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OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

FACULTY OF COMMERCE, HUMAN SCIENCES AND EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGES

COURSE CODE: EAP511S		**COURSE NAME**: ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES	
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SECOND OPPORTUNITY EXAMINATION QUESTION PAPER	
EXAMINER(S):	Mr B. Kamwi
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INSTRUCTIONS
1. Answer all questions.
2. Write clearly and neatly.
3. Number the answers clearly.

PERMISSIBLE MATERIALS

1. Examination paper
2. Examination script

THIS QUESTION PAPER CONSISTS OF 12 PAGES (Including this front page)

SECTION A: ACADEMIC READING **[40]**

Read the following research article and answer the questions that follow. The original article has been adapted for assessment purposes.

Students' and tutors' perceptions of feedback on academic essays in an open and distance learning context

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Abstract

A [1]**Feedback** is the most <u>important</u> aspect of the learning and teaching process. [2]Through feedback, tutors/ lecturers provide an important intervention in teaching as students would always like to know where they did right or wrong in their written assessed work. [3]Without feedback, learning is not complete. [4]This article report<u>s</u> on the results of a major study on academic writing of first year English Second Language university students in open and distance learning context. [5]The study probed both students' perceptions and tutor<u>s'</u> practices in the provision of giving feedback. [6]Marked students' assignments were evaluated using document analysis method and interviews were held with students and tutors. [7]The finding<u>s</u> show that feedback provided to students is not always *sufficient* and **therefore** denying students' opportunities to learn <u>effectively</u> as they would not know their weak and strong points.

Introduction

B   Feedback is very critical in learning and teaching. Without feedback, learning is like a ship without radar as there is no direction given to students regarding their written work. This study was qualitative in nature. In this study, data were collected using marked students essays by English for Academic Purposes students, as well as interviews with tutor-markers in an Open and Distance Learning (ODL) institution. The study found that marking of students' assignments was not satisfactory and students did not benefit much from feedback. Amongst others, the article recommends a rigorous training of tutor-markers to ensure that they strengthen the weak link that exists in providing effective feedback to students in order to enhance learning and the teaching of writing. The article also recommends training of both staff and students to produce effective feedback and adequately respond to feedback, respectively.

Research method and design

C   The study was qualitative in nature and used the case study as design. The case study approach was used because a particular case -ESL students' perceptions of feedback- was investigated to find out how they perceive the quality of feedback they receive on their written work. The **sample** comprised tutors who mark assignments and exams for the English for Academic Purposes module, and the students. A total of eight English tutor-markers participated in the study. All eight tutors who mark for this module were willing to participate in this study after an invitation was extended to them. All ethical issues were observed including **anonymity** (pseudonyms were used instead of real names), confidentiality and the right to stop participating in the study amongst others. A questionnaire, focus group interviews and marked student assignments were the data collection instruments used in this study. A questionnaire was administered to both students (appendix 1) and tutors (appendix 2) and was subsequently followed by interviews and content analysis of marked assignments. The rationale behind the use of a combination of these data collection methods (triangulation) was to get rich and

in-depth data regarding students' and tutors views on feedback (Bell, 2005). This was also done to replicate the methods used by theorists of the academic literacies approach, which is the theoretical framework underpinning this study (Lea, 2008; Lea & Street, 1998). As Lea (2008) states, "the academic literacies approach generally uses qualitative and ethnographic methods to obtain data. Accordingly, interviews, students' writing samples and feedback on students' writing were identified as the common methodological approaches used in academic literacies research" (p. 232). **However**, in this study questionnaires were also used as a data collection instrument, and the study adopted a case study instead of ethnography.

Findings and discussion

This section presents the results of the study. The results are presented by first highlighting the question asked and the responses to that question, followed by an analysis and interpretation.

Students' responses on feedback

D   Some participants indicated that they value feedback, and **it** helps them avoid repeating the mistakes in future writing tasks. For instance, Jim indicated that: "I feel good because I will know the way forward after that" and Mary noted that: "They help improve your mistakes." **Similarly**, Sarah commented that: "During tutorials a tutor must ask students to write an essay and mark them in class to correct and show us our mistakes before we submit our essays to de1 lecturer."

E   However, some students were not happy with their feedback due to the effort they put in the task, particularly when they did research and yet received a lower grade. Some put it like this: "I am so pleased but at some extent I feel that I deserved more than the mark I got" (Calvin). Debora indicated that: "Some of the feedback are not good when you give us". Samantha said she is "not happy because they (tutors) are not satisfied even though I spend a lot of time researching and finding information on the topic", while David said: "To be honest there was not much feedback because I got a high mark". These findings corroborate with studies by Dowden et al. (2013) and Price et al. (2010).

F   Participants found that they did not receive good feedback from their tutors regarding their writing. One student lamented that: "**They** are not as clear as to what I was supposed to write or where I was wrong" (Mosima) while another one said that "this time around not useful because of illegible hand writing". These comments indicate poor use of feedback and participants did not benefit anything from the comments; it **resonates** with Krause's (2001) findings. **As a result**, tutors missed a good opportunity of communicating with students and learning. This practice on giving feedback should be discouraged by all means.

G   However, some found that the feedback is "very useful because they pin point all the mistakes, so I get a clear understanding of what I should do next time on my essay assignments" (Lerato). Furthermore, another one said: "I like knowing what the lecturer/ tutor thought about my essay and what they found exciting and not so exciting, the feedback is of great importance, I learn a lot from them" (Tlou). **Seemingly**, some markers gave useful comments while others did not give any helpful comments. The fact that some students indicated that feedback was useful refutes assertions that students do not value feedback, as alluded by Higgins et al. (2001). Students yearn for teaching from ESL practitioners through quality feedback and if we are not doing that, we are failing them.

Tutors' responses on giving feedback

H   While writing feedback, one tutor made the following comments: "PLEASE NOTE THAT TASKS 2&3 WAS SUPPOSED TO BE SUBMITTED AS TWO SEPARATE TASKS. PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY IN FUTURE. WHILST YOU HAVE RAISED SOME VALID AND INTERESTING VIEWS YOU HAVE NOT MANAGED TO ORGANISE YOUR ARGUMENT IN A LOGICAL AND COHESIVE MANNER. YOU ALSO NEED TO PAY PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO YOUR WORD ORDER AND SENTENCE STRUCTURE. MAKE USE OF A DICTIONARY TO VERIFY YOUR SPELLING AND VOCABULARY" (Feedback by tutor)

I   In this assignment, the marker circled all language errors -for example, spelling and vocabulary. Language errors were mostly highlighted, as literature has confirmed that most feedback comments focus on grammar aspects. The student was advised to define different types of euthanasia. Though this marker is pointing out issues that the student needs to work on, the use of capital letters is not setting a good example to students, as they may adopt this style of writing in their future writing tasks. Accordingly, the marker is advising the student to use a dictionary to fix spelling errors and for improving vocabulary. This could **attest** to the fact that students delay writing assignments to the last minute to an extent that they submit poor quality work (Ellis, Taylor & Drury, 2005; Gambell, 1991).

J   When giving feedback, tutors indicated that they make feedback as comprehensive as possible in order to make the students aware of what they did right and where they need to improve. For example, one tutor said: "For those who perform badly, I comment on every item e.g. content, organisation, language, show them what and where to improve" (Tutor 2) while another tutor stated: "I indicate where they have gone wrong and try to encourage them to correct their mistakes" (Tutor 4). **Furthermore**, another tutor provides "guidelines as far as possible:—by giving alternative answers, approaches or different responses, sometimes not possible" (Tutor 4). One tutor said: "Start with positive things like 'I enjoyed reading your essay, your essay/language/organisation is good'. Then I indicate the areas which he/she needs to improve" (Tutor 7).

K   This finding indicates a motivational role, which tutors need to adopt when responding to students' work before pointing out areas where students need to improve (Weaver, 2006). However, some responses from marked assignments indicate that, when students are doing well in an assignment, tutors tend not to give elaborate comments. In addition, what tutor-markers have said did in correspond with what they do in practice.

L   Generally, tutors had different views on commenting on content and grammar. One tutor said: "I give the student what he deserves, but indicate to him/her where he went wrong with the hope that she would rectify and also give an average mark for the content and less mark for grammar obviously when the grammar is irrelevant it mostly distorts the content" (Tutor 3). **In contrast**, another one said: "I believe that the content should weigh as much as language because this is academic writing. Language can sometimes hamper content, but the language is a means to content delivery" (Tutor 7). Furthermore, one tutor said: "I look at the facts, the right answer more than the grammar. Although grammar is also important, correct response counts more" (Tutor 4).

M   This finding indicates that it is difficult to evaluate content that is clouded by grammar mistakes. It can be deduced from these responses that both language and content are important aspects of writing and should therefore be treated equally. Disappointingly, one tutors' comment was just a phrase which stated: "Mind your spelling". Some language errors were circled whereas some were ignored. Good points were appreciated and talkback was used (Lillis, 2001). The comments were not explicit enough to show the student in detail what she does right or wrong in the essay and how

the student can improve future submissions. The comment is not sufficient enough as it only comments on grammar (spelling) and nothing about the content. **This** confirms Harris' (1977) and Fregreau's (1999) observations that teachers tend to focus more on grammar and less on content when marking essay assignments.

Conclusion

N   Overall, the findings of this study do not differ much with the results presented by other studies. However, the findings of this particular study are important as they help us to understand how ESL students and tutors in an ODL context view and provide feedback, respectively. Therefore, this study contributes to the body of knowledge in the field of feedback in ESL and ODL contexts. Factors such as **incomprehensible** feedback, ambiguous feedback, illegible writing, and student emotions are some of the challenges unveiled in this study. To sum up, the findings indicate inconsistencies regarding the provision of feedback by tutors. The study also reported on the case of students who felt they deserved more and could not impress the marker despite all the hard work they put into their work. In the ODL context, feedback is not the only way students can be taught and learn, rather it is pivotal in learning and teaching strategy.

Part 1: Comprehension questions [20 marks]

1. What is the title of this article? (1)
2. What does ODL stand for? (1)
3. According to paragraph B, why is the rigorous training of tutor markers necessary? (1)
4. Choose the correct answer:

   i) Choose the set of participants whose responses show that they value feedback, and it helps them avoid repeating mistakes in future writing. (1)
      a) Samantha and Calvin
      b) Sarah, Mary, and Jim
      c) Calvin, Deborah, and David
      d) Mosima and Lerato

   ii) According to paragraph B, which of the following is the TRUE complete reason for the necessity of the rigorous training for tutor markers? (1)
      a) The study found that marking of students' assignments was not satisfactory and students did not benefit much from feedback.
      b) It can guarantee that tutor markers are able to strengthen the weak link between providing productive feedback to students in order to enhance learning and the teaching of writing.
      c) It can ensure that the weak link that exists between learning and the teaching of writing is removed.

   iii) What can be inferred from the following quote from paragraph K? (1)
      "For those who perform badly, I comment on every item e.g., content, organisation, language, show them what and where to improve".

a) Tutor 2 does not provide comprehensive feedback with the aim of ensuring that students are aware of their mistakes and areas of possible improvements.

b) Tutor 2 is tired of providing comprehensive feedback with the aim of ensuring students are aware of their mistakes and areas of possible improvements because students do not improve.

c) Tutor 2 provides comprehensive feedback with the aim of ensuring that students are aware of their mistakes and areas of possible improvements.

iv) Using the information provided in paragraph M, say whether it is **Correct** or **Wrong** to infer the following conclusion: (2)

If a student gets 100 over 100 in a written task, chances are very high that she will

receive elaborate comments from her tutor.

5. To what do the following pronouns refer?
   a) **it** in paragraph D (1)
   b) **they** in paragraph F (1)
   c) **this** in paragraph M (2)

6. Connect each cohesive device to its function. Write down the Roman number of the cohesive device and the letter of the corresponding function. Some functions are distractors, and a function may be used more than once. (4)

Cohesive devices	Their Function
i) Therefore, in paragraph A ii) Similarly, in paragraph D iii) In contrast in paragraph L iv) Furthermore, in paragraph J	a) It is showing consequences. b) It is contrasting. c) It is showing addition of extra information. d) It is showing exemplification. e) It is showing emphasis. f) It is showing comparison.

7. Use contextual clues to connect each word to its closest meaning. Write down the Roman number of the word and the letter of the corresponding closest meaning. Two meaning are a distractor. (4)

Words	Closest meaning
i) Anonymity in paragraph C ii) Resonate in paragraph F iii) Attest in paragraph I iv) Incomprehensible in paragraph N	a) to have the same view as someone. b) to show, prove, or state that something is true or real. c) to reason against someone. d) to keep someone nameless.

| | e) | not easily understood. |
| | f) | to give someone a name. |

Part 2: Language Usage   **[10 MARKS]**

The following questions are based on the article in part one. Read the abstract and respond to the questions based on it. The sentences are numbered for your convenience.

1. Identify the word class (part of speech) of the following underlined word in Paragraph A. (2)

    a) important
    b) effectively

2. Through which word formation process was the word in bold in paragraph A created? (1)

3. Create a word opposite in meaning to the word *important* in sentence 2. (1)

4. Create single a word with the same meaning as the phrase below by adding an affix to the underlined part. (1)
    not complete   (Paragraph A, sentence 3)

5. What is the function of each underlined word part in the words below? (3)
    a) reports   (Paragraph A, sentence 4)
    b) tutors'   (Paragraph A, sentence 5)
    c) findings   (Paragraph A, sentence 7)

6. Analyse the word *assignments* (sentence 6) according to its morpheme structure and label each morpheme (bound or free; derivational or inflectional), e.g., assessed = assess (free) + ed (bound, inflectional). (1)

7. Classify the word sufficient (sentence 7) according to its morpheme structure. (1)

Part 3: Research writing   **[10 MARKS]**

The following questions are based on the article in part one. Read the article and respond to the questions based on it.

1. Read the article title and respond to the following questions. (2)
    a) Which word/phrase can be added to the title to specify the type of action done in the study?
    b) What is the broad topic in this article title?

2. Identify the plan of action adopted to carry out the research in this study. (1)

3. What is the meaning of the word *sample* in paragraph C in the context of research? Select your answer from the options provided below. (1)
   a) A food or drink one tastes in order to determine if one likes it or not.
   b) A small number of people or things taken from the larger group to be studied, tested, or questioned to get information.
   c) A small part of a recording that is used in another performer's recording.
   d) None of the above.

4. Who are the participants of the study? (2)
5. Judging from the research instruments used, would you consider this study as empirical or non-empirical? (1)
6. How was primary data collected in this study? (1)
7. What is the significance of this research? (2)

SECTION B: ACADEMIC WRITING [60]

PART 1: Report writing questions [15 marks]

Read the newspaper report below.

Growing substance abuse a big concern
New Era Newspaper, 2019-07-02
(https://neweralive.na/posts/growing-substance-abuse-a-big-concern)
By Steven Klukowski
KEETMANSHOOP – The subdivision Substance Abuse, Prevention, Drug Control and Rehabilitation of the Ministry of Health and Social Services commemorated the annual international day against Drug Abuse and illicit trafficking last week in Tses, a village 80km outside Keetmanshoop. Officiating at the event, Geraldine Kanyinga, a chief social worker in the Ministry of Health and Social Services said that drug abuse is a complex problem at the intersection of public health, safety, and social issues. "It takes a heavy toll on our families and communities, claiming more than half a million lives, worldwide, every year," said the chief social worker.
She said the health ministry joined the rest of the world in commemorating the day under the theme 'Health for Justice – Justice for Health.' She mentioned social inclusion, building resilience as well as rehabilitation as instrumental elements in preventing crime and violence. "The sombre reality, however, is that the substance abuse phenomenon is growing at a rate that cannot be matched by the services to prevent and treat problems stemming from this abuse," she

emphasised. Kanyinga added that families, schools, and communities play a vital role, especially by supporting the youths who may be affected by drug abuse resulting in terrible and long-lasting consequences.

The health professional called on the general public to "work with and for our people to prevent drug abuse and help people lead healthier lives and navigate life's choices with strength and resilience." She regards cooperation in the fields of health and justice as essential in terms of ensuring that responses include vulnerable communities like youth and women. "Furthermore, these services should fight discrimination and promote alternatives to imprisonment and expulsion from school for adults and children with drug use disorders," said Kanyinga. Kanyinga urged people to show their commitment to fulfill their promise to ensure health and justice for all. "Let us aim to protect people's security and well-being while striving for the progress and dignity of all." A Namibia school-based health survey carried out in 2013 shows that 58 percent of the respondents indicated the use of alcohol. It further implies that 48 percent of students used drugs prior to attaining the age of 14 years and that 58 percent of them first tried a cigarette by that time.

According to a ministerial synthesis, it has been reported that 40 percent of learners were of the opinion that drug abuse by their parents caused harm to them.

As a NUST intern at the Ministry of Health and Social Services, you have to write a recommendation report to brief your supervisor on the dangers of substance abuse by the youths, because the Ministry wishes to roll out an education campaign on substance abuse to several Namibian towns and villages. You have decided to focus your report content on 1. The drug abuse situation among the Namibian youths, 2. The reasons for drug abuse among the youths, and 3. The effects drug abuse has on families and the country's economic outlook.

Write your **report title** and **introduction section ONLY**, paying attention to the correct format, paragraph structure, and content required for the introduction section of a report.

Part 2: Academic writing [20 marks]

1. Identify the academic writing conventions exemplified by each of the following sentences from the article in Section A. (4)

(a) The rationale behind the use of a combination of these data collection methods (triangulation) was to get rich and in-depth data regarding students' and tutors views on feedback (Bell, 2005).

(b) The findings show that feedback provided to students is not always sufficient and therefore denying students opportunities to learn effectively as they **would not** know their weak and strong points.

(c) "I feel good because I will know the way forward after that" and Mary noted that: "They help improve your mistakes."

(d) It can be deduced from these responses that both language and content are important aspects of writing and; should, therefore be treated equally.

2. Analyse the following sentences. Name the method used to incorporate information from other scholars in each of the sentences. (3)

   (a) This was also done to replicate the methods used by theorists of the academic literacies approach, which is the theoretical framework underpinning this study (Lea, 2008; Lea & Street, 1998).

   (b) As Lea (2008) states, "the academic literacies approach generally uses qualitative and ethnographic methods to obtain data. Accordingly, interviews, students' writing samples and feedback on students' writing were identified as the common methodological approaches used in academic literacies research" (p. 232).

   (c) To sum up, the findings indicate inconsistencies regarding the provision of feedback by tutors.

3. Mention the type of in-text citation used in the following sentence: (1)

   This finding indicates a motivational role, which tutors need to adopt when responding to students' work before pointing out areas where students need to improve (Weaver, 2006).

4. Analyse the following sentences. Identify the type of language errors found in them. (8)

(a) There's a test today, I hope you studied for it.

(b) A lecturer who made history.

(c) Aino's handwriting is terrible, awful, and just, messy.

(d) Overall, the findings of this study does not differ much with the results presented by other studies.

5. Correct the errors in sentences (a) and (c) above by re-writing the sentences. (4)

Part 3: Text structure [10 marks]

Analyse the following text and answer the questions that follow.

There are many ways to create an online portfolio. First of all, choose a platform and create an account. Second, choose the layout, a title, and an appropriate design. Finally, enter the information in each of the categories and remember to update your worksheets on a regular basis. In sum, these are some of the steps to follow if you need to create an online portfolio.

1) Which pattern of organisation is used to communicate information in the text? (2)
2) Which word(s) in the text signal(s) the text structure of the paragraph? (3)
3) Write down three main supporting sentences from the paragraph. (3)
4) Identify the topic sentence in the text (2)

Part 4: Citation and reference [15 marks]

1. State whether each of the following statements is **True** or **False.**

   The following are the elements of in-text citation:
   1.1 Always use the author's surname and first name. (1)
   1.2 When two authors' surnames are cited in brackets, a comma must be used to separate them. (1)
   1.3 When presenting three or more authors, cite the surnames of all the authors. (1)
   1.4 If the year of publication is not known, use (n.d.) in brackets. (1)
   1.5 Always add the year of publication to an in-text citation. (1)

2. Read the following extracts and answer the questions that follow.

   2.1 Bassnet (2001) gives another aspect of the problem of translation. The scholar posits that sameness cannot exist between the target language and the source language.

   Question: Which technique has been used to incorporate an external source in the extract above? Choose one:

   A. Quoting B. Paraphrasing C. Summarising D. Synthesising. (2)

   2.2 In short, one can say that the Namibian Government's Harambee Prosperity Plan (2017) is a blueprint that focuses on five major pillars for national development namely: Effective Governance, Economic Advancement, Social Progression, Infrastructure Development and International Relations Cooperation.

Question: Which technique has been used to incorporate an external source in the extract above? Choose one:

   A. Quoting B. Paraphrasing   C. Summarising D. Synthesising.   (2)

3.   Each of the following Reference List entries has one error. Identify the error and explain how it can be corrected. Do not copy the entry itself.

   3.1 Book with one author: (2)

   Leunen, M.C,. *A handbook for the frameworks of English*. Macmillan Press.

   3.2 Journal item: (2)

   Kooper, G. (2017) Perspectives on English education. Annual Review of Education in Africa, *IV*, 27 – 54.

   3.3 Newspaper item: (2)

   Iyambo, S. (2023, September 21), Khomanin community demands Government's intervention on landlessness. *The Namibian*.

-END OF EXAM-