



ISSN: 0856-9965 eISSN: 2546-2164 Journal homepage: <https://journals.udsm.ac.tz/index.php/jlle>
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**How People in the Small
Fishing Communities along
Lake Victoria Acknowledge or
Deny Poverty**

JLLE
Vol 19(2) 11–20
© The Publisher
DOI:10.56279/jlle.v19i2.2

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Received 11 July 2025, Accepted 25 November 2025, Published Online 03 January 2026

Abstract

This paper examines how people in small fishing communities along Lake Victoria employ discourse to acknowledge or deny poverty. The people involved in small-scale fishing are reported to be among the vulnerable groups (URT, 2001:2). They are reported to be susceptible to complex interactions that lead to HIV/AIDS prevalence due to their overall context of poverty. Following Bamberg, de Fina, and Schiffrin's Discourse and Identity Construction (Bamberg et al., 2011), this study drew digital data from Hubert Sauper's Darwin's Nightmare (2004) to find out how these people acknowledged and denied or detached themselves from the poverty in their communities. The findings show that Tanzanians of African origin apply discourse in a way suggesting that they are objects (undergoers), constructed by the way the world is. They are tired of the situation they are in but they have no way out. On the other side, Tanzanians of Asian origin suggest that they are subjects, using discourse to indicate that they construct the way the world is. These two groups have overly used discourse in ways that reflect their economic status without having to spell the words 'rich' and 'poor' to identify themselves.

Keywords: *Discourse, fishing community, identity theory, poverty, Tanzania*

Introduction

The fishing communities around Lake Victoria can be considered "communities of place", even if these people change membership due to the frequent migration of fishermen. Many of the members of the fishing communities share a common cultural identity, with few of them being from various tribes with different identities and traditions. Despite the varied socio-cultural and economic backgrounds these people may have, they live close to the lake and depend on the fisheries resources (Jansen, Abila & Owino, 2000). The fisheries sector in Tanzania is among the important economic sub-sectors of the economy. It contributes around 10% of the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and is an important source of livelihood for many Tanzanians (Masanyiwa et al., 2012). This sector provides substantial employment, income, livelihood, foreign earnings, and revenue to the country. It contributes about half of the global catch, supplying food for local, national, and global markets. It also accounts for approximately 90 % of fishing employment along the global supply chain and the industry employs more than 4,000,000 people engaged in fisheries and fisheries-related activities while more than 400,000

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fisheries operators are directly employed in the sector (Mgale & Nikusekela, 2017).

Fisheries resources represent natural capital and are a potential source of sustainable wealth for many coastal communities in developing countries such as Tanzania. This wealth provides the opportunity for such resources to make an ongoing contribution to economic growth and poverty reduction (Sesabo & Tol, 2007). Lake Victoria contributes significantly to the economic growth of the East African countries (LVFO, 2013). Many Tanzanians engaged in fishing activities earn income from the activity which has been increasing over the years, although distribution is increasingly becoming more inequitable, with the export-oriented fish processing sector taking the lion's share (Masanyiwa et al., 2012). The lake accounts for an estimated 60% of Tanzanian inland fish production. Fish and fisheries products from Lake Victoria are a significant food source to the country, yielding some 122,000 tons in 1995. It also contributes to the country's foreign exchange coffers, generating about 60 million US dollars in 1997 (Maembe, 1998). For a better understanding of the transformation in fisheries along Lake Victoria, I use the Nile perch to mark the regimes of transformation: the Pre-Nile perch regime and the Nile perch regime.

The pre-Nile Perch and Nile Perch Regimes

Before the 1980s, fisheries of Lake Victoria were exploited solely by small-scale fishermen, and the fish catches were dominated by species that were of less commercial value compared to the three highly commercial species now dominating the fishery of Lake Victoria namely Nile perch, tilapia, and sardines (Masanyiwa et al., 2012). It was estimated that some 50,000 fishermen operated from about 12,000 canoes (Butcher & Colaris, 1975). These small-scale operators dominated the fish processing and trading subsectors (Abila, 2000; Yongo et al., 2005), mainly comprising women from the communities surrounding the lake. They sold fresh fish and processed the surplus, using simple technology for later sale (e.g. smoking, salting, sun drying) to local inland markets. There were few wholesalers in the fish trade, and the traders never acquired control over the fishermen. Most of the fishermen sold their fish to a limited number of women fishmongers with whom they had developed long-standing relationships. Local rules had also developed concerning the role of the fishmongers and their relationship to the fishermen. Lake Victoria then underwent environmental degradation, exotic introductions and increased fishing pressure which led to a decline in fish catches, and changes in the lake's biodiversity, threatening the sustenance of the lake fishery upon which millions depended for their livelihoods (Njiru et al., 2008). Among the introductions, was the introduction of the Nile perch.

The introduction of Nile perch transformed the fisheries from a locally based artisanal fishery to a national and international capital investment industry. The fisheries produce an annual income of US \$ 600 million, providing employment opportunities for over 3 million people (Njiru et al., 2008). In the year 2004, Nile perch and its products exported from Lake Victoria in Tanzania amounted to 47.3 million metric tons that generated US \$ 100 million in foreign exchange earnings. On average Lake Victoria fisheries in Tanzania have been contributing about 2.5% to the GDP and Nile perch has been the major contributor (Masanyiwa et al., 2012). Exotic tilapiines have hybridized, displacing the indigenous fish species. Nile perch predation has caused the disappearance of once-abundant native fish species (Njiru et al., 2008).

Despite the economic boom associated with the introduction of Nile perch, the income from the Lake Victoria fishery has been concentrated among a smaller proportion of participants in the fish industry (Abila, 2000; Yongo et al., 2005; Geheb et al., 2007). According to Wilson et al (1995), Tanzania's harvesting capacity is now concentrated in the hands of a smaller number of fishers. Bokea and Ikiara (2000) argue that local fishers have no say in pricing. The local people have progressively been driven out of fish production, pricing, marketing, and processing activities, with fish factories and their agents tightly controlling these activities (Abila, 2000). In the processing and marketing sectors, large actors with substantial capital have edged out traditional sellers and processors. These changes have in turn reduced the availability and affordability of fish to local consumers, leading to food insecurity. Several studies show that the lack of fish from domestic markets has led to malnutrition, particularly among children in the lake zone. This is because other fish species that were traditionally consumed have become scarce leading to an increase in the price paid by local consumers (Masanyiwa et al., 2012).

Employment chances in traditional fish trading and processing sectors for Nile perch and its products, which was previously the activity of women, are now integrated into the marketing chain for fish processing and fishmeal. This has resulted in an inequitable distribution of income from the fishery sector, with local communities at a disadvantageous position, compared to fish agents and fish

processors, thereby effectively minimizing their ability to purchase other foods. This transformation of the fishery situation represents a significant loss to local communities. There is a further threat of unemployment in the processing and trading of Nile perch frames, as the latter are increasingly being sent to fishmeal factories (Abila, 2000).

As a result of the above transformation, these local communities around Lake Victoria can be characterized as being very insecure regarding food (Abila, 2000; Odongkara et al., 2005; Geheb et al., 2007). Most mature Nile perch caught in Lake Victoria goes to factories for processing and export. Only juvenile Nile perch, or those rejected by factories, plus Nile perch frames, remain behind for local consumption (Abila, 2000). Even when fish is available for purchase, local households often do not have sufficient purchasing power to compete with factories (Odongkara et al., 2005).

In reporting her Millennium Development Goals' projection for 2015, Tanzania characterized poverty as "the main development challenge, which all efforts eventually aim to address, [and described it as] widespread and persistent" (URT, 2001:2). The report mentions, among the vulnerable groups, those involved in small-scale fishing. Whereas fisheries are lauded for being vital in "creating employment opportunities, mostly rural-based, and thereby helping to reduce rural-urban migration" (Odongkara et al., 2005:124), people in these fishing communities are reported to be vulnerable to complex interactions that lead to the HIV/AIDS prevalence due to their "overall context of poverty" (Allison & Seeley, 2004:215). Assessing poverty in small-scale fisheries in the Tanzanian part of Lake Victoria, Béné sees "high vulnerability" among fishing communities (Béné, 2009:911). From this background, it is interesting, from a linguistic point of view, to understand how people in these communities handle the tensions lingering on poverty among riches. Therefore, following identity theory, this paper examines the discourse in these communities to find out how these people either acknowledge or identify with, or detach themselves from poverty.

Theoretical Issues

Theoretically, this paper follows Bamberg, de Fina, and Schiffrin's *Discourse and Identity Construction* (Bamberg et al., 2011). Theorists work their way up from "small-d" discursive practices to identities and sense of self as emerging in interaction, instead of moving progressively from existing "capital-D" social discourses to the domain of identity and sense of self (Bamberg et al., 2011:177). They say that interlocutors' identities are constructed in and through discourse; that is, this theory assumes that it is only through interaction that our identities get constructed. De Fina says, "If interaction is ubiquitous and central to the enactment and negotiation of identity, so is language" (de Fina, 2010:213). Identities, much as they can be seen as the property of the individual, emerge through different interactions and they can be regarded as residing in the mind or in concrete social behaviour which is usually anchored to the individual or the group (de Fina, 2019).

The focus on identity as 'doing' rather than 'being' is preferred because social reality does not exist as an independent entity but is socially constructed. Social constructionist thinkers argue that one should look at identity as a process rather than as an attribute or a series of attributes and that focusing on the process allows for a consideration of the concrete ways in which people will assume identities, attribute to each other the membership of various categories or resist such attributions. In other words, they point to 'constructing identities' as a kind of social and 'discursive work' (de Fina, 2010: 267).

De Fina adds that the tendency of interactionists to concentrate on the social rather than mental aspects of all semiotic processes is the belief that "it is through such social constructions that ideas and images are created and circulated. Identity, therefore, is literally in the doing, rather than in the thinking, and it is this doing that is amenable to observation for discourse analysis" (de Fina, 2015: 352-353).

Benwell and Stokoe (2006) say that when we interact we construct, enact or perform identities in such a way that through listening or reading a text one may tell that those involved in it are friends or non-friends, young or old, women or men, wealthy or poor, white or black people, upper or low class, educated or non-educated, professionals or non-professionals, et cetera; and all these issues may either be directly presented or implied in the discourse. So, it is one thing claiming to be, say, a university professor while in interactions one is heard talking as a hawker. As de Fina says, "The single most important system of symbols for expressing and negotiating identities is language" (de Fina, 2010:267).

We need to focus on the process of identity construction itself – the strategies used by interlocutors to match the life in these fishing communities.

Discourse and Identity Construction theory has three dimensions of identity construction which are distinguished and highlighted as dilemmatic but deserving prominence in the discursive construction of identity. These are (i) agency and control in terms of a person-to-world versus a world-to-person directionality. We navigate this with the question of whether it is the person, the *I-as-subject*, who constructs the way the world is or whether the *me-as-undergoer* is constructed by the way the world is - and how this dilemma is navigated on a case-to-case basis. (ii) the differentiation between self and other as a way to navigate between uniqueness and a communal sense of belonging and being the same as others. Here we pose the question of how we can draw up a sense of self as differentiated and/or as integrated within self - other relations - and how in concrete contexts we navigate in between those two; and (iii) the navigation of sameness and change across one's biography or parts thereof. Here we pose the question of how we can claim to be the same in the face of constant change and how we can claim to have changed in the face of still being the same - and what degree of continuity and development are necessary to develop and maintain a sense of self as unitary (Bamberg et al., 2011:177-8). These three identity dilemmas are navigated through a look at conversational data, which we can analyze as narrative, performative, conversation analytic, and positioning analysis.

Context and Methods

This study analyzed digital data from Hubert Sauper's *Darwin's Nightmare* (2004). Bartlett and Milligan (2015) suggest that using digital, web, and social networking affords and enhances flexibility in collecting rich data from a wide range of participants. Upon dealing with this kind of data, Thompson (2004) insists on keeping the context and environment - e.g., the relationship between the speakers - to help situate the discourse. The film documentary of life in fishing communities along Lake Victoria which involved speakers of both English and Kiswahili, was downloaded from YouTube². Generally, the documentary is in English, where Kiswahili, Kihaya or Kisukuma is used, translations have been provided.³ To examine the discourse of members of the fishing communities to find out how they either acknowledged or detached themselves from poverty. It involves street children of both sexes, young men and women, and old men and women in fishing communities in Mwanza. Only a handful of Tanzanians of African origin in the fishing communities speak English comprehensibly. Mitchell, a watchman and retired military officer wishes he had gone farther into schooling to get a better job. The little formal education that had enabled him to be a security officer may explain why he can speak English. Nkonongo is a retired primary school teacher. Not much is known about Yonash, who has graduated from the street, but he speaks English. The rest speak either Kihaya, Kisukuma or Kiswahili. The second group are Tanzanians of Asian origin. They are English speaking, own fish factories and employ Tanzanians of African origin. The other group of people are Russian pilots who come now and then to carry fish in cargo planes. They speak Russian and a little functional English. Since Russians are not resident here and they don't interact overly on matters touching poverty, this paper focuses on the two Tanzanian groups. The difference between these groups is seen on how they navigate through discourse components to acknowledge (identify with) or detach from poverty. The documentary was transcribed and the discourse was then examined in line with *Discourse and Identity Construction's* three components namely, (i) agency and control; (ii) difference and sameness between others and me, and (iii) constancy and change.

Findings

(i) Agency and control in terms of a person-to-world versus a world-to-person directionality. Is it the person, the *I-as-subject*, who constructs the way the world is, or whether the *me-as-undergoer* is constructed by the way the world is?

<i>I-as-subject</i> constructing the way the world is	
1	DIMONEY: So, we are the pioneers to start the [fish] business. We are one of the big[gest] factories in Mwanza right now. We have employed around 1000 people directly and

² The video was downloaded at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EEIC9F--DaA&t=4547s>

³ Where these translations by the documentary production team are questionable or missing, the author sought an alternative version, which is marked as 'English translation'.

	indirectly, and it's about ten years now we are in the business.
2	DIMONEY: In the factories of Nile perch, they are all doing well. The only problem is the market, the market is not that good for us right now, there's too much Nile perch in Europe right now. Mwanza itself is producing around 500 tons per day. That is minimal and helps a lot of money.
3	TIPER: We deal with industrial plastics. Simba Plastics has been in this business for forty-five years. We are part of another group called Samaria, dealing with pharmaceuticals, Coca-Cola companies, cotton ginning, industrial plastics, detergents, and so on. Simba is based in Dar es Salaam and we have our depot here, and fish is one industry we are focusing on currently. We make a lot of products for the fish here; flexible packaging and we are into euro pellets.
4	DIMONEY: (plays Bobby McFerrin's song <i>Don't Worry Be Happy</i>)

Me-as-undergoer being constructed by the way the world is	
1	MITCHELL: I'm tired of this, you have to study. I know that if I have a chance of going to study, it will increase my salary, and my salary will be increased. Therefore, it will help me to survive.
2	MITCHELL: The man was killed here before, he was butchered here. As you know, life is difficult, we don't have cash. Where do we get cash? Our education is low, perhaps even if you go to the offices, 'May I have a job?' 'We don't have a job, we don't have a job'. Now if you get a job, even if it's a bad job, you are supposed to do it.
3	MKONONGO: You have no job, you have no parent, and your parents are poor also because poverty is a vicious circle, you are born with a poor parent, and you are born poor, therefore even your son or the child you deliver will be poor. That's a vicious circle. So, we heard what the boys were saying. Some people say that most of the women who are coming to these areas are harlots, but it's not their fault. They are forced to be in such a condition, but most of them don't intend to, the situation forces them.
4	MITCHELL: Those who are dying of diseases, once he sees that now he cannot do any type of job he must return home! Because if he stayed here long, and at the same time he is still suffering, nobody will help him as you know, to carry a dead body from here up to your home costs cash. It's better you use a bus or a small car while you're still alive! The fare will not be high but once you are dead, the price changes.
5	MWAJU: Kama wale mapailoti wa Russia waliokujaga wanene sana, walikujaga siku moja na teksi wakatuchukuachukua...halafu na Queen akachukuliwa na mmoja aliyekuwa ameshindana na Eliza. <i>English translation:</i> Like those very fat Russian pilots who came one day in a taxi and took us for sex, then Queen went out with one who had failed a gig with Eliza.

(ii) The differentiation between self and other as a way to navigate between uniqueness and a communal sense of belonging and being the same as others; posing the question of how we can draw up a sense of self as differentiated and/or as integrated within self-other relations- and how in concrete contexts do we navigate in between those two?

Same as others

1	YONASH: So, we have a problem that poverty is around the lake and people dying because of dangerous diseases especially HIV and AIDS and a problem of some parents drinking too much, and the children cannot stay home because they have been told to survive for themselves to find life or to feed families.
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Different from others	
1	MITCHELL: These soldiers are gaining a lot of courage, this means that the government checks them very well, yeah, if you need nice cash, a nice salary, join the army, that's why we like to have a... army but we have no chance.
2	DIMONEY: If the fish were not there, Lake Victoria people, I don't know what kind of other job they would look for. It helped literary Mwanza and Musoma regarding what town have reached beyond the shores entirely on Nile perch fish, all of the areas along the shores of Lake Victoria, all people have jobs depending on fish.

(iii) The navigation of sameness and change across one's biography or parts thereof. How can we claim to be the same in the face of constant change and how we can claim to have changed in the face of still being the same? What degree of continuity and development are necessary to develop and maintain a sense of self as unitary?

Constant: things are still the same	
1	MKONONGO: You know God, unfortunately, created the world and invested some limited natural resources. Therefore, people tend to scramble for these natural resources; and that is what is happening today. Formerly, there was a scramble of land in Africa but now it seems there is a scramble of natural resources in the world. Who is to get and who is to miss? And that is the law of the jungle. The strong, tough animals have a chance of surviving more than the weak ones. When we say the stronger in our world we are living in, maybe we start viewing the Europeans are stronger than the rest. Because they are the people who own the IMF, they are the people who own the World Bank, they are the people who own the world trade.
2	MUKOSI: Mara ya kwanza tunapoanza, [kwa] ile hewa tumbo linajaa gesi, halafu kuna minyoo. Jinsi ya kuchimbua wakati wa mvua ndivyo matope kama unavyoona. Halafu gesi yake ni kali kwenye macho. Inavuta sana. <i>English translation:</i> When we started the stomachs were getting filled with gas, and when it is rainy like this, there are a lot of worms in the mud and it is hard to dig as you can see. This gas is smarting the eyes. It is very painful.

Change: things have changed	
1	YONASH: This is the life of children in the streets, they cook and smoke to protect themselves. When I was also in the street I smoked to protect myself.
2	YONASH: My parents passed away and then I came to Mwanza to fight, to find life because I was about the future, how could I stay in the village, no clothes, nothing, no job? I couldn't stay, so I decided to come to town. Now I'm living as a citizen of the world. I'm working, paying house rent. I'm living as a citizen, one of the citizens.
3	HAMBOSHI: I'm by myself, I'm staying alone. My husband has been sick, he's away seeking medical help from traditional doctors. Dealing in fish frames is better for me

	economically than in those times when I was a farmer. ⁴
4	MWAJU: Siku hizi mapailoti wengi hawajagi. <i>English translation:</i> Nowadays many of the pilots are not coming.
5	CHIKU: Yaani wengi tu, sema sasa hivi hawajagi. Yaani wengi sijui walishaga kufa, si umeona? <i>English translation:</i> Very many [pilots] indeed, only that they are not coming. A lot of them may have died, don't you think?

Discussion

This paper, following identity theory, examines the discourse in small fishing communities to find out how these people either acknowledge or deny poverty. Let us begin with the agency and control level, where the speaker as the subject uses discourse to indicate that it is he or she that constructs the way the world is. Dimoney, a Tanzanian businessman of Asian origin, says that he is a pioneer and has one of the biggest fish factories in Mwanza, employing around 1000 people directly and indirectly. He also says the fish business brings in a lot of money, and that the only problem is that there is too much Nile perch in the market. He does not seem worried about the poverty hitting the neighbourhood and expects everyone not to worry as he plays Bobby McFerrin's *Don't Worry Be Happy*. So, he is a subject, he controls the fishing industry as he has 1000 peoples' lives under his operations. Dimoney thus controls the situation he is in, but those he employs do not. This still speaks to the fact that fishery is still concentrated among a smaller proportion of participants (Abila, 2000; Yongo et al., 2005; Geheb et al., 2007; Wilson et al., 1995). Tiper, another Tanzanian businessman of Asian origin, deals in pharmaceuticals, Coca-Cola company, cotton ginning, industrial plastics, and detergents and his company is now focusing on fish. At the look of this section, these participants are on top of what they are doing, therefore constructing the way the world is. Dimoney is wondering what kind of work people around Lake Victoria would be doing if there was no fishing, because all the works here depend on fish. Through this use of discourse, Dimoney and Tiper are not poor at all. Definitely, this group is economically well off, but they don't say so by spelling the word 'rich'. Their problem is that there is no market out there, not going without food. This is why it is easy to play Bobby McFerrin in the middle of famine.

In the second part of *agency and control* Mitchell's navigation of discourse suggests that he is an object (the undergoer), constructed by the way the world is. Mitchell says he is tired of the hard life, he has not studied, the burden is too heavy for him, and he feels he cannot survive. Mitchell regrets that he cannot go back to the army because to him the army equals good pay "the government checks them very well". He adds that those of his type are dying of diseases, which suggests lack of medical services. Upon seeing that death is imminent, they have to cut down costs by travelling home before dying. It is too expensive to transport a dead body.

Somewhere else he says:

life is difficult, we don't have cash. Where do we get cash? Our education is low, perhaps even if you go to the offices, 'May I have a job?' [they would certainly respond] 'We don't have a job, we don't have a job'. Now if you get employed somewhere, even if it's a bad job, you have to do it.

If we have to leave Mitchell out, the rest echo Benwell and Stokoe (2006) that when we interact we construct, enact or perform identities in such a way that through listening or reading a text one may tell that those involved in it are friends or non-friends, young or old, women or men, wealthy or poor, et cetera. Mkonongo, for example, takes the poverty of people in fishing communities to another level. He talks about it as a vicious circle, standing on the side of women who have turned into harlots. He says "It's not their fault. They are forced to be in such a condition, most of them don't intend, the situation

⁴ Hamboshi speaks Kisukuma, so she is heard through the translator.

forces them". The situation he is alluding to is poverty. He talks about the scramble of resources, and says that Africans are the weakest in the scramble, whereas the most powerful are Europeans. What he suggests in the end, is that from the scramble of African land to the scramble of resources, power has not changed hands. Mwaju and her friends remember pilots who used to come and buy sex from them, who no longer come. Because their coming meant money, life is worse now without them.

At the level of *differentiation between self and others*, we have only Yonash who likens himself with the community, saying "We have a problem that poverty is around the lake and people are dying because of dangerous diseases, especially HIV and AIDS". Mitchell thinks that soldiers are different from the rest of them because they are paid very well. He says "If you need nice cash, nice salary, join the army... but we have no chance". On the other side, we have Dimoney differentiating himself from the rest of the "Lake Victoria people" whose jobs are 'entirely' dependent on fish.

On the navigation of *sameness and change*, Mkonongo echoes Darwin's *Evolution of Species* when he talks of the scramble for African resources then and as it continues today. What he is saying is that things have not changed ever since, the strong will continue exploiting resources at the expense of the poor Africans. Mukosi is still on a hard job but she is still on it despite the trouble. She says "When we started the stomachs were getting filled with gas [and] this gas is smarting the eyes. It is very painful". On the change, Yonash says that he was hustling like other street children and had smoked "to protect" himself. Following his parents' demise, he had to go to Mwanza "to fight, to find life" but now he has graduated from the street and says "Now I'm living as a citizen of the world". This kind of change is slightly likened to Hamboshi's, who finds relief from farming, having started dealing with fish frames. Whereas Yonash and Hamboshi find their change positive, Mwaju and her friends find the fact that many pilots are not coming to Africa to be negative. This is because more pilots' coming meant more money for the nights they bought. Mwaju and her friends are 'innocently' vulnerable to complex interactions that lead to the HIV/AIDS prevalence due to their "overall context of poverty" (Allison & Seeley, 2004:215).

Generally, this study divides the population between Tanzanians of African origin and those of Asian origin in the way these two groups relate to poverty. To answer the question on how these people employ discourse to acknowledge or deny poverty, let us begin with Tanzanians of African origin. This group applies discourse in a way which suggests that they are objects (undergoers), constructed by the way the world is. They are 'tired' of the situation but they have no way out. They picture a vicious circle of poverty, defending the moral decay going with poverty, accepting that Africans are the weakest in the scramble of resources. Power, they suggest, has not changed hands since the partition of Africa in Berlin. Some of these Africans relate to dealing with fish frames than tilling the land, that is why despite the difficulty they encounter with fish frames, they hang on. The fact that not many pilots come to this side of the lake nowadays exacerbates poverty to women.

The group of Tanzanians of Asian origin suggests that they are subjects, using discourse to indicate that they construct the way the world is. They are businessmen pioneering the fishing business in Mwanza, employing around 1000 people. They admit that their business pays, they play Bobby McFerrin's *Don't Worry Be Happy*, which suggests how they feel. They wonder what kind of job people around Lake Victoria would be doing "if the fish were not there" because people here "have jobs depending on fish". This group therefore identifies with wellbeing, that way detaching from poverty.

To sum it up, the Tanzanians of Asian origin, who enjoy riches, do not say directly that they are rich, but their discourse shows the gap between them and Tanzanians of African origin who are in different ways impoverished. The Tanzanians of African origin in this study, all except for Mitchell who admits that he is poor, employ discourse in ways that suggest that they are impoverished. This is despite the fact that in the Tanzanian part of Lake Victoria, Béné sees "high vulnerability" among these fishing communities (Béné, 2009:911). So, we can say that Tanzanians of African origin in the fishing communities face poverty and identify themselves as such through their discourse. As de Fina says, identities emerge through different interactions and they can be regarded as residing in the mind or in concrete social behaviour which is usually anchored to the individual or the group (de Fina, 2019).

Conclusion

This study examined how people in fishing communities around Lake Victoria used discourse to identify with or detach themselves from poverty prevalent in those areas. Before finding how these people used discourse, the study noted that the demographic characteristics divided these people between

Tanzanians of African origin and Tanzanians of Asian origin who run fish factories which employ Tanzanians of African origin. These groups, the rich and the poor differ in the way they respond to poverty. The analysis, which was informed by *Discourse and Identity Construction* theory has shown that the poor people and rich people generally do not pronounce themselves as rich or poor but navigate the discourse in ways which identify them as either rich or poor. This is another way that can help us to understand different sensitive phenomena without having to ask people directly, to save peoples' faces.

Declaration of conflicting interests

The author declares no conflict of interest regarding the research, authorship, or publication of this paper.

Funding

The author declares that he received no financial support from any organization for conducting the research and writing this article.

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