

R E F L E C T I O N

STANDING STILL AMIDST THE CHAOS: TOWARDS ENHANCED TEACHING AND LEARNING EXPERIENCES THROUGH REFLECTIVE PRACTICE.



**A PORTFOLIO SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
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OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA**

BY

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DECLARATION

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

TESOL- Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages

PTOTP – Personal Theory of Teaching Practice

PDHE- Post-graduate Diploma in High Education

T&L- Teaching and Learning

HE- Higher Education

COVID-19- Coronavirus Disease

ND1, 2, 3, 4- National Development Plans

NASFAF- Namibia Student Financial Assistance Fund

CPDTL- Centre for Professional Development teaching and Learning

ZPD- Zone of Proximal Development

TLA- Teaching and learning Activities

CLO- Curriculum Learning Objectives

ICT- Information Communication Technology

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INTRODUCTION

Profile of a Veteran Teacher

I started my teaching career at Max Makushe Secondary School in the Kavango East Region in 1995, five years after Namibia's independence. I am currently employed as lecturer in the Department of Communication and Study Skills at the Language Centre, UNAM main campus where I teach academic literacy to Masters and Ph.D. students and English for Academic Purposes to first year , undergraduates.

In 2009, I was privileged to obtain a Full Bright Scholarship which afforded me the opportunity to obtain a Master's degree in Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) at S.I.T. Graduate Institute in the U.S.A. After obtaining my Ph.D. from the University of the Western Cape, Cape Town in 2017, I had a profound desire to enhance my knowledge, skills and research and community work regarding my teaching career at the University of Namibia.

It is important that I admit that although I have 25 years of general teaching experience, the reality is that I lacked the width and depth of teaching within a Higher Education context. My 25 years of teaching experience did not automatically capacitate me to be a dynamic lecturer within the Higher Education classroom. My reality is corroborated by Barnett (2004) who postulates that the diversity within Higher Education is being compounded by new developments across the world. The emergence of corporate universities, the use of digital technologies so creating virtual universities, the development of markets in Higher Education and the formation of global alliances: developments such as these are changing rapidly the character of universities and increasing the diversity between them (p.62).

Despite having the necessary skills knowledge and confidence as an experienced lecturer, the new higher education context forced me to reflect on my current Personal Theory of Teaching Practice (PTOTP). Although I have been teaching for 25 years I certainly never took out the time to reflect on teaching and student learning in a changing Higher Education environment.

The terms “reflection” and “reflective practice” are important components in the Higher Education Teaching and Learning (T&L) context. The philosophy of reflection or reflective practice (reflexivity) is important to me because it is an essential component of my professional efficacy. It provides me with greater understanding of myself, why I teach and how I teach, moreover it enables me to improve my professional practice (praxis).

I have always been an individual that embraces challenges in life, so when the University of Namibia advertised the Post-Graduate Diploma in Higher education (PDHE) in 2018, I decided to grab this opportunity with both hands because I strongly believe that this qualification is going to afford me the necessary, skills, knowledge and research opportunities in order to become a qualified and skilled Higher Education educator. Moreover, I profoundly believe that it is going to empower me to become an active, informed, confident and reflective participant in the Higher Education discourse community.

PORTFOLIO-STRUCTURE

I consider myself as a student of the universe that is on a perpetual journey of academic enlightenment hence my portfolio is written as a road map that signals my constant paradigm shifts of where I have been and what I have discovered and the changes I needed to make to improve my Teaching and Learning (T&L) practice (praxis) following critical reflection. Equally important, it chronicles the journey of the various stages in my learning curve and paradigm shifts that I experienced in my T&L and professional practice. Moreover, it is written from a personal point of view- from the heart. The portfolio is organised around the core ideology or argument that within the dynamic context of Higher Education, critical reflection or reflective practice should be entrenched in academic practices, such as teaching, student research and supervision and academic administration to enhance professional personal growth and student learning (golden thread). The title of my portfolio states: **STANDING STILL AMIDST THE CHAOS: TOWARDS ENHANCED TEACHING AND LEARNING EXPERIENCES THROUGH REFLECTIVE PRACTICE**. It captures the essence of my portfolio because it denotes that in order for me to improve my teaching and learning practice, I have to stand still amidst the chaos. I have to stop and think (criticality) reflect (reflexivity) and make the necessary changes to improve my practice (praxis). Reflective Teaching is a self-assessment of teaching, where an educator studies their pedagogy, pronounces reasons and strengths for their approaches, and identifies areas for revision or enhancement (Brookfield, 2017). The terms “reflection “and “reflective practice” are core components of education and hence of this portfolio. Reflective practice focuses on the important relationship between self-awareness and learning and between personal values and professional practices (Murray, 2008). In a Higher Education (HE) setting, in practice based fields, students are encouraged throughout their courses to record and analyse facets of their growth as professionals. The concept of reflective practice is based on the idea that personal effectiveness is an essential component of professional effectiveness. It is aimed at helping me gain greater awareness and understanding of “myself” as a professional instrument. It helps me understand how and why I act, react and feel the way I do in different work environments. Murray (2008) claims that reflection is a potent instrument for professional learning and growth. The COVID 19 pandemic enabled me to critically reflect on my current T&L practice. In order to enhance Teaching and Learning (T&L) at the University of Namibia, I believe that reflective practice must be a core component of each educator’s daily tasks, hence I suggest that all staff development programmes at the University of

Namibia should include reflective practice topics in order to enable staff members to develop habits of reflective practice.

In chapter 1, as point of departure, I critically reflect and discuss the context of Higher Education on an international level, the context of Higher Education on a national level, the context of Higher Education on an institutional level and the context of Higher Education on a departmental and disciplinary level. I start with context, because it underpins the entire Higher Education domain. I then move on to critically reflect and discuss teaching and learning interrelated theories, thirdly I critically reflect and discuss the profile of adult learners. Finally, I reflect on the role that I see myself fulfilling as a reflective practitioner in teaching and learning (T&L) to enhance student learning. In chapter 2, I will concentrate on curriculum development in Higher Education towards enhanced teaching and learning. I begin with a reflective critical analysis of my role as educator in curriculum development and implementation at my institution. Secondly, I propose decolonised curriculum for the University of Namibia. I proceed with a critical reflection and discussion of the definition of the concept “quality” in relation to quality assurance in Higher Education. I conclude by engendering a critical reflective curricula for Second Language Teacher Training Programs. In chapter 3, firstly, I will critically reflect and engage with assessment related theories, then I proceed to critically reflect and discuss my role of educator in relation to the practice of assessment for and of student learning in higher Education. Lastly, I will critically reflect and discuss the paradigm shift that occurred in my assessment practices that called for the declonisation of my assessment practices. In chapter 4, firstly I will critically reflect on how I embraced Education 4.0- challenges and successes. Secondly, I will critically reflect and discuss the digital literacy skills, technological access, and the soft-ware tools and apps used by my students. I will then critically reflect and discuss why I embraced face-to-face blended learning as my preferred mode of online teaching and learning. Finally, I will reflect and discuss how online facilitation could enhance the skills for reflective practice. In chapter 5, firstly, I will reflect on the importance of student supervision in research, then I will discuss my journey and role as a student research supervisor. This is followed by a discussion on Reflective Learning Model of Supervision. Finally, I will reflect and discuss challenges that I experienced as a supervisor and propose possible solutions.

CHAPTER 1: TEACHING AND LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Introduction

I believe that Teaching and Learning (T&L) is the main function of any Higher Education (HE) institution. Learning in Higher Education extends beyond the subject expertise to personal and social development, practical and moral reason as well as critical thinking. I believe that learning should serve to assist students develop the intellectual, personal and social resources that will enable them to participate as critical, reflective and active citizens who will contribute to the economic, social and community development of the country. Excellence in teaching is a requirement in many universities. As I critically reflect on my role as an educator in Higher Education, I realise that I must develop suitable learning materials and teaching strategies that will support students with their academic work. I believe that university instruction should be focused on purposeful learning which requires a structured, favorable and interactive learning environment that enhances effective teaching and learning practices. These practices must ensure that students are prepared and empowered to participate in socio-economic development of the nation and participate in various development activities nationally and globally. In this chapter, as point of departure, I critically reflect and discuss the context of Higher Education on an international level, the context of Higher Education on a national level, the context of Higher Education on an institutional level and lastly the context of Higher Education on a departmental and disciplinary level. I start with context, because it underpins the entire Higher Education domain. I then move on to critically reflect and discuss Teaching and Learning (T&L) interrelated theories, thirdly I critically reflect and discuss the profile of adult learners. Finally, I reflect on the role that I see myself fulfilling as a reflective practitioner in Teaching and Learning (T&L) to enhance student learning.

1.1 THE HIGHER EDUCATION CONTEXT

1.1.1 The Context of Higher Education on an International Level.

Barnett (2004) asserts that the Higher Education context is dramatically and rapidly changing. Moreover, he claims that these changes are fueled by new global developments such as the emergence of corporate universities, the use of digital technologies, the growth of markets in Higher Education (HE) and the establishment of global alliances. The definition of what a university was a few decades ago has immensely changed and therefore Barnett (2004) believes that there is a need to redefine what Higher Education is and what its' role is in the twentieth century.

I opined that the Higher Education context is shaped and changed by various external and internal political, social, economic and technological forces. Similarly, Barnett (2004) asserts that there are enormous changes that are identical across the world. These grand changes include inter alia: globalisation, the 4th industrial revolution (the emergence of digital technologies), means of participation, access, equality and equity, and the alignment of Higher Education with the global market by identifying institutions' knowledge services for future customers, competition and the development of well-defined and state-funded quality assessment methods. The massification of Higher Education is an important global variable to observe in the Higher Education international context and the University of Namibia is no exception. Globally, students have unlimited access to Higher Education and this increase the demand for knowledge and skills needed in an ever changing technological driven economic society (William, 2002). As much as it is important for all students to have access to Higher Education, it is even more important that student success should increase. Therefore, student learning, knowledge, skills and outcomes are indispensable in the Higher Education context. These variables must be in alignment with the needs of the global market. There is an international impetus to educate students for citizenship and civic responsibility (Green, 2013). Equally important, I believe that technological changes are not only about the delivery of educational content but rather about changes in pedagogical methods through which Higher Education is delivered. I believe that these methods should promote criticality, reflexivity and praxis in Higher Education (HE) (Green, 2013).

1.1.2 The Context of Higher Education on a National Level.

Firstly, Higher Education in Namibia is defined as any education and training offered at level five (5) or above as per the legislative National Qualification Framework (Shalyefu, 2017, p.76). Currently in Namibia, any type of programme, general, professional vocational or post-graduate is considered as Higher Education (Higher Education Act, 2003). Moreover, Higher Education in Namibia is administered by the following regulations namely:

- (a) the Higher Education Act (2003)
- (b) Namibia Quality Authority Act (1996)

There are various organizations, practices and policy documents that are embodied in the Higher Education undertakings. They include inter alia:

- The National Council of Higher Education
- Public and Private Higher Education Institutions
- Quality Assurance System for Higher Education in Namibia (2009)
- National Development Plans (NDP1, NDP2, NDP3, NDP4) (Shalyefu, 2017).

The aim of these policy documents is to contribute to the national laws that are sign-posted by an increasing demand on effectiveness, quality, efficiency, relevance and development activities in Higher Education. It is imperative to mention that there are constraining factors nationally such as massification (expanding access to higher education) , a lack of accountability and cutting of funding by NASFAF (Namibia Students Financial Assistance Fund) just to mention a few.

1.1.3 The Higher Education Context on an Institutional Level

The University of Namibia (UNAM) aims to provide quality higher education with relevant skills, informative learning materials to support learning that will enable UNAM graduates to perform effectively in life, work and as responsible citizens that will able to contribute meaningfully to the socio-economic development of the country (Shalyefu, Khadila, Likando & Tonchi, 2014,p.4). In simple terms, it aims to provide not only knowledge and skills but also empower graduates with agency to become productive members in society and the work place. Moreover, the Teaching and Learning (T&L) philosophy is centered on the principles of “student oriented teaching and intentional learning”. The core values

of the university are: professionalism, mutual respect, integrity and transparency. More importantly the University of Namibia embraces inclusivity by providing an enabling environment where students and staff with disabilities and other special needs can successfully teach and learn (Shalyefu et al., 2014). Lastly, the current constraints that the university is facing are: massification (large numbers of students in classrooms). The cutting of student funding by NSFAP and a lack of marketisation (job oriented studies and the required cooperation with the industry and various stakeholders (Green, 1997).

1.1.4 The Higher Education Context on a Departmental and Disciplinary level

I am currently employed at the Language Centre at the main campus, where I teach academic literacy to Masters and PhD students. The mission statement of the Language Centre is “to equip students and society at large with linguistic and general communication skills through quality teaching and consultancy services towards improvement of language proficiency”. (Language Centre, 2017).

In addition, the Language Centre offers core modules such as English for General Communication, English Communication and Study Skills and English for Academic Purposes to university students. Moreover, the Centre uses cumulative and summative forms of assessment as prescribed within the assessment policy of UNAM. The Centre assists other faculties by providing academic writing assistance to all students through the Excellence Writing Unit. Equally important, consultancy services are rendered to various governmental ministries through tailor made short courses. The constraining contextual factors at the Language Centre are massification and structural impediments.

1.2 Teaching and Learning Theories

I believe that teaching methodologies in modern universities around the world need to be reinforced by new theories of how students learn, and the role of academic developers in modeling and influencing institutional culture. Historically, T&L are regarded as inherent aptitudes or commonsense activities that do not require any theoretical foundations in many Higher Education contexts (Light and Cox, 2000). Consequently, there has been no formal induction into the T&L field for many instructors. In my own case, when I was officially appointed as lecturer, I attended a weeklong induction program facilitated by the University of Namibia. The week long induction course focused on the contextual realities of Higher Education, however it did not include T&L theories and practices which I profoundly lacked and needed as a new educator in Higher Education (HE). All over the world, teaching in

universities has for decades been taken for granted as practice has been based on the ‘common-sense’ view. I only become aware of the common sense ideology when I attended the Post-graduate Diploma in Higher Education (PDHE) program that was offered by the Centre for Professional Development Teaching and Learning Improvement (CPDTL) in 2019.

The common sense ideology posits that any person with a master’s or PhD in a given discipline can teach effectively in a university. When I critically reflect on my current teaching approach, I must admit that I also subscribed to the common “sense view”, because I believed that my Ph.D. qualification and 25 years of teaching experience would enable me to teach effectively in a HE context. How wrong I was. According to Kruger (2012) the “common sense “view strongly undermines the dynamic and complex nature of teaching provides little or no consideration to the ways in which students learn. This view is strongly supported by Kadhila (2017) who state that a teacher remains unqualified if he/she practices teaching on the basis of a disciplinary qualification only, irrespective of how much experience they have. When I critically reflect on my HE context, I realize that teaching is more than just imparting knowledge to students, it is an art that needs to be learned and mastered (Kadhila, 2017). When I critically reflect on my teaching journey at the University of Namibia, I concede that I was thrown into the deep end of Higher Education T&L practices and just had to swim.

Through critical reflection, I discovered that I had adequate disciplinary knowledge however I lacked methodologies that would enhance effective learning and teaching in the HE classroom. Although I consider myself a good teacher overall, When I critically reflected on the way I teach, I concede that I learned to teach in HE through the act of teaching, in simple terms, I teach through my repertoire of experience that I accumulated the past 25 years and emulations of my former English teachers. In my teaching career, I at times relied on a didactic approach that is teacher-centered and that does not enhance effective learning and teaching and therefore I need to improve my Teaching and Learning through critical reflective practice. I believe that, despite being discipline specialists, I will forever be indebted to the PDHE facilitators that have capacitated me with the necessary pedagogical skills and knowledge on effective T&L theories and approaches. In the following section, I will engage with various Teaching and Learning (T&L) related theories.

1.3 The Social Realist Theory

Ashwin (2009) posits that a central reflection for any social theory is the conceptualisation of structure and agency. Archer (1995) suggest that structure represents the world out there, the material goods (unequally distributed across society) and is also the field of social positions and roles. Culture is the world of ideas and beliefs and includes the world of propositional knowledge in which ideas can be positioned in a logical relation with each other. In order for humans to act, they need agency. Agency is therefore the domain of human action and interaction. Archer (1995) argues that we cannot look at the world without analysing structure, culture and agency at the same time. The main premise of Archer's (1995) theory is the notion of morphogenesis which refers to change (genesis) in the shape of things (morpho). This morphogenesis could indicate a change in agency, culture or structure. I opined that in the HE context, it is imperative that we critically reflect on the morphogenesis of student agency. As an educator, I aim for my students to gain different knowledge and capacity for action (agency) that will enable them to become employable and agents of change in their respective positions. I am also acutely aware that the aspect of culture and structure can enhance or inhibit agency in the HE classroom. It is imperative for me to reflect and constantly analyse whether the different aspects of culture and structure are in complementary or contradictory relations to each other because I believe that complementarities in structure and culture could give genesis to agency in the HE classroom.

1.3.1 The Transformational Learning Theory

Transformational learning theory as presented by its chief architect, Mezirow (2000), is about making sense of our experiences; it is a meaning-making activity. Meaning-making related to everyday learning can be distinguished from meaning-making in transformative learning as follows: "normally, when we learn something, we attribute an old meaning to a new experience....In transformative learning, however, we reinterpret an old experience (or a new one) from a new set of expectations" (Mezirow, 2000, p. 11). This "new set of expectations" or meaning perspective is arrived at through critically reflecting upon the assumptions, biases, beliefs, and so on, that structure the old perspective. Mezirow has laid out a ten-stop process of transformative learning beginning with a disorienting dilemma that sets in motion a self-examination of one's underlying assumptions, followed by sharing these thoughts with others which leads to exploring new roles, relationships, and actions, a trying on of new roles, and finally, "a reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new role. In brief: Transformative learning is a theory of adult learning that utilises disorienting dilemmas to challenge students' thinking. Students are then encouraged to use critical thinking and questioning to consider if their underlying assumptions and beliefs about the world are accurate.

Mezirow (2000) describes transformative learning as learning that transforms challenging frames of reference to make them more inclusive, discriminating, reflective, open, and emotionally able to change. He believed that this arises when people face a “disorienting dilemma.” Disorienting dilemmas are experiences that don’t fit into a person’s current beliefs about the world. When faced with a disorienting dilemma, people are forced to reconsider their beliefs in a way that will fit this new experience into the rest of their worldview. This often happens through “critical reflection” in the context of dialogue with other people (p.61).

1.3.1.1 Applications of Transformative Learning Theory in the Higher Education classroom

Mezirow (2000) claims that disorienting dilemmas often occur in the context of academic learning environments, as teachers provide space to critically interact with new concepts. Teachers who want to utilize transformative learning in their classrooms can consider applying the following opportunities for students.

- Providing opportunities for critical thinking – Teachers can create opportunities for critical thinking through providing subject matter that presents new ideas. Students then need the opportunity to engage with new subject matter through journaling, dialoguing with other students, and critically questioning their own assumptions and beliefs (p.169).
- Providing opportunities to relate to others going through the same transformative process – Transformation often happens in community as students bounce ideas off one another and are inspired by the changes friends and acquaintances make (p.169).
- Providing opportunities to act on new perspectives – Finally, research indicates that it is critical for teachers to provide the opportunity for students to act on their new found beliefs. There is some indication that true transformation cannot take place until students are able to actively take initiative that recognise their new belief or perspective” (p. 169).

As a critical reflective practitioner, it is imperative for me to reflect on the role of context, the nature of facilitators of transformative learning, the importance of emotion, spirituality and relationships in the process, and the role of culture and transformation in the Higher Education teaching and learning context.

1.3.2 Social Constructivism

When I critically reflect on my 25 years of teaching, I come to the conclusion that I have always believed and practice social constructivism in my classroom. Social constructivism, a social learning theory developed by Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky, posits that learners are active participants in the creation of their own knowledge (Schreiber & Valle, 2013). Vygotsky asserts that learning takes place primarily in social and cultural settings, rather than solely within the individual (Schreiber & Valle, 2013). The social constructivism theory concentrates mainly upon discourse in small groups. For instance, students learn primarily through interactions with their peers, teachers, and parents, whereas teachers stimulate and facilitate conversation through harnessing the natural flow of conversation in the classroom (Schreiber & Valle, 2013). Social constructivism suggests that successful teaching and learning is heavily dependent on interpersonal interaction and discussion, with the primary focus on the students' understanding of the discussion (Schreiber & Valle, 2013).

One of the main concepts of Vygotsky's theory of social constructivism is the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which focuses on the role of the instructor in an individual's learning. The ZPD outlines the activities that a student can do without help, and the activities the student cannot do without the help of an instructor. The ZPD suggests that, with the help of an instructor, students are able to understand and master knowledge and skills that they would not be able to on their own (Schreiber & Valle, 2013). Once the students master a particular skill they are able to complete it independently. In this theory, the instructor plays an integral role in the students' acquisition of knowledge, rather than serving as a passive figure (Schreiber & Valle, 2013).

As a constructivist teacher I believe that students do not find or discover knowledge but rather construct or built it as they engage with each other. According to Schwandt (1994) we discover concepts, models and schemes to make sense of experience and further, we continually assess and adjust these constructions in the light of new experience (p. 125). From the constructivist stance, knowledge is constructed by students, authenticated by use in society, and so upheld by social institutions. I believe that teaching in the constructivist mode is collaborative and meaningful. It enhances critical and reflective learning in the classroom because it allows students and teachers to reflect on their experiences and thus create meaning and new knowledge out of it. My

responsibility as a critical reflective and constructivist teacher is to identify the individuality the strengths and weaknesses of each student, so that effective teaching and enhanced learning can be achieved. I must assure that my students are challenged but not overwhelmed by the subject matter. Moreover, I must constantly make sure that my students learn from new knowledge and experiences by providing scaffolding at all times.

1.4. Reflecting on the Profile of Adult Learners.

As a reflective practitioner, it is imperative that I understand who I teach. I must understand the adult learners that I teach. Through such an understanding I am able to focus my teaching to the specific needs and interests of the adult learner. Levine (2001) pivots that the adult learner is primarily independent/self-directed in what he/she learns. As a reflective practitioner it is important that I do not treat the adult like a child. Moreover, I should not assume that I am the only one with the answer. Handouts and materials that I provide during my teaching can help the adult learner continue to learn and reflect on their own learning after class (critical reflection). The adult learner is most interested in information and ideas that solve problems that they are presently faced with.

When I reflect on the adult learners that I teach English for Academic Purposes (EAP), I come to realise that when adults are learning at their own pace they can use the speed or rate of learning that best fits their own learning style. In addition, they learn at different rates. Reflective learning requires adult learners to speak from their life experience in small groups. As a reflective practitioner I must ask the adults to use their own unique experiences to help provide potential solutions to problems and questions that are posed. Each learner's experience is unique and different. Sometimes an adult's experience may be a barrier to further learning - an adult who has not had a positive learning experience may be hesitant to try it again. . Reflection is an important part of human activity and learning (Schon, 1983). As Boud et al. (1985, p.19) pivots, reflection is an activity in which people “recapture their experience, think about it, mull it over and evaluate it”. According to these scholars, reflection involves returning to experience (recalling and describing salient events), attending to feelings (using helpful feelings and removing unhelpful ones), and evaluating experience (re-assessing experience in light of our purpose and existing schemata and integrating new knowledge into our conceptual framework). It also involves evaluating approaches to learning and identifying approaches that worked well to strengthen good practices. It is imperative that that I mentioned that the PDHE program, enabled me to interrogate my current Teaching and Learning (T&L) practices in my journey to becoming a reflective practitioner. The truth is before I attended the PgDHE program did not reflect on the diverse contextual, cultural and socio-economic back ground of my adult students. These variables and knowledge of theories relating to adult teaching and learning did not inform my teaching and

learning practices. I wrongfully employed a “one size fits all “approach or “the “fish and monkey must both be able to climb the tree” approach. As I critically reflect on my practices, I now believe that learners’ ‘experiences (reflexivity) and interests should form part of my teaching and learning reflective practices (praxis) to ensure enhanced learning takes place . In the next section, I critically reflect and discuss my role as a reflective practitioner in the English for Academic Purposes classroom.

1.5. My Role as a Reflective Practitioner in teaching Adult Learners in the English for Academic Purposes Classroom.

1.5.1 Reflecting on Teaching

During one of my PDHE program lessons I learned about the power and value of reflective teaching and learning. The truth is, I had a complete paradigm shift and I started interrogating my current Personal Theory of Teaching Practice (PTOTP). I started to critically reflect on my teaching and learning practices that I employed in the HE classroom. I came to the realization that if I wanted to enhance my student’s learning, I could no longer continue teaching the way I did. I needed to change and that change called for me to incorporate critical reflection in academic practices, such as teaching and learning, student research and supervision and academic administration to enhance professional personal growth and student learning in HE. This process of morphogenesis enabled me to use my agency to enhance T&L in my HE classroom. According to Brookfield (2017) when a lesson is less successful than expected, reflective teachers will not embark on to the next lesson. They will take the time to critically analyse the lesson (reflect) and make observations about their teaching and how students reacted to the lesson. In critical reflection, I have learned that it is important to identify specific elements of the lesson that the students misunderstood or did not receive well. It could be that my lesson outcome was completely different than what I had expected. Whatever the outcome of my lesson, it is valuable to critically reflect on the process. Through critical reflection, I came to learn that successful lessons also need evaluation. By reflecting on success in the classroom, I can see what I prepared well and how the corrections I made during the lesson complemented the needs of my students. Brookfield (2017) suggest the following techniques on how to reflect. As a teacher reflect, it is imperative that he/she writes down observations about the classroom, the students and their emotional state as the teacher was teaching. The teacher notes which parts of the lesson succeeded and note possible reasons why. He/she also makes notes about the elements of the lesson that were ineffective. The teacher asks himself/herself the following evaluative questions:

- Did the lesson work?

- What didn’t work?

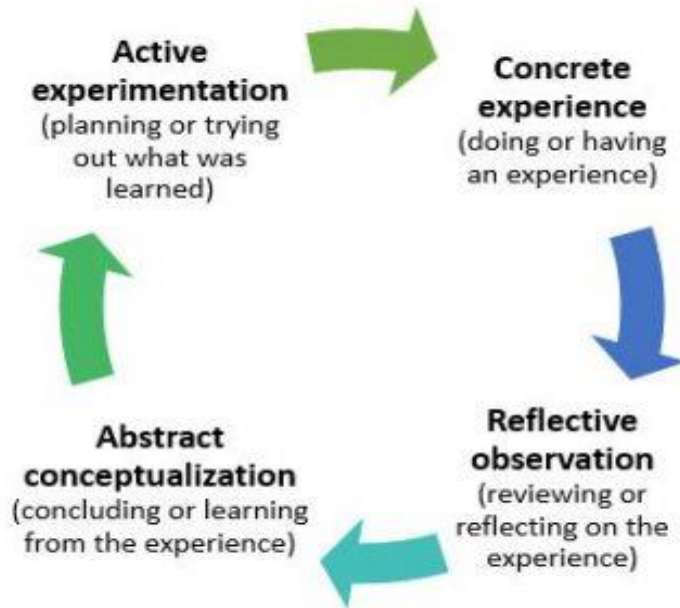
- What should I change?
- How can I reteach this material?

The key to reflective teaching is consciously and regularly reflecting right after class. Teachers who do not take time to reflect immediately, experience that their thinking patterns become unclear, as the rest of the day has its own challenges. So it is essential that educators build time for reflection into their daily plans (Brookfield, 2017).

1.5.2. Reflecting on Learning

Reflective learning involves students thinking about what they have read, done, or learned, relating the lesson at hand to their own lives and making meaning out of the material (Gray, 2018). Being a reflective learner allows a student to step back from what he/she is learning and develop their critical thinking skills by analysing an experience and improving on future performances. Being a reflective learner entails making learning a more conscious process. It enables students to become active participants by posing questions and thinking critically about their ideas. There are unanticipated benefits in consciously reflecting on ones learning. The reflective process can help students find out things they had not considered before and they may even find that their academic writing improves. Gray (2018) claims that there are benefits of reflecting on ones learning. Through critical reflection students examine what they have learned and how they have learned it. Moreover, they demonstrate how their thinking matures and progresses over time. Reflection on learning supports students with making connections between what they already know and what they are learning. It helps students learn from their mistakes by identifying how they would do things differently next time. Most of all, it encourages students to become reflective practitioners in their future professions. In my classroom, I enable my students to learn to reflect at a deeper, more critical level. I teach academic literacy to masters and PhD students and one way I enabled my students to reflect on their learning was to instruct them to write a reflective paper at the end of the semester on “My experiences and perceptions of academic writing before and after attending the module”. (See attached Appendices 1(a), 1 (b), 1 (c), 1 (d) for students’ reflective papers).

Reflective Practice diagram (Figure 1.1)



(Kolb, 2017)

Summary

As I critically reflect on the discourse above, it is evident that the Higher Education context is dynamic and therefore morphogenesis is taking place at various levels. Moreover, these changes pose relationship challenges for the various players and stakeholders namely, the state, students as clients, the world of work as well as pedagogical implications (Barnett, 2004). I opined that the context of Higher Education is imperative to observe if institutions of Higher Education want to promote critical thinking, academic enlightenment and embrace academic freedom rather than teacher-centered approaches to teaching and learning. Equally important, reflective teaching and learning should be part and parcel of the HE context. It enhances critical thinking (criticality), reflexivity and can improve my practice (praxis) .As a reflective practitioner, I suggest that all university educators engage in reflective teaching techniques to improve teaching methodologies and consequently enhance learning, student research and supervision and educational management.

Appendix 1 (a)

Ndateelela Amukuhu

Student number: 201404085

Academic writing for Post-graduate Students 2 November 2020

REFLECTIVE PAPER

To be quiet honest, my first reaction after learning that English would be one of the modules for the semester was “why do we still need to repeat what we have learned in the undergraduate program? Is this not just time consuming for no reason? Is it really that of much importance? I definitely approached it with a negative attitude.

My approach however changed when classes commenced. I have come to learn that I actually did not know English. The course is designed in a specific way aimed to effectively transform post graduate student into good writers and exceptional analytical thinkers. I must say that it was a bit of challenging having to use the online teaching method but I must commend my lecturer, Dr. Mukoroli who not only made sure that the each lessons were effectively delivered but also kept motivating and encouraging us to do our best. I am grateful I had the opportunity to do the course because I now know how to effectively write clear reports in a creative manner.

Appendix 1 (b)

Indileni Nanghonga

Student number: 201310556

Academic Writing Reflective Paper.

2 November 2020

I entered UNAM undecided upon whether I should persevere my Masters amidst the health challenges that has befallen the earth. I was unhappy – I dreaded looking ahead at the difficult and frankly uninteresting English course necessary for a Master's graduation. My entry into the world of academic writing was rather a rough start. I struggled to produce pieces which is image-rich and grounded enough for the reader to fully comprehend the writing. This was aggravated by the notion of online studies which was worsened by technology shortfall.

Etherealness, class with Dr Mukoroli helped me outgrow my hatred for academic writing and He made the class fun and easy to understand. A mind set change began to take its course. After discovering the infinite possibilities in academic writing, my confidence and interest in course developed by leaps and bounds. Close contact with Dr. in the online class particularly encouraged this expansion.

Appendix 1 (c)

Name: Robert S. Hoeseb

Student No: 9966161

2 November 2020

REFLECTIVE PAPER

For starters, I thought that Academic Writing for Post Graduate Students is just one of those English courses UNAM is requiring students to attend to make more money. I expected us to be taught mostly on ethical issues and boring English literature and so on, but I was wrong. I attended English courses in the past, which didn't even contribute to what I was doing at university or what I would be doing in the industry. Somehow I was wrong. I wish I had it earlier before I started writing the proposal for my final thesis. I had already submitted my first draft of the final year thesis by the time we started with the classes of Academic Writing for Post Graduate Students. Well, it is never too late.

When we started with the classes I quickly realize that I was supposed to attend this course before I even started with my final year thesis topic, let alone the proposal. Now I understand why UNAM is offering this subject in the first year of the Master's program. Academic Writing for Post Graduate Students sharpened my skills in meaningful reading and summarizing and proper academic writing as required by universities. The highlight of the whole course was the use of discourse markers and how it can be so useful when presenting to other colleagues at the company. Finally, it is really helping me to edit my own work and to preparing me towards my final presentation.

Appendix 1 (d) Reflective Paper

Student name: Johanna Namene

Student number: 201060931

Lecturer: Dr. Mukoroli, Joseph

Experience and perception on academic writing- Reflective Paper 2 November 2020

1. My experiences and perceptions of academic writing before attending class

Before attending the course, I thought it was going to be another English class where we would write essays and learn how to format our English writing. Consequently, having done other English courses previously, I felt like it was unnecessary and less

important. But then, I had a chance to look at the course outline and realised that I was going to learn about academic writing, abstract, referencing etc, and since I was in the process of writing my proposal, I became more excited about the course.

2. My experiences and perceptions of academic writing after attending class

Having done the course, my perception towards Academic writing have completely shifted. I feel like I have become a reasonably good writer not only in my academic writing but writing anything in general. Writing has become interesting and enjoyable because now I know what I am doing, I know how and where to use certain words/features. Similarly, I have gained the ability to write and synthesis a research paper, something I struggled with prior to this course. All in all, I enjoyed the lessons and they were very effective. Although I feel like I would have learned much more if the lessons were face-to-face, the lecturer made an effort and tried his very best to keep the classes engaging. In conclusion, Academic writing is an important skill for all academics both at undergraduates and postgraduate levels.

CHAPTER 2: CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Introduction

In the previous chapter I critically reflected on Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. In this chapter, I critically reflect and discuss curriculum development towards enhanced Teaching and Learning (T&L) in Higher Education. Frey et al., (2015) defines curriculum as a group of courses offered in a particular field of study (p.16). Furthermore, it is also defined as the knowledge and skills students are expected to learn e.g. objectives, learning standards and assessments (Frey et al., (2015).As a reflective educator, I am aware that the continuous contextual dynamics in Higher Education demand continuous curriculum reviews, UNAM is no exception. In the process of curriculum review it is imperative that I as a reflective educator ensure that the curriculum is economically, culturally, disciplinary and pedagogically responsive. In this chapter, I will concentrate on curriculum development in Higher Education towards enhanced teaching and learning. I begin with a reflective critical analysis of my role as educator in curriculum development and implementation at my institution. Secondly, I propose decolonised curriculum for the University of Namibia. I proceed with a critical reflection and discussion of the definition of the concept “quality” in relation to quality assurance in Higher Education. I conclude by engendering a critical reflective curricula for Second Language Teacher Training Programs.

2.1 My Role as Educator in Curriculum Development and Implementation in my Institution.

According to Rust (2002) curriculum developers have the crucial responsibility of developing and organising the use of new curriculum within the classroom in order to facilitate student comprehension of fundamental concepts. Moreover, it's their responsibility to evaluate how dynamic curriculum and teaching techniques actually operate in the learning and teaching context.

In order for me to become an effective curriculum design and development expert, it is imperative that I become well trained in curriculum development content and skills. This will enable me to fulfill my role in curriculum design and development in my institution. My role as a curriculum design and development agent would be to coordinate the implementation of curriculum, evaluate teachers' instruction, analysing student test data, assessing learning and teaching objectives, recommending relevant textbooks, and mentoring lecturers on the most effective and relevant

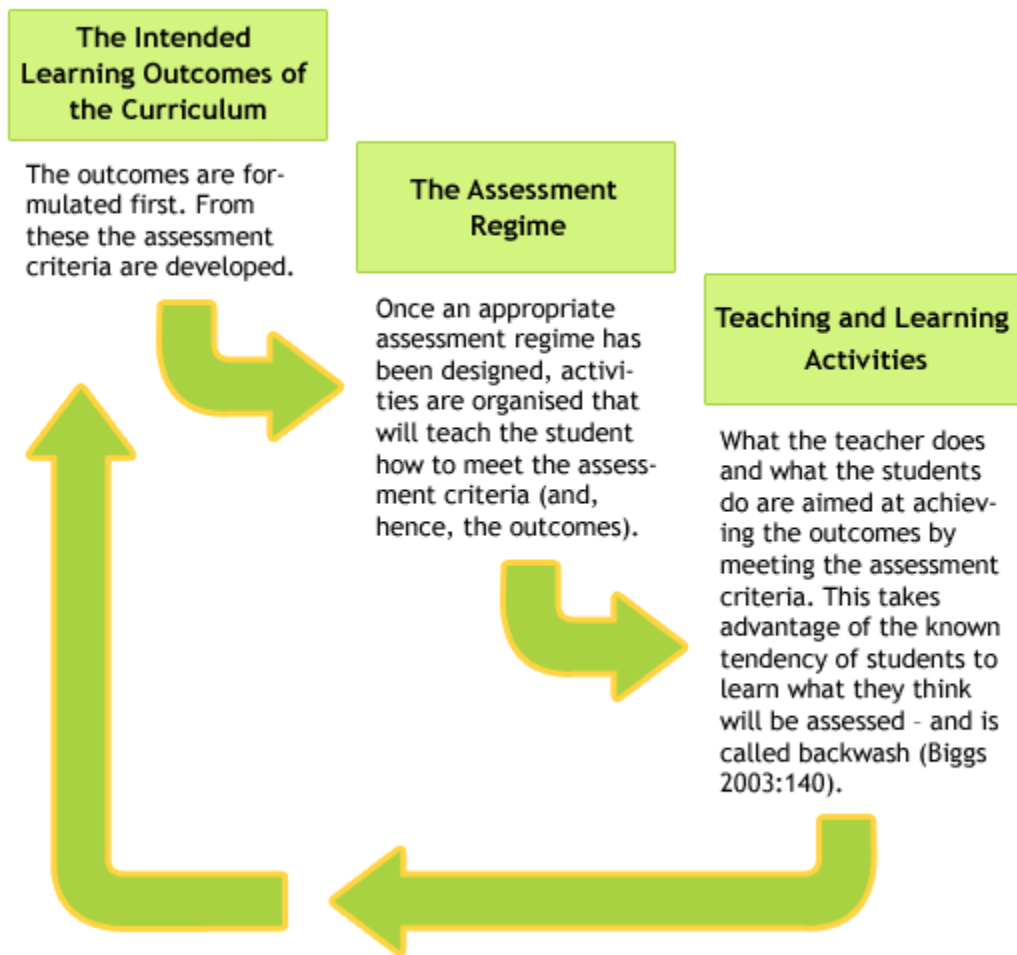
pedagogical strategies. As my institution is currently undergoing curriculum reform, I would like to be involved in conducting teacher training workshops to introduce new learning standards and demonstrate effective teaching methods. It is imperative that as a curriculum design and developer that I am always aware that curriculum development is all about students. In the process of designing a new curriculum that is aligned with standards, I must not lose sight of the goal, which is good education for all students. As the recommendations of educational standards are implemented, the ultimate target, the students, must be in every consideration. One way to do this is to consult students and listen carefully to what they say. Their comments are fundamental in the process of curriculum development.

As my institution is currently undergoing curriculum transformation, it is imperative that I assure that the new curriculum is aligned with the national and institutional vision and mission. It is imperative that I conduct meetings, training sessions, and other means of education with my colleagues. Moreover, I must ensure that everyone is on board so to speak, so that the curriculum is being taught in a streamlined manner. I should be able to mentor or coach my colleagues on improving their skills so that they may better teach the curriculum.

As a curriculum developer I must make recommendations based on a variety of different factors, like the research I have done, test evaluations, student/teacher dynamics, and effectiveness. In addition, I must ensure that all structures are in place to implement the curriculum, from books, to tests and technologies. I must create an enabling learning and teaching environment. I must continue monitoring progress, including conducting studies, sitting in on teachers' classes, and making recommendations. By doing so, I do not only ensure that the new curriculum is being used, but that it is being followed correctly. This kind of monitoring will enable me to make adjustments and changes to the curriculum to better suit necessary needs. On a micro-level, I would like to see that the new curriculum reflects the range of interests, prior knowledge, learning styles, and student abilities. The curriculum objectives and standards should be aligned to what all students should be able to do according to the graduate attributes of the institution. According to Biggs (2004), it is imperative that principles, to ensure that all assessment tasks, and assessment criteria, clearly and directly relate to the learning outcomes. Moreover, the institution should review all their modules' or units' learning outcomes and align them against the subject's programme specifications, to ensure that all the programme specifications will have been assessed for any student successfully

completing the course programme. (Rust, 2002, p. 148). Equally important, the teaching and assessment and the students' learning activities at the unit level should be based on constructive alignment as the model for teaching and assessment.

Figure 2.1: A Basic Model of an Aligned Curriculum (Biggs, 2003)



Edstrom (2008) argues that: “course evaluation should be regarded as a component of constructive alignment, together with the intended learning outcomes, learning activities and assessment” (p. 95). Such formative evaluation, using feedback obtained from students, colleagues and from personal observation, gives information about the clarity of the CLOs, (Curriculum Learning Outcomes) the effectiveness of the TLAs (Teaching and Learning Outcomes) and assessment methods, in order to determine where there may be problems in teaching, learning and assessment. If the results are not as good as is intended, reflective practice or action research may be used to pinpoint any problems. How those problems may be rectified is achieved through reflective practice and action research using a theory of teaching and learning to generate alternative strategies of teaching or of assessment. Such a quality enhancement mechanism should ideally be built into the system from the beginning.

Another important change I would like to observe at my institution is that points for teaching needs to acknowledge just as much as research is currently upheld since teaching is what most academics spend most of their time doing. In short, one issue that I would like my institution to be concerned with is the quality enhancement of teaching, which is an important step towards a quality curriculum for teaching and learning. I would also advocate for an epistemically diverse curriculum that would cater for learning by doing for application of disciplinary knowledge, enhances experiential learning and develop epistemic cognition that promotes reflexivity and contextually about the students’ learning.

On a macro level, I would like to observe that all curriculum developers at my institution work closely with other teachers (lecturers) and administrators to design and roll out a curriculum that provides students with a high quality education. It is imperative that as a curriculum design and developer that I research and incorporate current trends and data into the standard curriculum. I must include technology in all courses in order to ensure that the institution prepares students for the 4th industrial revolution. Equally important, I must assure that the curriculum outcomes are aligned to the national development plan and social; needs of the Namibian population.

I would like to see a shift from teaching seen as an individual responsibility to one that the institution should assume in matters of assessment practice, overall teaching design, in parallel with the scholarship of teaching and learning. Moreover, there should be continuous institutional concern for benchmarking and defining outcomes, such as in LTAS and the definition of graduate

attributes, might provide an outcomes-based framework into which outcomes-based models of teaching and assessment within constructivist approaches to student learning and assessment.

2.2 A Decolonised Curriculum for the University of Namibia

The call for a decolonised and reformed curriculum in Higher Education has prompted new academic discussions on the implications of decolonisation, diversification, Africanisation and transformation of contemporary epistemologies. The core of decolonisation of the African Higher Education is centered on the call to essentially rethink how knowledge is produced and taught, which is fundamental to the university. Moreover, it is part of a larger request to neutralise the multifaceted arrangements which construct the identity, knowledge and power of universities. Zondi (2018) argues that this has consequences not only for contemporary epistemologies but for the nation state and the entire world system.

As I critically reflect on the existing cultures and structures underpinning curriculum development at the Language Centre, I can confidently conclude that there is a need to decolonise the existing curriculum at the University of Namibia. Moreover, I would like to see that my institution undergoes constant curriculum transformation and decolonisation in various epistemological disciplines. In order to decolonise the current curriculum it becomes imperative to ask questions around whether the traditional disciplinary norm is the only form of powerful knowledge and if there are other knowledges, particularly those from the global South that are equally (or more) important for inclusion in curricula in both the sciences and the humanities. Establishing or including a body of work by black scholars is an important strategy for decolonisation and offers the means for rethinking the relationship between the university and society.

According to Anderson (2012) a decolonised curriculum is one concerned with justice and knowledge-making processes within and beyond the academy. In both the selection of curriculum knowledge and research-based teaching, part of decolonising a curriculum is to engage students, particularly those from marginalised groups, in meaning-making activities to enable them to develop coherent accounts of their lived experiences (p.44). Moreover, decolonisation is a project of re-centering'; it is about not assuming that the modern West is the central root of Africa's consciousness and cultural heritage. It is about rejecting the notion that Africa is merely an extension of the West. It is about refuting the endless production of theories that are based on European traditions; are produced nearly always by Europeans or Euro-American men who are

the only ones accepted as capable of reaching universality (p.115). This kind of culture must be abolished in the new curriculum.

By decolonising the curriculum students are introduced to Africans as intellectuals from across different time periods and from across different geographical regions of the world, from Africa to the rest of the world. Part of the reason for including black authors in courses is also to offer students examples of black intellectual life. In a decolonised curriculum a definite effort should be made to include texts by African scholars in my curriculum. The voices and images of black scholars should be at the forefront at all times (Anderson, 2012) (see Appendix 3 for local Afro-centered reading text for Academic Writing for Post-graduate Students).

I would like to see a curriculum where students are involved in scientific problem solving that makes use of the perceptions from a range of social sciences, the arts and knowledge held by communities (indigenous knowledge) (Praxis). Decolonising the curriculum involves critically rethinking issues around what and whose knowledge is taught and how this knowledge impacts on the lives of the students in front of them. As a critical reflective practitioner, I would like to see a curriculum that recognises the need for change to ensure that the lived realities of all students are acknowledged; that all students deserve to feel included and to thrive academically and as human beings. It is imperative that lecturers show a responsiveness of the need to ensure that all students feel included and validated by their courses.

Why is the decolonising of knowledge imperative and essential? According to Mignolo (2007) decolonisation and decoloniality is about “working toward a vision of human life that is not dependent upon or structured by the forced imposition of one ideal of society over those that differ, which is what coloniality does and hence, where decolonisation of the mind should begin” (p. 459). Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) asserts that what decoloniality fundamentally discusses is the coloniality of knowledge, the coloniality of power and the coloniality of being. These domains of coloniality equally support each other and jointly generate the practice of coloniality. While colonialism relates to “a political and economic relation in which the sovereignty of a nation or a people rests on the power of another nation” (p. 243). Essentially, the coloniality of knowledge is claimed to be characterised by the domination of Western and Eurocentric beliefs. These ideologies have been considered universal and objective, and have been offered as the only knowledge that can achieve a universal consciousness – unlike non- Western knowledge which is

considered particularistic, and therefore can't achieve universality (Grosfoguel, 2007). Therefore, decoloniality aims to shift the locality of reason away from the West toward previously colonised epistemological foundations to escalate the legality of the so called "subaltern epistemic ideologies" (Grosfoguel, 2007, p. 213). Similarly, Mignolo (2007) stresses that epistemic decolonisation "is necessary to make possible and move toward a truly intercultural communication; to an exchange of experiences and significations as the foundation of another rationality" (p. 499). De Sousa Santos (2014) suggests a pluri-university of knowledges, continuously in discourse. He states that knowledge must not be embraced nor rejected but have an epistemic honesty.

I envision a curriculum that creates ample opportunities for students to 'do' science, by, for example, taking classes on field trips and field-based practicals in all years of undergraduate study. These field trips introduce students to the research process where they play an increasingly independent role in generating research hypotheses and testing them with the data they collect. In this way, students can experience what it means to be an African science graduate with the ability to make contributions to scientific knowledge production. The curriculum must enhance student agency.

I want to see a curriculum that enables students to reflect (reflexivity) on how their own backgrounds have formed their ideas about Africa and Africans and to be more critical of the way the continent is represented in the media and the academy. Students will be required to critique and contrast ideas from mainstream white scholars (criticality). Moreover, students should be enabled to critically reflect on the implications of what they learn for promoting social justice and ethical being. It will require that teachers bring students' and their own experiences into the classroom.

Lastly, Alexander (2013) argues strongly for the use of indigenous languages as resources in teaching and the building of languages for academic use. In order for students to benefit from university learning they need to feel included and valued for who they are and for the societies from which they come. Pedagogies that pay attention to students' legitimate learning needs highlighted in this section include those that: reduce the power relations between students and their teachers; attempt to make explicit academic practices; encourage connections between diverse students; bridge the articulation gap between school and university; and demonstrate to students that their home languages are a valuable resource for learning.

2.3 The Definition of “Quality” in Higher Education.

In this section, I critically reflect, analyse and discuss the nature of the concept of quality in relation to Higher Education. Firstly, there are various arguments and premises regarding the concept of “quality”. In this section, I challenge the traditional way of perceiving and comprehending the concept of “quality” and propose the various dimension that we ought to perceive and experience quality, its’ relevance to Higher Education. Moreover, I critically explore the interrelationships and examine the philosophical and political foundations of quality.

According to Harvey and Green (2011) it is imperative that we perceive the concept quality within its various dimensions and contextual realities. Firstly, they postulate that there are various dimensions of the concept quality, mainly: (1) quality as a relative concept. (2) quality as being exceptional, (3) quality as being distinct and exclusive, (4) quality as excellence (5) quality as “fit for purpose” and finally (5) quality as transformation (6) quality as value for money.

The authors posit that although much has been written about quality in education, regarding management and the academic services. Most of this has been about quality control, assurance, management, audit, assessment, policy and funding. Hence there is a distinct need to explore the concept itself (Scott, 1987). The author’s main argument is that quality means different things to different people, hence it would be naïve to propose or advocate for a universally accepted notion of quality. Moreover, quality is relative to the user of the term and the contexts in which it is applied. Consequently, it raises the question “whose quality?”. To illustrate, there are a variety of 'stakeholders' in higher education, including students, employers, teaching and non-teaching staff, government and its funding agencies, accreditors, validators, auditors, and assessors (including professional bodies) (Harvey & Green, 2011). Each has a different perspective on quality, as prescribed by each unique context.

Harvey and Green (2011) employ various key concepts: quality relative, distinctiveness, excellence, standards, exceptional, perfection, culture and fit for purpose to make their claim. Although these concepts are grouped into five distinct areas, the authors clearly extrapolate how they are interrelated. The authors have contributed immensely to my comprehension of the concept quality. I came to understand that quality is subjective and relative, depending on the person that uses it and the context in which it is invoke. Equally important, the article has provoked me to think about quality in a broader perspective. I came to ask the questions: is quality improved when

standards are raised? Do we lower the standard when we increase the access to Higher Education (increased participation)? In addition, I came to realise that if quality is determined by standards in Higher Education, than that kind of quality is constantly changing because of the constantly changing contextual factors in Higher Education.

In the final analysis, it is imperative to know that quality is a relative term that is determined by the user and the contextual realities. It depends on the various stakeholders that are involved in the assessment and quality assurance processes. In my experience as educator, quality has a different meaning for lecturers and students regarding quality assessment in Higher Education. There is no universally accepted notion of quality, since it is relative-based. It is imperative that I as educator and my students have a common understanding of quality in academic work and assessment. We should construct a common understanding of quality in order to find a common criteria for assessing quality in Higher Education. Finally, it is essential that we understand the different conceptions of quality that underpin the inclinations of different stakeholders in Higher Education. In the next section I engender a Reflective Curricula for English Second Language Teacher Training Programs in Higher Education at the University of Namibia.

2.4 Engendering a Reflective Curricula for English Second Language Teacher Training Programs in Higher Education at the University of Namibia.

Wallace and Williams (1994), posit reflective teaching as a model of English Second Language Teacher Training Program in Higher Education. In general teacher training program, Cruickshank and Applegate (1981) have suggested a variety of approaches for implementing reflective teaching in teacher education programs, especially in relation to the teaching internship. Lange (1990), posits that an English Second Language programme that aims to nurture reflective teachers should consist of the following five modules: (1) competence in a second language, (2) understanding of how the target language is taught, (3) practice in the application of knowledge about the subject and teaching in teaching situations, (4) opportunities to reach an understanding of both the art and the craft of teaching, and (5) critical reflection and evaluation of teaching. Similar efforts in suggesting ideologies for a reflective curriculum have been posit by Wallace and Williams (1994) who believe that, in structured, formal in-service teacher training programs, improvement of reflectivity could be executed in the setting of a modernisation in teaching, where teachers are exposed to and implement a new teaching idea (e.g., process writing) or new resources. They then

elicit response from others, and reflect on such feedback. Based on this feedback, teachers then articulate further goals and strategies to apply their new paradigm shifts. This procedure is to be reiterated as sequences of input-reflection-action. As to the substantive issues, Pennington suggests that a reflective teacher development programme might progress in three stages concentrating on topics to do with (1) classroom tasks, (2) theory and practice, and (3) ethics and politics, respectively. As far as the teacher training program at the University of Namibia is concerned there has not been many attempts in implementing a critical reflective teachers training program. I have previously taught on this program at the Khomasdal Campus and I can attest that the curriculum does not promote critical reflective teaching and learning in the English Second Language classroom. The focus is merely on subject content, instructional pedagogy and the completion of the prescribed curriculum. It is due to this gap in the curriculum that I engender a critical reflective curricula for English second Language Teachers Training Program (Secondary phase) at the University of Namibia. This curricula is based on Stein-Kamhi and Galvan (1997) model that enhances a critical reflection approach to teacher development.

Reflective Journaling (Week 1)

The reflective journal development is originated during the first educational lesson. The reflective journal concludes in the closing course of student teaching. Students also reflect on different experiences during the entire internship experiences. Students are compelled to document activities, opinions, observations, emotional state, events and questions in journals. The reflective journal can be utilised to describe situations/events, and what they learned from various experiences. Students are required to improve observational and communication skills explore emotions and evaluate their own progress. The journaling process should indicate development over the given time within the teacher education program.

Lesson Plans (Week 2)

Students write –out lesson plans in all methodology courses. All lesson plans must adhere to the guidelines set forth by the department. The lesson plan should include a diversity of instructional pedagogies supported by research to improve teaching and learning. Students will be able to critically reflect on the effectiveness of the lesson.

Instruction Tools (Week3)

In week three students are required to construct teaching tools to enhance teaching and learning. Students must choose a subject- specific skill and construct an instruction aid to teach skills to learners. Moreover, students will use the instructional tool during teaching internship/student teaching. This requires students to reflect on how their learners interact with the teaching aid in order to determine the teaching aid's effectiveness.

Videotaped Lessons (Week 4)

Students are required to video-tape themselves teaching a lesson. This can be in a real classroom or a simulation. Teacher students are required to view and listen to the tape for the aim of analyzing teaching and learner's response. The students can also assess questioning strategies. The students can evaluate what worked in the lesson and what did not. This reflection component can lead to group discussions that could lead to re-teaching a specific lesson.

Professional Portfolio (Week 5)

The professional portfolio is introduced during the start of the education courses. This portfolio develops in the student teaching course. Selected assignments are allocated to students. Students must complete all assignments for inclusion in the portfolio. The assignments will require students to critically reflect about themselves as teachers.

Simulations/Role Playing (Week 6)

Simulations can be effective in providing a conducive learning context for teacher students. Students simulate an event that is real. They should be able to simulate the event so fine that there is no difference between the simulated event and the real event. Simulations afford students the opportunity to become active participants in the learning process. Students can then critically reflect and discuss their learning experience of the simulated events

Action Research (Week 7)

During action research students are requested to identify a problem/ dilemma in their classroom. They must apply all of the stages of action –research to solve the problem. Once information is collected, the data is utilized to provide information on what could be done to enhance student learning and teacher performance.

Summary

In the final analysis, it is imperative that university curricula need to be responsive to the world and to society. However, as noted by Barnett (2000), this is extremely challenging in a constantly changing and super complex world, hence there is a need to critically analyse the current curriculum offered at African universities and decolonization of the curriculum should be implemented where possible. To prepare students for the future new epistemologies, as well as a radical reconsideration of what it means to be human in the twenty- first century are needed. Barnett therefore suggests that in order to prepare her students for a future beyond the classroom I as an educator must use reflection- based, student- centered pedagogies and assessment methods. By doing so I enable graduates to respond to challenges they will face when they enter the world of work. Integrating the conception of reflection into teacher education programs, empowers teachers for a life of continuous critical reflection on best practices that enhance student learning and performance.

CHAPTER 3: ASSESSMENT OF AND FOR STUDENT LEARNING

Introduction

In the previous chapter I critically reflected and discussed curriculum development in Higher Education (HE). In this chapter I critically reflect and discuss assessment of, for, as learning as well as reflexive assessment. The portfolio is organised around the core ideology or argument that within the dynamic context of higher education, critical reflection or reflective practice should be entrenched in academic practices, such as teaching and learning , assessment, student research and supervision and academic administration to enhance professional personal growth and student learning (golden thread).

Stassen et al, (2001) define assessment as “the systematic collection and analysis of information to improve student learning.” (p. 5). This definition embodies the crucial task of student assessment in the Teaching and Learning (T&L) process. Student assessment enables me as an instructor to measure the effectiveness of my teaching by connecting student performance to my specific learning objectives. As a result, I am able to embrace effective teaching choices and revise ineffective ones in my pedagogy. Firstly, the measurement of student learning through assessment is imperative because it provides useful feedback to both me and my students about the extent to which they are successfully meeting course learning objectives. Wiggins and McTighe (2005) postulate that assessment enables instructors to determine the framework of measurement for student understanding of and expertise in course learning objectives. They argue that assessment provides the evidence needed to document and validate that meaningful learning has occurred in the classroom. Assessment is so dynamic in their pedagogical design that their approach “encourages teachers and curriculum planners to first ‘think like an assessor’ before designing specific units and lessons, and thus to consider up front how they will determine if students have attained the desired understandings.” (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005, p. 18). In addition, student assessment also supports critical reflective teaching (reflexivity). Brookfield (2017) argues that critical reflection on one’s teaching is an essential part of developing as an educator and enhancing the learning experience of students. Critical reflection on one’s teaching has a multitude of benefits for instructors, including the development of rationale for teaching practices. According to Brookfield (1995) “A critically reflective teacher is much better placed to communicate to

colleagues and students and to him/herself the rationale behind her practice since the teacher works from a position of informed commitment.” (Brookfield, 2017, p. 17). Student assessment, then, not only enables me to measure the effectiveness of my teaching, but is also useful in developing the rationale for my pedagogical choices in the classroom. Moreover, student assessment has a greater impact on student learning than teaching because assessment strongly influences how students respond to their academic work. Boud and Falchikov (2007, p.3) emphasise that assessment:

- (a) Has a powerful impact on what students do and how they do it.
- (b) Communicates to students what they and cannot succeed in doing
- (c) Can enhance or destroy their confidence.

In this chapter, firstly, I will critically reflect and engage with assessment related theories, then I proceed to critically reflect and discuss my role of educator in relation to the practice of assessment *for*, *of* and *as* student learning as well as reflective assessment in Higher Education. Lastly, I will critically reflect and discuss the paradigm shift that occurred in my assessment practices that called for the declonisation of my assessment practices.

3.1 Assessment Related Theories

3.1.1 Assessment *for* learning

Assessment for learning occurs during learning rather than at the end of learning. During such assessment students comprehend precisely what they have to learn, what is expected of them and are given feedback and advice on how to enhance their school work. . Boud and Falchikov (2007, p.3). In my daily teaching as educator, I apply assessment as an investigable instrument to investigate as much as I can about the prior knowledge of my students. I also try and find out what my students are able to perform and what misunderstandings, pre-conceptions or lack of knowledge they might experience. The great diversity of information that I collect as a teacher about my student’s learning activities provides me with the foundation for establishing what they need to do next to enhance their learning. Assessment for learning also provides the foundation for providing descriptive feedback for students which determines groupings, instructional approaches and resources that could enhance teaching and learning in Higher Education (HE).

3.1.2 Assessment *of* learning

The purpose of such an assessment is typically summative and is done at the end of an activity or chapter. Moreover, it is aimed to provide evidence of performance to parents, other educators, the students themselves and other stake-holders (Boud & Falchikov, 2007, p.3). Through assessment of learning, I as an educator have the onus of reporting students learning truthfully and fairly, based on evidence acquired from a variety of contexts and presentations.

3.1.3 Assessment *as* learning

Through this assessment process students are able to learn about themselves as learners and develop awareness of how they learn (metacognition). Moreover, students critically reflect on their work on a continuous mode, generally through self and peer assessment and decide with the assistance of the teacher what their next learning will be. Assessment as learning enables students to take more accountability for their own learning and observing future learning activities. (Boud & Falchikov, 2007, p.3). During Assessment as learning my role is to encourage the enhancement of independent, critically reflective students by guiding them to set their own objectives and monitor their own development. I must also engage with students to set clear criteria of good practices and excellent work that reflect curriculum objectives.

3.1.4 Reflective Assessment

The portfolio is organised around the core ideology or argument that within the dynamic context of higher education, critical reflection or reflective practice should be entrenched in academic practices, such as teaching and learning, assessment, student research and supervision and academic administration to enhance professional personal growth and student learning (golden thread), hence I find it necessary and appropriate that I include a section on reflective assessment. Over the last decade unconventional assessment strategies have become a pivotal part of the discourse regarding the reform and restructuring of Higher Education. In contrast to the more accepted center upon standardised testing, this discourse and investigation has extended to embrace the informal, continuous, formative assessments that arise within the Higher Education (HE) classroom. William and Thompson (2008) postulate that three purposes are served by educational assessments-- supporting learning (formative), certifying the achievements or

potential of individuals (summative), and evaluating the quality of educational institutions or programs (evaluative) (p.5). It is the first purpose, supporting learning or formative assessment that received great attention by the educational community. Moreover, it is how this formative assessment is easily incorporated into the teaching and learning practice that is central to this area (Ellis, 2001). In Higher Education, the purpose of assessment has become unclear with the main focus that is retained on standardised tests and exams (Stiggins, 1997). Although it is fundamental to teaching and learning, assessment is at times perceived as a distinct process. Important issues like critical reflection, problem solving and criticality are often abandoned in place of specific and general skills that are acquired out of context (Stiggins, 1997). According to Stiggins (1997) the purpose of assessment becomes useless when teachers focus on students' test scores. They state that an amplified focus of summative assessment could lead to negative impacts on student self-confidence and reduced self-assessment, both which are indicators to how students learn.

Scriven (1991) expanded his definition of formative assessment to include reflective assessment, an assessment that includes students with the aim to make improvements in the teaching and learning context. When the student and teacher are included in the assessment process, it could enhance the teaching and learning experience. Through reflective assessment, students have the potential to become masters of their own learning and consequently enhance their own learning (p.14).

As a reflective practitioner, I strongly advocate for reflective assessment in Higher Education because I believe that it grants students a chance to reflect on what they are learning. Moreover, through reflective assessment students may experience assessment as an integral part of their learning experience and not as a separate process that happens at the end of a learning experience. Hence, I wish to emphasise the core argument of this portfolio- Within the dynamic context of higher education, critical reflection or reflective practice should be entrenched in academic practices, such as teaching and learning, assessment, student research and supervision and academic administration to enhance professional personal growth and student learning (golden thread).

I strongly opine that metacognition, or reflective practice, is process that should be embedded in all academic practices of Higher Education if we wish to enhance teaching and learning. Through critical reflection educators of Higher education can reflect and evaluate their teaching and

learning experience. Through reflective practice and assessment, I can plan, reflect upon and evaluate my teaching and students' learning experiences. In simple terms, I can reflect and evaluate my teaching and student's learning experiences and consequently make the necessary improvement that could enhance my Personal Theory of Teaching Practice (PTOTP).

To summarise the core argument of this section-Reflective Assessment is when students are included in the assessment process. Students are compelled to reflect individually or together with others upon their own learning experience, either in writing or orally (Gibbs, 2004). Reflective assessment is a technique that belongs to the formative assessment family of methods, although it can be applied summatively. It is primarily aimed at improving learning. Moreover, it is a dynamic and empowering assessment method because it engages the student in self-evaluation and self-reflection. It hinges theoretically on the pivotal role that meta-cognition plays in learning, since it requires students to think about their own thinking. Gibbs (2004) has identified a sequence of six steps in reflective learning that is often used when teachers design reflective assessment. Some methods to practice reflective assessment include, for example, asking students to write down "I learned" statements, asking for an oral "turn and talk" with the student next to them, asking students to write down what is clear and unclear from the lesson on a piece of paper, and asking students to compose a journal / dairy (Gibbs, 2004,p.16). Finally, there are various benefits in reflective assessment. Reflective assessment enhances student's meta-cognition which in turn enhances student performance. Moreover, reflective assessment is an effective method to apply formative assessment in the classroom, and also makes students 'own' their learning process which enhances student learning and performance (Gibbs, 2004).

3.2. My Role of Educator in Relation to the Practice of Assessment *for and of* Student Learning in Higher Education.

As a point of departure, it is imperative that I mention that much research has focused on the essence of student assessment in teaching and learning in Higher Education. Student assessment is an essential feature of the teaching and learning process. Whether teaching at the undergraduate or graduate level, it is important for me to persistently evaluate the effectiveness of my teaching by evaluating the extent to which students in the classroom are learning the course material. Moreover, assessment allows me to evaluate my teaching and learning approaches and therefore make the necessary improvements in my practice.

As an educator in Higher Education, I believe that my role in assessment is to enhance student's motivation and commitment to learning, by doing so I enhance my student's performance levels. Moreover, the type of feedback I give to my students should further their learning. As a reflective practitioner, I reflect on the purpose of each assessment and then carefully choose the technique that best supports the purpose in the specific context. According to Black and William (1998) the role of me as a teacher in Assessment *as* learning is to:

- Guide students in developing inner response or self-monitoring instruments to confirm and interrogate their own thinking and to become at ease with new knowledge.
- Provide continuous and demanding opportunities to practice in order for students to become assertive, capable, self-evaluators.
- Monitor student self-reflective actions as well as their learning processes and offer comprehensive feedback.
- Create an environment that is conducive for students to explore and where support is offered readily.

In Assessment *for* learning my role as a teacher is to:

- Identify correct instructional approaches and special needs of students.
- Selecting and adapting teaching and learning materials and resources according to student's needs.
- Structure diverse teaching approaches and learning activities for assisting individual student's progress in their learning journey.
- Offer instant feedback and direction to students (Black & William, 1998).

3.3 Decolonising my assessment practices – a paradigm shift

When I critically reflect on my assessment practices in the past, I must concede that I had always leaned towards euro-centric reading text and context. It is true that many educators in high education are under the illusion that using euro-centric assessment context or text is more superior to afro-centric content or context, and I am no exception. During one my PDHE classes I came to learn about the concept of “decolonising assessment”. This topic forced me to critically reflect on my current assessment practices. I finally came to the conclusion that there was a need for me to move away from using euro-centric contexts in my academic writing examination paper and re-

direct my reading texts to focus on more afro-centric contexts (see Appendix 3 for an afro-centric Academic Writing examination paper, Semester 2, 2020, reading content). I experienced a complete paradigm shift. The Oxford Dictionary (2018) defines a paradigm shift as an important change that happens when the usual way of thinking about or doing something is replaced by a new and different way (p.208).

Why is there a need to decolonise assessment in Higher Education? According to Sayer (1992) it is important that African educators in Higher Education (HE) acknowledge that at times they use theoretical conceptions that originate from the global north and that these theories might not fit an African context. He suggests that it is time for African educators in Higher Education seek new theoretical and analytical perceptions to develop their own theories that are fit for an African context (p.39). Equally important, Mbembe (2018) claims that many African institutions of higher learning are too “westernised” because they only seek to become local institutions of a dominant academic model based on a euro-centric knowledge foundation and standards. But what is a euro-centric standard or knowledge foundation? A Eurocentric knowledge foundation considers truth only from a Western way of knowledge –production which disregards other epistemologies. In addition, it aims to represent colonialism as a normal form of social relations between communities rather than a system of exploitation and severe oppression. It promotes the detachment of the known from the knower (p.15). It is for these reasons that I advocate for the decolonisation of Higher Education institutions both of knowledge (assessment) and of the university as an institution.

On the other hand, Tuck and Yang (2012) caution that our current epistemological foundations have not sufficiently prepared us for engagement with the theory of decolonisation in Higher Education. Moreover, they contend that it is pivotal that as educators in Higher Education we contribute to discourses around how to respond to demands for institutional decolonisation which include curriculum and assessment. I strongly believe that there is a distinct need to decolonise assessment in Higher Education. Moreover, I also believe that investing in decolonising educational assessment models is pivotal to making the institutions of Higher Education more equitable and socially unbiased. I opine that a decolonised educational system begins with assessing the needs of students and local communities using a critical- reflective approach. How do I decolonise my assessment? By ensuring that:

- My assessment is differentiated, it should be able to measure different forms of intelligence.
- I have to create a conducive assessment context where my students and I are both actively engaged in the assessment processes.
- Not all assessment as to numerical or credit-bearing.
- Reading content should include afro-centric views and discourses.
- Excellence is not measured through statistical accountancy.
- I operate within an epistemologically diverse curriculum.
- That my students have epistemological access.

Lastly, I believe that as much as decolonisation of the curriculum is pivotal in Higher Education, in order for effective assessment to take place, it is important that institutional policies do cater for differentiated assessment approaches.

Summary

Assessment is an indispensable component of the Higher Education curriculum. Moreover, it functions as an individual evaluation system, and as a tool to compare performance across a spectrum and across populations. However, with so many different kinds of assessments for so many different purposes, it becomes difficult to keep the actual aim of assessing in consideration. The aim of assessment is to collect relevant data about student performance or progress, or to determine student interests, to make findings about their learning process. Continuous Assessment affords daily feedback about the learning and teaching process in the Higher Education classroom. It can strengthen the efficacy of teaching and learning in Higher Education. It also encourages the understanding of teaching as a formative process that evolves over time with feedback and input from students. It is evident that there is a distinct need to decolonise the university assessment practices. I believe that as educators in Higher Education, our goal of assessment should be the pursuit of knowledge and not the pursuit of credits hence the call for reflective assessment practices in the Higher Education curriculum.



UNIVERSITY OF
NAMIBIA

(APPENDIX 3)

**ACADEMIC WRITING FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS
(UAE 4819/5819/6819)
PROMOTIONAL EXAMINATION 2**

2020

Examiner: Dr J. Mukoroli

Moderator: LC Examination Committee

SURNAME:		INITIALS:	
STUDENT NO:	DURATION: 3 Hours	SLOT:	
LECTURER:		VENUE:	
MODE OF STUDY: Full-time <input type="checkbox"/> Part- time <input type="checkbox"/> Distance <input type="checkbox"/>			

LECTURER'S USE ONLY

SECTION A	_____	/60
SECTION B	_____	/40
GRAND TOTAL:	_____	/100

MARKER: _____

SECTION A: READING TEXT 1

Why Did Rwanda Shift from a Knowledge to a Competence Based Curriculum?

Ndihokubwayo, Kizito, The University of Rwanda College of Education

Centre of Excellence for Innovative Teaching and Learning Mathematics and Science.
Rukara Gahini Muhazi Road, (2009)

Introduction

1. The numerous prospects of curriculum, instruction, and assessment could be conceived on the basis of interactions existing among technologies and modern knowledge (Pellegrino, 2006) because the best way to forecast the future is to create it. A tremendous shift moved from a knowledge-based to competence-based curriculum, and from knowledge and skills acquisition to knowledge creation and application in order to fulfil the development of students' autonomous, lifelong learning habits; appropriate skills and knowledge as well as be able to apply those skills in their real life (Ngendahayo & Askell-williams, 2016). Actually, competencies are delivered from sets of skills; they reinforce one another from basic to advanced levels as learning growths. However, competencies within different contexts also require different bundles of knowledge, skills and values/attitudes. Therefore, progress refinement of well-defined competencies would be necessary in order for improved performance in a variety of contexts can be easily assessed (Mbarushimana & Kuboja, 2016). For sure, the concept of competence has a fairly long history in education and training research and practice. For instance, while in the German and Dutch discussions on competence-based education, a more holistic approach is advocated, to overcome the risks of the disintegrative approaches, in Australia and the United Kingdom, competence-based education has been implemented as a crucial part of national training reform plans.

2. Recently, in Rwanda, there was an implementation of education for all that was purposively laid on knowledge-based leading to the economy with particular emphasis on

science and technology as an engine of development. The present study aimed at analyzing the goodness of competence-based curriculum and usability of

Text books related to this curriculum. In 2016, knowledge-based was shifted into competence based curriculum (Rwanda Education Board, 2015b). Besides that, it is very important to consider the change, challenges, and difficulties teachers might meet as they are the first implementers of the curricular activities to students.

3.The Rwandan education philosophy guarantees learners to achieve full potential in terms of appropriate knowledge, skills, and values and attitudes allowing them to integrate into society and exploit employment opportunities (Rwanda Education Board, 2015b) after graduation. Rwanda's new competence-based curriculum matches global trends and is in line with the 2013 harmonized curriculum framework for the East African Community (Rwanda Education Board, 2015b). On the road to education, all policies related to the primary and secondary education are set out by Rwanda Education Board (REB). As in its mission to fast-track education development in Rwanda by enabling education sector growth with the line of Ministry of Education guidelines, in order to educate a huge population of Rwandans (Gahamanyi, 2010; Ministry of Education, 2013) to achieve the millennium goals such as education for all and free education with quality. The country as it particularly gave chances to any candidate to catch up the learning occasions to acquire competences and qualifications for the future in teaching; there is still a big challenge for teachers to implement what competence-based curriculum requires.

4. The competences suggested for Rwanda's educational system are critical and problem solving skills; creativity and innovation; research; communication in official languages; cooperation, interpersonal management and life skills; and lifelong learning (Ngendahayo & Askill-williams, 2016) and those competencies are confined in basic and generic competences. A competency-based curriculum is a curriculum that accentuates what learners are expected to do rather than focusing on what they are expected to know. Such curriculum is learner-centred and adaptive to the changing needs of pupils, students, teachers, and society (Kabita & Ji, 2017). Curriculum is the vehicle through which a country empowers its citizens with the necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes and values

that make them to be empowered for personal and national development. Curriculum should, no doubt faces the needs of the individual citizens and the state country (Kabita & Ji, 2017). Competence based training would

mean an institutional process that moves education from focusing on what academics believe graduates need only to know to what they need to know and be able to do in any simple or complex situations (Hoogveld, Pass, & Jochems, 2005; Mbarushimana & Kuboja, 2016).

5. With the competence-based Curriculum, a teacher is required to teach many skills. A competence-based school curriculum is seen as a great approach to addressing the aspirations of a society and its young people as children do not parse the world into domains of knowledge in order to satisfy their needs, as does the school system. However, previous aims of education at large have been to equip young generations with the capability to develop the knowledge accumulated by the human mind throughout millennia of development (Singer, Samihaian, Holbrook, & Crisan, 2014).

6. The traditional methods for teachers are not suited to produce the deep understanding that can assist students becoming intelligent users of knowledge thought from schools. According to competence-based curriculum towards education quality in Rwanda, teachers need to shift from traditional methods of instruction and adopt participatory and interactive methods that engage students in the learning process (Ministry of Education, 2015). However, there is no empirical research done in regard to identifying teachers' struggle (Uworwabayeho, 2009). Furthermore, most of the education systems in all societies adopted a separation, subject-based approach to educational development, and this becomes the failure of many educational reforms (Singer et al., 2014).

Theoretical Point of View

7. The competence based teaching and learning approach are one of the most relevant issues discussed concerning curricular reforms all over the world because this it has some controversial edges and consequently, it is visualized from different theoretical viewpoints (Mbarushimana & Kuboja, 2016). The same study conducted by Mbarushimana and Kuboja (2016) on Competence-based training has gained a paradigm

shift in Rwanda encouraging the hands-on activity and the sense of self-employment. This model was supported by the inspiration of` constructivism theory which always makes a projection on learner-centred. Therefore, teachers need to shift from traditional methods of instruction and adopt participatory and interactive learning methods that engage learners in the teaching and learning process, both in groups as well as in individuals learning environment avoiding passive learning in order to personalize and address learners' individual needs and expectations. The learner-centred approach is better than everything in term of teaching and learning since it preserves involvement of diverse learning experiences, including individual, paired and group work, oral questioning, discussions, debates, role play, presentations, projects, practical work, investigations, research, prediction, problem-solving, assignments, field visits, tests and quizzes (Rwanda Education Board, 2015a).

8.Competence-based education is constructed based on standards and the way we want a learner to act, **therefore** leading paradigm for innovation, creativity, and role model at the system and at the learning atmosphere level (Wesselink, Mulder, Elsen, & Biemans, 2004). An important reason for the above concept of competences is the expectation held by many stakeholders in the vocational education and training field that the gap should be reduced to the labour market and education using competence-based education. This competence-based education was however factually based on a behaviourist model of training and learning, within a Taylorism industrial model (Wesselink et al., 2004) since during the 1970s, the competence movement (Friedlander, 1996; Lucia & Lepsinger, 1999; Wesselink et al., 2004) was characterized by exhaustive analysis of the numerous behavioural aspects of professional tasks. Tasks of professionals were divided into the specific parts resulting in long lists of fragmentized behavioural components. As a result, competence-based education became primarily associated with behaviourism, mastery learning and modular teaching (Mulder, 2004).

Research Methods Used

9. The present study is aimed at revealing teachers' trainers (NTs) perception on shifting from Knowledge to Competence Based Curriculum and issues of related textbooks used. CBC training has two streams; administrative stream and technical stream. The administrative stream provides an organizational leadership training for DEOs, SEOs and HT/DOSs and it aims at introducing the concept of the new curriculum and the monitoring mechanism to all education stakeholders. **On the other hand**, the technical stream aims at providing technical contents to all teachers. In order to equip all teachers in service, the technical stream applies a combination of cascading training and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) as shown in the diagram below. REB develops training contents and train National Trainers (NTs). NTs train Sector-Based Trainers (SBTs), who will train teachers in a series of Sector-based CPD sessions. Sector/School-based CPD will serve as a platform to continuously explore the best approaches to the learners in the sector. This continuous cycle of professional development at the last phase of CBC training is expected to contribute to improving teachers' mastery in CBC and self-sustaining development of teachers and schools (Rwanda Education Board, 2017). Therefore, national teachers' trainers (NTs) were good to fit this study.

10. Forty-four out of one hundred fifty National Trainers were randomly selected for the study. The questionnaire survey used for data collection was made up of quantitative and qualitative questions. It sought information on the comparison between knowledge-based curriculum and competence one as well as respective textbooks related to national trainers' experience since they themselves are teachers. The instrument related to curriculum comparison was a 9-item Likert scale based on a 4-point rating scale; from "fair" scored 1, up to "excellent" scored 4 points so that an item in the questionnaire was therefore considered a goodness of competence based curriculum if the mean of the respondents on it was 2.5. The instrument related to textbooks comparison, however, was based on revealing strengths and weaknesses of each type of curriculum (CBC and KBC).

Analysis of Findings and Presentation

11. Using M-excel to evaluate Likert scale national trainers' perception related to how old (KBC) differ from new (CBC) curriculum, descriptive and inferential statistics was used to analyze nine components, these are: useful material coverage, practicability to teachers' needs and interests, organization of contents in syllabuses, time frame, quantity of content, effectiveness of activities, curriculum developers' competences, carrier guidance, and market orientation towards students.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The new competence-based curriculum (CBC) was launched in April 2015 aiming to increase students' skills and learning outcomes by mostly equipping students with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values needed for a knowledge-based economy that can boost Rwanda to compete on the global market.

Rwanda has chosen to adapt competence-based curriculum because the last one was covered with useful material, practical to teachers' needs and interests, well organized and timed. Its activities were appropriate, curriculum developers developed it with competences, it guides learners' carrier and orients them on the competent market. However, it is loaded with content as claimed by most of the national trainers' teachers. Currently the designing and writing is still an ongoing process, however national trainers (NTs) are claiming the textbooks delivered have still some problems like too many contents, scarcity of materials to cover experiments recommended, so Rwanda Education Board and Ministry of Education should remind the designers and textbooks writers the previous claims to take these into consideration

[References have been removed for assessment purposes]

SECTION A: TEXT 1

Read Text 1 and answer the questions that follow.

1. Which sentence in paragraph two indicates the author’s thesis statement? (2)

2. Who is the target audience of this text? Mention two. (2)

3. Analyze the title of Text 1 and indicate the following: (4)

Topic: _____

Viewpoint: _____

4. Read paragraph five of Text 1 and write down three different words used as “hedges” (3)

5. Give two reasons why topic sentences are important in academic writing. (2)

6. Identify the topic sentence in paragraph eight. (2)

7. What do you understand by synthesizing in academic writing? (2)

8. Give two reasons why it is important to read the abstract of a text? (2)

9. Identify the features of academic writing in the statements below. (3)

(a) The numerous prospects of curriculum, instruction, and assessment could be conceived on the basis of interactions existing among technologies and modern knowledge (Pellegrino, 2006).

(b) The new competence-based curriculum (CBC) was launched in April 2015 aiming to increase students' skills and learning outcomes by mostly equipping students with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values needed for a knowledge-based economy that can boost Rwanda to compete on the global market.

(c) A competence-based school curriculum is seen as a great approach to addressing the aspirations of a society and its young people.

10. Explain the function of the following discourse markers as used in context. (4)

Discourse marker	function
On the other hand (Para.9)	
Therefore (Para.8)	

11. Circle the correct in-text citation in the following statements. (4)

(i) _____ defines an idiom as an expression whose meaning is distinct from the sum of its part.

- (a) (Hanks and Hamakali, 2017,p29.)
- (b) Hanks and Hamakali (2017,p.92)
- (c) Hanks & Hamakali (,2017, p.29)
- (d) (Hanks & Hamakali ,2017, p.29)

(i) It is argued by _____ that students and teachers delineated several problems in the writing of undergraduate ESL learners.

(a) (Brown and Smith, 2016)

(b) Brown and Smith (2016)

(c) (Brown & Smith,2013)

(d) Brown & Smith (2016)

(11) Explain why authors sometimes include page numbers in APA in-text citation. (2)

(12) Provide an acceptable APA paraphrase of the following sentence: (4)

De-socialisation entails the changing or discarding of selected values, beliefs and traits one brings to university in response to the university experience. It is also the process of being exposed to and taking on some of the new values, attitudes and perspectives to which one is exposed to university (Pascarella & Terenzi, 1991).

(13) Write six supporting sentences for the topic sentence that follows. Your writing should adhere to academic writing conventions. (8)

Firstly, university is a new environment that triggers different reactions among first year students.

(14) Choose the correct reporting verb from the list to complete to complete the text.

(4)

found	suggest	outline	observe
<p>(a).Roland and O'Neill _____ reasons for poor performance by first year university students. (b)They also _____ that students who stay in contact with families are more likely to do well at university. (c)Winter and Yaffe's study _____ that good relations with parents help both male and female students to adjust to university. (d).A study by Enock and Renk _____ that males adjust faster than females at university.</p>			

(15) Rewrite the sentences below in the nominalized form. (6)

(a) When you predict the trend of retail, it requires that you analyse it carefully.

(b) The study demonstrated the use of semi-structured interview method of data collection.

16. Explain the function of the following components of a research proposal. (4)

(a) The findings

(b) The Methodology

17. Explain the purpose of paraphrasing in academic writing

(2)

Three horizontal lines for writing the answer.

TOTAL OF SECTION A: _____/60

SECTION B: ACADEMIC SUMMARY WRITING

Write an academic summary of not more than 200 words on **Paragraphs 7-10** of the article you read in **Section A (Text 1)**. Please write only in the spaces provided. Your summary should adhere to academic writing conventions. (15)

Multiple horizontal lines for writing the summary.

TOTAL SECTION B: _____ **/25**

SECTION C: ABSTRACT WRITING

Read the text below and write an abstract of not more than 150 words of the article entitled **“An Evaluation of Human Resource Management Practices in Wire and Cable Industry in South-western Nigeria”** Your writing should adhere to academic conventions.

An Evaluation of Human Resource Management Practices in Wire and Cable Industry in South-western Nigeria

Bello, Bashiru Akande ,Department of Business Administration

Bells University of Technology, Ota, Nigeria. Ologbenla, Patrick.(2007)

Introduction

Wire Cable industry in Nigeria is of utmost importance in power distribution and telecommunication, which has necessitated the need to identify with their human resource management practices and their level of citizenship behaviour that has made the organisation to maintain consistent global export level (Egbetokun, 2009). It has now become more imperative than ever for business organization to engage in human resource management (HRM) practices that are based on international standard towards the achievement of goals. Wu and Charturvedi (2009) were of the view that people are the most important factor that provides flexibility and adaptability to the organization. Wood and Wall (2007), expressed that to manage human element in any organisation is more complex than managing technology; and that firms that have learnt how to manage their human resources will have an edge over others. Scot and Denis (2008) emphasized that human resource is the most important factor for growth and development of any organisation. Every organisation is concerned with human resource practices that can change the fortune of the organisation (Abolalayi, 2010). For any organisation to attract,

retain and add to shareholders' value, there is a need for an innovative human resource management practices to be implemented (Akindele, 2011). The study examined the human resource management (HRM) practices in the wire and cable industry; investigated the relationship between human resource management practices and components of organisational citizenship behaviour. Every organisation now focuses on cost minimisation as well as the value of the intellectual asset which is the human resources (Arif, Chohan 2012). Human resource management in Nigeria is practiced within the social, political, economic and legal interest. Therefore, socio-cultural attitudes and political culture of people will influence their behaviour. It is therefore very significant to understand how human resources management practices especially the wire and cable industry can influence the extra role behaviour of workers. The knowledge of human resource management practices (HRM) in Nigeria has become increasingly important to business activities, and this can be attributed to the reasons why wire and cable in Nigeria has been able to maintain a standard quality overtime and which has resulted in her ability to compete globally. The growth, survival and viability of an organisation depend on acquisition, utilization, and maintenance of its human resources (Ezeagba, 2014). Nigeria is a developing country that is willing to subscribe to any innovative management practices that will ensure greater developmental purposes. In Nigeria, Wire and Cable industry is of utmost importance, considering the issue of epileptic power supply. Consequently, developing an effective human resources management practices that elicit organisational citizenship behaviour influences employee skills through the acquisition and development of a firm human capital. Adequate compensation management are meant to attract capable employees to the organisation. It is also meant to motivate employees towards superior performance and thus enhance productivity. The issue of compensation management in Nigeria organisation has necessitated the need for management to be more tactful and realistic in setting pay levels.

In today's competitive environment, it is imperative that all organisations should create a work environment that foster growth and development. Implementing career development programme in organisations will enhance organisational loyalty and increase the workers' citizenship behaviour. Performance appraisal generally is used in organisations for the purpose of rewarding or making administrative decision about how to reward employees.

Industrial conflict is usually manifested in dramatic forms, so management of conflict is highly imperative in order to bring about a harmonious relationship within the organisation.

Statement of the Problem

While a number of researches have been done on organisational commitment, and task performance in manufacturing organisation in Nigeria, (Fadiora 2012, Nermie 2012, Itiola, Odebiyi, Alabi, 2014), limited efforts or attempts have been made to establish the relationship between human resource management practices and organisational citizenship behaviour. The Wire and Cable industry in Nigeria has maintained global quality level overtime that makes it worthwhile to ascertain the contribution of human resource management practices and organisational citizenship behaviour to the performance industry. The dearth of such studies in developing economy like Nigeria makes it important to explore further the influence of human resource management practices on citizenship behaviour.

Conceptual Review

Meaning of Human Resources Management

Organisations are social systems that are made up of structures, technology and environments. The common denominator among the three is the human element. Human resources management practice has a broader implication on the management of change, it has a long term perspective which integrate all human aspect of the organisation into a coherent whole, thus encouraging individual employees to have an attitude to strive for higher performance, (Oladele, 2012). The human resource is central to the growth, viability and survival of any organisation. Judging by today's complex business in today's business world, it is only best human resource practice that can ensure continued success of any business organisation. The human element can be described as the most versatile resource in the organisation. It is the only resource that is capable of thinking, planning, executing, and achieving organisational result (Banjoko, 1996).

Human resource practices refer to organisational activities that are directed at managing the pool of human elements and to ensure that the resources are directed toward the

fulfilment of organisational goals and objectives. It is the source through which organisations achieve competitive advantage because of its capability to convert other resources such as money, machine, and materials into outputs. Fajana and Ige (2009) argued that the desire for top organisational performance, commitment, and extra role behaviour has driven the need for effective management of available human resources. Armstrong (2005) highlighted that people are the most important factors that provide flexibility and adaptability to the organisation. Chandles and Mcroy (2000) observed that one of the lingering question in human resource management is whether there is a single practice that present a single approach to managing people. Boxel (1996) has also found that those that are well paid, well-motivated and working in an environment of mutual trust generally generate high productivity gains and lower unit cost. Effective human resource management practices are indispensable to the growth and continuity of any organisation. Ajaogu (1995) described human resource management practices as the embodiment of many components such as career development, welfare programmes, and job analysis and compensation management.

Employee Welfare Programmes

The concept of employee welfare programmes has been used as a strategy by organisation to improve the productivity of employees. Mwita (2000) observed that welfare services may not directly relate to an employee job, but the effect could be noticed through employee performance, attitude, and labour turnover. The modern concept of employee welfare entails all those activities of the employers which are directed towards providing the employees with certain facilities and services in addition to wages and salaries. Welfare facilities are essential for the health of the organisation since they bear a close connection with the productivities of the labour force. International Labour Organisation (ILO) defined employees' welfare as such services, facilities and amenities as may be established, that enable employees to perform their work in healthy and congenial surroundings and with amenities conducive to good health and high morale. Organisations do provide recreational facilities to their employees with a view to enhancing social interaction and providing an avenue where workers can interact and spend their leisure hours.

This is evidenced by the provision of staff canteens sport centres, staff school and staff bus. All these are designed to provide financial relief and relational benefits to the workers. Employees' welfare is a comprehensive term, which may include any activity that is connected with the social, moral and economic betterment of workers provided by any agency. It should however be noted that welfare programmes differ from one organisation to the other. Generally, welfare programmes have the following objectives; to make the workers happy, satisfied and efficient, to provide better life and health to worker, and finally to improve cultural, intellectual and material condition of workers. The International labour organisation classifies welfare services into two: Intramural activities which include the provision of latrines, drinking water, shelter, canteens, arrangement for prevention of fatigue. Extra-mural services include welfare services which are undertaken outside the establishment such as social insurance scheme like gratuity, pension, provident fund, family planning and welfare, education facilities, housing facilities, transportation and recreational facilities.

The basic reason for providing this is to enable workers lives a richer and satisfactory life. Pfeffer (2006), and Armstrong (2006) highlighted that the relevance of employee welfare programmes could not be over-emphasised. There is the provision of good housing medical, canteens, facilities, which make the workers realize that they have some stake in the undertaking in which they are employed this will make them to think twice before taking any reckless decision which might prejudice their interest. Welfare measures such as subsidized food in canteens, free medical and educational facilities indirectly increase the real income of workers. Apart from this, welfare activities improve the psychological health of workers by reducing the incidence of vices of industrialisation. Welfare also influence the sentiment of workers. When workers feel that the employer and the state are interested in their happiness, their tendency to grouse and gamble will steadily disappears and this will pave way for industrial peace.

The provision of welfare facilities is very beneficial to employees in several ways. The provision of welfare facilities helps to improve the goodwill and corporate image of the enterprise. It also helps employees to have a feeling of involvement and commitment. Consequently, employers secure the benefits of high efficiency, low turnover and reduced

absenteeism, welfare services also reduce the threat of Government intervention. Employee welfare is also in the interest of the society, because the health, efficiency and happiness of each individual represent the general well-being of all. An employee that is well-looked is not only an asset to the employer but to the society in general.

On the job training is a type of training within the organisation. One important feature of the job training is the mentor system. When an employee enters a new department, they are assigned a mentor, the mentor helps the employee get schematized and helps them to solve any problems or questions they may have about their job, one-the-job training also takes the form of job rotation, this method is also very common in the manufacturing industry.

In the manufacturing organisation, promotion is used among others to appreciate and reward a committed staff, promotion is used to build employee morale, promoting job satisfaction and effective. Adekola (2011) emphasized that in an employee early years, it appears that promotion is usually based on seniority and employees of the same cohort seem to move together. After the first ten years, the differences between employees of the same cohort appear to become wider and promotions become more differentiated.

Methodology

Research Instrument

The main research instrument of this study was structured questionnaire which were administered to respondents who are employees of Wire and Cable industry in the South-western Nigeria. The questionnaire for the study was divided into four sections. Section A consisted of the socio-demographic characteristic of the respondents such as sex, position, marital status, years of experience and departments; Section B consisted of questions on identification of HRM practices in the selected organisations; Section C consisted of questions on various organisational citizenship behaviour, and Section D elicited information on the effects of demographic variables on organisational citizenship behaviour. All the variables were measured using the Likert 5-point scale.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data collected was processed and analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The analysis was in accordance with the research objectives and hypotheses. The descriptive statistics such as frequency count, percentage, mean and standard deviation, while Correlation analysis and multiple regression technique were the inferential statistics.

Results and Discussion

The result has indicated that HR practice such as compensation management is responsible for employees going extra miles to help their colleague and other employees. It is also recommended that: -provision of welfare programme also bring about extra role behaviour to the workers. -the organization develops their essential skills that are needed for the successful accomplishment of their duties.

There is a good basis for employee development plan through a periodical appraisal. The oversight team is in place and various options are used in resolving conflict.

References have been removed for assessment purposes.

CHAPTER 4: TECHNOLOGIES FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION.

Introduction

In the previous chapter I critically reflected and discussed assessment *of, for, as* learning as well as reflexive assessment. In this chapter I will critically reflect and explore technology for teaching and learning in Higher Education (HE). As point of departure, I hasten to mention that it is an irrefutable fact that the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the Higher Education context in various ways. Not only has it accelerated the emergence of Education.4.0 but it has also exposed the widened digital gap between developed and developing countries. Moreover, it has also forced Higher Education institutions around the globe to embrace online learning or e-learning by placing all its courses on online platforms. The University of Namibia is no exception. As I critically reflect on my digital teaching and learning, I come to the conclusion that I have never fully embraced Education. 4.0 in my teaching and learning practice. I have always leaned on face-to face teaching and learning and the use of technology or digital platforms in my classroom was minimal.

However, the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic has forced me to fully embrace the digital Teaching and Learning (T&L) context. In this chapter, firstly I will critically reflect on how I embraced Education 4.0- challenges and successes. Secondly, I will critically reflect and discuss the digital literacy skills, technological access, and the soft-ware tools and apps used by my students. I will then critically reflect and discuss why I embraced face-to-face blended learning as my preferred mode of online teaching and learning. Finally, I will reflect and discuss how online facilitation could enhance the skills for reflective practice.

4.1 Embracing Education 4.0 – Challenges and Successes

E-learning is the use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) to deliver education and training to learners (Sun., 2008). ICTs that is used effectively by instructors and learners have the prospect to make education more accessible and improve the quality of the education (UNESCO, 2007). It is a fact that technologies have changed the traditional way of education to the modern way of learning of e-learning. In addition, e-learning in Higher Education is included within a broader concept of technology-based learning through websites, learning portals, video

conferencing, YouTube, mobile apps, and thousand types of free available websites for blended learning tools. Moreover, e-learning is improving students' and the academic staff knowledge and skills through the use of technologies (Sun, 2008). Globally, due to COVID-19 outbreak universities closed and lockdown, teachers and students had to get used to the new normal of online teaching and learning. Equally important, the emergence of the COVID-19 has expedited the implementation of Education 4.0 in Higher Education and the University of Namibia is no exception. What is Education 4.0? Education 4.0 is a response to the needs of IR4.0 (Industrial Revolution 4.0) where human and technology are combined to enable new opportunities. Moreover, this kind of education enable students to learn only skills and knowledge that are necessary but also to recognize the foundations to learn these skills and knowledge (Hussin, 2018). According to Fisk (2017) there are nine components that constitute Education 4.0. First, learning can be taking place anywhere (classroom with no walls), because e-learning tools grant amazing prospects for remote self-paced learning. Second, learning is personalized to individual students and positive interventions are used to enhance positive learning experiences and increase students' self-belief. Third, students have the option to how they want to learn, the materials and approaches. Fourth, students will focus on more project-based activities based on knowledge and skills obtained. Fifth, students will have internships through field experience and collaborative projects. Sixth, students will be exposed to data interpretation where they are obliged to use their theoretical knowledge and critical thinking skills to make informed choices. Seventh, students will be evaluated in various ways and platforms. Eighth, students will be consulted in curriculum design and revision. Lastly, student will become more autonomous and in their learning and teachers will serve as mere facilitators (pp. 92-93).

As I mentioned before, when I critically reflect on the expedited emergence of Education 4.0 due to the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, it brought numerous challenges for me in my e-learning teaching and learning practice. Firstly, I was totally unprepared when the University of Namibia moved their entire curriculum from face-to face to online learning, hence my students and I had to innovate and adapt to a new online academic life within a short time. Moreover, as an e-learning facilitator I had to quickly learn how to use numerous digital tools to deliver e-learning in order to decide on the most appropriate e-learning teaching approaches. Although, I had known how to grade assignments and exams online, the process was long, physically and mentally exhausting and overwhelming.

At home I had to create a “work space “and had to master the art of working from home (WFH). My students had to adapt to a new way of learning (e-learning) and at times I had to be a counsellor, mentor and facilitator at once as I had to deal with academic enquiries and emotional stress of my students. In addition, some of my students lacked the necessary technologies to use for online learning, many of them are forced to share their laptops and computers with their parents, sisters/ brothers to stay up to date with their school work. I hasten to mention that teachers and students around Namibia are experiencing technical difficulties because of the high usage rate of online learning systems, video streaming software, & other digital tools. The platforms are overloaded: poor quality video and audio, internet problems contribute to negative online teaching and learning experiences. In Namibia, at times internet connection is either unstable or the current data plan of students and teachers/parents is not sufficient to cover the progressive e-learning needs. Students in both urban and rural areas are struggling with the “homework gap”. At times I have to manage the poor internet connection during the online lessons. Moreover, many of my students had to start using a learning management system or any other digital tool out of nowhere without additional training. They became overwhelmed by the amount of data they have to spend in order to be able to learn online, as well as frustrated and scared facing the unknown. Another challenge was the factor of isolation for my students. This rather psychological factor is still highly affecting students’ motivation and learning progress. Being in the classroom, students got used to constant face-to-face teaching and communication with each other allowing reacting together, sharing the experience, joking, & making a non-verbal contact, strengthening the social skills. For many students, a classroom has been a kind of “security”, which is now taken away. Most of them feel isolated, scared by the pandemic, parents’ job loss and friends’ disconnection. When I critically reflect on my online teaching and learning experience amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, I must admit that in spite of these challenges, I have learned many lessons and experienced successes in my online teaching and learning. Firstly, I had a paradigm shift – The Oxford Dictionary (2018) defines a paradigm shift as an important change that happens when the usual way of thinking about or doing something is replaced by a new and different way (p.18). I came to learn that education is not solely the process of gaining or transferring knowledge, but also about the interaction between students and teachers. I believe that in today’s world, the teacher’s responsibility is not only to provide e-learning but support the students, stay connected, and keep the integrity within the e-classroom as well. I have to continuously show my students that I am open to communication.

Moreover, I learned how to keep my online lessons simple yet effective. I have learned to be patient when students asked me different questions and when I am grading assignments and exams. Most important of all, I have learned that there are many and fun ways to engage students during the online lessons: PowerPoint presentations, short videos, quizzes, recordings and the educational use of social media platforms. I have to ensure constant contact with my students by tracking their progress and providing constant feedback.

4.2 The Digital Literacy Skills, Technological Access, and the Soft-Ware Tools and Apps Used by my Students.

I teach academic writing to masters and PhD students. My classroom consists of 95, working, part-time students. They are all adults. They all come from diverse socio-economic and technological back ground. The majority of my students own a laptop and a smart -phone. I have also discovered that my students are technologically savvy, meaning that they are technologically driven and have high digital literacy skills and enjoy being connected to technology. They are also known as the Gen X cohort. Equally important, I can confidently attest that their time is spend on social –platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook and Twitter. Many of my students, although employed do not have technological access such as the internet at home; since owning a Wi-Fi device at home is costly (data is costly). They mainly use their smart-phones when engaging on technological platforms. Many of my students also do not use their technological devises for educational purposes by choice, only when it is required by the lecturer or faculty. They use them mainly for research (Google) and communication purposes.

4.3 Face-to- Face Blended Learning – My Suitable Mode of Online Learning

Current studies on blended learning has received accumulative consideration (Arbaugh, 2014) and is becoming a fundamental mode of delivery in higher education. Although there are several definitions on what constitutes blended learning, there is agreement that a blended course combines online learning with face-to-face class activities in an intentional pedagogically valuable way where somewhere between 20% and 79% of content and activities are delivered online (Arbaugh, 2014, p. 785). Some early definitions include reduced seat-time (Garrison, 2017), however more recently the prominence has been on the prospect to rethink higher education pedagogy in order to increase student learning outcome. Several scholars emphasise that blended learning is not just a change of medium of delivery or a technology-enhanced add-on to what is

already taught face-to-face. Instead it is perceived as a transformative pedagogical approach (Garrison, 2017) and a prospective game-changer for teaching and learning in higher education.

In comparison with fully online and face-to-face learning, blended learning has shown to be a relevant substitute to face-to-face teaching where educational requirements are narrowly linked to flexibility (Arbaugh, 2014) and lower costs and to fully online teaching by having the advantage of providing opportunities for students to be physically together supporting nonverbal and instantaneous communication (p.15). But also as a new approach to learning, blended learning has shown to improve student motivation and learning objective. According to Garrison (2017), blended learning provides a pedagogical enhancement by combining “the best of both worlds” of online and face-to-face activities.

As I critically reflect on my personal teaching practice, I came to perceive the use of technology as an opportunity for me to spend face-to-face time with my students on active learning, engagement and interaction instead of lecturing or delivering content. I came to realise that as I offer blended learning in my classroom I must be constantly aware of my different learning objectives, different groups of students and learning activities. I must make an informed choice as to what teaching and learning activities should be delivered face-to-face and which online. My blended learning and teaching approach must enhance collaborative, interactive and active teaching when meeting students face-to-face.

I am aware that I have been lecturing and one-way communication is what I have spent most of my time in the classroom. In addition, as I move towards to face to face blended learning, I must embrace my new role of facilitating students’ learning face-to-face in an interactive and collaborative way .Moreover, blended learning is an opportunity for me to rethink face-to-face activities and to come up with new and innovative ideas of how to engage my students face-to-face in the optimal blend and not just continue what I have been doing in the past in the classroom. In other words, I need to rethink what I do with the students in the classroom or in other face-to face settings when I am not lecturing as a cause of adopting blended learning.

There are various challenges and benefits of face-to face technology for myself and my students. Firstly, face-to-face blended learning requires students to ”construct their own understanding and educational meaning ,which is more cognitively challenging than passive listening in a traditional didactic lecture” (Green, 2013, p. 183). The same is postulated in Fleck (2012) who outlines that

processes and activities should be devised for students to create their own meaning as opposed to teachers' transmission of knowledge. Following from the extensive focus on what face-to-face blended learning is not, descriptions of what characterizes face-to-face blended learning are also presented – often in contrast to a traditional classroom.

First, face-to-face blended learning is seen as a structure for student learning. An advantage of face-to-face technological scheduling is that meetings help to keep students on track and manage their time and is necessary for providing important information to students as well as to clarify issues (Stubbs, Martin, & Endlar, 2006). While providing a structure, face-to-face blended learning is considered to be flexible with regards to content, which should be decided upon in relation to student needs rather than a fixed curriculum selected in advance (Adams, 2012). Another benefit is that face-to-face learning activities in blended learning encourage creativity and innovation (Bruff, Fischer, McEwen, & Smith, 2013; Green, 2015; Hall & Villareal, 2015) and that it can provide a more informal and flexible way of structuring learning (Green, 2015) allowing more informal knowledge exchange and spontaneity (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004).

Equally important, face-to-face blended learning provides value by enabling immediate instructor feedback (Hall & Villareal, 2015) and provides opportunity for just-in-time learning for students to learn at the moment of greatest relevance (Swart & Wuensch, 2016, p. 74). Fast response and pace are also mentioned as features of face-to-face blended learning where the facilitator can react in real time to students' questions. Finally, class size is mentioned as taking lectures online frees up resource to have workshops or seminars with smaller size classes.

4.4 Facilitating Learning Online: Enhancing the Skills for Reflective Practice

It is imperative when a facilitator prepares for an online course, that he/she has a variety of resources that can inform them about the theory, the planning and implementation and provide guiding principles for facilitating these courses. Research has been conducted about the effectiveness of online learning, primarily using outcome measures such as grades and student satisfaction (Cole, 2000). However, there is minimal research that tells us about particular approaches and their usefulness in facilitating learning online. The portfolio is organised around the core ideology or argument that within the dynamic context of higher education, critical

reflection or reflective practice should be entrenched in academic practices, such as teaching, student research and supervision and academic administration to enhance professional personal growth and student learning, hence it is imperative that I deliberate on reflective practice in online learning.

According to Marsick (1990) a distinct objective of the facilitator in reflective practice groups is to enable students reflect on, experiment with, and learn from experience so that students are empowered to utilise these approaches for themselves. Research on reflective practice in online learning focuses on two types of literature: cognitive apprenticeship and group communication theory. Cognitive apprenticeship has the ability to actively engage students in their learning, in which learning can be defined as “doing” (p.67). The components of cognitive apprenticeship include coaching, collaboration, reflection, and validation. Students observe the approaches employed by the facilitators to engage in reflective practice in order to construct their own approach for doing the same. The role of the facilitator fades as learners demonstrate proficiency in the skills of reflective practice. Group communication theory suggests that group interaction is the basis for cognitive reframing, skill acquisition, and social support and is necessary for a quality learning experience (Wagner, 1997).

I believe that my role as an e- learning facilitator is to encourage online reflection in e-learning. I can achieve this by incorporating online group collaboration projects. During the COVID-19 pandemic I instructed my students to write collaboratively a researched English essay that counted towards their Continuous Assessment mark. This activity enabled my students to share knowledge by allowing them to perceive the topic from different viewpoints which encourage them to reflect on their personal perceptions, it also enhanced their critical thinking because each student had to negotiate and justify why their information should be included in the final product. Moreover, e-learning assessments give me a great understanding of how my online students are progressing and what they yet need to improve on. Equally important, self-assessments enable my students to focus on personal areas for improvement so that they can identify online resources independently. Reflection in online learning also assist another pivotal objection which is to reflect on the subject they just learned and integrate the information into their knowledge systems. Another way I encourage my students to be reflective in online learning is to request them to summarise their learning experiences at the end of each semester because this enables them to understand the main

concepts and enhance their intellectual capacity levels. Finally, I also request my online students to reflect on the entire e-learning experience, this includes how they felt about the e-learning course, what they found difficult and how they would apply the new knowledge to the rest of their academic studies.

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Summary

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed our world, and it has also taught us that the Higher Education system must be transformed to better prepare the present student generation for an unexpected future. This includes preparing our students to become citizens of a sustainable world and enable them to work collaboratively on a global level through the innovative use of technology. I believe that there is a need to redefine the role of educators, who should no longer be the sole owners of knowledge but become mentors or facilitators of e-learning. As an educator, I should encourage my students to find sustainable solutions to complex problems, based on a critical reflection of their current educational context analysis of epistemologies. Finally, I believe that there is a need to introduce new technologies that support engaging and motivating educational programs in Higher Education.

CHAPTER 5: STUDENT SUPERVISION IN RESEARCH

Introduction

In the previous chapter I critically reflected and deliberated on technology for teaching and learning in Higher Education. In this final chapter I will reflect and converse on student supervision in research. Firstly, Supervision is an inter-relational process, including interior and exterior factors as well as individual that occur between student and supervisor. The bond that develops between them depends on how well they manage their relationship (Abiddin, 2006). Most of the supervision activity must be supported with supervisors' input. Moreover, there are series of tasks and responsibilities that should be taken into account. How a supervisor works depends on the range and depth of supervision concept that he/she possessed. In addition, the supervisor maintain the conducive atmosphere for creativity and productivity, and to provide mechanisms for resolving problems which may arise between them (Abiddin, 2006). Thus, the skills of effective supervisor are utmost important. Supervision can be considered as facilitative process that requires supports and challenges (Pearson & Kayrooz, 2004). This includes providing research tasks and activities such as progress of the students, training and learning, coaching and mentoring, and encouraging student participation. The mentor is seen as a good adviser and not judgmental. The mentor should acknowledge the mentee to grow from dependent to independent and can adapt to change. In this chapter, firstly, I will reflect on the importance of student supervision in research, then I will discuss my journey and role as a student research supervisor. This is followed by a discussion on Reflective Learning Model of Supervision. Finally, I will reflect and discuss challenges that I experienced as a supervisor and propose possible solutions.

5.1 The Importance of Student Research Supervision in Higher Education.

As a point of departure, it is pivotal that I mention that the supervision of academic theses at the University of Namibia is one of the most important responsibilities with several challenges. Wisker (2005) states that research supervision plays a pivotal role in Higher Education in empowering students to become established researchers. Good practice principles for postgraduate research degree programmes with respect to research supervision commend that the following constituents are attended to: institutional arrangements; research environment; selection, admission, enrolment and induction of students; supervisory arrangements; initial review and subsequent progress; development of research and other skills; feedback

I profoundly believe that the role of the supervisor in providing a supportive, conducive and engaged supervision process is pivotal to ensure that the future generation of students have the correct educational knowledge and skills combination to realise the requirements of the profession. Through my own experience in student research supervision, I am cognisant that the role of a postgraduate supervisor is multifaceted (Wisker, 2005).

5.2 My Journey and Role as Student Research Supervisor at the University of Namibia

My journey of supervising postgraduate students started in November 2020 with Masters students in the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Namibia. I must mention that I have never supervised post-graduate students before, this is due to the fact that the Language Centre where I am employed to teach does not offer full qualifications, only core modules. I made it a point to consult the Faculty of Humanities in order to request them to allocate prospective post-graduate students to me for research supervision purposes. I am currently supervising two students with an interest in applied linguistics (See Appendix 5 (a) and (b) for students' research proposals). The students allocated to me live and work in the city of Windhoek. From the onset I quickly noticed that my students were not acquainted with research and, as their supervisor, I had to teach them research from a beginners' level until they become knowledgeable about research practices. Winberg and Ntloko (2015) postulate that there are numerous instances in African institutions of Higher Education, and internationally, where postgraduate students lack the necessary aptitude to conduct research projects, for example, being unable to search information and reading materials that relate to their studies. I learnt through discussions with my students, that they perceived the research as an enormous and terrible project. According to Winberg and Ntloko (2015) this is worsened by the fundamental challenge of insufficient academic literacy. Moreover, Manathunga and Goozee (2007) claim that universities embrace the culture of assumption that research students are already capable to conduct research autonomously, by virtue of being postgraduate students. This assumption is proved to be inappropriate by the many illustrations of postgraduate students who have not yet mastered the culture of the research communities and the discourses of their discipline in order to continue with their research projects. In addition, they also require emotional support and help as they develop their careers (Goozee, 2007). He further argues that the history and conditions of an institution can either constrain or produce an empowering environment of epistemological access to academic literacy. Hence, it is the responsibility of institutions of Higher

Education to ensure an enabling environment that facilitates the development of academic literacy of students, for instance, by providing access to Writing Centre services for both undergraduate and postgraduate students. Equally important, from my observation of their writing, it is evident that my students do not possess a strong academic writing background, therefore, I strongly believe that I have a great responsibility to develop strategies to enable my students to manage better their research work (Grossmann, 2016).

In the following section I will critically reflect and discuss my role as student research supervisor in Higher Education. According to Kiani and Jumani (2010) the research supervisor's role entails guiding students towards autonomy, and therefore the supervisor should strike a balance in providing feedback effectively and timeously. Moreover, the supervisor should constantly guide and train the supervisee to improve his/her written work. In addition, as a supervisor I have the need to take responsibility for making suggestions and provide opportunities for improvement of the supervised written work with the aim of empowering my students to take own initiative for personal academic growth. I believe that my role as supervisor in student research supervision is to identify my students' areas of weaknesses in writing and offer constructive feedback on how to improve in areas of weakness. I should also identify positive areas and provide positive feedback, in simple terms I must provide credit where credit is due. According to Grossmann (2016) student satisfaction with supervision and degree completion are interrelated hence the relationship with the supervisor is a determinant in students' success. I am also cognisant of the fact that my attitude could have an adverse impact on the students' perception of what a good relationship constitute. Kiani & Jumani (2010) provide a useful outline for good practice in postgraduate supervision which I totally embrace in my student research supervision practice. The eleven practices that constitute the features of an effective supervisor are outlined below: The supervisor must constantly monitor the concluding production and presentation of the research (Kiani & Jumani, 2010). Moreover, he / she must ensure that research partnership between supervisor and supervisee. The supervisor must get to know students well and carefully evaluate their needs.

He/ She must create reasonable, attainable mutual expectations and collaborate with students to create a solid conceptual foundation and research plan. The supervisor must encourage students to publish their work early in their academic life and often. I believe that using the above structure as

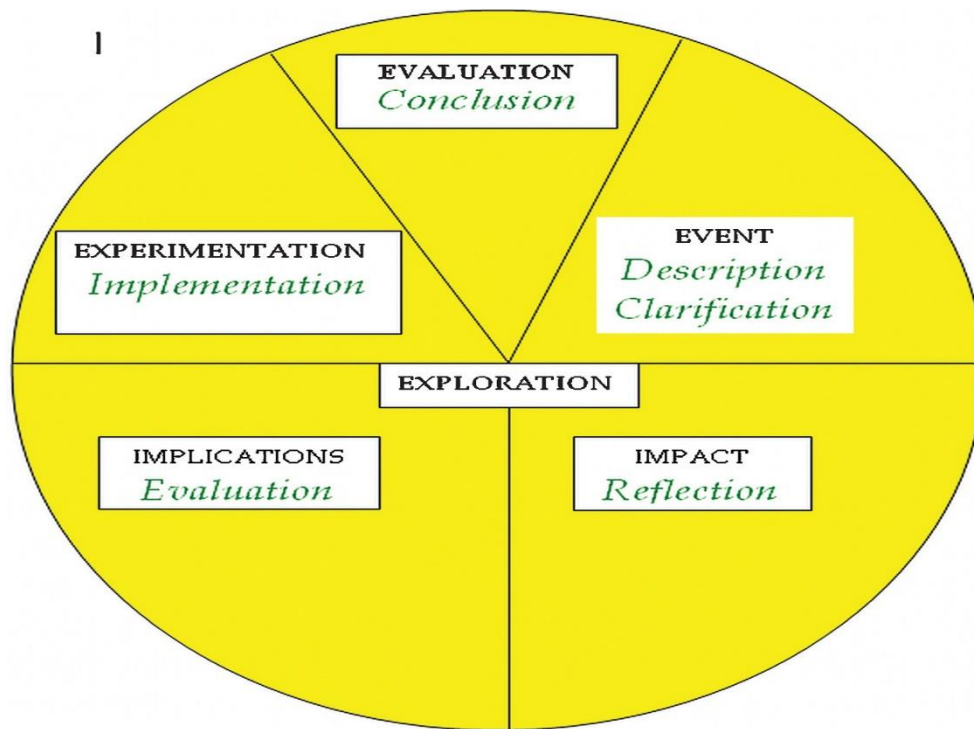
a manual when supervising a student could prepare the supervisor with direction in terms of the supervision process, supervision agreement and student support.

5.3 Reflective Learning Model of Supervision.

The portfolio is organised around the core ideology or argument that within the dynamic context of higher education, critical reflection or reflective practice should be entrenched in academic practices, such as teaching, student research and supervision and academic administration to enhance professional personal growth and student learning (golden thread) hence I adopt the Reflective Learning Model of Supervision as my mode of student research supervision.

Firstly, The Reflective Learning Model was advanced through the need for a practical model of supervision which directed the supervisor from the initial beginning of a supervision meeting until the end of the graduation process. Moreover, many models of supervision offer theoretical frameworks which define developmental phases of supervision (Brown & Bourne, 1996) or the theoretical (and therapeutic) processes and skills of supervision but few offer the new supervisor the necessary guidance from the beginning till the end. Hence, in my opinion there is a need for the Reflective Learning Model of supervision in Higher Education. This model is based on two principles. The first principle claims that the core purpose of supervision is to facilitate supervisee learning and development. Hence the model is reinforced by an understanding of the principles of adult experiential learning (Kolb, 1984). The second principle promotes the idea that learning develops transformational through reflection. As Kolb (1984) observes: 'It is not sufficient to have an experience to learn. Without reflecting on the experience it may be lost or misunderstood'. Although this model promotes the beginning and the end of the supervision process, it mainly focuses on the process in between these two collaborations which is where the real work of supervision happens. Most important, it pivots that the supervisor and student will have committed to building an effective relationship in the initial phases of practice learning (Kolb, 1984). The Reflective Learning Model of Supervision describes four stages namely, event, exploration, experimentation and evaluation which are addressed sequentially but allow for the student and the supervisor to move back and forth between the various stages as need arises (see Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1: The Reflective Learning Model of Supervision



Kolb (1984).

5.4 Problems that I Experienced in Student Supervision and Research and Possible Solutions.

Research supervision is the uppermost level of teaching for academics. Yet, in many cases, academics are assigned research supervision without any official training. It is a fact that for many supervisors, their supervision approach will be a reflection of what they have experienced themselves at post-graduate levels. Numerous supervisors consider that this form of teaching is stressful and difficult due to the responsibility placed on it by the Higher Education Institution. In the following section I critically reflect and discuss the problems that I experienced in student research supervision.

5.4.1 The Workload of Supervisors

The workload of supervisors was a great challenge for me as supervisor and my supervisees. Due to the lack of time, I do not have not enough time to guide and counsel my supervisees to carry out their duties. In order to solve this problem, I will have to set up a well-structured supervision timetable. Moreover, I have to plan my workload in such a way that I do not overload myself with administrative work. The supervision of my students will have to be intentionally worked into my work schedule and I will have to make sure that the deadlines are adhered to.

5.4.2 Lack of Resource

The other problem which is a great challenge in supervision is that I do not provide my students with the necessary access to information resources. I am aware that students who write the thesis pay much, spend a lot of time, but do not receive enough support. I will have to make all support resources available to my students, e.g. provide possible articles that relate to their topics. I will also be emotionally and professionally focused to their needs. I will also provide them with the necessary resources as they academic needs require.

5.4.3 Poor Staff Development Attendance

There is a distinct need for me to attend many supervisor development programs which are acceptable and have the standards for the changing student supervision and research contexts. I am aware that my lack of knowledge, methods and techniques can also affect the quality of the

research supervision. I will also have to make sure that I implement skills, knowledge and attitudes that I learn from staff development workshops in my students' supervision and research program.

5.4.4 Weak Structure of Thesis Supervision

This relates to a lack of written structure or supervision program. It is important for me to design and focus on a structured set of tasks that I as the supervisor and students must do. It is important for me to know what students expect from me, what I should do for the students, and what the students should do for me.

5.4.5 Ineffective Evaluation

One of the major problems in my research supervision at the University of Namibia is non-standard evaluation criteria, lack of expertise in thesis assessment and mark allocation, and inadequate standards in supervision and evaluation of faculty members in this area. It is imperative that I study the scoring and evaluation criteria carefully and adhere to the standards provided by the University.

5.4.6 Lack of Self-Assessment

Lastly, I have come to understand that self-assessment can improve the research abilities in the supervisor and the supervisees. Through self-assessment I can know and improve my own weaknesses. No other person is able to determine the abilities and qualifications of a supervisor, except myself. It is imperative that in any thesis process which includes writing, supervision and guidance, a self -assessment must be done both by me as supervisor and my supervisees

Summary

Quality supervision in teaching and learning in Higher Education has several challenges. For many supervisors and supervisees an essential understanding of what research constitutes is pivotal. There are various factors that could influence the relationship of the supervisor and supervisee such as the expectations of the student and, of course, the standard that the student already has in terms of skills, knowledge and experience. How research perceived in today's context of Higher Education could determine the success of research and student supervision. In addition to appropriate institutional and discipline specific knowledge, and pedagogical skills, my personal research and student supervision experience has revealed that students expect their supervisors to exhibit certain qualities in effective supervision. These include: 'sincerity', 'openness', 'compassion', 'sympathy', 'honesty', 'respect', and 'availability'. Finally, I believe there is a need to include a Reflective Learning Model of Supervision in Higher Education if we wish to empower our students to become effective and reflective life-long researchers.

APPENDIX 5 (A) STUDENT'S RESEARCH PROPOSAL

AN ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AS A COMMUNICATIVE
STRATEGY IN ACCESSING PUBLIC SERVICES IN KHOMAS REGION:

A CASE STUDY OF OKURYANGAVE PATIENTS

A RESEARCH PROPOSAL SUBMITTED IN

PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER IN ARTS IN ENGLISH STUDIES

OF

THE UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

BY

201405375

DECEMBER 2020

SUPERVISOR: DR. JOSEPH MUKOROLI

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

Language is a communication tool (Aukongo, 2015). For effective communication to happen people should be able to understand the language that is being used to communicate (Iiping, 2019). Therefore, a persons' language choice is essential for communication purposes. Namibia is a multilingual country with a number of different indigenous (Mlambo, 2017) thus, one is exposure to a number of languages in a single discussion. There is a total of 13 recognized languages in the country from which 10 are indigenous African languages and 3 are Indo- European languages (Frydman, 2011).

Despite the composition of languages found within Namibia English is chosen as the official language of the country as it is the only language shared by the population even though only a small number of 0.8% are first language speakers. English is found within the different structures of the government such as administration, national politics and government (Frydman, 2011). However, because of the linguistic diversity in Namibia, English is the lingua Franca of communication at all levels, this including healthcare facilities (Mlambo.2017).

Basimike (2018) states that since the English language is the lingua franca in Namibia it is the most frequently used as a means of communication between the people. However, at times the interlocutors accessing public services like healthcare have basic knowledge in English language and due to that fact the is a challenge due to a lack of mutual understanding due to a language barrier. The English language is the mode of communicative strategy at most of the healthcare facilities this including the Okuryangave clinic as many of the interlocutor's patients that go there have challenging expressing themselves in the English language when accessing public services (Mlambo, 2017). Mlambo (2017) stresses that English language as a lingua franca comes with communicative challenges that may have negative impact on the quality of accessing public services. The proposed study specifically seeks to analysis the use of English language as a communicative strategy in accessing public services for Okuryangave patients.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Although there are previous studies done in Namibia on communication or communicative strategies by Aukongo (2015), Basimike (2018) and Mlambo (2017), such studies focused on

different domains rather than on accessing public services have contributed greatly to the field of communication in Namibia. However, findings from previous studies may not be generalised to the use of English language in accessing public services as it is a different domain. Healthcare facilities have a multilingual set up in which the interlocutors speak different home languages (Mlambo, 2017), this includes the Okuryangave healthcare facility thus, the need to use a common language which is essential to achieve effective communication amongst interlocutors which are the nurses and patients. A common language will enable effective communication which will help in accessing public services.

Therefore, healthcare has a public setting with a formal language setting thus, English language is used within such a setting (Iiping, 2019). Therefore, a lack of English language proficiency might hinder patients from accessing public services such as healthcare as a result of a language barrier which will result in ineffective communication between interlocutors (Aukongo, 2015). Thus, there is a need to use a common language that will be a medium of communication which will serve in improving communication for better access services delivery. This study therefore aims to analyse and investigate the use of English language in accessing public services thereby contributing to the existing body of knowledge on communication in Namibia.

1.3 Research questions

1.3.1 What are the linguistic profiles of the participating patients and the nurses in the study?

1.3.2 How does English language proficiency influence communication between nurses and patients?

1.3.4 What communicative problem comes from using English language as a lingua franca between nurses and patients?

1.3.5 How do nurses and patients reduce the problem experienced with the usage of English language in accessing public services?

1.4 Significance of the study

The proposed study will provide useful insight to the already existing literature from previous studies (Aukongo, 2015; Basimike, 2018) therefore, it will focus on the usage of English language

in accessing public services. This study will help in understanding if English language proficiency is a barrier in accessing public services. Moreover, the findings of the study will help future researchers on related concepts to use the findings of the study to investigate aspects which are not yet studied in Namibia.

1.5 Limitation of the study

The proposed study will be restricted to the Okuryangave clinic nurses and patients in Khomas region. English language proficiency is the focus for the proposed study therefore, the findings from the study will not necessarily represented that of related studies. Additionally, a lack keenness from patients might be experienced as a limitation when it comes to collecting data. Time might also be a limitation as nurses may be too preoccupied to a part take in the study.

1.6 Delimitation of the study

The proposed study will be restricted only to the Okuryangave clinic nurses and patients and not to the whole khomas region. The study will focus on the role English language proficiency play in accessing public services by patients. Finally, the study will not include doctors or any other healthcare practitioners.

2. Literature review and Theoretical framework

2.1 Literature review

The linguistic diversity of Namibia, led to the country using a common lingua franca to equip Namibians with a common language that would people to gain access to public services (Olivir,2008). Mlambo (2017) states that Namibia has a diverse of languages. They are 13 languages of which 10 are indigenous African languages and 3 are Indo-European languages. However, English being the lingua franca within the country came with challenges, as the majority of the population express themselves within one of the indigenous languages (Mlambo, 2017). Patients have a limited proficiency within the English language, which is the centre of communication for every relationship (Lunenber, 2010) and without English language there can be no communication which in the end results in accessing basic essential healthcare due to a lack of English language proficiency.

Frydman (2011) express that the ability to communicate well in a language such as English brings ease for communication purposes especially amongst diverse ethnic groups within a country with a diverse linguistic set up. Additionally, language being a lingua franca in a multilingual country like Namibia has raise concerns as according to Mlambo (2017) the majority of the population uses national healthcare facilities but due to patients not having a common language with the nurses it leads to ineffective communication between the nurses and patients as many of the patients speak their indigenous languages when visiting the clinic. Mlambo (2017) further stated that due to limited literature on the challenges of a lack of language proficiency on accessing public services within the Namibian context. An article from the New Era Newspaper dated 9th April 2015 titled “Language barrier hampers health servicers” emphasised the need of language related healthcare provision as English language is a barrier when it comes to patient accessing healthcare services. Additionally, the language difficulties that come with English language go past patients only as acquaintances that escort patients to healthcare facilities are themselves not skilful in the English language themselves.

Therefore, a lack of skilful in English will have concerns especially for patients who come from extreme rote areas were a very small population of people speak English or understand it hence, a lack of skilful hinders access to public servicers (New Era, 2015). All in all, challenges that come with language barriers in multilingual healthcare context can be overcome thus, the study focuses on the use of English language proficiency as a communicative strategy on access to public services such as healthcare.

2.2 Theoretical framework

The proposed study will be informed by the Communication Accommodation Theory which in short is CAT. The theory emphasis how different speakers of different cultural accommodate each other during interactions by adjusting their speech styles (Orbe & Harris, 2008). It stresses that the focus is on strengthening the speakers’ intentions to communicate better thus, it goes above the normal target of communication which is the rates, accents, grammar, gestures, vocabulary and audibility. CAT emphasises that adjustment to speaking is done in two ways, mainly: divergence and convergence. Divergence is used to show the differences between speakers while as for convergence is used to show ways how speakers make adjustments to become more alike. It is

therefore, important to understand the intergroup dynamics of speakers for communication in adjusting their language pattern to accommodate one another (Farzadnia & Giles, 2015).

3. Research method

3.1 Research design

The proposed study will be qualitative in nature since, it is a way of getting an extensive depth of knowledge when data is collected, organised and interpreted from participants either using eyes, ears as a method (Litchman, 2010). A qualitative research is described as “a naturalistic, interpretative approach which is concerned with understanding the meanings which people attach to the phenomena (actions, decisions, beliefs, values) within their social world” (p.3) (Ritchie and Lewis, 2013). Additionally, the qualitative research has features that are best suited for the proposed study, hence it provides an in-depth and an interpretation in understanding the social world. Henceforth, this study will be conducted using a grounded theory research design (Statistics Solutions, 2013). The study will use an in-depth interviews, observation and questionnaires to collect data.

3.2 Population

The participants of this study will be obtained from the entire Okuryangave clinic nurses and patients present at the time of the study.

3.3 Sample

This study will employ the random sampling. The study will investigate a total of 50 participants of which 25 will be nurses and the other 25 will be patients all from the Okuryangave clinic in Windhoek, Khomas region.

3.4 Research instruments

The proposed study will use the researcher as the researcher is the key instrument in any qualitative research, thus it is the researcher who collects the data from interviews papers, Questionnaire papers and observing behaviours. Creswell (2009) states that researcher use different instruments in collecting data hence, the researcher sets up their own instruments such as questionnaires and interview questions which are used to gather the information. In the proposed study the researcher main role is to collect data as the research thoroughly examines the interview and questionnaire

papers. The researcher is the key player in the proposed study thus, the researcher will dictate how the data will be collected and how it will be used in the study to achieve the desired outcome from the study.

3.5 Procedure

The proposed study will use interviews, observations and questionnaires as research instruments to collect data. The researcher will select the participants at random. The researcher will firstly select 25 nurses for the interviews which will be recorded, the researcher will then select 25 patients for the questionnaires and finally the researcher will select a session for observation, which will be recorded on a check list for easy observation.

3.6 Data analysis

Data will be analysed based on areas investigated. The study will use content analysis for questionnaires as it looks closely at the interactions people make during conversation (Kawurich, n.d.) which adds importance to the study, it will also use discourse analysis for interviews and observation as it adds knowledge, new insights as well as a description of facts which is a practical guide to action (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Moreover, the data collected will be analysed into different themes to make the data interpretable. The responses from the participants will form the basis of the themes.

3.7 Research ethics

The researcher will obtain ethical clearance from The University of Namibia's Research and Ethics Committee before conducting the proposed study. The researcher will also obtain ethical clearance from the Ministry of Health and Social Services and also from the participants (Nurses and Patients). The researcher will inform the participants about their rights and the purpose of the study, which is for academic purposes only. Moreover, the researcher will ensure that participants that all data to be collected will be treated as confidential hence, the researcher will also inform the participants that all data collected will be treated as anonymous.

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APPENDIX 5 (B) STUDENT'S RESEARCH PROPSAL

APPLYING A PROCESS-GENRE APPROACH TO PROMOTE TEXTUAL METAFUNCTION
IN ACADEMIC WRITING AMONG THE ENGLISH MAJOR STUDENTS AT THE
INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF MANAGEMENT (IUM)

A RESEARCH PROPOSAL SUBMITTED IN FULFILLMENT FOR THE REQUIREMENT
OF THE PHD IN LITERACY AND LEARNING AT THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION:
UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

BY

STUDENT NUMBER: 200012622

MAIN SUPERVISOR: DR. JOSEPH MUKOROLI

1.1 Background of the study

In Namibia, English is a medium of instruction in government schools (Ministry of Education, 2009). However, the teaching of English is often reliant on rote learning, and receiving of information (Smith, 2010). Simasiku, Kasanda Smit (2015) attribute this practice to cause for poor performance in examinations. The grade 10 examination reports (Ministry of Education, Art and Culture, 2012, 2014, 2015) show no significant improvement on learners' performance in English over the years, and that writing in English Second Language (ESL) was not satisfactory. Over the years, the majority of students have failed to produce better symbols (A, B and C) in English in the junior and senior secondary school final examinations (Ministry of Education, Art and Culture, 2015). The problem is that a number of Grade 10 (Ministry of Education, Art and Culture, 2015) candidates lack essay writing skills to produce the actual language when writing in English. Lack of writing proficiency is further experienced at senior secondary schools through university level in Namibia. Writing may be the most complex communication within the communicative arts. As Negari (2011, p. 299), states "writing is a complicated process which involves a number of cognitive and metacognitive aspects such as planning, drafting and editing". However, at tertiary level students are expected to express themselves clearly and effectively in writing, that is, the purpose, context, and rhetorical structure. Wolfaardt (2006) laments that Namibian students generally are comparably weak in English language as compared to their global peers. In South Africa, Carstens (2009) and Kanyile (2015) also reported the under preparedness of students to meet university academic writing demands. Scholars such as Nyathi (1999) note weaknesses in students' academic writing skills in higher institutions of learning in Namibia. Nyathi (1999) voiced the dissatisfactions of lecturers at the University of Namibia (UNAM) main campus about

students' poor English academic writing skills. Mukoroli (2014) found students' lack of knowledge about rhetoric structure to explicitly convey meaning when writing academic essays at UNAM main campus. Similarly, Frans (2012) found lack of academic writing competency in students at Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST), and commended that students be taught necessary writing skills to successfully meet the disciplines' writing demands. As language lecturer at IUM, this researcher can attest that many students have difficulty in developing functional language when writing, that is, selecting proper words, using correct grammar, and developing ideas about a specific topic. Students at IUM need guidance on how to produce whole piece of information, to link and develop information, or arguments for a particular audience. Murray and Johanson (1990) suggest a need for writing skills training to such students. In this study, a process-genre approach is chosen to promote a Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) textual metafunction (Halliday, 1978) rooted in the study of how language functions. Matsuda (2006) indicated that English Second Language (ESL) practitioners are still in search of coherent and comprehensive theory to teaching writing, and Namibia is no exception. For pedagogical reasons, it is a requirement that an application of effective approach to writing instruction is pursued and engendered in Namibian classrooms. Murray and Johanson (1990) suggest a more pragmatic, hands-on approach to help teachers and students in their quest for effective writing skills.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Harmer (2004) states that English language is taught to students "who are living in the target language community and need English to function in that community on a day-to-day basis" (p. 39). At IUM students are assigned to write various types of texts in English such as academic essays, examinations, research projects in order to fulfill requirements of study courses or express

thoughts on certain issues. However, it is observed that many students lack knowledge and control of English language resources such as syntactic knowledge, coherency to communicate ideas clearly, and the awareness of social context of written text. Students lack of writing competence to produce effective written texts may be due to their language backgrounds (Mukoroli, 2014), or are not given sufficient opportunities to practice writing at textual level. Murray and Johanson (1990) suggest the need for more pragmatic, hands-on approach that would help teachers in their quest for effective writing skills. The focus of this study is therefore, to apply a process-genre practice to IUM English major students at the Ongwediva Campus in order to promote textual metafunction in academic writing, that is, the schematic structure and linguistic features.

1.4 Research objectives

This study will address the following objectives:

- 1) To establish the type of language resources available in first year English major students at IUM.
- 2) To explore how the process-genre practice helps enhance textual metafunction in English major students' academic essays at the IUM.
- 3) To demonstrate how grammatical cohesion applied to achieve coherence in IUM's students' written texts after process genre orientation.
- 4) To tap on the IUM English major students' perceptions towards the process-genre writing cycles.
- 5) To develop the textual metafunction thematic resources into a writing training manual.

1.5 Significance of the study

The significance of this study stems from the possibility of broadening scope of students' writing skills including the use of effective thematic structures. Further, this study will analyze the textual

metafunction of students' academic essays, and the results might provide useful information about the level of language usage by IUM Ongwediva campus students. The findings may provide both lecturers and students with the effective writing approach that will influence the development of writing skills in English.

1.6 Limitations of the study

There are potential methodological issues that may negatively impact the conclusion of this study. First, the sample may not be sufficient to be considered as representation of the population from which the results be generalized. Second, lack of previous research studies conducted in Namibia in the area to serve as theoretical basis for the research questions.

1.7 Delimitations of the study

This study will aim at applying a process-genre orientation to IUM's Ongwediva campus students' written work in order to realize coherence in students' academic writing. The study will focus on forty-eight (48) first year English major students at the International University of Management (IUM) Ongwediva campus.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) theory

This study is informed by the Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) theory by Halliday (1976). The theory treats writing as functional and systemic. The interest in this theory is that language is utilized in social settings to attain specific targets (O'Donnell, 2012). Social setting is the focus of process-genre practice which seeks to develop the students' ability to utilize language in different settings. Students at tertiary institutions in Namibia lack the ability to produce an effective

language to construe meaning in writing (Frans, 2012). To Halliday (1978) language is a social-semiotic system, a system by which its meaning and form are always driven by its context and the speaker's communicative goal. It is the awareness of the goal and context of writing that this study seeks to cultivate in students. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p. 32), SFL covers a "tristratal model" of language, that is, the language itself can be analysed in three levels which are; discourse semantic, lexico-grammar and phonology. Further, the discourse semantic realizes the linguistic resource (of a clause) into three modes of meaning making metafunctions: the interpersonal, ideational, and the textual-metafunction which deals with the language itself and other features (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Batler (2003) pointed out that each metafunction can be analysed separately. This study investigates students' textual metafunction use, and its significance in the analysis of context to meaning making process.

2.2 SFL Textual metafunction

Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) point out that textual metafunction focuses on relationships of text-internal structure as well as the relevance between a text and situation. The concern of this study is that IUM students struggle with many structural issues such as selecting proper words, using correct grammar, and developing such ideas in a coherent way. To Halliday (1978) textual metafunction is part of the text that makes the text intact and flow. In terms of components, Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) point out that textual metafunction is realized through three structures: semantic structure, information structure, and cohesion. These structures are concerned with the creation of a text, and the way writers organize meanings into a text that makes sense (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). Hedges (2005) opines that writing is about guiding students to produce whole piece of communication, to link and develop information, ideas, or arguments for a particular reader or group of readers. The focus of this study is on cohesion.

2.3 Systemic Function Linguistic Cohesion

Halliday and Hassan (1976) define (Systemic Function Linguistic) cohesion as the semantic relation between one element and another in a text. They also stated that “a text is not a grammatical unit, but rather a semantic unit of language, that is, unity of meaning, not a form” (p. 7). Halliday and Hassan (1976) further argue that cohesion does not only deal with grammar, but also with vocabulary, hence it is divided into grammatical and lexical cohesion. Grammatical cohesion is then divided into four types: reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunctions. Whereas, lexical cohesions are: reiteration and collocation. SFL provides a framework that will explain genre use at all educational levels, but not only at tertiary level. This study will apply a genre-process approach, adopting the SFL textual metafunction as a tool to enhance IUM Ongwediva campus English major students realize generic structure of a text.

2.2.2 Process-Genre Approach to writing

Badger and White (2000) claim that teachers need not to rigidly adopt just one approach of writing all times in the classroom. They combined the process and genre approaches to teaching writing, and termed it the Process-Genre approach. Students at IUM Ongwediva campus lack knowledge of text organization and functional grammar; therefore they need assistance and input. To realize that, this study will embrace Krashen’s (1985) input hypothesis and Swain’s (1985) negotiation of meaning hypothesis. Huang (2010) puts it, in English writing, teachers should reasonably use related theories of language consciousness to change teaching methods, so that the students can get more correct language input.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study will adopt a mixed method which combines qualitative and quantitative approaches in the same study. A mixed methods approach will be used to include a survey of students' written tasks, SFL analysis, discourse analysis, and a comparison of the pre- and post- essay rating analysis.

3.2 Population of the study

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2010) a population is a group of people or objects that share similar characteristics in which the researcher is interested to study. Overall, forty-eight (48) first year language major students will be the target population for this study. Despite students are majoring in two languages; the focus of this study will be only on English language.

3.3 Sample and sampling procedure

Based on the researcher's knowledge of the population, a judgment is made about which subjects should be selected to provide the best information to address the purpose of the research (de Vos et al., 2011). Purposive sampling will be used to select forty-eighty (48) English major students who are doing their first year at the Ongwediva campus. These students have little or no exposure to academic writing in the senior secondary school, since it is only practiced at university level.

3.4 Data collection instruments

The corpora of students' essays will be used to collect data for this study. Corpora contain authentic language that occurs naturally. The researcher will utilize the academic essays written by first year English major students in order to elicit the grammar cohesion in their written work.

3.4.1 Procedure

According to Halliday (2014) textual metafunction is realized through thematic, semantic and cohesion. First, the researcher will administer a pre-test to first year English major students, followed by the orientation to process-genre teaching cycles that will cover explicit instruction on the theory of textual metafunctions: thematic, semantic and cohesion. After orientation stage, the modeling stage where the sampled students will be customized to a coherent paragraph containing grammatical cohesion. Third, joint construction stage; students practice writing paragraphs applying the thematic progression and cohesive devices. Last, independent construction, students write own paragraphs under the researcher's supervision.

3.5 Data analysis

This study will employ Halliday's (1978) textual analysis to investigate the language resources and grammar of English major students' essays. The focus will be on the use of schematic structure and linguistic features as a genre based analysis, and it will help the researcher look at the thematic position of students' written texts. The researcher will analyze the corpora of essays written by first year IUM Ongwediva campus English major students to tap in how the language resources have been used to negotiate meaning.

3.6 Ethical considerations

It is important that the requirement for conducting research at the University of Namibia (UNAM) is adhered to in this study. Therefore, permission to conduct this research will be sought from the Faculty of Education at the International University of Management (IUM), Ongwediva campus. The Ethical Clearance Certificate will be sought from the UNAM's Ethics Committee. Informant consent from participants will be sought before embarking on the research process. Students will

be asked to complete and sign a consent form indicating that they voluntarily agreed to take part in the research. Participants will also be assured of confidentiality and anonymity and their identities will not be revealed to anyone. All participants will be informed about the nature of this research, its objectives and that they can withdraw from participating in this study any time during the research if they feel uncomfortable.

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CONCLUSION

In the final analysis, as I critically reflect on this journey that I undertook as I wrote this portfolio, I must admit that it was not easy but it was worth it. Firstly, the intensive and comprehensive knowledge, skills and new attitudes that I obtained through my engagement in the PDHE program has afforded me the opportunity to profoundly interrogate my current Personal Theory of Teaching Practice (PTOTP) and therefore made the necessary improvements. In addition, through this program I became acutely aware of my need to incorporate critical reflection in all my aspects of academic practice such as teaching and learning, assessment, student research and supervision, academic leadership and management. The various classes that I engaged in, allowed me to critically reflect and socially construct new knowledge and skills, academically interacted with fellow students and experienced various paradigm shifts that lead me to debunk various preconceived bodies of knowledge. Equally important, this program has challenged and enhanced my critical thinking abilities (criticality) and therefore I opine that I have become a dynamic and resourceful student of the universe that is able to constructively contribute to the High Education discourse community. I believe henceforth, I will not revert back to my old manners of academic practice, but will embrace the new Knowledge, Awareness, Skills and Attitudes (KASA) that I have gained through the PDHE program. For this, I will be eternally indebted to all the facilitators on the program that unselfishly imparted their knowledge and skills to turn me into a critical reflective academic practitioner that I am currently.

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