

Speaking in Tongues in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania: A Mixed-methods Study of Interpretations of and Attitudes to *Glossolalia* among the Theology Students of Tumaini University Makumira

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Abstract

This co-authored article explores interpretations of and attitudes to *glossolalia* as unintelligible, non-semantic language among the students of theology at Tumaini University Makumira as part of the broader phenomenon of the Pentecostalisation of mainline churches in Africa. We conceptualised *glossolalia* as connected with the New Testament idea of spiritual gifts and African cultural practices but also as learned social behaviour. A mixed-methods approach combines a quantitative survey with a qualitative study providing further in-depth interpretations. The combined findings reveal that half of the students have spoken in tongues themselves (especially women) and that most of the respondents appreciate *glossolalia* as a spiritual gift and, more or less, want it to be practiced in the church and not only privately. Furthermore, respondents employed a questionable distinction between genuine *glossolalia* and

fake *glossolalia* with only the latter causing negative effects. One of these is the discrimination of non-glossolalists as inferior to tongue-speakers which causes serious conflicts in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT). As remedies of malpractices, respondents emphasised translation of *glossolalia* and intensified teachings. The researchers could also show that African cultural resources may provide a positive view of speaking in tongues and its translation. The authors discussed these findings with reference to research from New Testament studies, African cultural perspectives, and contemporary socio-scientific research. This article concluded that awareness of educational but also political aspects, integration of glossolalic practices and the curtailing of malpractices through teaching and socio-political awareness are needed and should be considered by the ELCT.

Key Words

Glossolalia, ELCT, Tumaini University Makumira, Charismatisation/Pentecostalisation, African culture, mixed-methods study, 8spiritual gifts, theology students

Introduction

Speaking in tongues is a controversial issue in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT). Practices of and conversations about this religious exercise are linked with the growth of African Neo-Pentecostalism and charismatic movements that take

place even within the ELCT. According to this trend rituals like healings, prophecy, sacred use of salt, oil, water, dancing, but also speaking in tongues are appealing for many believers. The latter, as we define it, represents the phenomenon of believers vocalising utterances like, “hack shukuna ash tuu kononai; mee upsukuna shill Adonai,” that do not symbolise linguistic or semantic meaning.¹ Rather, they transcend the boundaries of ordinary language.

Within the ELCT, speaking in tongues enjoys growing influence on the one hand, but also leads to tensions and conflicts on the other hand. Believers who speak in tongues often regard themselves as “spiritual” and with it maintain a divisive line between speakers and non-speakers of tongues. The latter may regard glossolalists as imposters and often show little acceptance of their practices.

Even the ELCT’s academic learning institutions are intertwined with discourses about speaking in tongues. They register students whose views are of particular interest to us as they soon will be (or already are) leaders of the ELCT. In our study we selected the Faculty of Theology at Tumaini University Makumira (TUMA), a

¹ James K. A. Smith, ‘Tongues as “Resistance Discourse”: A Philosophical Perspective’, in *Speaking in Tongues: Multi-Disciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Mark J. Cartledge, Studies in Pentecostal and Charismatic Issues (Bletchley, Milton Keynes, England: Paternoster Press, 2006), 103. We differentiate speaking in tongues (=glossolalia) from xenolalia or xenoglossy. The latter two terms signify a miraculous emergence of the ability to speak a foreign language (like, e.g. Portuguese) without having learnt or acquired it over time (see Philip E. Blosser et al., *Speaking in Tongues: A Critical Historical Examination: Volume 1: The Modern Redefinition of Tongues* [Pickwick Publications, an imprint of Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2022], 52).

prominent academic theological faculty in Tanzania, from where the authors of this study are.² In that context we asked ourselves the central question: What are current interpretations of and attitudes towards glossolalia among TUMA theology students?

Methodologically, we opted for a mixed methods study consisting of a survey with some basic quantitative insights and a qualitative investigation through interviews.³ This empirical research was embedded in a review of some relevant literature and published research on speaking in tongues and the discussion of its results from this background. We regard this research as doing contextual theology within the discipline of practical theology as we bring biblical, African cultural, socio-scientific research, and our own empirical study insights into a conversation.⁴

Our thesis is that glossolalia may be an important aspect of the liturgical practices of the ELCT in regard to our respondents' high appreciation of speaking in tongues as spiritual gift and by taking biblical and cultural perspectives into account. With regard to our findings gained from research among the theology students at TUMA, we argue that, despite the prevalence of malpractices, by sound teachings and awareness of socio-

² The study was conducted as a practical research project of a course in research design and reports, taught at TUMA by J. Zehelein, the other authors were registered for this course.

³ See Mario L. Small, "How to Conduct a Mixed Methods Study: Recent Trends in a Rapidly Growing Literature," *Annual Review of Sociology* 37 (2011): 57–86.

⁴ See Stephen B. Bevans, *Essays in Contextual Theology, Theology and Mission in World Christianity* 12 (Leiden Boston: Brill, 2018), 30–46.

political factors glossolalia should be considered a beneficial aspect in the ELCT's worship.

Glossolalia as a Biblical Practice

The crucial passages from the New Testament are Acts 2:1-13 (Day of Pentecost) and 1 Corinthians 12-14 (Pauline instructions on Speaking in tongues).⁵ We hold that the phenomenon of Pentecost is basically xenolalia, the outstanding and/or miraculous event of a person being able to speak a foreign language formerly unknown to her/him.⁶ In the context of 1 Corinthians there is a controversy about whether *glossais lalein* in 1 Corinthians 12-14 refers to unintelligible speech.⁷ With scholars, like Philip Esler and Lee A. Johnson, there are good reasons to argue that the Corinthian experiences and Pauline instructions, on the one hand, and contemporary, religious glossolalia, on the other hand, stand in continuity.⁸ Paul suggests that speaking in tongues is a divine gift, however, it is part of a broader variety of

⁵ Max Turner, "Early Christian Experience and Theology of 'Tongues': A New Testament Perspective," in *Speaking in Tongues: Multi-Disciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Mark J. Cartledge, Studies in Pentecostal and Charismatic Issues (Bletchley, Milton Keynes, England: Paternoster Press, 2006), 1.

⁶ Fergus J. King and Selwyn Selvendran, "Rhubarb, Rhubarb, Alleluia, Amen: Xenolalia, Glossolalia, and Neurophysiology," *Biblical Theology Bulletin: Journal of Bible and Culture* 49, no. 2 (2019): 89; Turner, *Early Christian Experience*, 4.

⁷ See John-Christian Eurell, "The Nature of Pauline Glossolalia and Its Early Reception," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 72, no. 2 (2019): 182-90.

⁸ Lee A. Johnson, "Women and Glossolalia in Pauline Communities: The Relationship between Pneumatic Gifts and Authority," *Biblical Interpretation* 21, no. 2 (2013): 200-202.

equally important *charismata* (spiritual gifts given to believers) according to 1 Cor 12:7–10. Thus, there is no reason to hold the ability of speaking in tongues in higher regard than other gifts. Furthermore, Paul instructs believers to practice glossolalia publicly in the church only if it is translated into ordinary language (1 Cor 14:27–28). In Corinth, there might be ecstatic glossolalia, however, Paul’s instructions imply that the practice of glossolalia can be controlled (1 Cor 14:32). With Sarah Hinlicky Wilson holding that even today “charismata are real” we consider Pauline teachings relevant for addressing current use and misuse of speaking in tongues today.⁹

Glossolalia in African Perspective

Scholars, like Ogbu Kalu and Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, stress that speaking in tongues does not just originate from the early Pentecostal movement in the USA, i.e., the Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles.¹⁰ The latter had tremendous impact on the spread of the global Pentecostal movement and the promotion of glossolalia, indeed. Nevertheless, in Africa cultural features were

⁹ Blosser et al., *Speaking in Tongues*, 44–45.

¹⁰ Nathan Iddrisu Samwini, “Missionary Tradition, African Worldviews and the Growth of the Pentecostal Movement: Implications for the Fellowship with German Churches in Mission and Development,” in *Encounter beyond Routine: Cultural Roots, Cultural Transition, Understanding of Faith and Cooperation in Development; International Consultation, Academy of Mission, Hamburg, 17th - 23rd January 2011*, ed. Owe Boersma and Evangelisches Missionswerk in Deutschland e. V., Dokumentation / EMW (Hamburg: EMW, 2011), 42; Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 97–98.

influential as well. Anderson M. Chebanne points to APR (African Primal Religions) in which traditional healers used to make unintelligible utterances in order to symbolise their communication with the spirits.¹¹ AIC (African Independent Churches), as Solomon O. Ademiluka states, merged such glossolalic practices from African cultures and religions into their version of Africanised Christianity.¹² A more recent phenomenon, “Charismatisation,” “Pentecostalisation” or “Lutheran Pentecostalism,”¹³ is also relevant. Mainline churches in Africa, like the ELCT, are increasingly entangled with African Neo-Pentecostalism that favours practices like glossolalia which were previously considered mainly relevant for Charismatics, Pentecostals, or AIC.¹⁴ Against this background, Nyembo B. Ilunga requests mainline churches, such as the Roman Catholic Church of

¹¹ Anderson M. Chebanne, “The Language of the Spirit of the Spirit in the Language: A Preliminary Discussion of Glossolalia Practices in Some Botswana Churches,” *Scriptura: International Journal of Bible, Religion and Theology in Southern Africa* 92, no. 1 (2006): 170–171.

¹² Solomon O. Ademiluka, “The Nature of Glossolalia in the Neo-Pentecostal Churches in Nigeria,” *Verbum et Ecclesia* 45, no. 1 (2024): 4; Chebanne, *Language of the Spirit*, 170–171.

¹³ Leita Ngoy, *Prosperity Gospel Redefined: The Impact of Charismatisation of the Mainline Churches in Tanzania* (Brill, Schöningh, 2025 [publication in progress]); Mookgo Solomon Kgatle and Mulalo Thilivhali Fiona Malema, “Pentecostalisation in the Devhula Lebowa Circuit of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa: Towards Church Growth and Ecumenism,” *Pharos Journal of Theology* 104, no. 1 (2023): 2–3; Johannes Zeiler, *Crafting Lutheran Pastors in Tanzania: Perceptions of Theological Education and Formation in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania*, *Studia Missionalia Svecana* (Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet, 2018), 149.

¹⁴ Chebanne, *Language of the Spirit*, 167–177; Blosser et al., *Speaking in Tongues*, 139–147.

Lubumbashi, to embrace speaking in tongues as a viable expression of Christian faith in Africa.¹⁵ However, there are also malpractices of spiritual gifts, such as glossolalia, in current African (Pentecostalised) Christianity that are addressed, e.g., by the All Africa Conference of Churches.¹⁶

Glossolalia in Socio-scientific Research

From an empirical perspective, glossolalia appears to be not just a unique feature of Christianity but rather a phenomenon that is possibly encountered in many religions or social settings.¹⁷ Research on it can be categorised into three major approaches that were all developed around the beginning of the 1970s in Europe and North America.¹⁸ The first was embodied by John Kildahl and perceives speaking in tongues as pathological phenomenon. Conversely, Felicitas Goodman, an anthropologist, classifies glossolalia as extraordinary

¹⁵ Nyembo Boya Ilunga, *Pentecostalisation as an Adaptation Strategy of the Catholic Church of Lubumbashi: A Missiological Perspective*, PhD Dissertation (Potchefstroom Campus: North-West University, 2022), 230.

¹⁶ Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, "On Captivity through Hollow and Deceptive Philosophy: Misleading Theologies and Christianity in 21st Century Africa," in *Addressing Contextual Misleading Theologies in Africa Today*, ed. Bosela E. Eale and Njoroge J. Ngige, Kindle, Studies in Mission (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2020), 39–41.

¹⁷ See Heather Kavan, "Glossolalia and Altered States of Consciousness in Two New Zealand Religious Movements," *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 19, no. 2 (2004): 171–84.

¹⁸ See for the following elaborations Margaret M. Poloma, "Glossolalia, Liminality and Empowered Kingdom Building," in *Speaking in Tongues: Multi-Disciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Mark J. Cartledge, Studies in Pentecostal and Charismatic Issues (Bletchley, Milton Keynes, England: Paternoster Press, 2006), 152.

behaviour. Her focus is on unusual practices in ecstatic, possession- or trance-like states of consciousness. A third approach, brought forth by linguist and Africanist William Samarin, perceives speaking in tongues as a language, though not an ordinary language with semantic intelligibility.¹⁹ He holds that like any other language, glossolalia can be learned through a socialisation process.

For the empirical point of view, we consider Samarin's concept convincing. For studies have revealed that tongue-speakers suffer from psychological disorders to quite the same degree as non-glossolalists do, hence glossolalia is not essentially pathological.²⁰ Furthermore, though speaking in tongues may involve ecstasy and altered states of consciousness, it is not totally extraordinary, as a lot of glossolalists are regularly in control of what they do.²¹ Even if believers claim that the ability of speaking in tongues is just a matter of individual giftedness, a socialisation process is most likely there. In support of that, Nicholas Harkness in a study from South Korea found:

“Christians in South Korea by and large learn to speak in tongues through group prayer [...], even if

¹⁹ Evandro Bonfim, “Glossolalia and Linguistic Alterity: The Ontology of Ineffable Speech,” *Religion and Society* 6, no. 1 (2015): 76–77.

²⁰ For a recent study that confutes the pathological approach see Szabolcs Kéri, Imre Kállai, and Katalin Csigó, “Attribution of Mental States in Glossolalia: A direct Comparison with Schizophrenia,” *Frontiers in Psychology* 11 (2020): 1–9.

²¹ Kavan, *Glossolalia and Altered States*, 181; B. Grady and K. M. Loewenthal, “Features Associated with Speaking in Tongues (Glossolalia),” *The British Journal of Medical Psychology* 70 (1997): 190.

they first produce glossolalia, or continue to practice it, alone.”²²

Speaking in tongues is, therefore, both a *private and a communal practice*. Glossolalia stands for a “... relationship of overwhelming intimacy, privacy, and secrecy.”²³ It is a particular way of private prayer.²⁴ At the same time, it is a social issue. Speaking in tongues can be deliberately used to communally participate in public prayer while at the same time hiding the actual contents of the prayer from other worshippers.²⁵ Moreover, glossolalia can be a mark of social identity. It helps to distinguish the tongue-speaking community from non-glossolalists, whether within a congregation or between congregations.²⁶

However, tongue-speaking does not only increase social bonding, but it can also lead to *divisions and*

²² Nicholas Harkness, “Glossolalia and Cacophony in South Korea: Cultural Semiosis at the Limits of Language,” *American Ethnologist* 44, no. 3 (2017): 480. Harkness even referred to a pastor of Yoido Full Gospel church who presented a practical guide of how to introduce somebody to speaking in tongues by continuous and very quick repetition of the word “hallelujah” (Harkness, *Glossolalia and Cacophony*, 482).

²³ Harkness, *Glossolalia and Cacophony*, 484–485.

²⁴ Blosser et al., *Speaking in Tongues*, 43.

²⁵ Harkness, *Glossolalia and Cacophony*, 483. Harkness, furthermore, perceives glossolalia as a way of communicating with other tongue-speakers during public worship “... in terms of music-like, rhythmic joint engagement in this non-propositional speech.” (Harkness, *Glossolalia and Cacophony*, 487)

²⁶ Zoro Dube, “Speaking in Tongues as Emigration: A Social-Psychological Understanding of Tongue Speaking Using Migration Theory,” *Scriptura: International Journal of Bible, Religion and Theology in Southern Africa* 110, no. 1 (2012): 249.

conflicts within communities.²⁷ Speaking in tongues can split an existing group into those who speak and those who do not speak. In African mainline churches, such divisive potential is linked with the understanding of tongue-speaking as part of the development of “Pentecostalisation” as a spiritual renewal movement. Leaders and church members who are not part of it may apply pressure to Pentecostalised groups. However, members of the latter may display feelings of pride and elitism.²⁸

Beyond such divisions emerging because of speaking in tongues, glossolalia can also trade on already existing divisions, e.g. *gender*. Tongue-speaking women subject to society’s patriarchy may escape this oppressive pressure within the church. Lee A. Johnson in her research about glossolalia among women in the Appalachian regions (USA) supports this thesis as she concludes that women find themselves

*“in that unique environment of the Pentecostal worship service where they can display otherwise unacceptable female behavior and, contrary to their tradition, acquire honor outside the home.”*²⁹

²⁷ Blosser et al., *Speaking in Tongues*, 61.

²⁸ Mookgo S. Kgatle and Thabang R. Mofokeng, “Towards a Decolonial Hermeneutic of Experience in African Pentecostal Christianity: A South African Perspective,” *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 75, no. 4 (2019): 4.

²⁹ Johnson, *Women and Glossolalia*, 206.

Thus, glossolalia as an honourable, but ab-normal practice is a chance for women to overcome patriarchal restrictions.

This subversive potential may also be relevant for *political existence*, in general. Zorodzai Dube in his article entitled “Speaking in Tongues as Emigration” observes:

“Through speaking in tongues, people believe that heaven is a place of refuge and that by speaking in tongues they escape the problems associated with the present world.”³⁰

This attitude can lead to escapism and apolitical existence as Kamenicky holds.³¹ However, Dube detects subversive potential within emigration and, thus, considers glossolalia “... a form of protest and resistance against unjust structures.”³² Dube contextualises this idea from an African perspective and exemplarily refers to Zimbabwe under Mugabe’s dictatorship. In such a constellation glossolalia may be a cryptic voice of protest.³³

By summarising the outcome of this section about socio-scientific research on glossolalia, we can say that glossolalia can be considered a language (Samarin) that somebody is socialised into, ecstatic circumstances may, however, also play a role. Speaking in tongues is an

³⁰ Dube, *Speaking in Tongues*, 252.

³¹ Michael Austin Kamenicky, “The Dangers of Pentecostal Practice: On the Formative and Deformative Potential of Speaking in Tongues,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 32, no. 1 (2023): 60–63.

³² Dube, *Speaking in Tongues*, 256.

³³ See also Smith, *Tongues as Resistance*, 81–110.

individual way of praying by unintelligible sounds, but it has also a communal dimension. It is a mark of social identity and can cause divisions and conflicts. Glossolalia may be politically relevant, not only as apolitical escapism, but also in terms of helping women to transcend patriarchal gender roles or subversive political protest.

Speaking in Tongues among students of theology at TUMA: A Simple Quantitative Survey

Methodological Remarks

The survey conducted for this essay follows the quantitative paradigm and intends to provide general insights and allows for checking correlations between variables and certain answers given.³⁴ Since our research population is quite small and comprises students of theology at Tumaini University Makumira with a total of just 169 students enrolled, we cannot claim that our survey is quantitative in terms of a large sample size. Nevertheless, the kind of data is quantitative; and our analysis, despite not using complex statistical procedures, follows the quantitative paradigm. TUMA theology students are from the ELCT in most cases, are enrolled for Bachelor, Master, and Ph.D. programmes and are required to take part in the religious life on campus, i.e., morning devotions and Sunday services with traditional Lutheran liturgy. There are also fellowship groups and choirs, some

³⁴ Our design of a survey is informed by John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (New Delhi: SAGE Publications Asia-Pacific, 2014).

of them embracing Pentecostalised practices, including glossolalia.

In the questionnaire, we decided to control independent variables like age, gender, and status of being ordained or not.³⁵ Gender was a factor that literature review identified, age might be a further dimension that we hypothetically control, status of ordination often represents experiences with parish leadership and thus is also relevant.

As speaking in tongues is a hotly debated issue and safety about disclosing authentic views is an issue, we assured confidentiality, we facilitated an anonymous way of answering our questions, and we followed a data securing protocol.³⁶ By a variety of multiple-choice and check-box questions we asked for whether students have spoken in tongues already, and, given they did, what the impact of it on the individual believer was. We were also interested in views on what the meaning, function, and impact of glossolalia in/on the church is and to what extent it should be promoted in the church. A final open-ended question offered the chance to briefly state further perspectives and opinions on glossolalia.

The overall response rate is sufficient (40%) as we collected 67 responses out 169.³⁷ Almost all respondents

³⁵ See a similar choice of independent variables in Felicity M. Gazowsky, "The Impact of the Spiritual Practice of Glossolalia on Affect" (Doctorate Thesis, Sacramento, California School of Professional Psychology: Alliant International University Sacramento, 2018), vii.

³⁶ For facilitating the survey, we used [surveymonkey.com](https://www.surveymonkey.com).

³⁷ Susan M.B. Morton et al., "In the 21st Century, What Is an Acceptable Response Rate?," *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health* 36, no.

answered all applicable questions. We hold, therefore, that our data is significant for drawing quantifiable conclusions about our research population. We collected information from students of the age groups 20–30 (38%), 31–40 (48%), and beyond 40 (14%). Especially the age group of 31–40 was represented to a significantly higher degree as compared to its prevalence in the total (35%). The rate of female respondents (22%) was almost the same as the percentage among the total population (24%). 85% of the respondents were not ordained, this rate is slightly higher than the distribution within the total (76%). However, all in all, the differences in the distribution of independent variables as represented in our sample are still acceptable and/or could be interpreted respectively.

Distribution of Answers

Responses to our first question, asking for personal experiences with glossolalia, revealed that only 45% never spoke in tongues, whereas 19% did in the past and 36% still practice it. Thus, more than half of the students of theology at TUMA that responded to our survey have personal experiences with speaking in tongues.

2 (2012): 106–108. Furthermore, see Brooks Holtom et al., “Survey Response Rates: Trends and a Validity Assessment Framework,” *Human Relations* 75, no. 8 (2022): 1560–84.

Have you ever spoken in tongues?

Answered: 67 Skipped: 0

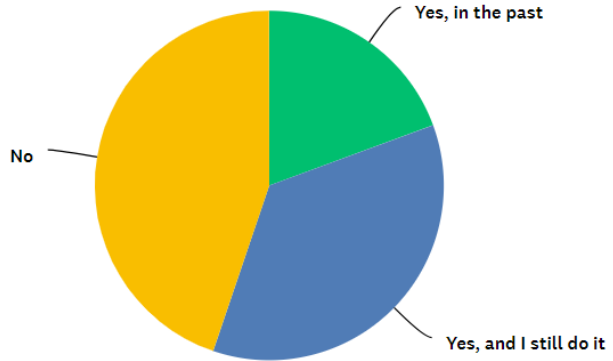


Figure 1: Distribution of personal experiences with glossolalia

When these students were offered several answer options of what the impact of speaking in tongues on themselves was, the most frequent answer was “spiritual growth” (67%), followed by “having privacy with God” (39%), and “gaining spiritual visions and prophecies” (31%). Also, the experience of being engaged in spiritual battles is quite relevant (22%). These options that were ticked most often clearly display functions of glossolalia relevant to the believing individual. Answers that connect speaking in tongues with social or relational dimensions have significantly lower representation. Only 8% testify to having experienced a “sense of belonging to a spiritual community” by having spoken in tongues, and only 11% consider it relevant that a tongue-speaker may appear as

a “spiritual person” in the eyes of others. Just 6% regard glossolalia as crying out against problems in society, politics, or economics.

What is speaking in tongues in the church? (more than 1 answer possible!)

Answered: 64 Skipped: 3

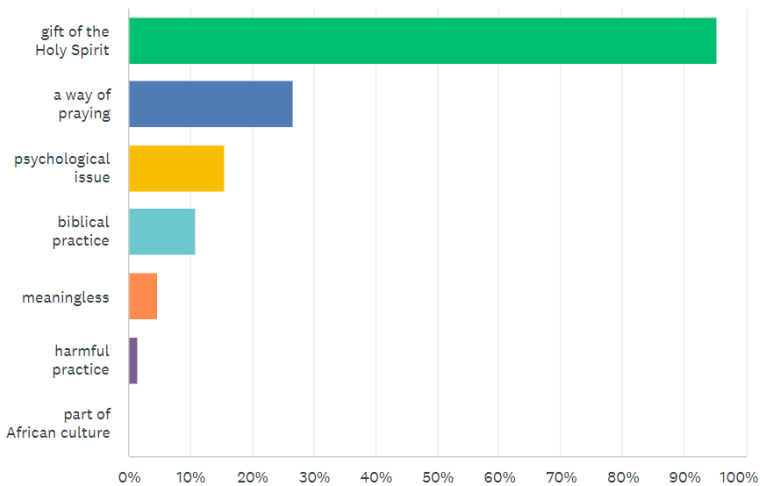


Figure 2: The meaning of glossolalia in the church

When we asked “What is speaking in tongues in the church?” and offered multiple answer options almost all respondents (95%) appreciated glossolalia as a “gift of the Holy Spirit”, 27% of all respondents understood it as a means of praying, and few respondents (11%) regarded it as a “biblical practice”. A slightly bigger portion (16%) considered speaking in tongues a psychological phenomenon, however, most of them (8 out of 10) still embraced the idea of glossolalia being a gift of the Holy

Spirit. Of outstanding relevance is the fact that not a single respondent identified speaking in tongues as an aspect of African culture.

How does glossolalia affect the church? (more than 1 answer possible!)

Answered: 63 Skipped: 4

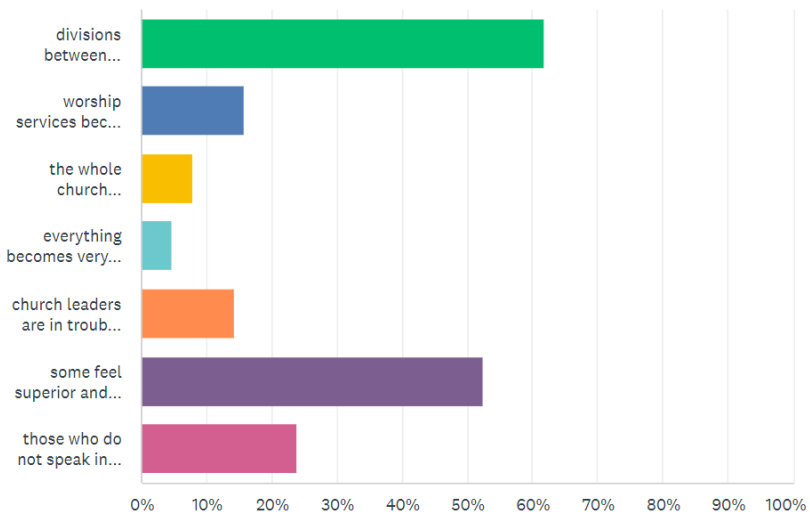


Figure 3: Glossolalia and how it affects the church

When respondents were asked what the impact of the practice of speaking in tongues on the church is, the major finding is that glossolalia often has negative effects. Glossolalia leads to divisions between those who speak and those who do not speak in tongues as 62% of responses point out. More than half of the responses recognise that tongue-speakers have feelings of pride and

superiority (52%), whereas 24% identify envy on the side of those who do not practice glossolalia. The item “church leaders are in trouble to deal with conflicts” is almost as often represented (14%) as the only beneficial answer with a considerable rate: “worship service becomes more lively” (16%). All in all, respondents see the way how glossolalia affects the church in a predominantly negative light.

This finding stands in stark contrast with how respondents answered our last but one question about promoting glossolalia in church.

Is glossolalia to be promoted in church?

Answered: 65 Skipped: 2

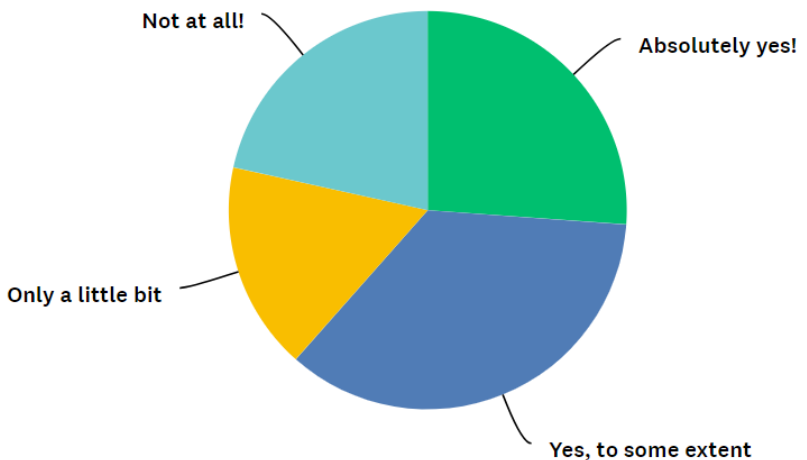


Figure 4: Promoting glossolalia in church (all responses)

Almost two thirds of all responses are positive (35%) or very positive (26%) about accepting and encouraging speaking in tongues in the church. Still 17% of answers have at least a slightly positive attitude when they tick “only a little bit.” Only 22% of all respondents strictly reject any practice of glossolalia in church. Thus, only a minority maintains an attitude of unambiguous exclusion of glossolalia from the church. The majority has a (very) positive opinion of promoting speaking in tongues in the church.

The final textbox-question allowed for expression of any thoughts or perspectives that have not yet been addressed by the previous questions. Here, we identified common themes that were at least mentioned thrice, such as raising the issue of practicing glossolalia not as authentic gift of the Holy Spirit, but merely *faking* it. Also, the issue of to what extent there is *control of speaking in tongues* by glossolalists was addressed, as well as the idea that glossolalia is to be practiced *privately and individually*, rather than in church gatherings. *Growth of the entire church*, possible *translation of glossolalic utterances* were at least mentioned twice. We decided to inform our qualitative in-depth interviews by the issues raised in that last question, instead of a deeper interpretation on the basis of our online survey.

Correlations of Variables and/or Answers

Gender: We found that females had a higher rate of personal experiences with glossolalia than males. The total of respondents having spoken or still speaking in

tongues is 55%. Among females, the rate is significantly higher (80%). Not surprisingly, even the rate of having a positive or very positive attitude towards promoting glossolalia in the church is significantly lower among males (56%) as compared with that of females (80%). Figure 5 below shows all 15 females' responses.

Is glossolalia to be promoted in church?

Answered: 15 Skipped: 0

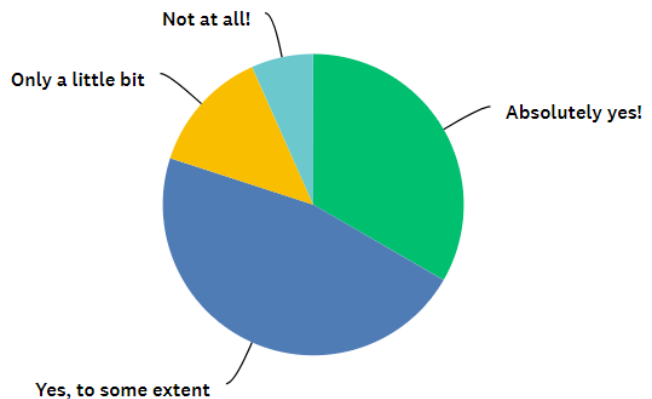


Figure 5: Promoting glossolalia in church (only females)

Age: We saw no significant differences between younger or older generations concerning personal experiences with glossolalia and/or the attitude towards encouraging glossolalia in the church. Only when correlated with gender we could detect outstanding tendencies. Not a single woman of the age group 20–30 wanted glossolalia to be totally discouraged in church,

whereas 43% of males of the same age group said that glossolalia must not be promoted. Therefore, within the youngest age group there is a significant difference between males and females, the latter having a very positive attitude towards speaking in tongues in the church.

Ordination: Respondents that identified themselves as already ordained were 12 in total, of whom 11 were male. They were all part of the age groups above 30. Of particular interest are their answers to the question of whether glossolalia should be encouraged in church. A total of 64% wants to encourage speaking in tongues in the church very much (18%) or to some extent (46%). This percentage is even slightly higher than that of the total population (61%). However, a 91 % of all ordained respondents witnessed that speaking in tongues causes divisions between “spiritual” and “non-spiritual” Christians whereas the overall average of that answer was only 61%. It seems that divisions and possible conflicts are a very common issue in the eyes of ordained students of theology. Even the value for the answer “some feel superior and become proud” among the ordained ones (64%) is remarkably higher than the overall average (52%). The question emerges even more: How can these two findings be reconciled? On the one hand, almost all ordained respondents witnessed to divisions in the church, more than non-ordained students. On the other hand, still about two thirds of the ordained (64%) want to promote glossolalia in the church “to some extent” or “absolutely.” This question cannot be answered on the

basis of our online survey; thus, we will try to interpret this gap in our final discussion.

Summary of Findings from the Survey

In summary, we discovered that our data collection tool (questionnaire) was functional, and the data has statistical significance for representing the total study population. We concluded that probably more than half of all currently registered students of theology at TUMA have spoken in tongues already. This rate does not change according to age, in general, but it is higher among females and highest among young females. Views of speaking in tongues are predominantly positive, almost all regard it as a gift of the Holy spirit, a downplaying of speaking in tongues as just a function of the human psyche is irrelevant. The understanding of glossolalia as being part of African culture is totally absent.

With regard to the church, students of theology at TUMA see that speaking in tongues affects the church mainly in a negative way (divisions, feelings of superiority and pride, envy, church leaders having to deal with conflicts). Nevertheless, only 22% of the study population wants to ban speaking in tongues from church completely, whereas the other part has a less negative (17%), positive (35%), or very positive (26%) attitude towards the promotion of glossolalia in church. Students that are already ordained emphasise the negative effects of glossolalia even stronger, but also slightly stronger want to promote it in church. We will discuss this ambivalence later.

Speaking in Tongues among students of theology at TUMA: A Qualitative Study

Methodological Remarks

As one variant of mixed methods approaches, we wanted the qualitative study to complement the quantitative survey. This should help gaining further in-depths insights from the same sample (nested approach). In order to be able to draw from findings of the survey we opted for sequential, rather than simultaneous design.³⁸ Because of the sensitivity of the topic, we wanted to approach respondents individually and confidentially, so the data collection tool was individual interviews. We will refer to respondents by "R" for "respondent", followed by numbers 1-8. We conducted interviews in Kiswahili, recorded the answers, transcribed them by a combination of summary and literal quotation, and translated them into English. In order to reduce complexity within a research group of five researchers we agreed on a standardised, structured interview guide with 15 questions. We constructed these by drawing from findings from our online survey (issues of translation, private use, fake, controllability, feelings of superiority) and insights from literature review (New Testament perspectives, African culture, and Lutheran Pentecostalism).³⁹ We analysed the data by a combination of content analysis

³⁸ See Small, *How to Conduct a Mixed Methods Study*, 64-69.

³⁹ Three questions were asked in interviews that did not produce the expected outcome, e.g., concerning glossolalia as possible aspect of Lutheran identity.

and thematic coding. We summarised contents by following the order of questions and watched out for common themes running across all answers. In terms of intercoder reliability, all parts of the data were analysed by at least two researchers, the final analysis was approved by all authors. The sample of respondents (eight bachelor students)⁴⁰ represented a variety of variables like age (20 and above) and gender (3 females). Variables of being rural or urban on the one hand, and being glossolalic or not, on the other hand, were evenly distributed.

Speaking in Tongues as a Gift of the Holy Spirit vs. Pretence

It is remarkable that all interviewees perceive glossolalia as a genuine gift of the Holy Spirit. Some even stated this right at the beginning of the interview, but all respondents finally appreciated glossolalia as a divine talent. When we asked interviewees about relevant Biblical passages concerning glossolalia (our 6th question), they consequently referred to the appearance of speaking in tongues at Pentecost in Act 2, or to Paul's dealing with glossolalia as one of many spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians

⁴⁰ The relatively small number of the sample was justifiable for pragmatic reasons and because we reached a basic level of saturation concerning our objectives. Unfortunately, Master or Ph.D. students were not accessible for interviews.

12–14.⁴¹ R3 pointed to Mk 16:17 and the signs that will follow the believers: “They shall speak with new tongues.”⁴²

However, despite the affirmation of the reality of genuine glossolalia, many interviewees differentiated between speaking in tongues as a gift of the Holy Spirit and its imitation or faking before we explicitly asked for it in question six. R8 sees the ambiguity of glossolalia being both, a divine ability, but possibly also or just a “theatrical” show or “performance”. R2 identifies a recent development according to which glossolalia has become a “fashion” or trend. R1 derogatively refers to certain glossolalists who developed the habit of “... repeating the same words every day and saying [them] where is not the right place to say.”

Some respondents emphasised that a sign of inauthentic glossolalia is to regularly use the same vocalisations and syllables (R3, R4, R8). In this regard, R6 points to the influence of television and online media that display glossolalic performances that people may just copy. About such pretence R5, R6 and R7 assume that people imitate genuine glossolalia because appearing as a tongue speaker can uplift the social standing within the respective religious group.

R5 defends genuine glossolalia despite the prevalence of fake glossolalia.

⁴¹ Only one interviewee identified Paul’s understanding of tongues as exclusively xenolalia (R8).

⁴² From the Old Testament, also the examples of Hannah when she spoke silently in the tabernacle (R1, R5), or Saul when he joined prophets in their ecstatic practices (R4) were referred to. We could identify references to 1Sam 1:13 (Hannah) and 1Sam 10–12 (Saul).

“Having people who fake to speak in tongue doesn’t mean that the real thing is not existing. Speaking in tongues is real and it has a positive impact within the church like other spiritual gifts.”

R7 developed a remarkable, prescriptive definition of authentic glossolalia:

“Genuine speaking in tongues involves a personal connection with God and the Holy Spirit. This is particularly evident when an individual engages in prayer with sincerity and humility, without seeking attention and validation from others.”

We may interpret such and other statement(s) as to say that authentic glossolalia will only impact individuals and the church positively whereas fake glossolalia only aims for uplifting one’s own social standing above others and as such leads to conflicts.

Being in Control or Not while Speaking in Tongues

Interestingly, most of the glossolalists among the respondents witness that there is conscious control of glossolalia by the power of the Holy Spirit (R1, R2, R5). R5 and R6 (non-glossolalist) see the Holy Spirit at work when glossolalia is controlled. Similarly, but with more ambiguity R2 states:

“Yes, you can govern yourself but be guided by the Holy Spirit. My worry is where the one who

leads prayers saying amen and all the people are silent.”

With this statement R2 could criticise authoritarian styles of leadership, or, more probably, s/he questions the authenticity of each individual’s glossolalia if it can be stopped easily and for everyone at the same time.

This concern relates with three voices who hold that authentic glossolalia is uncontrollable (R3, R4, R8); one among these is glossolalist (R4). R8 states:

“Individuals who engage in speaking in tongues often organise themselves. This might be attributed to receiving prior instruction, as their words seem rehearsed, with repeated phrases indicating memorization. If the coordination was truly inspired by the Holy Spirit, individuals would lack control over the beginning and ending of their speech.”

Speaking in Tongues in the Church

Public practice of glossolalia in the church comes with a certain amount of ambiguity. Glossolalia is not just celebrated and practiced as one of the spiritual gifts that benefits the entire community. Rather, it is also a source of conflict. We have identified two challenges that we address in the next two sections, namely unintelligibility and attributions of spiritual superiority. In a third section we have asked for possible ways of how to deal with the challenges posed by glossolalia in the church.

Unintelligibility and Translation of Glossolalia

As glossolalia is not understood like any other ordinary language it raises the question what its significance within the entire believers' community is and whether it should not just be practiced privately. As some respondents point out, speaking in tongues has indeed a function for the individual. They see it as a special way of communicating with God, "... a deep prayer and a deep conversation with God." (R5) R6 knows of believers who assume that speaking in tongues will protect the prayers as it hides their contents from Satan and evil powers. R7 as a unique voice among all interviewees suggests that it is better to practice glossolalia only privately, as it has only significance for individuals. All other interviewees were indifferent or positive about allowing glossolalia in public gatherings.

One important topic in this context was the issue of translation. We not only addressed it by reference to instructions of Paul in 1 Corinthians 12–14 in our question No. 7, but it already emerged before reaching to this question in the interview. Six of the interviewees considered it a valuable approach to translate glossolalia practiced in public worship into an ordinary language so that everyone can understand (R1, R2, R3, R5, R6, R8). Three out of these even suggested to make it obligatory for any public presence of glossolalia.

Despite interviewees' generally positive view of translation R6, R7, and R8 are concerned about practical realities.

“Translation is a good idea; however, translators are nowhere to be found. I have never heard or seen a translator of glossolalia. Christians and church leaders are several times emphasising glossolalia but I never heard a pastor even in Pentecostals churches calling people in front to receive the power of the Holy Spirit so as to translate when people speak in tongues.” (R6)

Attributions of Superiority to Glossolalists

R7 states that glossolalia in a social context can be practiced in order to show off, i.e., to display one’s own superior ability and connection with God to other believers. We detected this view in one of the interviewee’s statements. R1, a glossolalist, holds that “... getting this gift depends on the level of investment in prayer.” In other words, tongue-speaking believers appear to be superior spiritual achievers. Even R5 and R7 affirm such discrimination of believers with respect to the ability of speaking in tongues.

“It’s becoming increasingly apparent that those who engage in tongues seem to hold a special status, regarded as particularly close to God. Conversely, there’s a tendency to view those who do not speak in tongues as lacking the presence of the Holy Spirit within them.” (R7)

All respondents, however, object such discrimination.⁴³ They clearly state that the ability of speaking in tongues does not make somebody be more spiritual or unique in a special way. Thus, with R2, R3, and R4 glossolalists should not misunderstand their gift as social prestige, but use it for one's own relief, the benefit of the community, and in humility. Many were positive about what we brought up in question 8, namely that the biblical idea of glossolalia is just one gift among others (1 Cor 12–14).

However, almost all interviewees see a discrepancy between Paul's teaching and the current situation in many congregations. A statement of R6 represents this view:

“It is true that no one should feel superior as Paul says, unfortunately, some speakers are always considering themselves spiritually higher than non-speakers. Many of the speakers use to boast (Kiswahili: wanajimwambafai).”

Teaching as a Response to Glossolalic Malpractices

When respondents were asked to imagine being pastors in charge themselves and how they would deal with glossolalia in the church many emphasised teachings.⁴⁴ R4 and R5 as pastors in charge would instruct

⁴³ Even R1 affirms this view, however, s/he is ambivalent in this respect as we have shown already.

⁴⁴ In our question no. 10, we asked: “Imagine yourself being a pastor in the parish. How would you deal with speaking in tongues in the church?” Six out of eight respondents emphasised teaching congregants properly.

people to not imitate genuine glossolalia (*nitawafunzisha wasiigilize*) and tongue-speakers not to use glossolalia selfishly or under the influence of destructive spirits (R5). R2 would stress that every believer "... is given the Holy Spirit." On that basis R7 and R6 would educate about biblical insights, especially the diversity of many and equally important spiritual gifts. R3 affirms this view:

"The church should take time and teach seriously and carefully about spiritual gifts, especially speaking in tongues, so that if the spirit hasn't revealed, let the Christians feel okay even without that. If the spirit reveals, for sure it will be the blessing and not the source of conflict and division."

Speaking in Tongues and African Culture

Regarding the dimension of African culture, interviewees were split in two halves. The first affirmed a connection of African culture with speaking in tongues whereas the second half rejected this view (R2, R4, R5, R8). The latter consists of mostly tongue-speakers who point to the Christian religion as the sole origin of glossolalia. "It is not African culture, people learned after Pentecost." (R2) The former, however, witness to a positive connection of glossolalia and African culture, one of them (R7) even expressing that although s/he did not tick the "It is part of African culture" answer in our online survey s/he later changed her/his mind. All four respondents employ a traditional understanding of African culture(s), as they explore intersections between traditional healing and communication with spirits or ancestors on the one hand,

and incomprehensible languages or vocalisations on the other hand. Three out of those four respondents even point to the tradition of translating or interpreting the unintelligible vocalisations:

"There were times in African cultures when a person can be covered by a spirit of ancestors and starts to speak using a language that people don't understand, but it happens that one among many grasps the message and tells others what the speaker has said." (R6)

Summary of Qualitative Findings

A first crucial finding of our qualitative study is that all interviewees appreciate genuine glossolalia as a gift of the Holy Spirit. However, speaking in tongues can also be an aspect of mere performance and imitation. People may pretend to have the authentic spiritual gift in order to uplift their social standing in their respective religious groups.

Some consider genuine glossolalia ecstatic and uncontrollable. However, others, most of them tongue-speakers, hold the opposite true. They regard the Holy Spirit as a divine power that is not ecstatic but maintains order.

In the church, speaking in tongues is a challenge due to its unintelligibility. Whereas all respondents encourage private usage of glossolalia, they address public speaking in tongues with more caution. While most of them are open for permitting it, some suggest making

translation a requirement of public glossolalia. Practically, however, such interpretation is uncommon.

Another challenge that glossolalia poses to the church is its discriminative potential. All respondents affirm the biblical view of glossolalia being one spiritual gift among many and thus reject any attributions of superiority. Nevertheless, interviewees point to the fact that in present-day Christianity such discrimination prevails extensively. As a response to that challenge most respondents emphasised teaching on how to avoid destructive usage of glossolalia.

Finally, half of the respondents, most of them non-glossolalists, see a continuity of Christian glossolalia and speaking in tongues (and its translation) that occurred in African traditional practices.

Triangulating Findings

One of the major agreements of the quantitative and qualitative part of our research is the acknowledgement and appreciation of *glossolalia as a spiritual gift* that is still attainable for present-day believers. Many of the students of theology at TUMA did or still do practice glossolalia themselves. The analysis of the survey provided insights into particular correlations of items and variables, e.g. concerning gender and ordination.

However, there is a possibility of *pretence or “fake” glossolalia* that was indicated by our survey and thoroughly affirmed by interviewees.

Another agreement between our survey and our interviews is that students of theology at TUMA observe a significant prevalence of *divisions and conflicts* in congregations revolving around glossolalia. These emerge due to glossolalia's unintelligibility and attributions of superiority to glossolalists as the interviews revealed. Concerning the issue of superiority, all theology students interviewed reject any *discrimination* of non-glossolalists. They are aware, however, that a great deal of believers maintains such bias.

Nevertheless, it is *no option to ban glossolalia from church* completely for the majority of respondents. It remained an open question why, e.g. ordained respondents from the survey all know of such conflicts but a clear majority of them promotes the use of glossolalia in the church. The interviewees did not reveal an answer to that question but provided particular suggestions to handle the conflictual issue of glossolalia, e.g. by making *translation* a requirement, by encouraging *private usage* of the gift, and by emphasising profound *teachings* on glossolalia.

Finally, we identified one crucial difference between the survey and the interviews concerning the question of whether the Christian practice of glossolalia stands in continuity with *African culture*. Our qualitative study, unlike the online survey, shows that half of the respondents affirm such continuity.

Discussion of Findings: Appreciation and Malpractices

In biblical perspective, we have seen that most of our study participants assume a *continuity of the Holy spirit's gift of glossolalia with present-day speaking in tongues*. This finding agrees with our own position (Esler, Johnson). Beyond Christian Scripture, a large number of interviewees (unlike participants of the survey) agrees with scholars in African studies that there are also roots of speaking in tongues in *African culture* as embodied by APR and AIC. From this, one could argue for a contextually sensitive acceptance of glossolalia within the ELCT and other African churches on both, biblical and cultural basis (Ilunga). Some interviewees dispute the link between African culture and glossolalia and claim that speaking in tongues has exclusively biblical or Christian roots. Nevertheless, still most theology students at TUMA appreciate glossolalia, at least on a biblical basis.

Unlike scholars addressing glossolalia from biblical, African or empirical perspectives our study provides a new view on glossolalia which is the assumption that there is the possibility of *imitating genuine glossolalia* as “fake” and that just this fake glossolalia, not genuine speaking in tongues, can have negative effects, e.g., social discrimination and inappropriate uplifting one's own social status. This is an outstanding finding of our study. The reason for employing such distinction is clearly the possibility to be loyal to the biblical idea of glossolalia being a spiritual gift on the one hand and to be critical of contemporary malpractices of glossolalia on the other

hand. From biblical and African perspectives, as we have shown above, this issue is addressed differently. Rather than differentiating real and fake, the more general category of misuse and malpractice is employed. Thus, instead of keeping the “real thing” unblemished as opposed to fake glossolalia, the idea is that even genuine glossolalia can be misused and appear as malpractice. Also from an empirical perspective, the criterion of genuineness is problematic. According to Samarin glossolalia is basically an aspect of socialisation. Any glossolalic practice that is not learnt, that does not imitate other glossolalists, and is, thus, not influenced by other tongues speakers’ performances is actually unthinkable. Thus, the distinction between real glossolalia (that cannot be misused) and fake glossolalia (that is responsible for malpractices) is either untenable or needs to be backed by further theological and empirical research.

One may resort to the view brought forth by some of our participants that genuine glossolalia is simply *ecstatic and beyond any control*. If there is no choice of the human believer, it appears impossible to criticise glossolalists since one would argue against divine will. Of course, to some extent elements of trance may play a role in biblical contexts as well as nowadays in the ELCT and elsewhere. However, overall, understanding glossolalia simply in ecstatic terms stands in stark contrast with about half of theology students’ views (most of them tongue-speakers themselves!). In similar vein, Paul assumes that liturgical control is possible. Even with

Samarin glossolalia is a language and can, of course, be spoken intentionally.

Concerning *attributions of superiority* there is a clear agreement of our study's results with Paul's instructions in 1 Corinthians. With the apostle all respondents hold that speaking in tongues is just one of many spiritual gifts. Thus, it does not fit for privileging tongue-speakers as superior spiritual achievers. This is a finding in terms of prescriptive attitudes towards glossolalia. The descriptive perspective reveals that such attitude is often missing since there is a great deal of discrimination along the line dividing between glossolalists and non-glossolalists. From there *conflicts* within churches emerge as literature research and our empirical research have pointed out. To simply restrict glossolalia to private usage is, however, no option as our interview respondents and also biblical, African, and empirical perspectives demonstrated.

One question is still unanswered. How come that in the online survey participants were very much aware of conflicts and divisions in the church but still there was a majority of theology students, especially among the ordained ones, that is ready to promote glossolalia in the church? This could be explained in terms of the general appreciation of glossolalia as spiritual gift and its positive impact on believers. Another explanation could, however, be that many theology students try to navigate through the current high tides of Neo-Pentecostalism, Charismatisation, and Pentecostalisation of mainline churches by rather accepting an ambivalent religious

practice instead of losing members to other Pentecostal(ised) churches.

Paul's further teaching concerning *translation* is relevant both in terms of biblical *and* cultural perspectives. In 1 Corinthians Paul clearly emphasises the need to have translation of all public glossolalia. In African traditional cultural practices, as our study revealed, there were rituals and habits of translating unintelligible vocalisations as well. While in our limited research of literature concerning glossolalia in Africa, we did not come across any publications supporting this finding, we found evidence of such translations of unintelligible speech in Asian culture and religion.⁴⁵ It is highly probable that such practices prevailed in African traditions and cultures as well. Thus, there would be common ground, culturally and biblically, to support the idea of translating speaking in tongues into ordinary language. Only the practical-theological challenge remains that currently the non-interpreted use of glossolalia is default.

Finally, the emphasis on *teaching* as a way to deal with malpractices revolving around glossolalia is a biblically meaningful approach as, e.g. Pauline instructions can mainly be considered teachings. From an empirical point of view, the educational approach may have some impact. If glossolalia is an aspect of a socialisation process (Samarin) there can be further learning processes towards a beneficial usage of speaking in tongues. Especially in the Tanzanian context, where

⁴⁵ L. Carlyle May, "A Survey of Glossolalia and Related Phenomena in Non-Christian Religions," *American Anthropologist* 58, no. 1 (1956): 87.

Nyerere's political emphasis on education has had long-lasting impact, a pedagogical approach may be fruitful.⁴⁶

Politically, however, perspectives of escapism or resistance (Dube) have hardly played a role neither in the survey nor in interviews. Only on the level of *gender* our own analysis of the survey revealed a positive correlation of being female and a tongue-speaker. Johnson held that glossolalia offers a chance for women to resist patriarchal restrictions. From this perspective, we may say that female students of theology at TUMA through glossolalia uplift their social status that is often diminished by patriarchal structures within church and society. Such political implication of glossolalia calls for an education beyond catechesis. If speaking in tongues can be a way of rebellion or resistance, one cannot just deal with it through instructing believers. A framework that would broaden such a narrow view on teaching would be the Pedagogy of the Oppressed by P. Freire. This influential political educator of the 20th century clearly aimed at a liberated society that embraces values of emancipation and equality.⁴⁷ With such a pedagogy glossolalia may be a liberating gift as it upholds the spirit of freedom, love,

⁴⁶ Anders D. F. Haugen, "Education for Development: The Tanzanian Experience," *Policy & Practice: A Development Education Review* 35 (2022): 34–55.

⁴⁷ Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1971). An extension of this pedagogy to feminism and gender studies which Freire himself did not do is required, however (see Carlos A. Torres, "Paulo Freire: Voices and Silences," *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 54, no. 13 [2022]: 2169–79).

equality, and humanity that benefits individuals and communities without discrimination.

Way Forward – Appreciating Glossolalia and Tackling Malpractices

As aspect of the Pentecostalisation of mainline churches in Africa, glossolalia is a topic that deserves proper attention. On the basis of cultural and biblical considerations it is possible to accept glossolalia as a potential spiritual gift and legitimate part of Christian religious practice in Africa. A distinction of real and fake glossolalia is problematic as it avoids to accept the ambiguities of this religious practices that already Paul and the Corinthians know about. A way forward will be to avoid malpractices and to find ways of negotiating for the acceptance of glossolalia among students of theology at TUMA, but probably within the entire ELCT. This will not only require further academic research on glossolalia beyond TUMA, but also the development of guidelines and practical frameworks on ELCT-wide and congregational levels. Theological education, private usage of glossolalia, liturgical spaces for translation, awareness of political or societal power relations (e.g. gender) must be taken into consideration when this controversial, but very relevant practice of glossolalia as a spiritual gift is or will be part of Lutheran worship, not only in the eyes of TUMA students, but perhaps within the entire ELCT.

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