks; more; scientist(s); system(s); agitprop; elites; Europe; legislation; new; power; progress; terrorism; community/ communities; winter; resource(s); group(s)</p>

The conceptual frame in which the discourse surrounding globalization is set is characterized by the immediate collocations *global market(s)* in all four corpora and *global village* and *global community/communities* in the African corpora only (see table 1; *market(s)*, however, is a wider collocates with *global\** in BrNE and AmNE, as well as *community/communities* in AmNE; see table 2). As one would expect, in three of the corpora, *global\** is found in frequent relation to their “home country.”

<sup>12</sup> PLC stands for “Public Limited Company”.

<sup>13</sup> UBA stands for “United Bank of Africa”.

<sup>14</sup> GEF is the “Global Environment Facility”, a UN sub-organization, mentioned in GamNE for sponsoring environmental projects in The Gambia and the third world in general.

This, however, is not the case with the American corpus. GamNE and NigNE have *Gambia*, respectively *Nigeria*(*'s/n*), in frequent textual proximity to *global\** and share a *regional* and *Africa(n)* perspective; BrNE has *Britain* and *London*; yet the only geographical wider collocation with *global\** in AmNE is *Europe*. Unlike in the other corpora, however, the political leader – here President Bush – frequently collocates with *global\**. As wider collocations we found *world*, *national*, *international*, *regional*, *country/countries*, *nations*, *environment* and *US* in both African corpora, and further *local*, *based*, *intercontinental*, *place*, *domestic* and *South* in NigNE. Globalization is discussed in the African corpora as a local, national, regional, international, and ultimately as a world affair, with a major role – at least in terms of sheer frequency counts – assigned to the US. It is remarkable that only the African corpora have a significant occurrence of *the* iconic term for the result of globalization, *global village*. With three and five occurrences per 1m words for GamNE and NigNE respectively (no occurrence in BrNE and only one in AmNE), and recurrent phrases like “our dear motherland is not exception [sic] to this in view of the global village scenario we are in,” (GamNE), or “but don’t forget that today Nigeria is part of the global village” (NigNE), *global village* occupies a rhetoric commonplace in African English discourse on globalization, while it has become a cliché to be avoided in British and American newspapers.

Temporal words, or words in which temporality is implied, collocating with *global\** in our corpora are *new* in GamNE and AmNE, *current(ly)*, *recent*, *today* and *now* in NigNE, *change(s)*, *increase/increasing*, *emerging* and *growing* in GamNE and NigNE, *rising* in BrNE and *progress* in AmNE. **We would like to draw attention especially to** the many exclusive time references in our Nigerian corpus; it is the one in which globalization is most strongly associated with a sense of immediacy. Still, globalization is observed by the news writers in all of our corpora as a new and ongoing phenomenon, as something that is happening today, and as something that is affecting the world in many different ways. What these observations are specifically will be discussed in the following section.

### 3.2. Predominant topics of globalization

A highly salient topic in all four corpora is the natural environment. *Global warming* as a reference to the currently most pressing international environmental issue does occur frequently in both the GamNE and the NigNE corpus. For *Gambia*, one would suspect that the concern about global warming may be partly motivated by the geographic nature of the country – the tidal sea water reaches far upstream of the river *Gambia*, along whose riverbanks *Gambia* stretches –, and repeated references to Sub-Saharan Africa are made in the relevant texts (e.g., the climate becoming more extreme in the tropical countries, desertification, food insecurity, etc.). The collocations *water* and *level(s)* for GamNE in table 2 support this suspicion, though *water* is an item that also relates to the topic of health (see below). In the Nigerian corpus, on the other hand, *global warming* occurs only twice in a specific African, i.e., Nigerian context (the impounding of “not road-worthy vehicles,” emitting too much smoke); the other references relate to global warming



as a general international news item. In the African corpora, the natural environment as a global issue also shows, albeit indirectly, in the repeated references to the *Global Environment Facility* (GEF, see footnotes 7 and 14), which sponsors environmental projects. *Global climate* in the Western corpora and *global temperature(s)* in BrNE are other relevant immediate collocations. In BrNE, *glacier* and, partly, *rising* and *sea* as wider collocations profile the topic of global warming further. However, *global environment* in the African corpora also refers to globalization per se; the Gambian corpus talks of challenges and “great difficulty” in the global environment, and the Nigerian corpus, more specifically, of economic competition in the global environment.

While the current hype about global warming in the West is reflected in the absolute dominance of this immediate collocation among the others with *global* in BrNE and AmNE, the “world economy” dominates as a topic across the corpora under investigation. Under this heading, one can directly subsume *global economy* and *global market(s)* in all four corpora, *global trading* and *global trade* in GamNE, NigNE, and AmNE respectively, *global finance* in GamNE, *global economic* and *global financial* and their extended collocates in NigNE, *global companies* and *global brand(s)* in NigNE and BrNE, *global bank(s)*, *global banking*, *global business(es)*, *global credit*, *global growth* in NigNE, as well as *global sales* in BrNE. Though collocates of *global* with terms from the economic realm can be found in all four corpora, obviously, the media focus on the link between globalization and (the) economy is by far strongest and widest in the Nigerian corpus. This link also shows in the wider collocates from the economic and business-related realm (cf. *industry*, *company*, *management*, *corporate*, *PLC*, etc. in the Nigerian column of table 2).

Admittedly, this prevalence of economic topics in NigNE may be due to the dominant representation of business-oriented newspapers in this corpus, but it also has to do with Nigeria itself. On the one hand, oil is *the* Nigerian commodity that is internationally sought after and more than anything else connects Nigeria to the world economy. *Global oil* and *global energy* immediately attest to this specificity; the vast majority of occurrences of *global demand(s)* are also linked to oil and energy resources. On the other hand, as a *global player*, or in the attempt to become one (most references of *global player(s)* are indeed to Nigerian enterprises), international benchmarking is an important issue in the Nigerian press. The adoption of *global (best) practice(s)* and following *global standard(s)* is a recurrent and encompassing topic, all the way down to Nigeria’s film industry (another popular though less “weighty” export of the country). *Global rating(s)* more narrowly and predominantly refers to the standing of the Nigerian finance sector, but also to companies in general and efforts by a government agency in the telecom sector. Likewise, yet more realistically, *global competitiveness* mostly relates to Nigeria’s poor performance in international competitiveness reports and ratings, but also to Africa’s global competitiveness (other references are to Nigerian students, and the global competitiveness of other countries). In a wider sense, *global compact* also belongs to this category of international benchmarking, as it is the name of a UN “initiative for responsible business practice.” The wider collocate *corruption* indicates one of the key problems Nigeria still faces.

*Global trend(s)* and *global challenge(s)* are predominantly used in an economic context in NigNE, but a sizeable number of other topics are touched upon by these collocations as well. For *global trend(s)* these are progress and development in an unspecified sense, educational development, politics, aviation, sexual and reproductive health, and football. *Global challenge(s)*, besides economic topics, refers to Nigeria's naval challenges, the curriculum of law faculties, corruption, administration, and US policy. *Global development(s)* in NigNE repeatedly occurs in articles on a World Bank report, but also in the context of IT, art, AIDS and malnutrition. *Global system* predominantly refers to mobile phone communication and standards in Nigeria and elsewhere (see below), and only in a couple of instances to the international financial system. No occurrence of *global imbalance(s)* relates to Nigeria specifically; the references very generally pertain to the uneven distribution of wealth, developmental aims, or the US account deficit. *Global community/communities* in NigNE is occasionally used as a synonym for "global market," as in "it is difficult for Nigeria to be an exception in a global community where investors ... readily move from one country to another," but most times touches upon the FAMILY OF NATIONS metaphor, often with reference to Nigeria's place in it, as in "he expressed pleasure at the efforts of the Federal Government to restore the glory and pride of Nigeria as an important member of the global community."

Still dealing with collocations that occur only in NigNE above our cut-off point, we find that *global level(s)* and *global effort(s)* are mixed bags in terms of topical reference. The former immediate collocation is used in the context of corporate relevance and transparency, changes in the national and international banking system, and Africa's trade performance, but also in reference to a World Bank program for sustainable fishing, the correlation of national poverty with low education, the link between energy use and environmental sustainability, the monitoring of environmental conditions, poverty alleviation in the Third World, aviation standards in Nigeria, and qualifications for a golf tournament. *Global effort(s)* also pertains to fishery, aviation, and poverty reduction, but also to Nigeria's debt reduction, agricultural development, sub-Saharan economic growth, the protection of intellectual property rights, the cooperation of NGOs, software development and IT in Nigeria. Yet health issues, specifically the fight against AIDS and malaria, stand out among the various contexts this item refers to.

Health as a global topic is directly activated by *global health* in GamNE and NigNE. In the former, reference is mostly made to the World Health Organization and international programs, but also to the risks of tobacco and bioterrorism. In NigNE, we found similarly general references to world-wide health, but also specifically to AIDS and bird flu. These two diseases also figure prominently in our American corpus, judging by the immediate collocations *global AIDS*, *global pandemic* and *global threat*, with the latter two exclusively referring to bird flu (also see *avian* and *flu* in the AmNE column in table 2). In the Gambian corpus, on the other hand, *global pandemic* almost exclusively is a placeholder for HIV/AIDS, and only in two cases stands for bird flu. In GamNE, the fight against HIV/AIDS is also most frequently referred to by *global campaign*; other references are made to

a WHO campaign for the prevention of violence against women, the International Action Network on Small Arms, childcare, urban governance, and journalistic free expression. An important health-related reference reciprocally shared by the African corpora on the one hand, and the American on the other, is *Global Fund(s)* (there is no immediate collocation *global fund\** in BrNE). The Global Fund was founded “as a partnership between governments, civil society, the private sector and affected communities” (Global Fund 2002-2007) to fight AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria (one finds these names of diseases as collocates in the GamNE and the AmNE column in table 2). Not surprisingly, in the American corpus, the relevant newspaper articles discuss the US contribution to this fund and alternative projects, like the Bush initiative to fight AIDS. In GamNE, besides general information about the Global Fund, one finds reports on particular projects sponsored by it in the Gambia. In the NigNE, however, various articles deal with the mismanagement of financial support provided by Global Fund and Nigeria’s subsequent indictment by this institution. NigNE is the only corpus in which *global fund(s)* does not exclusively refer to the Global Fund organization, but also to the Global Fund for women (2x), and global investment funds (7x).

The high frequency of *global citizen(s)/citizenship* in GamNE is due to the use of the terms by a US-based Gambian human rights activist and political critic, who idiosyncratically signs many of his articles with a formula in capitals like *MAY GOD BLESS GAMBIA AND THE AFRICAN CONTINENT AND CONTINUE TO BLESS THE GREAT UNITED STATES OF AMERICA* [It was indeed Nigeria here, and not Gambia, but if you think this is confusing, we can also use (the latter part of) this formula: *LONG LIVE FREEDOM, JUSTICE AND THE RULE OF LAW. LONG LIVE DEMOCRACY. MAY GOD BLESS THE AFRICAN CONTINENT AND CONTINUE TO BLESS AMERICA*. At least 22 of the 26 collocates of *global* and *citizen\** in GamNE could be traced back to this Gambian American journalist.<sup>15</sup> His pieces are editorials or political analyses (e.g., a series articles called “Dictators on the run”) for three different US-based online only Gambia-oriented newspapers and websites, *Freedom*, *AllGambia.net*, and *The Gambia Journal*. “Global,” if used in conjunction with *citizen* and *citizenship*, metonymically stands for abiding by international principles of justice and peace. For example, the arrest of Charles Taylor and the prosecution of other war criminals is seen as being “due to the efforts of all global citizens in the transnational civil society.” Interestingly, this label is also used for Africans and Gambians, even when no immediate “global” issue is at stake, as evident in “global citizens continue to be hopeful that they [a group of progressive African leaders] have set examples on the continent” and in “global citizens were stunned with the news of Major Kalifa Bajinka’s [a former commander of Gambia’s Presidential Guard] narrow escape from death.”

<sup>15</sup> This occurrence shows that idiosyncratic language use, i.e., the lexical choices of one individual journalist, can yield statistically significant findings in the corpus at large, which, without caution, are easily extrapolated as a particularity of the national variety in question. In other words, corpora of written language, especially when relying on newspaper discourse, essentially reflect the aggregate individual language use of members of a small group of writers. It remains an open question as to how far these writers can be seen as representatives of the speech community they belong to. In Gambia English in general, *global citizen/citizenship* are not typical or recurrent terms.

Though *global citizen(s)/citizenship* is by far not as frequent in NigNE, we did find, however, *global* used there in the same semantically peculiar sense of ‘abiding by international principles of justice and peace,’ with *global citizen* standing metonymically for Nigeria’s government (cf. *global community* above): “Government’s excuse for its uncharacteristically quick compliance with the ruling of the World Court is the desire to uphold the rule of law and be a good global citizen.”

Our Gambian corpus is the only one in which *global peace* is of noticeable frequency. It occurs in reports on an international topics (speeches at the UN or by UN officials, a speech by the then Nigerian president Obasanjo at an international conference, the Middle East conflict, the terrorist attack in London, the conflict between the PR China and Taiwan), and in articles with a local focus. In the latter case, *global peace* is found as part of the name of the *Global Peace Games for Children and Youth*, a charitable sports event, the *Agency for the Promotion of Global Peace and Religious Tolerance*, a Gambian charitable organization, but also in an article on Gambia’s ranking on the Failed State Index, the role of tourism in the Gambia, and the Gambia’s foreign policy, including its role in Senegal’s Casamance conflict. The wider collocate *security* in the GamNE corpus (see table 2) ties in with *global peace*.

The antinomy of *global peace* – *global war* – is frequent in AmNE, and, as expected, all collocations refer to the US administration’s “global war on terror” or terrorism. *Global terrorism*, highlighting a closely related topic, is a significant collocate in the BrNE corpus. *Global war* and *global terrorism* also occur in the GamNE and the NigNE corpus, but their frequency is below our cut-off point; still, *war* is a wider collocate in GamNE (see table 2). *Nuclear*, as a wider collocation in BrNE, refers to both the possibility of nuclear terrorism and the proliferation of nuclear arms.

Fittingly for this festschrift, the issue of English as a global language is indicated by *global language(s)* in BrNE, but all occurrences go back to one article in the *Guardian* on a Language and Development Conference, held in Addis Ababa (still it is remarkable that as insignificant a topic as this one even made it into a respectable daily newspaper).

Another topic which is not evident as an immediate collocation but is activated by wider collocates in both GamNE and NigNE is telecommunication. The collocates are *network* and *system* in both corpora, *GSM* (Global System Mobile Communication, a Nigerian provider of mobile phone services) and *communication* in NigNE. In countries where functioning landlines cannot be taken for granted, communication via mobile phone is an important means to connect locally and internationally, and is enjoying an ever-increasing popularity in Africa.<sup>16</sup>

Finally, the occurrence of *poverty* as a wider collocate in the African corpora, and its absence in the two Western ones, is remarkable. *Poverty* is what we would call a “connector,” i.e., a collocate that conceptually links different topics of globalization. ‘Poverty’ is the reference point for development, but also plays an important role in the discourses on the environment and health.

<sup>16</sup> The Gambia, a country of only 1.5m inhabitants, had in 2007 three different mobile telephone providers.

### 3.3. Perceptions of globalization

To get an idea of how globalization is perceived, or, rather, of the way the media shape these perceptions, one can look at the collocates in table 2 that do not represent a topic of globalization per se, but provide a description or characterization. For heuristic purposes, these collocates can be grouped into three simple categories according to whether they signal “negativity,” “indeterminacy,” or “positivity.” We lack time and space here for a referential analysis of the verb/noun *increase* or determiners like *high*, *more*, *strong*, *new*, which, at least in the African corpora, frequently collocate with *global\** (see above). Likewise, we cannot provide an analysis that differentiates the respective collocates with regard to the individual topics under which they occur. Still, the textual proximity of certain words to *global\** tells something about the semantic atmosphere surrounding the overall topic.

In the category “negativity,” we would place *fight(ing)*, *problem(s)*, *against*, *anti*, and *threat*. These collocates clearly signal danger and/or adversity. They can be found, though not consistently, in GamNE, NigNE, and AmNE, but surprisingly not in BrNE, which has no negative markers above our threshold of significance. As to the three evaluative categories, “negativity” in the context of *global\** dominates in our American corpus. In the nomenclature of conceptual metaphor theory (e.g., Lakoff & Johnson 1980), the underlying metaphor of this category is GLOBALIZATION IS A THREAT.

Collocates that fall into the “indeterminacy” category constitute the largest group across the four corpora. *Phenomenon* and *issues*, which frequently occur in GamNE and NigNE respectively, are the most non-evaluative and semantically “neutral” references to (aspects of) globalization. The word in this category perhaps closest to “negativity” is *challenges*, but a challenge can be a “wake-up call,” and implies the chance of change to the better. *Challenges* frequently occurs as a collocate of *global\** in GamNE, NigNE, and BrNE. The collocate *change(s)* is frequently found in both of our African corpora. *Emerging*, semantically related to ‘change,’ is frequently in textual proximity to *global\** in NigNE. The respective conceptual metaphors are GLOBALIZATION IS A CHALLENGE and GLOBALIZATION IS CHANGE. *Response*, frequently found in GamNE, is demanded by challenges and changes. Words that express consequences of globalization can only be found to a significant degree in NigNE (*impact*) and BrNE (*effect(s)*).

“Positivity” is the smallest category, with only *boosting*, *opportunities* and *benefits* as frequent collocates in NigNE (and it is only the NigNE corpus in which “positivity” is combined with the “immediacy of globalization” mentioned earlier). Considering the overall database, GLOBALIZATION IS AN OPPORTUNITY is an underrepresented conceptualization. Arguably, one could also include *progress* and *development* in this category, but to our mind, these words are more “infra-structural” than atmospheric.

#### 4. Discussion and summary

It has to be acknowledged that newspaper corpora provide only a snapshot of salient issues in a fast-changing media world, and our findings and arguments can only claim legitimacy with respect to the time period covered by our corpora and the newspapers we included. Within these bounds, though, we can propose certain generalizations and conclusions.

First, unlike originally expected, global crime (if terrorism and corruption are not subsumed under this label), cultural contact and flow, the Internet, and tourism do not play a major role in our corpora. In fact, crime was neither a significant topic in itself nor in relation to another, as far as we surveyed the relevant texts. The article taken from the *Guardian* on the sociolinguistics conference touched upon the issue of language and culture, but apart from that, this was not a topic the newspapers were concerned with. The Internet only indirectly figures under the rubric of IT business and telecommunication, but not as a cultural phenomenon. The relation between tourism and globalization (in reference to global peace) was found to be mentioned only in the Gambian corpus – not surprisingly, as the Gambia's economy to a large part depends upon tourism.

The four dominant topics of globalization in our corpora are the environment, specifically global warming; global health, with AIDS, avian flu, but also malaria and tuberculosis as major concerns; the global economy, with a variety of sub-topics, like the international banking system, trade, energy supply, IT, and telecommunication; and global terror and counter-measures. On the basis of these findings, we have to modify the general claim made at the beginning of this paper that in terms of globalization, Africa is mostly associated with issues of economic migration, HIV/AIDS, and international aid in the Western mind. Economic migration is not a big issue in our African corpora,<sup>17</sup> and it is “Westerners” and Africans alike who link Africa to the global issues of HIV/AIDS and international aid.

As both the immediate collocations and the wider collocates show, the two African corpora are thematically more diversified, and “global,” globally speaking, has a more salient status there than in the two Western corpora. Global warming and global terrorism as topics are by far not as dominant in the African corpora as they are in the Western corpora. In the African corpora, health and external funding play an important role, and country-specific issues, such as Nigeria's dependency on oil, come to the fore. This localism can be taken as evidence that Western news networks are not fully hegemonic. Still, most topics of globalization are shared across the four corpora, albeit with different weightings and foci.

Finally, judging from the various names of Nigerian and Gambian companies and organizations that include the word “global” (see table 1), it seems that globalization is also an issue of prestige and aspiration in these two countries, and perhaps in all of (West) Africa (cf. Juffermans 2008fc.).

---

<sup>17</sup> An analysis of newspaper corpora compiled from newspapers published in European countries closer to Africa may yield different results with respect to this topic.

## References

- Barnbrook, Geoff  
 1996 *Language and Computers: A Practical Introduction to the Computer Analysis of Language*. [Edinburgh Textbooks in Empirical Linguistics]. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Boers, Frank  
 1999 Metaphorical variation in the economist's mind: Bodies of evidence. *Études et Travaux* 3: 19-30.
- Bolton, Kingsley  
 2003 Globalisation and Asian Englishes: The global village in the Asian English-language press. Paper presented at the International Seminar on Applied Linguistics in a Global World, Department of Linguistics, University of Delhi, India, December 12-14, 2003.
- Charteris-Black, Jonathan  
 2005 *Politicians and Rhetoric: The Persuasive Power of Metaphor*. Basingstoke (Hampshire) – New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Deignan, Alice  
 1999 Linguistic metaphors and collocation in nonliterary corpus data. *Metaphor and Symbol* 14(1): 19-36.  
 2005 *Metaphor and Corpus Linguistics*. Amsterdam – Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Dirven, René  
 2005 Major strands in Cognitive Linguistics. In: Francisco J. Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez & M. Sandra Peña Cervel (eds.), *Cognitive Linguistics. Internal Dynamics and Interdisciplinary Interaction*, 17-68. [Cognitive Linguistics Research 32]. Berlin – New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Dirven, René, Frank Polzenhagen & Hans-Georg Wolf  
 2007 Cognitive linguistics, ideology, and Critical Discourse Analysis. In: Dirk Geeraerts & Hubert Cuyckens (eds.), *Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics*, 1222-1240. Oxford – New York: Oxford University Press.
- GamNE. The Gambian Newspaper English Corpus  
 2007 Version of 6.5m tokens. Compiled by Kasper Juffermans. Ghent University.
- Geeraerts, Dirk  
 2003 'Usage-based' implies 'variational': On the inevitability of cognitive socio-linguistics. Plenary lecture presented at the *8th International Cognitive Linguistics Conference: Cognitive Linguistics, Functionalism, Discourse Studies: Common Ground and New Directions*. Logroño, Spain, July 20-25, 2003.  
 2005 Lectal variation and empirical data in Cognitive Linguistics. In: Francisco J. Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez & M. Sandra Peña Cervel (eds.), *Cognitive Linguistics. Internal Dynamics and Interdisciplinary Interaction*, 164-189. [Cognitive Linguistics Research 32]. Berlin – New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Gerbig, Andrea & Angela Shek  
 2007 The phraseology of tourism: A central lexical field and its cultural construction. In: Paul Skandera (ed.), *Phraseology and Culture in English*, 303-322. [Topics in English Linguistics 54]. Berlin – New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Global Fund 2002-2007  
 2007 [<http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/> accessed September 15, 2007].
- Globalization Research Center Africa  
 2007 University of California, Los Angeles  
 [<http://www.globalization-africa.org/> accessed June 19, 2007].

- Hall, Stuart  
 1997 The work of representation. In: Stuart Hall (ed.), *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, 13-64. London: Sage Publications, in association with The Open University.
- Igboanusi, Herbert  
 2003 Knowledge, use, and attitudes towards Americanisms in Nigerian English. *World Englishes* 22(4): 599-604.
- Juffermans, Kasper  
 2008fc Local emplacement and global identities in signboard and billboard literacies in urban Gambia. In: Augustin Simo Bobda (ed.), *Explorations into Language Use in Africa*. Frankfurt (M.): Peter Lang.
- Koller, Veronika  
 2006 Of critical importance: Using corpora to study metaphor in business media discourse. In: Anatol Stefanowitsch & Stefan Griess (eds.), *Corpora in Cognitive Linguistics: Metaphor and Metonymy*, 229-257. [Trends in Linguistics. Studies and Monographs 172]. Berlin – New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Lakoff, George & Mark Johnson  
 1980 *Metaphors we Live By*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- McEnery, Tony & Andrew Wilson  
 2002 *Corpus Linguistics*. 2nd ed. [Edinburgh Textbooks in Empirical Linguistics]. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Musolff, Andreas  
 2004 *Metaphor and Political Discourse: Analogical Reasoning in Debates about Europe*. Basingstoke (Hampshire) – New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- NigNE. The Nigerian Newspaper English Corpus  
 2007 Version of 8.8m tokens. Compiled by Kasper Juffermans. The University of Hong Kong.
- Peter, Lothar, Hans-Georg Wolf & Augustin Simo Bobda  
 2003 An account of distinctive phonetic and lexical features of Gambian English. *English World-Wide* 24(1): 43-61.
- Scott, Mike  
 1999 *WordSmith Tools 3.0*. Software. Oxford University Press. [www.lexically.net/wordsmith].
- Shi-xu, Manfred Kienpointner & Jan Servaes (eds.)  
 2005 *Read the Cultural Other: Forms of Otherness in the Discourses of Hong Kong's Decolonization*. [Language, Power and Social Process 14]. Berlin – New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Stubbs, Michael  
 2002 *Words and Phrases: Corpus Studies of Lexical Semantics*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- White, Michael  
 2003 Metaphor and economics: The case of growth. *English for Specific Purposes* 22(2): 131-151.
- Widdows, Dominic  
 2003 A mathematical model for context and word-meaning. In: Patrick Blackburn et al. (eds.), *Modeling and Using Context. 4th International and Interdisciplinary Conference CONTEXT 2003, Stanford, CA, USA, June 23-25, 2003, Proceedings*, 369-382. [Lecture Notes in Computer Science]. Electronic resource. Berlin – Heidelberg: Springer.



Wolf, Hans-Georg

- 2003 The contextualization of common core terms in West African English: Evidence from computer corpora. In: Peter Lucko, Lothar Peter & Hans-Georg Wolf (eds.), *Studies in African Varieties of English*, 3-20. Frankfurt (M.): Peter Lang.

Wolf, Hans-Georg & Frank Polzenhagen

- 2007 Fixed expressions as manifestations of cultural conceptualizations: Examples from African varieties of English. In: Paul Skandera (ed.), *Phraseology and Culture in English*, 399-345. [Topics in English Linguistics 54]. Berlin – New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

- 2008fc *Cognitive Linguistic Approaches to World Englishes: An Analysis of the Community Model in African English*. [Applications of Cognitive Linguistics Series]. Berlin – New York: Mouton de Gruyter.