

ASSESSING STUDENTS IN ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES: THE ROLE
OF ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT TOOLS IN WRITING INSTRUCTION

BY

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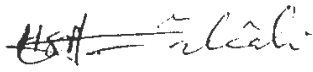
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NOVEMBER 2018

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that “Assessing students in English for Academic Purposes: The role of alternative assessment tools in writing instruction” is my work, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.



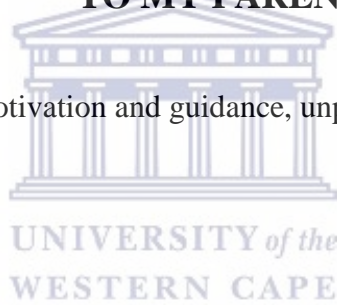
Hafeni Pamwenase Shikalepo Hamakali

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TO MY PARENTS

To your unswerving motivation and guidance, unparalleled love, and resolute care.



ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the assessment of students in the English for Academic Purposes course at the University of Namibia Language Centre. There has been increasing criticism of standardised test and examinations and it has brought into question the value of other indirect approaches to language assessment (Reeves, 2000; Sharifi, & Hassaskhah, 2011; Tsagari, 2004). The study draws its theoretical foundation from the constructivist's view of education (Canagarajah, 1999; Schunk, 2009; Vygotsky, 1962). The study embraces the interpretivist approach to research which tends to be more qualitative, and is open to diverse ways that people may understand and experience the same non-manipulated objective reality.

The participants in this study are students and lecturers of the English for Academic Purposes course at the University of Namibia Language Centre. The study employs a qualitative research design, along with triangulation, where qualitative data was collected through lecturer interviews, lesson observations, multiple intelligence inventory, and student focus groups discussions. The study adapted the thematic approach of data analysis where the data were analysed and presented under themes derived from the research questions of the study.

The findings indicate that, there was a limited stock of assessments that suits the classification of alternative assessment, namely: checklists, student-lecturer question techniques, and academic essay. The findings reveal some factors that influence the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction, such as: lecturers and students' knowledge of assessment, students' assessment preferences, authenticity, classroom setup, and feedback. The findings also showed that the assessment practices that were used by the lecturers did not seem to fulfil the ideologies advocated in Gardener's (1984) theory of Multiple Intelligences. However, the study found that the students and lecturers' attitude which was skewed towards the positive direction may be an indication that there could be hope for success in attempts to integrate alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

The findings of this study could be useful in informing language instructors, language material developers, language teacher trainers, as well as curriculum designers about the role of alternative assessment in language programs. Based on the insights generated from the entire process of this study, the study proposes an integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. The study also proposes a framework that should guide the implementation of the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. The framework could also be a guide to designing, planning, and administering alternative assessment to effectively assess academic writing abilities of students.



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KEY WORDS

Academic writing

Academic literacy

Alternative assessment

Assessment

English for Academic Purposes

Framework

Instruction

Integration



ACRONYMS

ACPLF	Assessment Competency and Professional Learning Framework
APA	American Psychological Association
BEALEAP	British English Association of Lecturer for English for Academic Purposes
BICS	Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills
CALP	Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
ESL	English Second Language
MA TESOL	Master of Arts in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
MA	Master of Arts
NCTE	National Council of Teachers of English
NIES	National Institute of Education in Singapore
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
TBA	Task based assessment
TCPS	The Canadian Tri-Council Policy Statement
ULEA	English for Academic Purposes
UNAM	University of Namibia
UNESCO	United Nation Educational, Scientific Cultural Organisation
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1. A Point of Departure

As a point of departure, it is important for my study to provide an overview of my background as the researcher in this study. My experience in language education started with teaching of English as Second Language at high school level, and then at university level where I focused more on Academic Literacy. Recently, I have taught the English for Academic Purposes course at the University of Namibia. Therefore, my research background has been mainly on teaching and learning of academic literacy, and as such I have developed research interest in the assessment practices of academic language. I must acknowledge here that, my knowledge, skills and experiences on language assessment will have a significant influence on my study as well as on my philosophy of language education. At this juncture, I know through my experience in teaching language courses (such as English for Academic Purposes) and from the language education and language assessment literature that language assessment is a crucial component of language instruction. I also share the same understanding with language assessment scholars such as Brown and Abeywickrama (2010) who view assessment and teaching as partners in that assessment provides feedback to teaching; it also promotes student responsibility as they confirm areas of strength and those that may need to be further probed.

The term assessment may carry different interpretations in various settings, fields, or industries. Thus, it is important that from the very outset, I highlight the definition of assessment as I view it in my study. In this regard, I invoke the University of Namibia's (2013) Assessment Policy which defines assessment as "the process of collecting evidence on student performance in order to determine how well students have achieved the intended learning outcomes" (p. 3). In particular, I wish to refer to Dikli's (2003) definition of language assessment that, it is any method used to find out the current language knowledge and skills that a student possesses in line with their learning objectives or practices. Concerning my subject and focus of study: alternative assessment,

I wish to embrace the definition of alternative assessment as the collection of evidence of change or progress from multiple sources over time and the analysis of data to help inform lecturers, students, programs, and eventually, policy makers who need to compare findings across curriculum (Balliro, 1993). In addition, it is also the process of evaluating student's performance, lecturer's teaching methods, and learning materials in order to reconsider the way of teaching and to make the necessary adjustments in it for a better as well as an empowering educational experience to students in particular (Fiktorius, 2013). With this understanding of what assessment should be, I have been continually curious towards the appropriateness and effectiveness of assessment practices employed at the University of Namibia and in the English for Academic Purposes in particular.

Over the years of teaching academic literacy to university students, I have come to learn that assessment is central to students' learning experience. I can illustrate the importance of this, as I invoke Lombardi (2008) who writes that, many lecturers find themselves explaining something to their students and then all of a sudden a hand shoots up:

“Yes” the lecturer asks looking forward to engage on the topic with the bright mind.

“Um, do we have to know this? Will it be on the test [or exam]?” the student asks
(p. 2)

This is a common concern that I have also observed in my English for Academic Purposes classrooms, and to me, I interpret it as an indication that the types of assessment that students know tend to determine when they tune in to the lecturer and tune out. This is to suggest that, assessment tends to define what students may regard important and what is worth their time; because students tend to take their cues of what is important from what is assessed. In light of this, I am inclined to argue that, if one then would like to change the student learning, then a point of start is by changing the method of assessment (Lombardi 2008). I believe that, this change should therefore be informed by theoretical and empirical foundation so that the resulting methods are of good quality and they can benefit the students, instruction, and the lecturers.

I wish to point out that recently, two types of language assessments have emerged. One is termed ‘traditional assessment’, and the other one is ‘alternative assessment’ (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010; Herman, Aschbacher & Winters, 1992). Traditional assessment refers to the methods of assessment which use traditional assessment techniques (for example, tests and examinations) which are formal, standardised, and students are given administrative procedures and scoring. Alternative assessment, on the other hand, refers to methods of assessment (for example, research projects, portfolios, group discussions) which can be formal and informal, but the information gathered is ongoing and context driven. I have noted from the language assessment discourse that, there has been increasing criticism of standardised tests and examinations (Reeves, 2000; Sharifi, & Hassaskhah, 2011; Tsagari, 2004), and this has sensitised the need to consider and explore the value of other indirect approaches to language assessment. I have also learned that, various studies reported that alternative assessment provides a wealth of information which can inform a more socially attuned interpretation of standardised tests or examination results. It is therefore against this background that, I have developed my curiosity on the possibility of using alternative assessment in academic literacy courses. This has prompted me to propose and conduct a study to investigate the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction at the University of Namibia Language Centre, where I am currently employed.

1.1. Aim and Scope of the Study

At this juncture, I am aware that, various scholars refer to the concept of alternative assessment as: ‘authentic’ assessment (Barootchi & Keshavarz, 2002); ‘performance’ assessment (Bachman & Palmer, 2011); and ‘continuous’ or ‘ongoing’ assessment (Reeves, 2000). I also know that, researchers and educators tend to use these terms interchangeably, though consistently (Reeves, 2000). I, therefore, wish to mention that in my study, I have used the term ‘alternative assessment’ since it tends to be more generic in light of this concept.

Now that I have selected the term “alternative assessment”, I also wish to point out that it can be classified in terms of *structured* or *unstructured* assessments. Structured assessment may have distinct outcomes which may be grades, issued a score, or marked “complete” or “not complete” (Hamayan, 1995). On the other hand, unstructured assessment may comprise any activity that can be performed in the jurisdiction of a given institution of learning. Another classification that I should also point out is that, alternative assessment can be informed by the *process* or *product* approaches (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010). The process approach puts more emphasis on the way the students process the learning content. In this case, the focus of assessment is on the performance and behaviour of the student towards the learning contents. The product approach, however, concentrates on the outcome or final product of the performance or behaviour. The assessment is more focused on what the student produces and a grade or score is likely to be obtained. I must clarify though that, according to Hamayan (1995; Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010), the product and process approaches can be used to inform the same type of assessment. This is to suggest that depending on the purpose of assessment, language instructors can use the same type of assessment to assess how students have gone about completing a given task, as well as assess the final product or the completed task.

My study is predicated on an investigation of the integration of alternative assessment in the English for Academic Purposes course in the University of Namibia. The course English for Academic Purposes is being concerned with communication skills in English which are required for study purposes in formal higher education for academic purposes (Jordan, 1997). The main objective of the course is to develop students’ ability to comprehend and express themselves fluently, appropriately and accurately in spoken and written academic English. I wish to state that, the main focus of my study is on how alternative assessment can be integrated into academic writing instruction. In this context, academic writing is done to fulfil a requirement of university (Mukoroli, 2016), and instruction is the purposeful direction of the learning process of academic writing which tends to be the major teacher/lecturer class activity (Joyce, Weil & Calhoun, 2003). Now

that I have presented the aim and scope of my study, in the next subsection, I wish to present the context of the study.

1.2. Context of the Study

I carried out my study in Namibia, at the University of Namibia, in the Language Centre. Namibia is a country in South Western Africa, bordering Angola in the north, Zimbabwe and Zambia in the north-east, Botswana in the East, South Africa in the South, and the Atlantic Ocean in the west. The University of Namibia is a state owned and funded institution, and it is the first university in the country, established in 1992 “by an Act of Parliament of August 31, 1992 as recommended by a Commission of Higher Education” (University of Namibia, 2016, para. 1). The University of Namibia Language Centre operates as the Centre for language learning, teaching and research. The key focus is on the upgrading of competence in the use of English, and the teaching of the University core courses, namely: Academic Writing for Postgraduate Students, English for Academic Purposes, English Communication and Study Skills, English for General Communications, and English Communication for Certificate Purposes. It is mandatory for all undergraduate students to take the course English for Academic Purpose as a core module. In this course, they are introduced to various academic language skills, which they may need during their studies and beyond.

Majority of the students enrolled at the University of Namibia have passed out of secondary schools in Namibia. This includes both private and state owned secondary/high schools. They have attended high school programmes which are governed by the language policies produced by the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture. The language syllabi for Namibian secondary school, analogous to the University of Namibia’s assessment policy, promotes alternative assessment as it emphasises that information gathered about learners’ progress and achievements should be used to give feedback to the learners about their strong and weak points (Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, 2014). However, in practice, assessments in Namibian schools remain largely traditional since most of the teaching is geared towards national examinations, the final product, with little focus on the learning process; assessment relies largely on traditional

assessment, such as tests, essays and friendly letters (Hamakali & Lumbu, 2016). This mismatch seems to have led Hamakali and Lumbu (2016) to question the relevance of assessing the friendly letter, when the world has already shifted to using electronic e-mails, as well as social media. This is to suggest that, the students that enter the University of Namibia and attend courses at the language Centre may be more exposed to assessment practices that are predominantly traditional and have limited link to real world practices.

In Namibian tertiary institutions, the situation differs slightly. More avenues for alternative assessment are provided. The University of Namibia's (2013) assessment policy permits the usage of alternative assessment in the university programs, as it is stated in the policy that "[i]t does not constrain the development of alternative or additional forms of effective assessment, provided such assessment are consistent with the principles stated in the policy" (p. 3). I have also noted that, the continuous assessment contributes the largest proportion to the exit mark. The University of Namibia and the International University of Management, for example, have a ratio of 60% for continuous assessment and 40% of the examination. Nevertheless, this should not really be sufficient for me to conclude and confirm that alternative assessment is integrated into the continuous assessment, because traditional assessment may still dominate it. Despite the published and declared advocacy for alternative assessment, traditional assessment seems to continue to dominate language programmes. There still remains limited empirical evidence of practical integration of alternative assessment in language instruction, particularly in academic writing instruction. Now that I have presented the context of my study, in the next subsection I wish to proceed to present the statement of the problem of my study.

1.3. Statement of the Problem

Although the traditional approach to language assessment, which uses traditional assessment techniques (traditional assessment), seems to be preferred in most Namibian educational and language programs, educators and critics from various backgrounds have voiced quite a number of concerns about the effectiveness of these techniques in some learning situations (Tsagari, 2004). At this juncture, I am well aware that traditional

assessment tends to require less institutional budget, subjective evaluation and interaction in the process compared to alternative assessment techniques (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010). It is also documented that:

Many universities homogenize their [lecturers] into teaching in a particular way and their students into learning in a particular way. This is because they believe that homogenizing their [lecturers] and students into particular way of functioning will provide for better control and power relations (Sivasubramaniam, 2004, p. 4).

However, Tsagari (2004) argues that traditional assessment tends to be incongruent with the current practices in the language classrooms. This suggests that, dependency on traditional assessment alone may compromise the effectiveness and quality of assessment outcomes in the academic writing courses. This is also in keeping with Barootchi and Keshavarz (2002) who argue that, it can be challenging for the traditional assessment alone to inform the language instructors about the process of learning; information needed for formative evaluation and further planning of the teaching and learning strategies might not be easily provided through traditional assessment.

Further concerns to traditional assessment have also been raised in that it tends to encourage rote learning and hinder critical thinking and reasoning (Tsagari, 2004). A normative rather than a criterion approach to assessment is also used which is reported to be causal of competition among language students instead of promoting personal improvements with the learning objectives. I have noted that, by the movement of academic writing instruction towards the learner-centred approach, it seems any single measure may not be sufficient of estimating the diversity of skills, knowledge, learning processes, and combined strategies to determine student progress (Sharifi, & Hassaskhah, 2011). A research study by Mutimani (2016) found a number of challenges of academic writing among students in the University of Namibia. The study reported that, students tend to struggle with language usage and cohesion in academic writing. Students also found it difficult to write cohesive ideas as well as to distinguish between the structures of written and spoken texts or expressions. Another challenge observed is incorrect usage

of referencing which led to cases of plagiarism. Even after students have gone through the English for Academic Purposes course, they still found it challenging to avoid plagiarism; they still cut and pasted. The study showed though that, time constraints played a role in the ‘cut and paste’ tendencies, leading to increased cases of plagiarism.

In light of the points I have raised above, language assessment scholars have begun to explore alternative assessment methods in the belief that they can yield more realistic information about students’ achievement and classroom instruction (Bachman & Palmer, 2011; Barootchi & Keshavarz, 2002; Hamakali & Lumbu, 2016; Reeves, 2000; Sharifi, & Hassaskhah, 2011; Tsagari, 2004). The University of Namibia’s (2013) assessment policy also permits the usage of alternative assessment in the university programs, as it is stated in the policy that “[i]t does not constrain the development of alternative or additional forms of effective assessment, provided such assessment are consistent with the principles stated in the policy” (p. 3). Alternative assessment allows language instructors to assess the learning process, direct the design of subsequent instructional strategies, as well as enable the students to discover their learning needs. Since alternative assessment is continuous in nature (Reeves, 2000), it can also allow assessors to assess both the process and product of language learning. I wish to argue that, with all the challenges that come with the use of traditional assessments, I believe that alternative assessment can be used as a complement of traditional assessment and vice versa. Therefore, at this juncture, I am inclined to believe that if alternative assessment is administered effectively, then on top of the appropriate use of traditional assessment it could enhance the positive outcomes of language programs.

In light of the above-mentioned developments in the field or practice of language assessment, I wish to note that, although the integration of alternative assessment has gained recognition among various scholars and it seems to be promoted in agendas and legislations of various educational organisations, its practical use remains minimal. This is to suggest that its support and promotion in the literature as well as legislation alone may not nurture the effective integration of alternative assessment into academic writing instruction. It is against this background that this study investigates the integration of

alternative assessment in writing instruction in the English for Academic Purposes course at the University of Namibia Language Centre. Now that I have presented the statement of the problem of my study, I wish to proceed apace and present the research objectives and research questions of my study.

1.4. Research Objectives

At this juncture, I wish to reinforce the main research objective of my study: “Assessing students in English for Academic Purposes: The role of alternative assessment tools in writing instruction”. In my investigation, I will attempt to realise the following research objectives given the issues and insights that I have discussed so far:

1. Explore the different alternative assessment tools that are used by English for Academic Purposes lecturers in academic writing instruction.
2. Analyse the factors that influence the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.
3. Assess the compatibility of assessment tools used by lecturers and the types of students’ intelligences.
4. Assess the lecturers and students’ attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.
5. Propose a framework of integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

1.5. Research Questions

In my study, I seek to investigate the possibilities of integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. I wish to engender an alternative assessment approach that is experiential, meaningful, and critical in the academic literacy courses. In order to achieve the aim of my study and the research objectives listed above, I wish to propose the following research questions (as a way of foregrounding them), given the insights and the beliefs that I have discussed so far:

1. How do lecturers of English for Academic Purposes integrate alternative assessment in academic writing instruction?
2. What are the factors influencing the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction?
3. What is the lecturers and students' attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction?
4. How do the assessment tools for academic writing match the types of students' intelligences?
5. What type of framework could be employed to integrate alternative assessment in academic writing instruction?

In light of the research questions stated above, I wish to mention that my study is informed by the constructivist view of education. My study also embraces the interpretivist approach to research which tends to be more qualitative, and in light of this, methods like unstructured interviews and observations would be appropriate. At this juncture, I know from the research literature that, interpretivists are open to diverse ways that people may understand and experience the same non-manipulated objective reality, because their understanding and experiences may be influenced by different factors, settings and contexts. Based on the interpretivist view, my study concurs with the views of Bertram and Christiansen (2014) who write that:

Often data that [qualitative] researchers collect within these paradigms are people's perceptions, their understandings of a particular action or context, or their beliefs. From this perspective, the data depends very much on a particular person who was interviewed [for example], how they were feeling or thinking at that particular time.... The question [in qualitative research] is no longer "Is this a fact, is this true?" but "How well do the data reflect the reality of the respondents?" (p. 174)

It is my hope that the questions I have proposed above could help to strengthen my understanding of alternative assessment and the possible ways in which it can be

integrated in academic writing instruction. While a qualitative research design is appropriate for the research questions that I have proposed, the questions require a research design that allows triangulation through collection of data from multiple sources. In light of this, my investigation is based on sets of data collected from lecturers who teach English for Academic Purpose, students enrolled in the English for Academic Purposes, and the classrooms for English for Academic Purposes. I hope the multiple sources of data could provide me with a better understanding of the phenomenon under study, and from the data analysis, I could make informed conclusions and further proposals with regards to the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing. I propose to revisit my research questions and my methodology in Chapter 3. In the next subsection, I present the significance of my study.

1.6. Significance of the Study

Language assessment informs the stakeholders within the language educational community about the progress that the language students have made throughout and at the end of the program. Language assessment can be both formal and informal; it informs one about what language students have mastered based on a collection of information gathered through multiple ways and methods of assessments at different times and contexts (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010; Dikli, 2003). My study, which is set to investigate the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction, is of practical importance to the assessment of academic writing in universities and also to the knowledge and theory of language assessment and academic writing in particular.

The findings of this study could be invaluable in informing the assessment approaches used by language lecturers, language-learning material developers, and language teacher trainers in Namibia and farther afield. It could also serve as a guide to designing, planning, and administering alternative assessment to effectively assess language abilities of students, particularly in language programs such the English for Academic Purposes course. I wish to invoke Bachman and Palmer (2011) whose writing also resonates with the significance of my study:

Language assessments are widely used... to collect information that is used to make decisions. These uses of language assessments and the decisions that are made have consequences for stakeholders – the individuals, programs, institutions, organisations, or societies.... We believe that it is also important for individuals [in this case lecturers] who develop and use language assessment to have a theoretically grounded and set of principles and procedures for developing and [administering language assessments] (p. 19).

Since one of my research objectives is to formulate a framework for integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction, the framework that my study proposes may serve as a tool of reference when lecturers have to select, design and use various assessments of academic writing in their academic writing courses. This framework may also be informative to other stakeholders of academic writing assessment such as higher institution employers and educational managers at various levels in a university setting. These stakeholders could have great influence on assessment policies that govern assessment practices in university programmes. In addition, my framework could also be used by other researchers who may wish to conduct evaluation studies on assessment practices.

The findings of my study can also contribute to the current body of knowledge of the language assessment discipline. My findings could be used to challenge or confirm some theoretical claims that already exist in language assessment. My study could also provide a different perspective on already existing research findings on assessments which may be produced from different research methodologies, subjects and settings. This is a commonly accepted practice that, researchers should always be motivated to build on and respond to existing research confirmations and theoretical claims. It is for this reason that a researcher would usually suggest future avenues for further exploration and inquiry in the belief that, their findings may not be totally conclusive nor definitive (Mukoroli, 2016; Sivasubramaniam, 2004).

The findings of my study, being based on qualitative data, can also provide an in-depth, comprehensive coverage of the phenomenon under study: alternative assessment. Since my study features a triangulation of data, I believe it provides for a better understanding of alternative assessment, how it could be used, and its potential and challenges in academic writing instruction. I believe so because the objective of qualitative design is to find in-depth understanding of a phenomena and issues that are related to the subject matter: alternative assessment. In the next subsection, I present the definitions of key terms used in the study.

1.7. Definitions of Key Terms

The following terms may carry various meanings depending on their usage in different settings. Therefore, for the purpose of my study the following terms are defined within my research context and setting.

1.7.1. Academic writing

Academic writing is writing done to fulfil a requirement of college or university, and it is also used for publication that are read by lecturers and researchers or presented at conferences (Mukoroli, 2016).

1.7.2. Academic literacy

Academic literacy is a culturally determined set of linguistic and discourse conventions, influenced by written forms that are applicable mainly in academic institutions (Leibowitz, 2001).

1.7.3. Alternative assessment

Alternative assessment is one that assesses students' progress, and it can provide feedback to both the students and the lecturer in the belief that the feedback obtained can be useful to inform the pedagogy as well as direct the students in their learning (Balliro, 1993; Dikli, 2003; Fiktorius, 2013).

1.7.4. Assessment

Assessment is “the process of collecting evidence on student performance in order to determine how well students have achieved the intended learning outcomes” (University of Namibia, 2013, p. 3).

1.7.5. English for Academic Purposes

English for Academic Purposes is defined as being concerned with communication skills in English which are required for study purposes in formal higher education for academic purposes (Jordan, 1997).

1.7.6. Framework

A framework is a detailed basis that stipulates how an assessment is to be operationalised by combining theory and practice to explain both the “what” and “how” (Pearce et al., 2015).

1.7.7. Higher Institution of Learning

Higher institution of learning are educational institutions where all types of studies, training, or training for research at the post-secondary level are provided by universities or other educational establishments that are approved as institutions of higher education by the competent state authority (Japan International Corporation Agency, 2002).

1.7.8. Instruction

Instruction is the purposeful direction of the learning process and it tends to be the major teacher/lecturer class activity (Joyce, Weil & Calhoun, 2003).

1.7.9. Integration

Integration is the process of ensuring that assessment is incorporated and seen as an integral part of teaching/instruction (Kesianye, 2015).

1.7.10. Traditional assessment

Traditional assessment refers to the methods of assessment which use traditional assessment techniques (for example, tests and examinations) which are formal, standardised, and students are given administrative procedures and scoring (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010; Herman, Aschbacher & Winters, 1992).

1.8. Organisation of the Chapters of the Study

Considering the variety and complexity of the issues that my study investigates and addresses, I believe it is important for my study to provide a traditional structural organisation of this thesis. This can allow a logical and cohesive presentation of my research process. Having presented the rationale for the organisation of the chapters of the study, I propose to present the outlines of the six chapters that constitute my study.

Chapter one serves as an introduction to my study. I first present an overview of the background as the researcher in this study. I then discuss a set of language assessment concerns which act as an awareness-building exercise and a point of departure for this study. I also discuss the aim and scope of the study, context of the study, the statement of the problem, the research objectives, foreground the research questions, the significance of the study, and the definition and operationalisation of the key terms.

Chapter two presents the theoretical framework and review of literature of the study. In order to gain a theoretical understanding of the study, the chapter first explores the definition of alternative assessment as well as attempts to operationalise it for the purpose of the current study. Second, I present the theoretical framework of the study. Furthermore, I present various types of alternative assessment and their strengths in academic writing instruction. I also present the legislative allowance of alternative assessment as well as the influence of the students' multiple intelligences on assessment. Finally, I review various frameworks that could be instrumental in informing a possible framework of integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

Chapter three addresses the design and methodology of this study. I revisit the research questions and the setting of the study. I describe the research methods to be used, the research site where the investigations were conducted, the participants, the instruments used to collect data, the data collection procedures, and the data analysis procedures. I also focus on the scope the procedures provide for triangulation that enables recourse to multiple perspectives of evaluation and interpretation. Finally, I present the ethical considerations of my study.

Chapter four presents the rationale for analysing the data and provides a description and analysis of data gathered with reference to the research questions of this study. First, I present the bio data collected from the participants. Second, I present the raw data and coding of data collected from lecturer interviews and students focus groups discussions. Next, I present the analysis of data under themes derived in regard to the research questions of the study.

Chapter five presents a discussion of findings of the study. In this chapter, I interpret the findings of the study with reference to the research questions along with the epistemology of the study. First, I present the findings of my study on the types of alternative assessment used in the English for Academic Purpose course, with reference to the literature, and the eligibility of the assessment to be considered as alternative assessment. Second, I present the findings of my study on the factors influencing the integration of alternative assessment into academic writing instruction, in relation to those presented in related studies in the literature. Next, I present the significance of using alternative assessment that accommodates various needs of the students, especially the different dominant intelligences that students may possess. Lastly, I present findings on how the attitude of lecturers and students may have significant influence on the success of integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

Chapter six presents the conclusions, limitations, implications, and recommendations of my study. I first recapitulate on the main findings of my study in order to state my conclusions for this study. I also reinforce the rationale for my study, re-emphasise the

significance of the selected methodology for my study and relate my study findings to the research questions. Moreover, I present the significance of my findings on language assessment practice, theory and research. I also present the recommendations for my study along with the limitations of my study, and lastly the insights and issues for future research.

1.9. Summary of the Chapter

In this chapter, I have provided the introduction for my study. I have first presented an overview of my background as the researcher in this study. I then discussed a set of language assessment concerns which act as an awareness-building exercise and a point of departure for this study. I also discussed the aim and scope of the study, context of the study, the statement of the problem, the research objectives, the research questions, the significance of the study, and the definition and operationalisation of the key terms. Finally, I have presented the outlines of the chapters of the study. Now that I have presented the introduction to my study, I wish to proceed to Chapter two, where I will present the theoretical framework and a review of literature relevant to my study.



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CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

My study investigates the integration of alternative assessment in writing instruction in the English for Academic Purposes course (EAP) at the University of Namibia Language Centre. In this chapter, I review literature related to the topic of my study. First, I explore the definition of alternative assessment as well as attempt to operationalise it for the purpose of the current study. Second, I present the theoretical framework of the study. Furthermore, I present various types of alternative assessment and follow it up with a comprehensive review of literature on the documented strengths of alternative assessment in writing instruction. In this section, I also present the legislative allowance of alternative assessment as evident in various policies of institutions of higher learning as well as the government. Additionally, I demonstrate how alternative assessment could accommodate students' multiple intelligences in academic writing classrooms. Finally, I review various frameworks that could be instrumental in informing a possible framework of integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.



2.1. Defining Alternative Assessment

Over the years, the concept of alternative assessment has gained particular momentum and prominence in language assessment research. Various scholars have documented it variably and selectively with regards to the terms and definitions they have used. Most definitions of the concept seem to follow a contrastive approach where alternative assessment is viewed in contrast to traditional assessment.

Dikli (2003) defines alternative assessment as any method used to find out the current knowledge and skills that a language student possesses in line with their learning objectives or practices. Likewise, Fiktorius (2013) defines alternative assessment as a process of evaluating student's performance, lecturer's teaching methods, and learning materials in order to reconsider the way of teaching and to make the necessary adjustments. Balliro (1993) notes that alternative assessment involves the collection of evidence of change or progress from multiple sources over time and the analysis of data

to help inform teachers, students, programs, and eventually, policy makers who need to compare findings across curriculum. These definitions appear to suggest that alternative assessment is one that assesses students' progress, and it can provide feedback to both the students and the lecturer in the belief that the feedback obtained can be useful to inform the pedagogy as well as direct the students in their learning.

Alternative assessment is not necessarily a new concept. It is documented that the notion of alternative assessment emerged as a response to the need to accommodate students with learning disabilities (Quenemoen, 2008). Learning disability is defined by Lerner (2003) as a neurobiological disorder that affects how one's brain works. With reference to Gardener's (1984) Multiple Intelligence theory, one may use a slight interpretation that the individualistic nature of students make them stronger in some intelligences and rather disabled (limited) in others. In the same vein as documented by Quenemoen (2008), alternative assessment can still be viewed as a response to students' learning "disability", in this case their unequal abilities.

Wiggins (1998), using the term *educative assessment*, views alternative assessment as one that is designed to teach and improve students and teachers' performance. In alternative assessment, Wiggins (1998) believes that students should be equipped with self-assessment skills which may enable them to redirect and adjust their learning strategies. In this view, Wiggins puts it that the main target goal of alternative assessment should be for lecturers to achieve a significant performance gain over time for all the students. Based on Wiggins' view, I base my review of alternative assessment in the literature of education with a particular bearing on language assessment, as it is a derived educational practice of teaching and learning. In my review, I would like to acknowledge current thinking on assessment, which says that assessment should not only weigh the students' level on knowledge but it should enhance learning.

In contrast to the above-mentioned view, Brown and Abeywickrama (2010) alert that the concept of alternative (and traditional) assessments may represent some overgeneralisation and should be interpreted with considerable caution. They further

indicate that, it may be difficult to provide a concrete distinction between alternative and traditional assessments; some forms of assessment may even fall in between the two while others combine the two. For example, Brown and Hudson (1998) used a holistic approach to define alternative assessment. They do not compare alternative assessment to traditional assessment. They rather view all language assessments as assessment alternatives instead of treating some as special. Furthermore, they advise that since all alternatives of assessments have distinct weaknesses and strengths in different contexts, they should all be considered important. According to Brown and Hudson (1998), teachers must consider all assessments as alternative in assessment as long as they use them within an overall framework of responsible assessment and decision making.

A good example of responsible assessment can be obtained from Derakhashan, Razaei and Alemi (2011) who argue that, it is essential for both learners and teachers to be involved in and have control over the assessment methods, procedures and outcomes, as well as their underlying rationale. They explored two questions: “Why alternative assessment is accentuated in the 2000’s” and “What this emphasis on assessment means for researchers, teachers, and learners”. They came to a conclusion that alternative assessment and all other derived concepts (alternative assessments, alternatives in assessment, and alternative approach to assessment) are trendy buzzwords which can be placed along on the same continuum with little or no major pedagogical and practical differences. Although they may differ in respect to reliability and validity issues, in reality, they are operationalised more or less in the same manner.

Despite some criticism of the use of the term ‘alternative’, the term does not seem to disappear in Brown and Hudson’s works. It seems they still suggest that there should be an alternative way of assessing language students. It is for this reason that, apart from just highlighting the role of alternative assessment in academic language instruction, my current study intends to propose a framework that may guide lecturers of academic writing when they select and use various alternatives of assessment, or rather alternative assessments in their academic writing courses.

Various scholars may refer to the concept of alternative assessment as: ‘authentic’ assessment (Barootchi & Keshavarz, 2002); ‘performance’ assessment (Bachman & Palmer, 2011); educative assessment (Wiggins, 1998); and ‘continuous’ or ‘ongoing’ assessment (Reeves, 2000). Researchers and educators tend to use these terms interchangeably, though consistently (Reeves, 2000). In this study, the term ‘alternative assessment’ is used since it tends to be more generic in view of this concept. As such, this study uses the term ‘alternative assessment’ to refer to assessment that assesses students’ performance (current knowledge and skills as well as their progress) in order to evaluate students’ learning progress, the lecturers’ teaching methods, and the teaching-learning materials.

Alternative assessment can also be classified in terms of *structured* or *unstructured* assessments. Structured assessment produces distinct outcomes such as grades, a score, or marked “complete” or “not complete” (Hamayan, 1995). On the other hand, unstructured assessment may comprise any activity that can be performed in the jurisdiction of a given institution of learning. Furthermore, alternative assessment can be informed by the *product* or *process* approaches (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010). The process approach places more emphasis on the way the student processes the learning content. The performance and behaviour of the student towards the learning contents is the centre of assessment. The product approach, however, concentrates on the outcome or final product of the performance or behaviour. The assessment is more focused on what the student produces and a grade or score that is likely to be obtained. According to Hamayan (1995; Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010), the product and process approaches can be used to inform the same type of assessment. Depending on the purpose of assessment, language instructors can therefore use the same type of assessment to assess how students have gone about completing a given task as well as assess the final product or the completed task.

In the next section, I present the theoretical and conceptual framework of my study. I will describe and explain the lens in which my study views alternative assessment.

2.2. Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The focus of my study is to investigate the integration of alternative assessment into academic writing instruction. In this section, firstly, I present theories that inform my study predicated on alternative assessment. These are theories that inform not only assessment practices, but language education at large. Secondly, I also present conceptual grounds that inform my study of alternative assessment.

My study is informed by the constructivist view of education. In this view, I believe that students possess the ability to construct knowledge, of course under the guidance of lecturers. My study underscores the notion of using assessment to extract what was taught to the students: In other words, students are taught (knowledge deposited in them), and then later the knowledge passed on to them is assessed whether they have retained it or not (knowledge extracted from them). Instead, assessment should promote creativity, critical thinking, application of knowledge and independent learning through alternative assessment. It is through this belief of constructivism that I undertake my study on the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

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Particularly, my study is informed by three main theoretical views. First, through the sociocultural theory (Lantolf, 2000) my study supports the idea of assessment for learning which is realised when students complete tasks collaboratively. Second, through the Multiple Intelligences theory (Gardner, 1984), my study embraces assessment or rather pedagogies that acknowledge and accommodate the pluralistic nature of students. Third, through the Teacher Knowledge theory (Blesler, 1995), my study embraces the need for teacher empowerment through assessment training, because it has an influence on the way teachers/lecturers assess their students. In this view, my study strongly emphasises the need for lecturer education on assessment practices that respond to the current students' academic literacy needs. In addition, the study is also informed by two conceptual views. Through Freire's (1968) concept of "the education as liberation", I also address the role of alternative assessment as one that provides freedom to the students to learn and think independently as well as apply and create knowledge in their classrooms. Lastly, my study is informed by the basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and

cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) (Cummins, 1984; 2008). Drawing on the insights of Cummins' (2008) BICS and CALP, my study embraces assessment that serves the real language needs of the students. In this view, I put forward that current pedagogies should be flexible to an extent that it recognises the characteristics of the students, so that should there be a need to address the BICS of the students, which is a foundation for the CALP, then instruction should be adjusted accordingly. In this section, I therefore explain the bearing of my theoretical and conceptual framework as well as how it informs my study.

First, Vygotsky's (1962; Schunk, 2009) sociocultural theory as a constructivist theory, suggests that meaning is not an individual construction but a social negotiation that depends on supportive interaction and shared use of language. It emphasises that the social environment is a facilitator of development and learning. The constructivist view of knowledge sees students as constructors of new knowledge, and this knowledge is negotiated in the classroom through learning activities and experiences (Canagarajah, 1999). Canagarajah (1999; 2006) opposes pedagogy that insists on uniform variety of language or discourse as it only promotes monolingual ideologies and linguistic hierarchies which is not the reality in the academic writing classrooms especially in second language settings like Namibia.

One of the constructs of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1962), the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), suggests that learning should be a deliberate transfer of skills and knowledge from a more skilled/knowledgeable student to a less skilled or knowledgeable student in a given instructional area (Schunk, 2009). The ZPD is not necessarily a physical place in time and space; it is rather a metaphor of how mediational means are processed and activated as well as actualised (Lantolf, 2000). Lantolf (2002) adds that, it is the difference between what a student (a novice person) achieves when acting alone and what the same student can achieve when acting with the support from someone (expert) else and sociocultural artefact. The notion of social guidance through apprenticeship enables the novices to work closely with experts in joint work related activities (Schunk, 2009).

Several instructional programs can be developed on the basis of the notion of ZPD interpreted this way, including reciprocal teaching and dynamic assessment. Therefore, my study needs to be informed by this theory. Culatta (2016) has illustrated the concept ZPD in Figure 2.1 below:

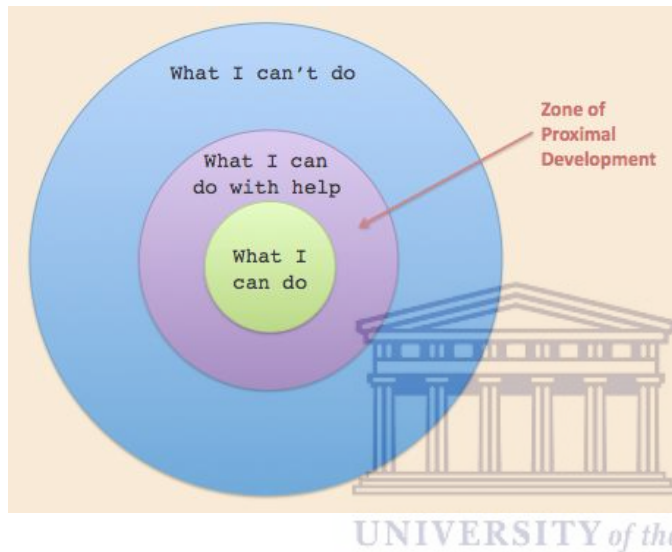


Figure 2.1. Zone of Proximal Development (Culatta, 2016)

The concept of ZPD has been modified into new concepts since Vygotsky stated his original conception. For example, the concept of scaffolding is related to the ZPD even though the term was not used by Vygotsky. The concept of scaffolding was rather theorised, using the ZPD, by other theorists in relation to educational settings. Scaffolding is defined by Culatta (2016) as a process through which a teacher or a more competent being assist to reach their students' learning objectives or targets. Culatta's (2016) definition indicates that there is more than one person involved for scaffolding to take place. There is a student and one or more competent being assisting the student to go over the ZPD. In this process, interaction plays a crucial role.

Interaction is another central element of the sociocultural theory (Van Lier, 2000). Based on the ecological perspective which reveres the importance of environment and context in learning, the element of interaction suggests that through negotiating meaning, a piece

of language that was not comprehensible becomes comprehensible as a result of negotiation. It can then become part of the student's target language inventory. In fact, Van Lier (2000) believes that learner-learner interaction can be effective in that simpler explanations are preferred to students than complex ones. In my study, I view alternative assessment as a tool that provides avenues for negotiation of meaning, and as a method that enables students to learn from their peers and the lecturer, and as a team construct meaning.

Second, Gardner's (1984) theory of Multiple Intelligence opposes the one dimensional and uniform view of assessing students through pen and paper as well as tests and examinations. He notes that sometimes being the best and brightest students as well as being rewarded with the best grades does not mean one is also better ranked in life. Hence, he proposes a pluralistic view of assessing and enhancing students' abilities. In his Multiple Intelligences theory, Gardner (1993) defines seven intelligences:

Logical-Mathematical Intelligence consists of the ability to detect patterns, reason deductively and think logically. This intelligence is most often associated with scientific and mathematical thinking.

Linguistic Intelligence involves having a mastery of language. This intelligence includes the ability to effectively manipulate language to express oneself rhetorically or poetically. It also allows one to use language as a means to remember information.

Spatial Intelligence gives one the ability to manipulate and create mental images in order to solve problems. This intelligence is not limited to visual domains - Gardner notes that spatial intelligence is also formed in blind children.

Musical Intelligence encompasses the capability to recognize and compose musical pitches, tones, and rhythms. (Auditory functions are required for a person to develop this intelligence in relation to pitch and tone, but it is not needed for the knowledge of rhythm.)

Bodily-Kinaesthetic Intelligence is the ability to use one's mental abilities to coordinate one's own bodily movements. This intelligence challenges the popular belief that mental and physical activities are unrelated.

The Personal Intelligences includes the ability to understand interpersonal feelings and intentions of others, and intrapersonal intelligence is the ability to understand one's own feelings and motivations. These two intelligences are separate from each other. Nevertheless, because of their close association in most cultures, they are often linked together (pp. 17-26).

Over the years, there have been numerous attempts to add new intelligences to the Multiple Intelligences theory. However, in more than two decades, the list has only grown by one. Hence, the eighth intelligence was added to Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences, the naturalistic intelligence. "*Naturalist intelligence* designates the human ability to discriminate among living things (plants, animals) as well as sensitivity to other features of the natural world (clouds, rock configurations)" (Brualdi, 1996, para. 3).

According to Brualdi (1996; Gardner, 1993), even though the intelligences are structurally separated from each other, they seldom function in isolation. They tend to complement each other as students develop skills and solve problems. Gardner (1993) further recommends that, assessors should spend less time ranking people and more time facilitating learning, in this case through alternative assessment. In alternative assessment as proposed in my study, students are assessed for learning (Canagarajah, 2009). Through this theoretical viaduct, students are identified as to how they are smart, but not whether they are smart (Davis, Christodoulou, Seider, & Gardner, 2012). As a pluralistic theory, its main claim is that students may manifest variation in the levels of strengths and weaknesses within a given intelligence. But it should be noted that these variations do not mean each student possesses superiority in one or more of the intelligences (Davis et al., 2012). Assessment, such as alternative assessment, that is informed by the pluralistic view is likely to depict the real pluralistic profile of students in the academic literacy classrooms.

My study is also informed by the Teacher Knowledge theory. Teacher knowledge refers to the particular knowledge that teachers have that relates to knowing how to teach (Bresler, 1995). Literature on language assessment suggests that, research on classroom-based assessment should focus on three issues, namely: teachers' knowledge of assessment, assessment practices, and professional development in assessment (Xu & Liu, 2015). In this study, it is my theoretically informed belief that lecturers' knowledge of alternative assessment may play a significant role on how and what assessment is administered to the students. In fact, research has shown that, some of the challenges of developing and implementing alternative assessment are linked to the lack of assessment literacy among educators (Aschbacher, 1993). My belief is also pinned to the "post-method condition" proposed by Kumaravadivelu (1994; 2001) which brought about the concepts of teacher "plausibility" and "autonomy" in to the domains of teaching and learning. The former refers to the teacher or lecturer's subjective perception of their teaching which could be developed by their previous experiences as students, teachers, or lecturers, as well as through their professional training. Teacher autonomy refers to the teacher or lecturer's independent teaching setting in which they may be required to develop reflective approaches to their own instructional settings so that their approach addresses the specific language needs of the students. These concepts concur with the Teacher Knowledge theory and the objectives of my study, that lecturers may possess various assessment experiences, they may also not be presented with the same assessment settings, and they may have to administer their assessments in various but appropriate ways based on the circumstances that they may find themselves. Therefore, I believe that if participation of English for Academic Purposes lecturers is incorporated in this study, the findings of the study may be informed by the appropriate people who have first-hand experience of the classroom situations.

According to Bresler (1995), teacher knowledge theorists believe that research, which draws on teachers' or rather lecturers' concerns and incorporates their accumulated knowledge, helps reduce the theory-practice gap, allowing authentic classroom practices to guide theory. She adds that, a major characteristic of teacher knowledge is that it is contextual rather than abstract. In their study entitled "Teacher assessment knowledge

and practice: A narrative inquiry of a Chinese College EFL Teacher's Experience", Xu and Liu (2015) warn that teacher knowledge is not something objective and independent of the teacher. It is a collection of the teacher's whole personal, social, academic and professional experiences. Therefore, the current study reveres the pluralistic nature of lecturers' assessment knowledge. Additionally, it also presupposes that their contribution can richly inform the framework for integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

My study also embraces the views of Paulo Freire's principal work which advocates for education as a liberatory practice. In his book "Pedagogy of the Oppressed", Freire (1968) opposes education that treats students as "depositories" and lecturer as "depositor" of knowledge. He used the "banking" concept to describe such pedagogy that follows a narrative view of education. The banking concept turns students "into containers and receptacles to be filled" (Freire, 2000, p. 72) with knowledge, and eventually to be most probably weighted (during assessment) of the volume of knowledge they have received.

In view of Freire's work and of this study, students who are assessed as depositories are considered to be the oppressed. Hence, pedagogy needs to shift towards liberating the students from the oppressive educational systems. Informed by the dynamics of the constructivist view explained above and Freire's work, I believe that students should not be assessed as working at storing the deposits entrusted to them. Such an assessment may lead to less critical consciousness which is believed to result from their intervention in the reality as agents of the construction of that reality. Based on Freire's view of pedagogy for liberation, I believe that students should be equipped with assessment resources that do not oppress them but liberate them, allow them to learn, and that inform their learning process in order to achieve a prolific learning product.

Lastly, my study is informed by Cummins' (1984) view of Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). BICS refers "to conversational fluency in a language" while CALP refers to the "students' ability to understand and express, both in oral and written modes, concepts and ideas that

are relevant to success in school” (Cummins, 2008, p. 2). The BICS and CALP thus indicate that if students have not sufficiently acquired their BICS in the target language, then it becomes difficult for them to acquire the CALP in that language. In this view, it should be noted that while some student’s aspects of language development (such as phonology) can be perfected relatively early, other aspects (such as vocabulary knowledge and academic literacy) continue to develop throughout lifetime. Cummins (1984) argues that:

It is problematic to incorporate all aspects of language use or performance into just one dimension of general or global language proficiency. For example, if we take two monolingual English-speaking siblings, a 12 year old child and a six year old, there are enormous differences in these children’s ability to read and write English and in the depth and breadth of their vocabulary knowledge, but minimal difference in their phonology or basic fluency. The six year old can understand virtually everything that is likely to be said to [him/her] in everyday social context and she can use language very effectively in these contexts, just as the 12 year old can (Cummins, 2008, p. 3).



Research indicates that students tend to struggle to cope with academic literacy expectations because the medium of instruction is not their mother tongue (Mutimani, 2016). This challenge can be explained with reference to Cummins’ (2008) BICS and CALP theory. In light of this study, the students’ CALP can be developed in the English for Academic Purposes course. However, if their BICS is still underdeveloped, then it could be argued that language aspects that enhance students’ BICS should also be integrated in the learning tasks and assessments in order to accommodate the gap between the students’ BICS and CALP.

In this section I have extrapolated the theoretical and conceptual framework that informs my study. In the next section, I review related literature of my study.

2.3. Types of Alternative Assessment

Different assessment methods are more or less appropriate for different kinds of authentic learning tasks. Students have traditionally been graded on individual performance, and this structure remains valuable for many learning exercises (Lombardi, 2008). Increasingly, assessment of group performance has also become part of academic language classrooms. Research literature has documented some commonly used alternative assessments in academic writing instruction. Taking into consideration Brown and Abeywickrama's (2010) cautioning, it is important to remember that, depending on the purpose of the assessment, some types of assessment may qualify to be either traditional or alternative. In this section, I present some of the alternative assessments, and the first one I present is portfolio.

2.3.1. Portfolio

A student portfolio, for assessment purposes, is a "library" (Fiktorius, 2013) of reports, academic essays or papers, together with other assessment materials and students' reflection on his/her learning strengths and weaknesses. In the students' reflections, the students may also include a plan of action in order to work on their weaknesses. Portfolio assessment requires students to provide selected evidence that indicates that learning is taking/has taken place. The constructivist theory (Lantolf, 2000) appears to confirm as well as cement the value of portfolio assessment in that learning has to be constructed by the students themselves; it should rather not be conveyed by the lecturer.

Literature reviewed by Fiktorius (2013) presents three types of portfolios. First, there is 'showcase' portfolio that consists of the student's best and most representative work. This portfolio is comparable to the artist's portfolio where different works of art are showcased. The student is in charge of the portfolio in that he/she selects what he/she thinks is representative of work. Second, the 'student-teacher' portfolio, also called the 'working portfolio/folder', is an interactive teacher-student portfolio that facilitates in communication between teacher and student. From time to time, the teacher and student negotiate what to add or delete within the content of the portfolio. Lastly, the 'teacher alternative assessment' portfolio is used as an assessment tool.

In my study, the use of portfolio is primarily focused on the teacher alternative assessment portfolio. This portfolio is a model of a holistic approach to assessment. It may be kept by the lecturer especially when it is exclusively used as an assessment tool. It contains language tasks completed by the student and they are selected by the lecturer, because they are evidence of the student's performance or what the student has become able to do. Various written genres that could be entries to the portfolio are: essays, summaries, literature reviews, and interpretations of graphic information (Pierce, 1998). The items in the portfolio are scored and evaluated. Although portfolio is regarded as an alternative assessment, it should be noted that the individual items or tasks in the portfolio may also be autonomous alternative assessments. The next type of alternative assessment that I review in my study is self-assessment.

2.3.2. Self-assessment

Self-assessment refers to the involvement of students in the evaluation of their own learning, achievements and outcomes of their learning (Boud & Falchikov, 1989). This type of assessment is formative because it assists students to redirect their focus onto areas that may need improvement (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010).

One of the methods that complements well with self-assessment is portfolio assessment. According to Sharifi and Hassaskhah (2011), portfolio responds directly to the goal of training students how to assess and evaluate their own achievement. This may involve reviewing and understanding progress through record keeping as well as conferencing with the lecturer and peers. In addition, it is also believed that during the preparation of the assessment portfolio, learning takes place because students are expected to reflect on their experience, identify their learning needs, and initiate further learning (Harris, Dolan & Fairbairn, 2001).

It has been believed that sometimes students do not have clarity on the aims, techniques and conventions associated with academic writing tasks (Denscombe & Robins, 1980). Research has also shown that students tend to show low interest in self-assessment unless

they are specifically trained to do so (Andrade, 2000). When all the criteria are explained, students tend to aim for the highest level of achievement. Therefore, in order to achieve a positive wash-back in this type of assessment, students' involvement in the negotiation of criteria and equally in the evaluation process is important. Precaution should be taken so that self-assessment is not confused with self-marking. According to Boud and Falchivok (1989):

When students are involved in making judgement of their work without a concomitant involvement in establishing criteria, this is commonly referred to as self-marking. Many studies which describe themselves as studies of self-assessment do not involve students in the selection of criteria and [students are simply asked] to rate themselves according to some pre-established scale... [C]aution must be exercised in generalizing their findings to the wider realm of self-assessment (p. 529).

In the same vein, Yancey (1992) further argues that assessment is no longer seen as a process where students submit their works to the lecturer or peers with no influence on how the work is performed or interpreted. All the parties are actual participants, and the student whose work is being assessed is more than an object of someone else's perusal. Although research has shown that sometimes students tend to overrate or underrate themselves (Boud & Falchivok, 1989), there still tends to be a greater chance of agreement in scoring between the lecturers and students, favourably when a five point scale is used. Another alternative assessment is conducted through academic essays and I review this type of assessment below.

2.3.3. Academic essays

Academic essay is a common assessment tool in higher education. Particularly, it is significant in the Social Sciences where the grasp of the subjects are predominantly applied and demonstrated through a medium of written words (Denscombe & Robins, 1980). In higher education, apart from just following a defined format (introduction, body, and conclusion), academic essay writing requires higher-order thinking and as such

it tends to be argumentative. Students are therefore required to present coherent and logical arguments and provide evidence to support their claims.

The manner in which academic essays are used as assessment tools defines them whether they fall or not in the category of alternative assessment tools. For example, academic essays can be alternative assessment when they are used diagnostically. In other words, they are used to provide feedback to both the teacher/lecturer and the students about their writing strengths and weaknesses and also to allow students to learn through errors (Canagarajah, 1999).

Following the principles of alternative assessments (such as, formative, feedback, authenticity and collaboration), academic essays can be administered either as individual or group projects. Students can work on individual projects where each student has their own topic, but they have access to the support of other peers, lecturer and reading materials. On the other hand, students can also work in groups on the same topic and collaboratively they have the support of their group peers, peers from other groups, lecturer, and reading materials. Student support is crucial in alternative assessment; competition is however not the focus of the assessment since ranking of students is also discouraged.

Although this assessment is commonly focused on assessing academic language proficiency, personal writing also features in the process. The assessment involves not only writing the academic essay (which are academic), but at times students are also required to write reflections about their essay (which is personal). Sometimes student writers produce transactional language such as academic essays and scientific reports, conveying meaning explicitly; they also use expressive language when they write reflections, stories and poems, conveying meaning implicitly (Mlynarczyk, 2006). Any assessor of academic writing should therefore consider the link between personal and academic writing and take advantage of the influence that the former has on academic writing development.

Research has shown that, through academic essay, students tend to benefit positively from corrective feedback. A Namibian study by Mungungu-Shipale (2016) investigated lecturers and students' perceptions and preferences on the provision of corrective feedback at the Namibian University of Science and Technology. The findings of the study showed that, firstly, both lecturers and students view corrective feedback as essential in language learning and instruction. According to Mungungu-Shipale (2016), her findings appear to be in agreement with Ferris' (2010) view, which opposes previous claims that corrective feedback tends to depress students. Ferris (2010) maintains that, corrective feedback can improve the accuracy of students' writing. Analogous to the alternative assessment principle of "flexibility" (Chirimbu, 2013), Mungungu-Shipale (2016) cautions that corrective feedback practice cannot be entirely based on a uniform or standardised feedback strategy. This is so because of the nature of the language classrooms which is pluralistic or rather multidimensional and multicultural. Another type of alternative assessment that I review in my study is think aloud protocols.

2.3.4. Think aloud protocols

Think aloud protocols are assessment methods used to assist students to reflect on the process of completing academic writing tasks. The students complete a written task while they are also narrating why, what, and how they are doing it. According to Ali and Pebbles (2011), think aloud protocols allow the lecturer to access students' short memory stream, and the cognitive processes involved in task completion can be uncovered and analysed. It is a cheap way of collecting a lot of useful qualitative feedback during assessment. They added that, in principle, the think aloud protocols should not necessarily hinder or improve performance of the task at hand. The method may benefit the students in that the lecturer can analyse the cognitive processes, and the strategies used by the students to approach the learning task. Henceforth, the lecturer can suggest alternative strategies of approaching the given task. The next type of alternative assessment I review in my study is peer assessment.

2.3.5. Peer assessment

Peer assessment happens when students are allowed to assess each other's work or learning. According to Lombardi (2008), peer assessment helps to distribute the workload of assessment across the learning community and also to promote critical thinking among students. Peer assessment is largely formative (Dunn & Mulvenon, 2009) and it should inform the students of their leaning process as well as whether they have or not mastered the target language skills. It is believed that, peer assessment can help students improve their interpersonal skills. This belief is in line with the Sociocultural theory and the ZPD, as well as Sharifi and Hassaskhah (2011) who concur that peer assessment serves as a socialising driving force among students as well as between the students and the lecturer.

Precaution should be taken that students learn to appreciate the formative critique that they may receive from their peers. That way, students are likely to benefit from the assessment in a manner that they may attain the course objectives. One way to use peer assessment effectively is by providing a rubric for the assessment. A rubric can be defined as a set of scoring guidelines that are disclosed to students (Andrade, 2000). Time should be devoted to familiarise students with the main objectives of each task, and also how the objectives are linked to the main course objectives. In some cases, the rubric can even be developed in collaboration with the students. Lombardi (2008) labels a good rubric to be the one that identifies how and which work is to be judged, and the difference between excellent and weaker works.

In a study entitled "Using rubrics to promote thinking and learning", Andrade (2000) has presented some reasons as to how and why rubrics are useful for both the lecturer and the students. First, they help students become more critical evaluators of the quality of their work as well as those of their peers. Second, they are time saving because the lecturer can have a clear criteria of success being assessed. Additionally, with proper design and planning of the rubric and assessment, they can be very easy to use by both the lecturer and the students. Using controlled-uncontrolled groups techniques, the study found that the group of students who received rubrics and explanation of each criteria and grading performed significantly better than the group which received a rubric without an explanation. The study findings showed that students did not show any interest in using

rubrics for self-assessment unless they were specifically trained to do so. Students who were trained how to use the rubric showed high interest in using it, and they seemed to be aiming for the highest level of the rubric.

Peer assessment and self-assessment can also be combined to produce a more reliable, perhaps a more definitive feedback. Feedback can be received in three ways: self, peers, and the lecturer. Combining these assessments also serves as a mean of triangulating data (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2009) and minimising some of the disadvantages of assessments done by the students themselves or their peers. Apart from the type of alternative assessment, my study also reviews alternative groupings of assessments which had received minimal support in the traditional assessment era.

2.3.6. Alternative groupings for assessments

Group work and pair work are used for the purpose of giving students feedback while they are working in groups or pairs, respectively. Tests and examination (traditional assessment) have been administered to individual students in paper-and-pencil format. However, it should not be concluded that this is the only way of assessing students' academic writing skills. Lecturers and students tend to benefit from groups or pairs in a number of ways. For example, group or pair work provides an opportunity to assess actual language production as well as the strategies used by the students to approach the learning task (Ali & Pebbles, 2011). It is also time-saving. I could also make reference to Krashen's (2009) Affective Filter hypothesis that, group or pair work reduces the affective filter since students tend to feel relaxed and less threatened when assessed in groups or pairs. According to Krashen (2009), research has confirmed the relationship between various effective variables and the success of language learning. His review shows that, performers with high motivation, self-confidence and a good self-image, and low anxiety tend to be better language students.

Lecturers should be cautioned that scoring of group tasks could be subjective. It is advisable that one could consider taking multiple assessments from each group or pair in order to achieve some level of reliability (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010). Another way

to minimise scoring subjectivity is to design a clear rubric or guideline for scoring the students' tasks (Andrade, 2000; Brown, 2013; Lombardi, 2008). There are also situations where some students may be paired with "weak" students and it would be unfair to compare their achievement to the ones with well-matched partners (Brown, 2013). Students could therefore be asked to perform tasks in multiple groups or pairs. Brown (2013) adds that lecturers may also find it a challenge if there is limited participation from the side of the students, which may result in limited data for the lecturer to assess the actual students' performance.

In this section, I have reviewed the types of alternative assessment. Next, I review and present the role of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction as it is documented in the literature.

2.4. The Role of Alternative Assessment Tools in Academic Writing Instruction

The acknowledgement of the value of alternative assessment in language programs assumed relevance and substance after some critics (Reeves, 2000; Tsagari, 2004) argued that, traditional assessment may not be functional in all assessment situations of academic writing. It is also linked to the advent of the communicative approaches such as the process writing, communicative competence, and whole language (Ortega, 2009). The shift of academic writing instruction towards the learner-centred approach seems to have made it rather impractical for a single measure to be sufficient for estimating the diversity of skills, knowledge, learning processes, and combined strategies to determine students' progress. Specifically, standardised testing has been criticised as being adversative to process learning (Sharifi, & Hassaskhah, 2011). According to Sharifi, and Hassaskhah (2011), traditional assessment has also been criticised with reference to the incompatibility of process learning and product assessment, and the discrepancy between the information needed and the information derived through traditional assessment. It is for this reason that educators have begun to explore alternative forms of student assessment.

As far as students are concerned, the most central thing to learning experience is assessment. Lombardi (2008) has illustrated the importance of assessment to students, where in common situation lecturers find themselves explaining something to their students and then all of a sudden a hand shoots up:

“Yes” the lecturer asks looking forward to engage on the topic with the bright mind.

“Um, do we have to know this? Will it be on the test [or exam]?” the student asks (p. 2).

This is an indication that the type of assessment that students know tends to determine when they tune into the lecture and tune out. In addition, I can deduce that assessment defines what students may regard important, and what is worth their time; because students tend to take their cues of what is important from what is assessed. Ultimately, I wish to argue that if one then would like to change the student learning, then a point of departure would be to change the method of assessment (Lombardi 2008). Situations such as the one illustrated by Lombardi (2008) prompted the need for alternative assessment that enhances learning.

Research promotes the use of alternative assessment in instruction that, it can play an integral role in informing decision making in language programs. Herman, Aschbacher and Winters (1992) argued that assessment should not be used as an end in itself:

Assessment [should provide] information for decision making about what students have learnt, what grades are deserved, whether students should pass on to the next grade, what groups they should be assigned to, what help they need, what areas of classroom instruction need revamping, where the [institution] needs bolstering, and so forth (p. 95).

According to Canagarajah (1999), in line with one of the intelligences in Gardeners (1984; 1993) theory of Multiple Intelligences, student interpersonal skills can be

enhanced through alternative assessment. Takahashi and Sato (2003) report that, alternative assessment helps students to flee from isolation, oppression, and it creates a learning community where there is peer to peer, and peer to lecturer collaboration is at the students' disposal. In their paper "Teacher perception about alternative assessment and student learning", Takahashi and Sato (2003) noted that students seem to be confused when they are introduced to a new assessment approach, but once they get used to it they tend to enjoy it. They added that one of the reasons why students tend to prefer alternative assessment methods is because they can be engaged in both interactive speaking and writing activities. In addition, students were also reported to have learned a lot from their peers.

Alternative assessment, which tends to be formative in nature (Alderson & Banerjee, 2001), provides the language lecturer with a better understanding of students' progress in a given language course. Since alternative assessment is developed in context and over time, the teacher is able to assess the strength and weaknesses of students in different content areas and situations (Dikli, 2003). Although alternative assessment is formative in nature, it is important to note that not all formative assessments are necessarily alternative assessments. Dunn and Mulvenon (2009) used the "purpose" view of defining alternative assessment. Unlike tests and examinations which are classic ways of measuring students' progress or mastery (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2005), Dunn and Mulvenon (2009) defined alternative assessment as one that is used by the students and lecturers to adjust teaching and learning. For example, tests are generally considered summative (and traditional), but they warn that a test that is designed to give summative feedback can be formative if the teacher uses it to provide feedback for the students. Formative assessment should assess students' learning and respond to them (OECD, 2005). In their view, they maintain that an assessment is just an assessment and the manner in which it is evaluated and used is related but separate issues. Hence, summative or formative data may be used for formative or summative purposes, respectively.

The formative nature of alternative assessment is not only beneficial to the lecturer but also to the students. Through alternative assessment, students receive feedback about their strengths and weakness with regard to the learning task or objectives. Pierce (1998) suggests that students should be taught how to engage in peer assessment and self-assessment in order to maximize the amount and quality of feedback they may need. The author warns that a single number or letter grade may not be enough as feedback; one should provide specified criteria in a rubric. Students' involvement is imperative in the design of the rubric. It should be agreed upon and well understood by both parties (lecturer and students). Lecturers are further advised to avail time for peer and self-assessment activities (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010; Harris, Dolan & Fairbairn, 2001; Lombardi, 2008). For larger classes, Pierce (1998) proposes that the lecturer can assess a selected number of students each day or week through staggered cycles.

Available literature on assessment and instruction view assessment as a longitudinal process that occurs during instruction and promotes lifelong learning. The new form of assessment (alternative assessment) avails more opportunities for the lecturer to observe students' skills and to redirect the lesson to the students' needs (Mussawy, 2009). The longitudinal nature of alternative assessment elucidates what the students have learned and what they still need to learn. In Figure 2.2 below, I illustrate the process of formative assessment using the formative assessment cycle that was adapted by Mussawy (2009) from Harlen (2009). Figure 2.2 shows that, first, the learning goals are defined and the evidence relating to the goals is collected by means of assessment. Next, the evidence is interpreted so that the lecturer could make a judgement of the students' achievement or performance on the target language skills. Based on the lecturer's judgement, one may then make the decision about the next step which could be remedial teaching, or moving to the subsequent skill of which the achieved skills were prerequisite, and will be the next target goal.

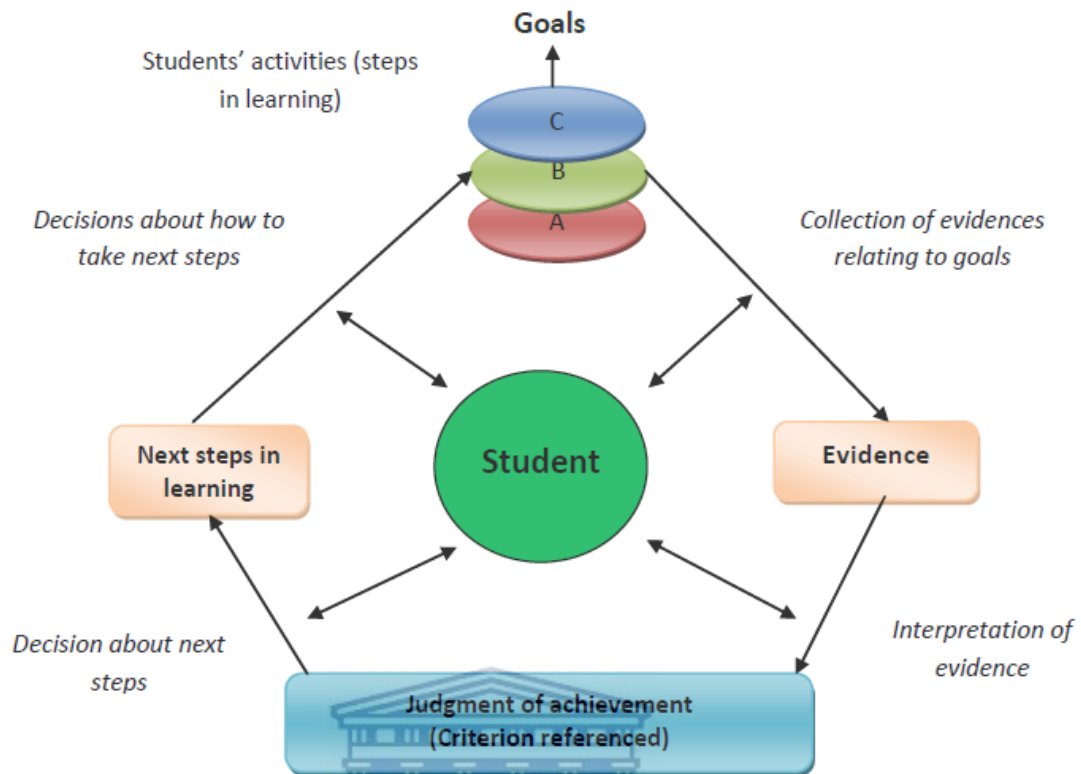


Figure 2.2. Formative assessment cycle (Harlen, 2009 adapted in Mussawy, 2009)

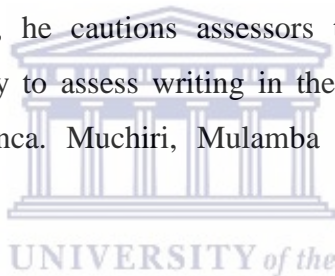
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Alternative assessment enables language students to apply their knowledge to real life situations. Finch (2002) used the term ‘authentic assessment’ which is synonymous to alternative assessment. He believes that alternative assessment techniques feature more authenticity. In addition, they also present high validity because they use learning tasks which closely parallel real-life writing situations which students may encounter outside the classroom (Dikli, 2003). However, so far research on assessment validity does not seem to have found any type of assessment that truly achieves its full validity. But, the authenticity feature of alternative assessment can provide a better evaluation of students’ academic writing proficiency, as well as reliable prediction of the students’ potential to persevere in the real academic world and world of work (Dunn & Mulvenon, 2009). Moreover, Huerta-Macias (1995) maintains that:

Trustworthiness of a measure consists of its credibility and auditability. Alternative assessments are in and of themselves valid, due to the direct nature of

the assessment. Consistency is ensured by the auditability of the procedure (leaving evidence of decision making processes), by using multiple tasks, by training judges to use clear criteria, and by triangulating any decision making process with varied sources of data (for example, students, families, and teachers). Alternative assessment consists of valid and reliable procedures that avoid many of the problems inherent in traditional testing including norming, linguistic, and cultural biases (p. 10).

Alternative assessment strives for a contextualized pedagogy. In fact, Canagarajah (2006) defines proficiency as the ability to use the language effectively for specific purposes, function, and discourse in specific communities. It is for this reason that he stresses that assessment should be contextualised. The use of language may have different meaning in different context. Hence, he cautions assessors to develop assessment tools with imagination and creativity to assess writing in the complex communicative needs of English as a lingua franca. Muchiri, Mulamba and Ndoloi (2014) illustrate this complexity as follows:



The use of English has a different meaning in Kenya, Tanzania, and [Democratic Republic of Congo - DRC]. In [DRC], French is the main European language of the university and of public life, and English is left within a tiny niche. English is not the language of the former colonial power; the desire to learn English may mean, for instance, that one hopes for a career in business, perhaps as a translator or bilingual secretary. It is a marketable, practical skill, like computer programming. In Kenya and Tanzania, English can never be considered apart from the colonial past. In Kenya, English is widely used in education, government, and business, though Kiswahili is also an official language. In Tanzania, Kiswahili is widely used as a national language, which means that special fluency in writing English can still be a distinctive personal skill (p. 188).

Contextualized pedagogy is further promoted by recent research as it argues for the integration of African indigenous knowledge in academic discourse. For example, Banda

(2016) employed qualitative research methods to collect various examples of local contexts that can benefit teaching and learning. The findings suggest that educators use local context to research and employ African proverbs to teach language macro skills. He further dismisses the Eurocentric approach of looking at local and African ways of doing things as a sign of exhibiting primitivism. The paper advocates for knowledge and reasoning that is judged in the context it comes and makes sense to the users of knowledge.

Alternative assessment also involves a criterion-referenced (CR) orientation. According to Bachman and Palmer (2011), this orientation elicits information about the actual students' language abilities in given real life situations. Based on this orientation, the focus of assessment is directed to whether the students have mastered the learning content or language skills taught in a given language lesson or program. In the end, the learning content, the student, instruction and the learning process are all assessed and evaluated.

Alternative assessment, such as academic essays, can help students evaluate their values in light of the demands of participating positively in the society. Winter (1993) conducted a study on the influence of essay writing in corrections. The findings of the study show that essay writing contributed positively to inmates' moral development. Since essay writing also requires gathering of ideas through reading, the students are likely to be exposed to various ideas and perspectives, and they can learn new ways of thinking and doing things. In this way, critical thinking is also enhanced.

A call was made for the post-independence education system in Namibia to promote teaching and assessment of critical thinking skills (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1993). However, a need still exists to sensitise educators on how critical thinking can be incorporated and assessed within academic literacy courses (Paulus, 2016). In his study conducted at the University of Namibia, Paulus (2016) indicated that although lecturers of English for Academic Purposes claim to assess critical thinking in their teaching, only seven out of twelve lecturers appeared to present a grounded conceptualisation of what critical thinking entails. The study found that 20% of the examination questions

(traditional assessment) appear to fall under high order thinking, while 80% of the examination questions are low order thinking. In other words, an 80:20 % distribution is skewed in favour of low order thinking question. This is a gap that alternative assessment is supposed to address; assessment that promotes application, synthesis, evaluation, and creation of knowledge (Gronlund, 1998).

Alternative assessment is found to be flexible as it allows the teacher to play the role of a supervisor, partner and collaborator in the language classroom (Chirimbu, 2013). Its openness and complexity thus enable the teacher to alter the methodology according to the needs of students. Furthermore, students have multiple chances of revising their work, with the guidance of the teacher and their peers, throughout the completion of the learning task. The flexible environment provided in this assessment can also lower the students affective filter (Ortega, 2009), because students are allowed to make errors and learn through them (Canagarajah, 1999). On top of that, this assessment facilitates the pedagogy of liberation that is advocated by Freire (2000), which should not oppress the students but liberate them. In light of this, there is also limited control of the process of completing the learning task (Alderson & Banerjee, 2001). During the assessment, students are encouraged to be creative and to construct new knowledge through the assessment guidelines. Likewise, in real life situation, students have access to support material (Reeves, 2000). Therefore, it measures the students' final product, and their ability to make use of available human and physical resources to effectively complete the learning task.

Alderson and Banerjee (2001) presented the concept 'washback', which refers to the effect that an assessment has onto the students and teacher/lecturer. Although the wide variety in students' product might cause reliability concerns, they still provide positive washback to the learners (Dikli, 2003). Alternative assessment has a great impact on learner behaviour towards learning tasks and content. It also has an impact on the methodology used by the language teacher. For example, research has shown that students tend to put more effort on learning tasks which had been more challenging to complete (Finch, 2002). As a result, the teacher may adopt another method of remedially

teaching the learning task that appeared difficult to the students. Nevertheless, alternative assessment should therefore not be regarded as replacement but as a complement of traditional assessment and vice versa. According to Brown and Abeywickrama (2010), the legitimate question remains whether there could real be one assessment which, in all cases, is the most reliable, has the highest validity, and easiest to score. Hence, they further maintain that:

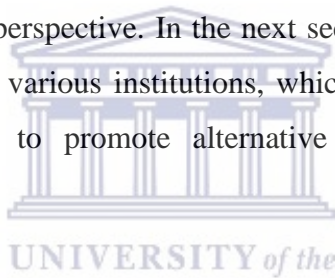
But the one idea that seems to get lost in the shuffle is that virtually all of the various types [of assessment] are useful for some purpose, somewhere, sometime. In other words, all of the different types of [assessments] are important to keep because all of them have distinct strength and weaknesses (p. 5).

In light of Brown and Abeywickrama's (2010) point above, I wish to point out that in order for language assessors to select and design assessments that best serve their purpose, such assessments should have six qualities, namely: reliability, validity, impact, practicality, authenticity, and interactiveness (Bachman & Palmer, 2011). Bachman and Palmer (2011) warn that one assessment may not meet all the six qualities; therefore, assessors or rather lecturers must determine the relative importance of each element for their particular assessments situation. In large-scale and high-stake assessment situations such as course-exit assessment, of the six qualities, 'practicality' tends to be of great significance (Bachman & Palmer, 2011). Practicality refers to the resources (economic, human, and temporal) that may be required to design, administer, score, and report results for a given assessment (Bachman & Palmer, 2011; Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010). For example, for Namibian students admitted at Rhodes University, it was not possible to write a placement test for logistical reasons (Rhodes University, 2014). Di Gennaro (2006) illustrates assessment practicality as follows:

Time is needed initially to create the testing instrument and scoring rubric, but time is also needed to administer, proctor, and score the tests. Human raters are required to judge the quality of the tests, and money is needed to compensate those who administer and rate the tests. Test-takers, as well, are affected by a test's

practicality, as they must find the time to take the test and, in some cases, may incur some of the test administration costs. In short, performance tests (such as direct essay-writing tests) require a great deal of resources and, for this reason, are often considered costly and time-consuming (p. 2).

Language lecturers, material developers, and curriculum designers are being cautioned that traditional assessment should not uniformly be seen as tainted while alternative assessment “offers salvation to the field of language assessment” (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010, p. 18). Traditional assessment can still continue to enjoy its valued status and be used for the functions it provides. In this study, I, as well as the point suggested by the alternative assessment commentators, do not necessarily suggest that traditional assessment should be abandoned all together, but rather that assessment move forward from a different perspective. In the next section, I review the permissibility of alternative assessment by various institutions, which in my view has a crucial role in motivating the lecturers to promote alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.



2.5. Institutional Advocacy for Alternative Assessment

Language assessment at the University of Namibia seems to be harboured by a favourable legislative environment. A number of educational and assessment policies do not necessarily limit language lecturers to traditional assessment practices only. They, in a way, encourage integration of assessment that really enhances learning among students.

First, the University of Namibia (2013) Assessment Policy allows lecturers to employ various assessment practices. The policy “does not constrain the development of alternative or additional forms of effective assessment, provided such assessments are consistent with the principles stated in the policy” (p. 3). The Policy upholds the principle that assessment is an indispensable part of teaching and learning. Thus, the policy maintains that assessment should provide information that directs both students and lecturers on the on-going improvement of teaching and learning. In addition, it also comprises both summative and formative assessment. Although alternative assessment

can also be the summative, literature indicates that it is largely formative. Favourably, the continuous assessment contributes the largest proportion to the exit mark of the courses. For example, the exit mark comprised a ratio of 60% for continuous assessment and 40% of the examination.

Second, it is also important to note that majority of the students enrolled at the University of Namibia have gone to secondary/high schools in Namibia. They have attended high school programmes which are governed by the language policies produced by the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture. The language syllabi (analogous to the University of Namibia Assessment Policy) for Namibian secondary school promote alternative assessment as the emphasise that information gathered about learners' progress and achievements should be used to give feedback to the learners about their strong and weak points (Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, 2014). In principle, students should supposedly be familiar with alternative assessment methods by the time they enter the university. Conversely, assessments in Namibian schools remain largely traditional since most of the teaching is geared towards national examinations, the final product, with little focus on the learning process; assessment relies largely on traditional assessment, such as tests, essays and letters (Hamakali & Lumbu, 2016). It is for this reason that Hamakali and Lumbu (2016) question the relevance of assessing how to write a friendly letter, when the world has already shifted to using electronic e-mails and social media for personal communication.

Stringent patronage for quality education is stipulated in the Namibian Constitution. The Constitution of the Republic of Namibia Article 20 (1) states that "All persons shall have the right to education." It should be understood that the "education" being referred to here should not just be the mere enrolment of persons in schools or their presence in classrooms. This is quality education which can be realised through alternative assessment. It is in my view that this should be quality education that can turn the persons into quality-educated beings. Analogously, The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Article 29 (1) similarly states that:

- Education-- (1) Everyone has the right—
- (a) to basic education, including adult basic education; and
 - (b) to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible

Another reference can be made to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Chapter three, Area of Cooperation, Article 4, Cooperation in Policy for Education and Training which states that:

- (a) improving equitable access, improving the quality and ensuring the relevance of education and training

Therefore, one of the goals of the alternative approach, quality language teaching, addresses the call for quality education stipulated in the legal documents presented above.

The United Nation Educational, Scientific Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) has also documented its advocacy for alternative assessment. To illustrate, it was found that language teachers tend to be pressured and preoccupied with teaching and preparing students for tests and examinations (Ho, 2013). Ho (2013) indicates that it was discovered that most of the classroom assessments were not intellectually challenging. As a result, UNESCO has then made effort to fund interventional programs that respond to the educational reform and innovation, in response to the issue, including alternative assessment.

The Centre for Research in Pedagogy and Practice examined how new forms of assessment (such as authentic assessment) enhance students' learning and performance (Ho, 2013). A two-year professional programme with teachers was then designed to improve teachers' assessment literacy. After the intervention, the teachers were found to have developed their capacities and they were able to design and make use of high quality classroom assessments. In line with the Teacher Knowledge theory, it is evident here that the knowledge of the assessor plays a significant role in the assessment, and it is important

that assessors receive proper training. Ho's (2013) report indicates that it was suggested in the training seminar that improving teachers' assessment literacy through ongoing professional development is achievable and essential.

I wish to point out that, although the integration of alternative assessment may be promoted in agendas of various educational organisations and other governing bodies, practically, its use remains minimal (Hamakali & Lumbu, 2016). It is thus important to note that legislation alone may not nurture the effective integration of alternative assessment into academic writing instruction.

In the next section, I direct my review on how alternative assessment interacts with one of the theories informing my study: Gardener's (1993) Multiple Intelligence theory. In particular, I present how alternative assessment could facilitate assessment of autonomous students who may have various, dominant intelligences.

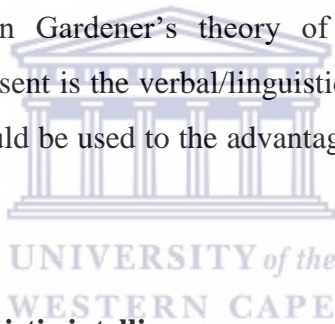
2.6. Alternatives for Assessing the Students' Multiple Intelligences in Academic Writing Instruction

Research has shown that most educational systems are heavily biased towards linguistic modes of instruction and assessment (Lunenburg & Lunenburg, 2014). To a rather lesser extent, they also embrace the logical mathematic intelligence. This one dimensional and uniform view of assessing students is the kind of approach that is opposed by Gardener's (1984) theory of Multiple Intelligences. In his theory, which supports a pluralistic view of assessing students, it is understood that students may manifest variations in their levels of strengths and weaknesses within a given intelligence. Meaning, not all students may equally and strongly benefit from assessment tools that only entail linguistic intelligence and logical mathematic intelligence. Armstrong (2009) observes that:

It would certainly be the height of hypocrisy to ask students to participate in a wide range of [multi-spectrum] experiences in all eight intelligence and then require them to show what they have learned through standardised tests that focus narrowly on linguistic or logical-mathematical intelligences... Thus, [the

Multiple Intelligences] theory proposes a fundamental restructuring of the way in which educators assess their students' learning progress [and achievement] (p. 130).

The main aim of alternative assessment is to enhance learning. In my study, I argue that if students are allowed to activate their dominant intelligence(s), then through assessment, learning could be enhanced. Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences may then be incorporated in academic writing assessment to help improve academic writing instruction and learning. Hence, this section highlights how lecturers can improve students' academic writing skills by integrating assessment tools that accommodate application of various intelligences of students. I must declare here that available literature does not seem to sufficiently provide or suggest alternatives of assessing all the intelligences presented in Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences. The first intelligence that I will present is the verbal/linguistic intelligence. I will also show how alternative assessment could be used to the advantage of the students who are dominant in this intelligence.



2.6.1. Verbal/Linguistic intelligence

Although humans relate to other animals in terms of being warm blooded, having epidermal layer, and producing offsprings with other creatures; humans are unique in a way that they have the ability to reason and use a complex language system with classifiable words (verbs, prepositions, nouns). Using this complex language system, they can argue and debate topical issues that affect them. According to Lunenburg and Lunenburg (2014), in the case of written instruction, students can be asked to write responses to the following prompts:

- What would happen if...?
- Why do you think that...?
- How is that similar to/different from...?
- How did you arrive at that idea...?

These are higher-order open ended questions and they can help the students to develop the verbal/linguistic intelligence. These prompts require students to exhibit and explore their written language skills on a given subject content or topic of discussion. The next intelligence that I present is the logical/mathematical intelligence. I will explain how alternative assessment could be used to the advantage of the students who are dominant in this intelligence.

2.6.2. Logical/mathematical intelligence

The logical/mathematics intelligence is defined by Lunenburg and Lunenburg (2014) as the ability to use the inductive and deductive reasoning, solve abstract problems, and understand complex relationship. Sequencing, analysing, and estimating are some of the skills that are embedded in this intelligence. Groups/individual projects can serve better in developing students' logical/mathematical intelligence.

In an academic writing classroom, students can be given problem solving projects that they must report back in writing. Students can also be presented with data that they should analyse and draw conclusion or estimations. Although the focus is on writing, the assessment takes advantage of the students' strength, the logical/mathematics intelligence, to develop the students' academic writing skills. In the next section, I present how alternative assessment could be used to the advantage of the students who are dominant in the visual/special intelligence.

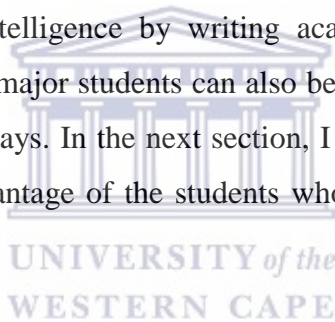
2.6.3. Visual/spatial intelligence

The visual/spatial intelligence has to do with the ability to perceive the visual world accurately and for students to be able to re-create their visual experiences (Lunenburg & Lunenburg, 2014). It fosters the ability to perceive the visual world accurately and to be able to re-create one's visual experiences. Students can be asked to compare and contrast items or issues using visual formats such as tables, or interpreting comparisons or contrasts from a graph. It is imperative that both visual/spatial and verbal/linguistic rubrics are outlined. The whole idea is to develop the academic writing skills of students through their intelligence. Hence, the teacher can allow students to add visuals (charts,

graphs, maps) to their academic texts. In the next section, I present how alternative assessment could be used to the advantage of the students who are dominant in the bodily/kinaesthetic intelligence.

2.6.4. Bodily/Kinaesthetic intelligences

The bodily kinaesthetic intelligence enables humans to control and interpret body motions, manipulate physical objects, and establish harmony between the mind and the body. It may be misperceived that the development of this intelligence is limited to athletics. Lecturers can use the non-competitive games to develop students' academic vocabulary which is an indispensable aspect of academic writing (Shober, 2016). One can also design projects that require students to manipulate objects and tools, and then they are asked to write based on the activity they have completed. Science major students can capitalise on this intelligence by writing academic reports on their laboratory experiments. Visual Arts major students can also be asked to discuss and interpret their art works in academic essays. In the next section, I present how alternative assessment could be used to the advantage of the students who are dominant in the intrapersonal intelligence.



2.6.5. Intrapersonal intelligence

The intrapersonal intelligence fosters the ability to know oneself and assume responsibility for one's life and learning (Lunenburg & Lunenburg, 2014). Assessment tools such as think aloud protocol could be appropriate for students with this intelligence. While they are engaged in a writing task, students are expected to say what they are doing and why they are doing it. At the same time, they are reflecting on the learning process. Similarly, students can also be asked to write in a journal about their reflections on the learning task. Intrapersonal intelligence can best be put at use when students are given authentic problem-solving activities. In the next section, I present how alternative assessment could be used to the advantage of the students who are dominant in the interpersonal intelligence.

2.6.6. Interpersonal intelligence

The interpersonal intelligence promotes the student's ability to interact with and relate to other students and lecturers (Lunenburg & Lunenburg, 2014). This intelligence fosters the ability to understand and relate to others (other students and lecturer). It further fosters the ability to interact with others and with a win-win result. In order to capitalise on this intelligence, lecturers should use assessments that involve collaboration and interaction among or between students. Having students work in pairs/groups to complete problem solving tasks could be one way to exploit the interpersonal intelligence of students. Students with high interpersonal intelligence may enjoy working with other students instead of working alone. Specifically, students can be given a research project on a particular topic, on which they will have to submit an academic research report.

Learning centres can also be used to the advantage of the interpersonal intelligence. Lunenburg and Lunenburg (2014) define learning centres as areas in the classroom that a lecturer creates for students to work in groups or individually. Each of these learning centres are furnished with learning resources that assist the students to complete various assessment tasks. It is believed that learning centres facilitate understanding for the subject matter and they improve the target language skills of the students (Lunenburg & Lunenburg, 2014). Learning centres are also consistent with the Sociocultural theory's elements of scaffolding (Culatta (2016) and interaction (Van Lier, 2000). In light of this, students can/will work together, learn from one another, and collaboratively complete assessment tasks. Some factors such as classroom size, students' interests, and university level (undergraduate or postgraduate) determines the type of learning centres that are appropriate for a given class group.

Lunenburg and Lunenburg (2014) recommend that writing lecturers may consider establishing a Writing Centre for activating students' linguistic, spatial, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligences. A Writing Learning Centre is generally equipped with the following materials:

- Cushions for quiet reading or for group discussion
- Creative writing tools (pens, paper), tape recorder, magazines, starter books, and cards

- Yellow pages; other resource address books
- Lists of addresses and phone numbers of relevant organizations
- Computer: concept mapping software, word processor, email, Internet connection
- Multimedia presentation tools (e.g. PowerPoint, HyperStudio, etc.)
- Word games (Boggle, Scrabble, Password, etc.)
- Books on tape with hard copy
- Books, articles, papers, poems written by students

It is important to mention that, the University of Namibia' Language Centre has a Writing Excellence Unit in place. It is a free service for all students at the University of Namibia students to get support with any aspect of their writing, from specific academic assignments to general writing skills (University of Namibia, 2017). A Writing Tutor can assist with assignments for a writing class, papers for other classes, or writing that is not for class at all – like job applications and admissions essays. Students can learn various writing skills from appointed writing tutors (students) through interaction, scaffolding and correction. In the next section, I present how alternative assessment could be used to the advantage of the students who are dominant in the naturalist intelligence.

2.6.7. Naturalist intelligence

The naturalist intelligence fosters the ability to create taxonomies that classify different species in the environment (Lunenburg & Lunenburg, 2014). According to Wilson (2018), this intelligence enable students to recognise patterns, make subtle connection, discrimination and classification. Students who possess this intelligence may prefer subjects that deal with animals and natural phenomena; for example, Biology, Zoology, Botany, Geology, Meteorology, Palaeontology, or Astronomy (Wilson, 2018). Academic writing lecturer should therefore consider assessments that that feature writing tasks base on these subjects. The naturalist students may prefer tasks that involve problem-solving activities related to solving environmental problems in their communities. Hence, students can be asked to complete projects that involve inquiry on local issues, and then later they document it.

Further explanations can still be borrowed from Lunenburg and Lunenburg (2014) that:

[W]riting activates logical-mathematical intelligence when scientists write proofs to theories; spatial intelligence when architects write blueprints of their structures; bodily-kinesthetic intelligence when coaches write strategic plays their athletes execute; musical intelligence when maestros share their genius through their written composition; interpersonal intelligence when student groups help to edit essays of other students; intrapersonal intelligence when students reflect on a written piece; naturalist intelligence when humans demonstrate sensitivity to the natural world (plants, animals, clouds, rock configurations (p. 8).

Further to the above-mentioned issues, the Educational Broadcasting Corporation (2004) recommends strategies for applying multiple intelligences in the classroom. These strategies can be used as guidance to integrate multiple intelligence and alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. It can be deduced from the strategies that there should be collaboration of assessment methods among lecturers. Secondly, students need to be allowed various and multiple options of presentation of their ideas. Lecturers should also consider using cooperative assessment groups of students in their writing classrooms.

In Table 2.1 below, Armstrong (2009) illustrated and summarised alternatives of assessing different intelligences in three topics taken from different fields of studies:

Table 2.1.

Eight ways students can show their knowledge about a specific topic (Armstrong, 2009, p. 138)

Intelligences	Factors associated	Development of a	Principles of
	with the South	Character in a Novel	Molecular Bonding
	losing the Civil	(Literature)	(Physics)
	War (History)		

Linguistic	Give a written report.	Do written interpretation from the novel with commentary.	Explain concepts in writing.
Logical-Mathematical	Present statistics on dead, wounded, supplies.	Present sequential cause effect chart of character's development.	Write down chemical formulas and show how derived.
Spatial	Draw maps of important battles.	Develop flow charts or series of sketches showing rise/fall of character.	Draw diagrams that show different bonding patterns.
Bodily-Kinaesthetic	Create 3-D maps of important battles and act them out with miniature soldiers.	Pantomime the role from beginning to the end, showing changes.	Build several molecular structures with multi-coloured pop-beads.
Musical	Assemble Civil War songs that point to causal factors.	Present development of character as a musical score.	Orchestrate a dance showing different bonding patterns.
Interpersonal	Design class simulation of important battles.	Discuss underlying motives and moods relating to development.	Demonstrate molecular bonding using classmates as atoms.
Intrapersonal	Develop one's own unique way of demonstrating competency.	Relate character's development to one's own life history.	Create scrapbook demonstrating competency.
Naturalist	Examine how the geographical	Compare development of	Use animal analogies to explain dynamics of

features of North and South contributed to result.	character to the evolution of a species.	bonding (for example, animals that attract and do not attract).
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In this section, I have demonstrated how the multiple intelligences inform the integration of alternative assessment in academic language instruction. In the next section, I present a review of various frameworks and adaptably demonstrate how they could be used to guide the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing.

2.7. Frameworks that Inform Integration of Alternative Assessment in Academic Writing Instruction

The purpose of this study is to investigate the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. One of the objectives of this study is to propose a comprehensive framework that may guide academic writing lecturers in integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. My review of available literature have yielded result of various frameworks for language teaching and assessment. In this section, I present the review of these frameworks as well as illustrate how they can inform integration of alternative assessment in language instruction. Although these frameworks are not all necessarily designed for academic language assessment, my review attempts to identify certain elements in these frameworks that may be instrumental in formulating the intended framework in my study. The first framework that I have reviewed is the task based assessment (Linked to Content-based/Content-oriented assessment).

2.7.1. Task based assessment (Linked to content-based/content-oriented assessment)

Task based assessment (TBA) could be used as a framework that informs alternative assessment. According to Byrnes (2002), in communicative language teaching, TBA has served as response to post-method approaches and also as an alternative to traditional, form-focused instruction and assessment. Byrnes (2002) further reported that TBA has

been used to specify how various forms of communication affect the negotiation of meaning.

A number of factors have motivated the focus on TBA within language programs. First, there is a need for authentic instruction and assessment (Barootchi & Keshavarz, 2002) which employs real textual worlds as used in various genres. Second, there was a possibility of developing a text-based content-oriented instruction and assessment. Weigle and Jensen (1997) maintained that even though all the six qualities (see Bachman & Plamer, 2011) of an assessment are important, authenticity and interactiveness are of paramount importance if assessment has to match the goals of content based assessment. It was then necessary that for TBA to be realised, writing events in language programs should be defined. A gradual conceptual reframing for writing, which resulted from TBA assessment, defined a number of writing events. The first writing event requires that students are assessed on the nature of writing task particularly their awareness of the audience, intention of writing, register, and required length of the piece of writing. The second writing event requires students to demonstrate content focus, which also includes knowledge of background information. Another writing event entails the language focus where students demonstrate ability to write sentences correctly. Here, elements such as fluency, accuracy, and complexity are assessed. Furthermore, the writing process is also a writing event where students demonstrate that they could respond satisfactorily to the task given. And finally, grading and the provision of feedback is also defined as a writing event. These include grading of drafts and final versions of students' writings, as well as feedback on the contents and language used by the students.

In brief, TBA plays a pivotal role in connecting assessment of content and language. TBA should not be viewed as a replacement but as a complement and value-added notion of language assessment. TBA, as a framework of assessing language, could help students develop independent language learning skills, as well as promote learner-centred language learning. The next framework I have reviewed is the National Council of Teachers of English Framework for 21st Century Curriculum and Assessment.

2.7.2. The National Council of Teachers of English framework for 21st century curriculum and assessment

The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) (2013), founded in Chicago, United State of America in December 1911, is devoted to improving the teaching and learning of English and the language arts at all levels of education. In the NCTE framework for 21st century curriculum and assessment, the NCTE definition of 21st century literacies uphold that there is a need for continued evolution of curriculum, assessment, and teaching practice. The framework also acknowledges that the literacy demands of the 21st century have implications for how student learning is planned, supported, and assessed. In order to achieve effective language learning, the framework stipulates a number of objectives.

The framework stipulates that there is a need to develop proficiency and fluency with the tools of technology. Students in the 21st century should be equipped with skills to use technological tools in the classroom and the language learning environment they may find themselves. They must also be able to select most suitable technological tools to solve particular problems as well as address certain needs. These could be achieved if the following questions are addressed in the 21st century's instruction and assessment practices:

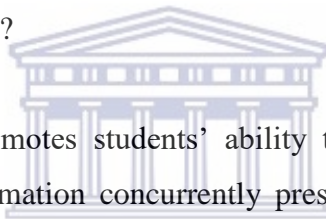
- Do students use technology as a tool for communication, research, and creation of new works?
- Do students evaluate and use digital tools and resources that match the work they are doing?
- Do students find relevant and reliable sources that meet their needs?
- Do students take risks and try new things with tools available to them?
- Do students, independently and collaboratively, solve problems as they arise in their work?
- Do students use a variety of tools correctly and efficiently?

The framework further fosters instruction and assessment practice that strive students to build cross-cultural connections and relationships with others, so to pose and solve problems collaboratively and promote independent thinking. Students in the 21st century need interpersonal skills to be able to work together to approach various situation and solve real-life problems. At this juncture, I am also aware that Gardener's [1984] theory of Multiple Intelligences addresses the development of students' interpersonal skills, that instruction should consider methods that require application of students' interpersonal intelligence. Hence, the NCTE framework for 21st century curriculum and assessment suggests that assessment that helps develop these skills is realised through proper consideration of the following questions:

- Do students work in a group in ways that allow them to create new knowledge or to solve problems that cannot be created or solved individually?
- Do students work in groups to create new sources that cannot be created or solved by individuals?
- Do students work in groups of members with diverse perspectives and areas of expertise?
- Do students build on one another's thinking to gain new understanding?
- Do students learn to share disagreements and new ways of thinking in ways that positively impact the work?
- Do students gain new understandings by being part of a group or team?
- Are students open to and intentional about learning from and with others?

The framework also fosters practices that help students to be able to design and share information at global level, for different purposes. Students of the 21st century need to develop awareness of the world around them, in and outside their classroom. They should be able to select, organise, and design information to be shared, understood, and distributed beyond their classroom. I also find the notion of Freire's (1968) "pedagogy for the oppressed", which advocates for a pedagogy of liberation, to illuminate this element. This element calls for instruction and assessment that respond to the following questions:

- Do students use inquiry to ask questions and solve problems?
- Do students critically analyse a variety of information from a variety of sources?
- Do students take responsibility for communicating their ideas in a variety of ways?
- Do students choose tools to share information that match their needs and audience?
- Do students share and publish their work in a variety of ways?
- Do students solve real problems and share results with real audience?
- Do students publish in ways that meet the needs of a particular, authentic audience?
- Do students consciously make connections between their work and that of the greater community?



This framework also promotes students' ability to manage, analyse and synthesise multiple streams of information concurrently presented. Students in the 21st century should be able to create new knowledge and solve problems by using information from multiple sources of different formats, and weigh its reliability. This can be realised if instruction and assessment have put the following question into consideration:

- Do students create new ideas using knowledge gained?
- Do students locate information from a variety of sources?
- Do students analyse the credibility of information and its appropriateness in meeting their needs?
- Do students synthesise information from a variety of sources?
- Do students manage new information to help them solve problems?
- Do students use information to make decisions as informed citizens?
- Do students strive to see limitations and overlaps between multiple streams of information?

The framework seeks for instruction and assessment that enable students to create, critique, analyse, and evaluate multimedia texts. The 21st century students are expected to be critical users of information. This element also helps students to acquire higher levels of thinking. I wish to mention that, creation, critique, analysis, and evaluation are skills/abilities that fall under higher levels of thinking in the Bloom's taxonomy (O'Neill & Murphy, 2010). This element promotes instruction and assessment that respond to the following questions:

- Do students use tools to communicate original perspectives and to make new thinking visible?
- Do students communicate information and ideas in a variety of forms and for various purposes?
- Do students communicate information and ideas to different audiences?
- Do students articulate thoughts and ideas so that others can understand and act on them?
- Do students analyse and evaluate the multimedia sources that they use?
- Do students evaluate multimedia sources for the effects of visuals, sounds, hyperlinks, and other features on the text's meaning or emotional impact?
- Do students evaluate their own multimedia works?
- Do students consider their own design choices as much as their choices about text?

The final element of this framework calls for instruction and assessment that develop students' awareness and respect for ethical responsibilities that may be required by different complex environments. This element requires students of the 21st century to comply with the legal and ethical practices as they use resources and information. Recent research showed that, a common ethical practice overlooked by academic writing students is the issue of plagiarism and academic integrity (Paulus, 2016). Research had also found in particular that, plagiarism has been on the rise in the digital age (Head & Eisenburg, 2010). Instruction and assessment should therefore seek to respond to the following questions:

- Do students share information in ways that consider all sources?
- Do students practice the safe and legal use of technology?
- Do students create products that are both informative and ethical?

The questions under each element of this framework serve as guidance for designing and employing instruction and assessment that best serve the 21st century students. The reference to the 21st century students in this framework does not exclude the students who are currently being taught academic writing in the University of Namibia Language Centre. I find this framework significant for my study because the guide-questions it poses, such as “Do students share information in ways that consider all sources?”, relates to the issue of acknowledging source which is one of the central area taught to academic writing students. In addition, there is also the issue of academic integrity which is addressed by the question “Do students practice the safe and legal use of technology?” Students are required and expected to be truthful and honest in their academic work, and they should use the available technology to their advantage in a legal manner. The other question “Do students create products that are both informative and ethical?” touches on creation of information which is central to constructivism, a view that governs my study. Students are expected to create knowledge through producing authentic written work that adds knowledge to their field of studies but still adhering to the ethical regulations set in their institutions as well as by the law.

While the NCTE framework is more focused on what is expected from the students, in the next section I review the Guidelines for the Assessment of Language Learners which are rather focused on what the assessors are expected to do, particularly on the issues of fairness and equity.

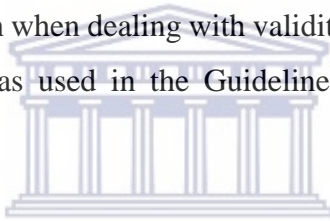
2.7.2. Guidelines for the assessment of language learners

“The Guidelines for the Assessment of Language Learners” published by the Educational Testing Services (2009) address quality issues in relation with fairness and equity. It is indicated in the introductory section of the guide that “although the primary focus of the

guidelines is on large-scale content area of assessment administered in the United States to students in grades K-12, most of the guidelines can still be useful to other populations or other forms of assessment” (p. 1). Certainly, the document presents a number of principles that inform the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

The guidelines address the issue of validity, which is the most important element of assessment. It is indicated that the main threat to validity is when assessment focus on factors that are irrelevant to the learning objectives, target skills, or target level of proficiency. Therefore, these guidelines aim at ensuring that assessments are used to assess what they are really intended to assess.

Precaution should be taken when dealing with validity issues in assessment. To illustrate, the following scenario was used in the Guidelines for the Assessment of Language Learners:



[A student] who has the mathematical skills needed to solve a word problem may fail to understand the task because of limited English proficiency. In this case, the assessment is testing not only mathematical ability, but also English proficiency. If the construct of interest is mathematical skills exclusive of language skills, then it may be systematically inaccurate to base inferences about the academic content knowledge or skills of this student (Educational Testing Services, 2009, pp. 2-3).

In the academic writing classroom, the opposite of the scenario above also illustrates this validity issue where a student’s academic language proficiency may be judged based on the response that requires their mathematical intelligence. This is a lesson for academic language assessors, for them to critically and carefully diagnose students’ learning needs, and only then they could address the real problems faced by the students.

The guidelines also inform this study in the area of planning assessment. The guidelines provide steps that could be followed when planning assessment. Firstly, the purpose of

the assessment should be clearly defined. An assessment could be planned for summative or formative purposes. It could also be set for high or low stake decisions on the students' performances. Secondly, the definition of the construct of the assessment is required. For example, when assessing academic writing, the assessor should consider to which extent is the evaluation focused on the students' language and/or content responses. Finally, the assessment specifications should be defined and explained on how the content will be assessed. These should contain clarification of acceptable performance in terms of vocabulary, language and content. The specification should be linked to the overall course or institution objectives.

These guidelines also advise assessors to consider some factors when planning assessments. There should be clear directions on what is expected from the students – whether to respond in a paragraph, complete sentences, list or diagrams. Although assessors are advised to use clear and accessible language, there should be exemptions when complex language is part of the construct under assessment. In the next section, I review the principle of fairness and justice in language assessment which also stresses the significance of fairness, but it also bring in the issues of justice in language assessment.

2.7.3. The principles of fairness and justice in language assessment

My study could also draw from two principles of language assessment discussed in Kunnan's (2013) work: Fairness and Justice. The principles serve as guidance in the design and establishment of fair assessments and just institutions. They also help to reduce or rather eliminate unfairness and injustice in language assessment.

This study, which advocates for alternative assessment, also builds on some questions raised by Kunnan (2013). In his discussion, he questions whether the rights of test takers to a fair assessment should be supported in authoritarian states that do not provide for equal rights. Another question is whether institutions in such states should feel less compelled to provide a fair assessment. He also questions whether assessment developers and users should be required to offer public justification or reasoning. These are queries

that average assessor probably never asked themselves nor their institutions. Fairness and Justice is probably under-considered in a number of language learning institutions.

The principle of fairness calls for an assessment that is fair to all students and treats them all with respect. An assessment should provide enough and equal opportunity for the students to learn the skills, knowledge and abilities that are to be assessed. It should maintain consistency and meaningfulness in its result interpretation. It should also be free of bias against any particular student; this could be achieved by assessing construct-relevant matters.

The principle of justice calls for assessment that has benefits to society and promotes justice through public justification of the assessment. An assessment should be aimed at bringing benefits to society by making a positive social impact. It should also provide justice by publicly justifying the way students are assessed as well as what is assessed.

Therefore, when assessing students, language (academic writing) lecturers and institutions should consider the two basic questions (Kunnan, 2013):

How do we set up fair assessments and just institutions? How do we remove unfairness and injustice? [Of course the point of departure is] ...by using principles of fairness and justice to design, develop, administer, and analyse assessments so that assessments are beneficial to society. And, by using public reasoning to justify the benefits of assessment (p. 39).

Assessors should ensure that their assessment tasks are directly linked to the purpose and assessment specifications. Such links have favourable effects on the validity of assessments. In the next section, I review the validity framework by highlighting how the framework may be used to guide assessors in designing and administering effective assessment of academic writing.

2.7.4. Validity framework

The Validity framework was adapted by Oliveri, Lawless and Young (2015) in their framework entitled “A validity framework for the use and development of exported assessments”. They present a framework that outlines the key considerations for the fair application of exported assessment. Since their main focus was on tests, they organised their framework by considering six components of validity to evaluate test fairness, namely: defining the domain, evaluation, generalisation, explanation, extrapolation and utilisation. For the purpose of my study, I would still like to highlight how validity framework may/can inform the development and usage of alternative assessments, by citing the six components used by Oliveri et al. (2015):

- Defining the domain: This component involves defining the construct being assessed. It also claims that students’ performance should closely provide evidence of the assessed construct. It is advisable that assessors provide opportunities for students to familiarise themselves with assessment methods and structures. This way, one could confidently interpret the students’ performances as evidence of construct under assessment.
- Evaluation: This component claims that a score and its meaning awarded to student’s performance can have comparable meanings for different population. This component is context-sensitive. Oliveri et al. (2015) illustrates as follows:

...a scoring rubric that includes “succinct writing” as an aspect of good writing may disadvantage members of a population who believe that it is impolite to direct and consider writing in a less direct way as more appropriate (p. 15).

- Generalisation: This component is concerned with the reliability of student performance across parallel assessment forms. It also involves evaluation of the assessment whether it has sufficient number or quality of tasks to demonstrate the knowledge, abilities and skills of the students. One of the factors that influence the generalisability of an assessment is the assessor’s knowledge of the

assessment form. This could mean that limited knowledge of the assessment form may disadvantage a given group of students.

- Explanation: This component claims that assessments are considered sufficient when the student's level of performance is relatively the reflection of their ability, skills and knowledge. Assessors need to ensure that other factors that may affect the real performance of the student on the construct are controlled. These factors could be linguistic (in case of assessing content), and they could also be cultural (in case of assessing language). Another factor could also be linked to the form of assessment, especially when the students are not familiar with it. On top of that, knowledge of using modern learning tools like computers and the Internet could also interfere with the performance of the students on a given construct.
- Extrapolation: This component focuses on whether one assessment designed for a given group of students can be equally and reliably administered to other groups and the result will be interpreted in the same way. This component could be a lesson to the proponents of alternative assessment. It informs them that when designing assessments, one should also consider the population or the type of students the assessment is intended for. This consideration seems to be ignored in test design and administration processes, particularly in exported assessments. The main question being asked in this component is whether a parallel form of assessment can be interpreted similarly as the true reflection of the student performance on the domain being assessed.
- Utilisation: This component is concerned with how the result of the assessment will be used. It has direct effect on the students being assessed since the decisions which may be made based on the assessment result would have implication for the students. It might also have implications for the stakeholder such as the lecturers in subsequent levels or those teaching in the subsequent level of which the current subject/course may be a prerequisite. The main question in this case is whether the assessment results were sufficient to inform the decision of whether the students are ready or would cope in the subsequent course.

Although this framework was originally designed to address threats to validity in exported assessment, I have herewith attempted to highlight how it informs the design

and administration processes of alternative assessment. The aspects of this framework that are more focused on traditional assessment may not be of importance to my study. I have adapted this framework in a way that particular elements that inform alternative assessment could serve as guidance on the designing and administering of alternative assessment in academic writing. In other words, the frameworks could serve as reference on validity issues that may pertain alternative assessment.

In the next section, I review the assessment competency and professional learning framework. This framework intertwines with the other frameworks I have reviewed because it puts emphasis on the need to address the assessors' professional needs, particularly in assessment practices.

2.7.5. Assessment competency and professional learning framework

The Assessment Competency and Professional Learning Framework (ACPLF) was developed by the National Institute of Education in Singapore (NIES) (Shin, 2015). This framework was motivated by the growing worldwide interest in helping educators to enhance their assessment practice. According to the Teacher Knowledge theory, teachers' knowledge on assessment plays a crucial role in how they assess their students (Blesler, 1995). In my view as well as that of this study, this framework is instrumental in informing the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. This is to suggest that, improved teacher training programmes and professional development in educational institutions can promote lecturers' assessment literacies. Lecturers need to develop the understanding and skills necessary to integrate assessment techniques, such as performance-based assessment, portfolios, self-assessment, video journals, and exhibitions, into their practice (Derakhashan, Razaei, & Alemi, 2011).

This framework presents five main features that should be taken into consideration with regard to what assessment literacies entail. First, assessments should be more than merely providing scores and corresponding judgements about student learning. Second, they must provide rich descriptions of the current state of student achievement. In other words, if assessments are to support improvements in student learning, their results must inform

students, [as well as the lecturer,] how to do better next time. Third, formative communication should transmit sufficient, understandable detail to guide the learner's actions. In such contexts, single scores or grades will not suffice. Fourth, assessment should evolve in an ongoing, interconnected series so that patterns in student learning will be revealed. "When [lecturers] wait for test and examination results to be known to them, it is too late to help their students through follow-up teaching and learning activities" (p. 2). Fifth, they must have a balanced assessment systems that serve diverse purposes by meeting the information needs of all decision-makers – school leaders, lecturers and students.

The framework also provides specific competencies that educators (in this study, lecturers) should attain. Lecturers are advised herewith that they should design assessment methods that are appropriate for instructional decisions. Decisions could include any changes in instructional methods or promotion of students to subsequent learning levels. Lecturers should plan assessments as part of an effective teaching learning process. They are also advised to have a good understanding of the goals and criteria of assessments, as well as to communicate the same goals and criteria to the students. Assessments should be designed purposefully to develop students' self-assessment skills for reflective and independent, continuous learning. Assessment should also provide feedback to the students and lecturers for them to improve their learning and teaching, respectively. Additionally, in cases where scoring of assessments is involved, results should be interpreted effectively. Lecturers are also cautioned that they should develop an eye to detect unethical, illegal, and inappropriate assessment practices.

All in all, this framework advocates for a comprehensive and systematic framework that defines a set of knowledge and skill-based competencies for lecturers to be assessment literate in the classrooms of tomorrow. Assessment-competent educators are better positioned/placed to understand the importance of aligning learning objectives of their courses with the appropriate assessment practices to provide valid information for the intended purpose. In line with Shin's (2015) view, lecturers should develop themselves

professionally and acquire the necessary assessment knowledge and the ability, ethics and discernment to practise assessment appropriately.

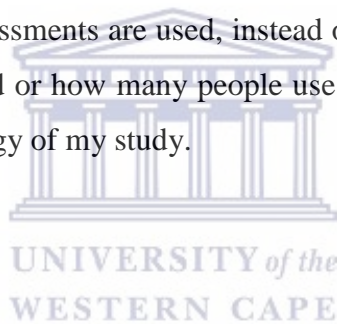
In this section, I have presented a review of the frameworks and guidelines that inform integration of alternative assessment in academic writing. These frameworks are instrumental in formulating a comprehensive framework of integrating alternative assessment in academic writing. Although these frameworks are not all necessarily designed for academic language assessment, my review has attempted to identify certain elements in these frameworks that may be instrumental in formulating the intended framework in my study. In the following section, I present the conclusion and summary of my overall review of literature for my study.

2.8. Conclusion and Summary of the Chapter

Based on the theoretical issues and insights I have presented so far in this review as well as the various theoretical positions that I have visited so far in my review of literature, it is my belief that alternative assessment can allow language lecturers to assess the learning process and the product, direct the design of subsequent instructional strategies, as well as enable the students to discover their learning needs. If it is administered effectively, then, on top of the appropriate use of traditional assessment, it could enhance the positive outcomes in language programs. The language learning practice could thus be assessed with more authenticity (Bachman & Palmer, 2011; Gardner, 1993). My review has also found that there seems to be some institutional allowance and advocacy for alternative assessment. However, the practical usage of alternative assessment is still limited. If alternative assessment is well supported and illumined by research and appropriate theoretical support, the question of why its implementation in language classroom is still minimal can be answered. Therefore, it is against this background that I aspire in this study to investigate the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction, specifically in the course English for Academic Purposes.

My review of literature so far has enabled me to formulate well informed research questions for my study. My study attempts to seek answers to research questions that

carry an inquiry on required elements of integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. Based on this review, my study explores how lecturers of English for Academic Purposes integrate alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. My study also examines the lecturers and students' attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. It also assesses the compatibility between assessment tools for academic writing and the types of students' intelligences. My study further proposes a comprehensive framework for integrating alternative assessment in academic writing. The framework should draw from the alternative assessment literature and in particular the frameworks and guidelines that were reviewed in this chapter; as well as from the results of the data analysis of my study. The review of literature of my study as well as the focus of my study encourage me to choose a qualitative methodology in my study. The main focus and point of argument in my study tend to rather focus more on or qualify how and why certain assessments are used, instead of quantifying how many or much a certain assessment is used or how many people use it. In the next chapter, I present an account of the methodology of my study.



CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

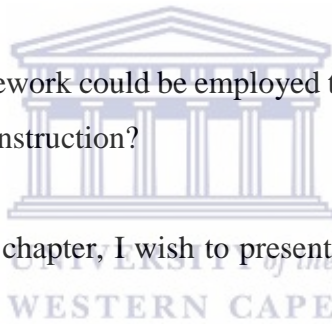
The purpose of my study is to investigate the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. I wish to mention that, my study is informed by the constructivist view of education. My study also embraces the interpretivist approach to research which tends to be more qualitative. At this juncture, I know from the research literature that, interpretivists are open to diverse ways that people may understand and experience the same non-manipulated objective reality, because their understanding and experiences may be influenced by different factors, settings and contexts. In my study, I used a qualitative research design, where multiple data collection methods (triangulation) were used to collect qualitative data. I collected data through four research methods, namely: observation, lecturer interviews, student focus groups discussions, and Multiple Intelligence inventory. In my study, I chose to use multiple methods of data collection in order to get in-depth coverage and understanding of the study, which are synonymous/in keeping with triangulation. According to Gay et al. (2009), triangulation is useful when a researcher wants to obtain a more complete picture of what is being studied, as well as to cross-check information. Gay et al. (2009) stress that the strength of qualitative data research lies in collecting data in many ways, rather than just relying on one method. The data I have gathered were analysed qualitatively in order to address the following research objectives:

1. Explore the different alternative assessment tools that are used by English for Academic Purposes lecturers in academic writing instruction.
2. Analyse the factors that influence the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.
3. Assess the compatibility of assessment tools used by lecturers and the type of students' intelligences.
4. Assess the lecturers and students' attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

5. Propose a framework of integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

In order to achieve the aim of my study and the research objectives listed above, my study wishes to answer the following research questions:

1. How do lecturers of English for Academic Purposes integrate alternative assessment in academic writing instruction?
2. What are the factors influencing the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction?
3. What is the lecturers and students' attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction?
4. How do the assessment tools for academic writing match the types of students' intelligences?
5. What type of framework could be employed to integrate alternative assessment in academic writing instruction?



In the first section of this chapter, I wish to present a description of the population and sample of my study.

3.1. Population and Sample

The population of my study were the lecturers and students (at the time of collecting data) in the English for Academic Purposes course at the University of Namibia Language Centre. It is a mandatory requirement that all undergraduate students at the University of Namibia must take the course as a core module. In this course, they are introduced to various academic language skills, which they may need during their studies and beyond.

The Language Centre consists of 14 lecturers. Each semester, about eight lecturers are assigned to teach the course. At the time of data collection, seven lecturers were assigned to teach the course English for Academic Purposes. Each lecturer teaches four classes ranging from 48 to 69 students per class. The lecturers meet their classes four times (four lessons) a week per class. Each lesson is allocated 55 minutes. The lecturers are holders

of at least a Masters’ degree in language or language teaching related specialties. Some of them have graduated from Namibian higher institutions of learning while others have attended in foreign countries. All the lecturers are however Namibian nationals.

I employed a convenience sampling for my study. Since the lecturers and students reserved the right to refuse partaking in the study (Gay et al., 2009), I felt that a convenience sampling approach was appropriate for the study. I could only select the students and lecturers who showed interest to be participants in my study. Out of seven (7) lecturers who taught English for Academic Purposes at the time of collecting data for this study, I selected (3) willing lecturers to be participants in the study. In addition, I also selected 12 willing students to be participants of this study. This translated into four (4) students from each one of the classes taught by each participating lecturer.

In the next section, I propose to present the instruments that I used to collect data for my study.



3.2. Instruments

3.2.1. Lesson observation

I collected data using classroom observations. Through observation, my focus was on how the lecturers used alternative assessment. I also focused on how the students’ responded to the assessments used by the lecturer in each lesson. I used an observation form as guidance for what items to focus on. Additionally, the form consisted of a provisional section for ‘other observations’ since for a qualitative study such as this one, more facets are likely to surface and should be utilized to the advantage of the research outcomes. I have presented the lesson observation (also see Appendix 8) form/guide below:

Observation guide

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Observations</u>
Assessment techniques: - Group, pair, individual work - Whole class discussions	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher learner questions - Formative or summative 	
<p>Students' reaction to the assessment technique:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation, class management, affective filter, students' clarity and comfortability with the assessment used 	
<p>Support for Multiple Intelligences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Linguistic, musical, kinetics, special, interpersonal, intrapersonal, logical, naturalistic 	
<p>Support materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Textbook, handouts, video, audio - Computer, Internet, Intranet 	
<p>Rapport:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Show interest in students, respectful, encourages participation, supportive, shows enthusiasm. 	
<p>Authenticity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Real life application, relevance, effectiveness, practicality, linked to objectives 	
<p>Lecturer's support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supportive, clear instruction, while or post feedback, good knowledge of the assessed skill or content. - Self-confident, professional 	
<p>The physical environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Layout of the room, light, ventilation, destruction (noise) 	
<p>Other or overall observation:</p>	

It should be noted that qualitative designs are fluid and emergent in nature, and thus may not be fixed from the beginning. In light of this, the design evolves in response to the emergence of new, and often unforeseeable discoveries (McComack et al., 2012). In this study, I similarly expected that the outcomes of the observations may also influence addition of more items to be discussed during the interviews and focus groups.

Another instrument that I used to collect data for my study was the Multiple Intelligence Inventory. I have presented it in the next subsection.

3.2.2. Multiple Intelligences Inventory

I administered a Multiple Intelligences Inventory (Armstrong, 1994) to the students, to collect data which were compatibly compared to the types of assessments used by the lecturers. I have presented the inventory below (also see Appendix 11):



Multiple Intelligences Inventory

PART A: Check (✓) each statement that applies to you. Write the total checks for each section in the space provided.

Verbal-Linguistic Intelligence

TOTAL: _____

- ___ Books are very important to me.
- ___ I can hear words in my head before I read, speak, or write them down.
- ___ I get more out of listening to the radio or a spoken-word cassette than I do from television or films.
- ___ I enjoy word games like Scrabble, Anagrams, or Password.
- ___ I enjoy entertaining myself or others with tongue twisters, nonsense rhymes, or puns.
- ___ Other people sometimes have to stop and ask me to explain the meaning of the words I use in my writing and speaking.
- ___ English, social studies, and history were easier for me in school than math and science.
- ___ When I drive down a freeway, I pay more attention to the words written on billboards than to the scenery.
- ___ My conversations includes frequent references to things that I've read or heard.
- ___ I've written something recently that I was particularly proud of or that earned me recognition from others.

Logical-Mathematical Intelligence

TOTAL: _____

- ___ I can easily compute numbers in my head.
- ___ Math and/or science were among my favorite subjects in school.
- ___ I enjoy playing games or solving brainteasers that require logical thinking.
- ___ I like to set up little "what if" experiments (for example, "What if I double the amount of water I give to my rosebush each week?")
- ___ My mind searches for patterns, regularities, or logical sequences in things.
- ___ I'm interested in new developments in science.
- ___ I believe that almost everything has a rational explanation.
- ___ I sometimes think in clear, abstract, wordless, imageless concepts.
- ___ I like finding logical flaws in things that people say and do at home and work.
- ___ I feel more comfortable when something has been measured, categorized, analyzed, or quantified in some way.

Visual-Spatial Intelligence

TOTAL: _____

- ___ I often see clear visual images when I close my eyes.
- ___ I'm sensitive to color.
- ___ I frequently use a camera or camcorder to record what I see around me.
- ___ I enjoy doing jigsaw puzzles, mazes, and other visual puzzles.
- ___ I have vivid dreams at night.
- ___ I can generally find my way around unfamiliar territory.
- ___ I like to draw or doodle.
- ___ Geometry was easier for me than algebra in school.
- ___ I can comfortably imagine how something might appear if it were looked down upon from directly above in a bird's-eye view.
- ___ I prefer looking at reading material that is heavily illustrated.

Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence**TOTAL: _____**

- ___ I engage in at least one sport or physical activity on a regular basis.
- ___ I find it difficult to sit still for long periods of time
- ___ I like working with my hands at concrete activities such as sewing, weaving, carving, carpentry, or model building.
- ___ My best ideas often come to me when I'm out for a long walk or jog, or when I'm engaging in some other kind of physical activity.
- ___ I often like to spend my free time outdoors.
- ___ I frequently use hand gestures or other forms of body language when conversing with someone.
- ___ I need to touch things in order to learn more about them.
- ___ I enjoy daredevil amusement rides or similar thrilling physical experiences.
- ___ I would describe myself as well coordinated.
- ___ I need to practice a new skill rather than simply reading about it or seeing a video that describes it.

Musical Intelligence**TOTAL: _____**

- ___ I have a pleasant singing voice.
- ___ I can tell when a musical note is off-key.
- ___ I frequently listen to music on radio, records, cassettes, or compact discs.
- ___ I play a musical instrument.
- ___ My life would be poorer if there were no music in it.
- ___ I sometimes catch myself walking down the street with a television jingle or other tune running through my mind.
- ___ I can easily keep time to a piece of music with a simple percussion instrument.
- ___ I know the tunes to many different songs or musical pieces.
- ___ If I hear a musical selection once or twice, I am usually able to sing it back fairly accurately.
- ___ I often make tapping sounds or sing little melodies while working, studying, or learning something new.

Interpersonal Intelligence**TOTAL: _____**

- ___ I'm the sort of person that people come to for advice and counsel at work or in my neighborhood.
- ___ I prefer group sports like badminton, volleyball, or softball to solo sports such as swimming and jogging.
- ___ When I have a problem, I'm more likely to seek out another person for help than attempt to work it out on my own.
- ___ I have at least three close friends.
- ___ I favor social pastimes such as Monopoly or bridge over individual recreations such as video games and solitaire.
- ___ I enjoy the challenge of teaching another person, or groups of people, what I know how to do.
- ___ I consider myself a leader (or others have called me that).
- ___ I feel comfortable in the midst of a crowd.
- ___ I like to get involved in social activities connected with my work, church, or community.
- ___ I would rather spend my evenings at a lively party than stay at home alone.

Intrapersonal Intelligence

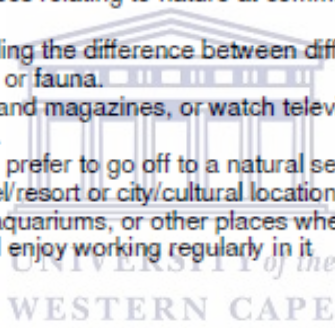
TOTAL: _____

- ___ I regularly spend time alone meditating, reflecting, or thinking about important life questions.
- ___ I have attended counseling sessions or personal growth seminars to learn more about myself.
- ___ I am able to respond to setbacks with resilience.
- ___ I have a special hobby or interest that I keep pretty much to myself.
- ___ I have some important goals for my life that I think about on a regular basis.
- ___ I have a realistic view of my strengths and weaknesses (borne out by feedback from other sources).
- ___ I would prefer to spend a weekend alone in a cabin in the woods rather than at a fancy resort with lots of people around.
- ___ I consider myself to be strong willed or independent minded.
- ___ I keep a personal diary or journal to record the events of my inner life.
- ___ I am self-employed or have at least thought seriously about starting my own business.

Naturalist Intelligence

TOTAL: _____

- ___ I like to spend time backpacking, hiking, or just walking in nature.
- ___ I belong to some kind of volunteer organization related to nature (e.g., Sierra Club), and I'm concerned about helping to save nature from further destruction.
- ___ I thrive on having animals around the house.
- ___ I'm involved in a hobby that involves nature in some way (e.g., bird watching).
- ___ I've enrolled in courses relating to nature at community centers or colleges (e.g, botany, zoology).
- ___ I'm quite good at telling the difference between different kinds of trees, dogs, birds, or others types of flora or fauna.
- ___ I like to read books and magazines, or watch television shows or movies that feature nature in some way.
- ___ When on vacation, I prefer to go off to a natural setting (park, campground, hiking trail) rather than to a hotel/resort or city/cultural location.
- ___ I love to visit zoos, aquariums, or other places where the natural world is studied.
- ___ I have a garden and enjoy working regularly in it.



PART B: Now create a bar graph by plotting your totals below:

10								
9								
8								
7								
6								
5								
4								
3								
2								
1								
Intelligence	Verbal Lin- guistic	Logical Math- matical	Visual Spatial	Kines- thetic	Musical	Inter- personal	Intra- personal	Naturalist

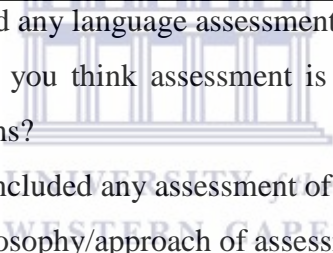
Based on the theory of Multiple Intelligence, I believed in this study that students' intelligences may vary and thus students may benefit from a given assessment differently. The types of assessment that were observed during the lesson observation were then

compared to the type of intelligences that the students manifested through the Multiple Intelligence Inventory. In the next subsection, I also present another instrument, the lecturer interviews, that I have used to collect data for my study.

3.2.3. Lecturer interviews

I collected data through lecturer interviews. Here, I had individual one-on-one interviews with the lecturers who were selected to be participants of the study and whose lessons I had observed. In the interviews, I used semi-structured questions. There were not only pre-set questions but I also asked the lecturers follow up questions which were depending on the course of the interview. I have presented the lecturer interview questions below (also see Appendix 9):

Lecturer interview guide

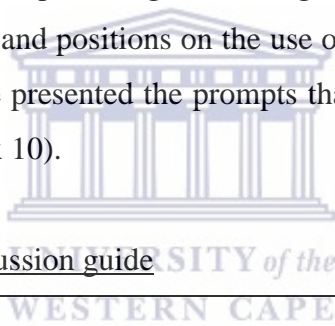
- 
1. Have you attended any language assessment training?
 2. In your view, do you think assessment is of great importance in academic writing instructions?
 3. Has the training included any assessment of academic writing?
 4. What is your philosophy/approach of assessment?
 5. Apart from the prescribed assessments: the essay, test, and presentation, what are the other methods of assessment do you use particularly on academic writing?
 6. What are the factors that influence your choice of assessment methods?
 7. How do students' characteristics influence your choice of the type of assessment tools that you may use?
 8. How often do you assess your students?
 9. What is your take in authenticity assessment?
 10. What are the available platforms for information sharing on writing assessment?
 11. Where do you get your assessment tool? Are they readily available at the centre or you produce your own?
 12. Any other contributions?

In the interview, I asked the lecturers to share their experiences and position on the use of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. For later analysis of the data collected through the interviews, I used an audio recorder to record the interviews.

In the next sub-section, I present the student focus groups, which is another instrument that I have used to collect data for my study.

3.2.4. Student focus groups discussions

I collected data through student focus groups. These were group discussions that I held with the student participants. There were four sets of focus groups: the four students from each lecturer's semester group. During the focus group discussions, I asked the students to share their experiences and positions on the use of alternative assessment methods in writing instruction. I have presented the prompts that I used in the student focus group discussions (see Appendix 10).



Student focus groups discussion guide

1. How do you understand the term or concept “assessment”?
2. Is there a relationship between assessment and teaching? Is it one thing or two different things?
3. Do you like being assessed? And why?
4. In English for Academic Purposes, you are taught academic listening, speaking, reading and writing. So I am focused on academic writing. Do you feel like you are assessed enough when it comes to academic writing. Or how often are you assessed?
5. How often does the lecturer assess your writing skills?
6. Apart from the essay that specifically assess your academic writing, are there other assessments that are given to you in the course?

7. When the lecturer gives you a writing task, how do they convey the criteria that you should try to meet? How do they ensure that you are clear on what to do?
8. When lecturers assess, they use a document called a rubric. It consists of the assessment criteria and marks allocations. In your views, how helpful could it be to complete your assessments if it was provided to you in advance?
9. Do you think that what you are required to perform will be required in the real world?
10. Any other contributions?

I used a semi-structured approach in that I had pre-planned questions/items to be discussed. But I also prompted the students to discuss other items that surfaced during the discussions. For the purpose of later analysis of data collected through these discussions, I used an audio recorder to record the discussions. In this section, I have presented the instruments that I have used to collect data for my study. In the next section, I present the step-by-step procedure that I followed when I collected data for my study.

3.3. Data Collection Procedures

As soon as I was granted the necessary permits, namely: the ethical clearances from the University of Namibia (see Appendix 4) and the University of the Western Cape (see Appendix 5), I began with the data collection process. First, I selected the willing student and lecturer participants. I also had to arrange explanation sessions to explain to the participants what is really expected from them as well as their roles in this study. During the explanation sessions, I also provided an information sheet to the participants, which they had to read for themselves. I also asked the participants to sign consent forms (see Appendix 7: Annexes 7.1 and 7.2) at that juncture. I have presented the information sheet (also see Appendix 1) and the participant consent forms (also see Appendix 6) below, respectively:

Information sheet

Faculty of Education
Private bag X17 Bellville 7535 South Africa
Tel. 021-959 2449/2442
Fax 021-959 3358

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Hafeni P. S. Hamakali. I am currently studying towards a PhD degree in Language and Literacy with the University of the Western Cape (UWC), South Africa. I have several years' worth of experience in teaching English as a Second Language and Academic Literacy courses at tertiary level. As a result, this has resulted in my keen interest in researching new avenues for assessing language in the Academic Literacy courses.

I kindly invite participants of this study to familiarise themselves with the content of this information sheet, and to freely ask questions or anything that may need clarification. There are two groups of participants: lecturers and students. The lecturers will participate in an interview and their lessons will also be observed. The students will participate in the focus group discussion as well as complete a multiple intelligence inventory. Both the lecturer interview and focus group discussion will be recorded for later analysis. Participation in this study is voluntary and one is free to withdraw from the study without any obligations.

Research Title: *Assessing students in English for Academic Purposes: The role of alternative assessment tools in writing instruction*

The research objectives of this study are to:

1. Explore the different alternative assessment tools that are used by English for Academic Purposes lecturers in academic writing instruction.

2. Analyse the factors that influence the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.
3. Assess the compatibility of assessment tools used by lecturers and the type of students' intelligences.
4. Assess the lecturers and students' attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.
5. Propose a framework of integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

My hope is that this study improves the quality of assessment approaches in the English for Academic Purposes course and that it will strengthen my professional practices as a language educator.

Your voluntary participation in this study will be highly appreciated.



Informed consent form

Faculty of Education
Private bag X17 Bellville 7535 South Africa
Tel. 021-959 2449/2442
Fax 021-959 3358

I, the undersigned, have accurately read the information sheet, and understand what is expected of me as a participant in this study.

I confirm that I have been given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and that the questions have been answered accurately and to my satisfaction.

I confirm that I have not been pressured into giving consent, and that my consent to participate in this study is given freely and voluntarily. I have also been informed that I may withdraw from this study at any time without any obligation.

Participant's full name: _____

Signature of participant: _____

Date: _____

I collected data in the following order:

1. Lesson Observation
2. Multiple Intelligence Inventory
3. Student focus groups
4. Lecturer's interview

I began with lesson observation in order to get a clear picture of what is really happening in the English for Academic Purposes lessons, as far as assessment is concerned. The data

collected from the lesson observations also informed some of the kinds of questions that I have to ask in the lecturer interviews as well as the student focus groups. Similarly, the comparison of the types of intelligences of students along with the types of assessments observed in the lessons also informed some of the types of questions I asked in the lecturer interviews and the student focus groups. I then followed up with the student focus group discussions and then finally, the lecturer interviews. Below, I present the procedures I followed to collect the first set of data, using the lesson observation instrument.

3.3.1. Lesson observation

Although I had already conducted an explanation session for the lecturer participants, I also had to introduce and explain myself as well as my role as a researcher in the English for Academic Purpose lessons that I observed. I specifically informed the students about my student/researcher status in their lessons, and that my role in their lessons was strictly to observe but not to teach, assess, nor participate in their discussions or learning.

For the purpose of this study, which is focused on assessment of academic writing, my observations were selective of lessons focused on academic writing only. As such, I ensured that I had the lecturers' semester plans and I was keeping track of the lecturers' progress with the semester plan, so that I could not miss the target lessons. During the observation, I particularly looked for the items pre-listed in my lesson observation guide (see Section 3.2.1. and Appendix 8). In addition, I also left room for "other observation" space where I recorded any interesting or emerging items for the interest of this study. In other words, the observation guide was also to some extent open-ended. As I observed the lessons, I also recorded on paper what I have found, for later analysis.

The next set of data that I collected were through the multiple intelligence inventory. I present the procedures that I followed in the next sub-section.

3.3.2. The multiple intelligences inventory

After the observation were completed, I administered the multiple intelligences inventory to the student participants. Since the inventory could be new to them, I also spared some

time to explain what the inventory was about, and how they should complete it. Students were not required to provide any identification information on the inventory, for example name, student number or contact number. The main aim of administering the inventory to the students was to find out the variations in types of intelligences possessed by the student participants, but not on who exactly possesses which type of intelligence.

Particularly, I needed this information in order to find out whether the assessments used in the course English for Academic Purposes are congruent with the types of intelligences that students dominantly possess. The Multiple Intelligence theory suggests that lecturers take into consideration the types of intelligence that their students dominantly possess (Gardener's 1984). I concur with Lunenburg and Lunenburg's (2014) view that such considerations can enable the lecturers to design their assessments in a manner that they stimulate and take advantage of the students' dominant intelligences.

The next instrument I have used to collect data for my study was the lecturer interviews and I present the procedures I have followed to collect data in the next sub-section.

3.3.3. Lecturer interview

Towards the end of the course/semester, I started to conduct the lecturer interviews. I had requested the Language Centre management to allow me to conduct the interviews in the Language Centre's boardroom. I preferred the boardroom because, unlike a classroom or office, it was unlikely that there would be much interruption (visits and noise) from the general university community. During the collection of data for this study, I was still working as a lecturer, and students could show up at my office for consultations from time to time. I was responsible for groups of both undergraduate and postgraduate students at the time. My colleagues could also come to my office and interrupt the interviews. Hence, the boardroom was favourable.

I used an audio recorder to record the interviews. This was useful as it allowed me to capture the whole discussion that I had with the lecturers. Later, I found it easier to

analyse the data without omitting any useful information that should inform the findings of my study. I also incorporated some etiquettes/protocols of conducting interview from Perry (2000) as house rules for me as the researcher:

- I asked the lecturer participants, in advance, if they do not mind being audio taped during the interview/focus group discussion.
- I ensured the setting up of the environment beforehand: audio recorder, seating arrangements, DO NOT DISTURB sign.
- I ensured that the discussions were conducive for the lecturer participants to share their experiences, feelings and deepest thoughts, willingly and freely.
- My reactions to the lecturer participants were carefully managed because I believed that it could have great effect on the participants' willingness and motivation to share their experiences and views.
- I also had to be ready to respect the autonomy of the lecturer participants as I understood that, how I interact with the subject matters and lecturer participants (for example to build rapport) may vary from person to person.

UNIVERSITY of the

The next instrument that I used to collect data was the student focus groups. I present the procedures I have used to collect data in the next sub-section.

3.3.4. Student focus groups discussions

Towards the end of the course/semester, I started to conduct the student focus group discussions. I had requested the Language Centre management to allow me to conduct the discussions in the Language Centre's boardroom. I preferred the boardroom because, unlike a classroom or office, it was unlikely that there would be much interruption (visits, noise) from the general university community. During the collection of data for this study, I was still working as a lecturer, and students could show up at my office for consultations. I was responsible for groups of both undergraduate and postgraduate students at the time. My colleagues could also come to my office and interrupt the discussions. Hence, the boardroom was favourable.

I used an audio recorder to record the discussions. This was useful as it allowed me to capture the whole discussion I had with the students. I then found it easier to analyse the data without omissions. I also incorporated some etiquettes/protocols of conducting interview from Perry (2000) as house rules for me as the researcher:

- I asked the student participants, in advance, if they do not mind being audio taped during the focus group discussion.
- I ensured the setting up of the environment beforehand: audio recorder, seating arrangements, DO NOT DISTURB sign.
- I ensured that the discussions were conducive for the student participants to share their experience, feeling and deepest thoughts, willingly and freely.
- My reactions to the student participants were carefully managed because I believed it could have enormous effect on the participants' willingness and motivation to share their experiences and views.
- I also had to be ready to respect the autonomy of the student participants. How I interact with the subject matters, and participants (for example to build rapport) may vary from person to person.

As soon as I completed the data collection process, my next step was to analyse the data. In the next sub-section, I present the procedure as well as the methods I have used to analyse the data that I have collected for my study.

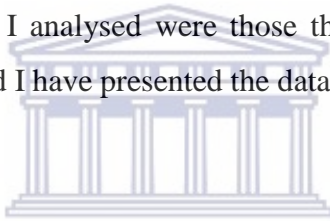
3.4. Data Analysis Procedures

My study is qualitative in nature in that I used qualitative data in the study. As soon as I completed the data collection process, I began with data analysis where I employed a qualitative data analysis method. I used a thematic analysis method to analyse the data by organising the data under different themes. Below, I will describe the data analysis procedures for each set of data collected through each research instrument. The first set of data that I analysed were those I have collected through lesson observation and I have presented the procedures I have followed to analyse the data in the next sub-section.

3.4.1. Lesson observation

I analysed the data collected from lesson observations under different themes. Some of the themes were already embedded in the lesson observation guide (see Observation form in Section 3.2.1. and Appendix 8); however, I also left the analysis open to new themes that could emerge from the observation. This is the reason why there was space for “other observations” available on the observation guide. It is common practice that in qualitative studies, new themes are likely to emerge all the time; hence, room should be made available to accommodate them in order to provide in-depth understanding of the subject under study (McComack et al., 2012). The presentation of the analysis is simply in prose form since there were no need for any graphical representation of the qualitative data that were analysed.

The next set of data that I analysed were those that I collected through the multiple intelligences inventory and I have presented the data analysis procedures in the next subsection.



3.4.2. The multiple intelligence inventory

I analysed the data collected through lesson observation in two ways. First, I identified the types of intelligences that students have indicated to be the dominant ones for them. I must clarify here that this analysis was not focused on quantifying the types of intelligences that a number of students possess, but rather it was meant to find out whether a group of students may possess differing types of intelligences. That is, even if a given type of intelligence was only indicated by one student participant, for the purpose of this analysis it was already considered a variation, because each student should equally and inclusively benefit from the way lecturers plan and administer their assessments.

Second, I compared the types of intelligences that emerged from the students' indications with the type of assessments used by the lecturers. The types of assessments were identified through lesson observations, lecturer interviews, and student focus groups discussions: Through the lesson observations I observed how the lecturers used their assessment on their students; through the lecturer interviews I had a prompt on the types

of assessment that lecturers used; and through the student focus group discussions I also had a prompt on the way students were assessed in the course English for Academic Purposes, respectively. The presentation of this analysis will be in a table form with additional prose form to provide a detailed description of the analysis.

3.4.3. Lecturer interviews

I used a thematic analysis to process the data collected through lecturer interviews. First, I transcribed (see transcriptions of Lecturer Interviews in Chapter 4: Section 4.3.1) the interviews so that it becomes easier to apply the coding. I used the coding techniques to identify and place different sets of data under different themes. The themes were formulated with regards to the research questions for my study. In other words, I as the research formulated the themes/labels. The lecturer interviews were one-on-one interviews between me (the researcher) and the individual lecturer participants. Since my methodology was qualitative, the data did not involve any quantification. The focus was on the specific features that fell under each prompt in the interview guide (see Interview Guide in Section 3.2.3 in this chapter) as well as those that fell under “other considerations” or emerged from follow-up questions. The presentation of this analysis will be in prose form. I will also provide the coding sheet prior to the analysis of data in Chapter 4.

I have also used the same technique, the thematic analysis, to analyse data collected through student focus groups. I present the procedures that I followed to analyse the data in the next sub-section.

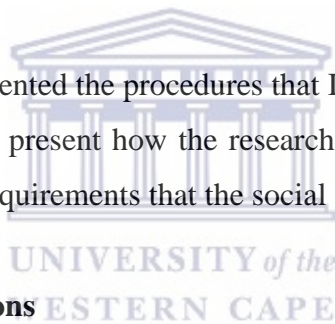
3.4.4. Students focus groups discussions

Firstly, I transcribed (see transcriptions of Students Focus Groups discussions in Chapter 4: Section 4.3.2) the data and then after, I coded (see Chapter 4: Section 4.4) the data under different themes. Similarly, I formulated the themes with regard to the research questions for my study. The student focus groups involved a discussion between me (the interviewer) and 3-4 students (the interviewees). Although students’ amount of responses

as well as their views differed, it did not necessarily affect my analysis since I did not focus on comparing their responses but on the specific issues they have raised.

According to Perry (2000), analysis of qualitative data must begin as soon as the first piece of data accrues. However, Perry (2000) warns that the data collection process should not focus more on the themes that have emerged, before completing the interviews. In my study, I had some of the themes already pre-determined for this study while others emerged from the data collected. I also compared the data collected through the MI inventory with the types of assessments used by the lecturers to assess the compatibility of assessment and the type of students assessed. The presentation of this analysis will be in prose form. I will also provide the coding sheet prior to the analysis of data in Chapter 4.

In this section, I have presented the procedures that I followed to analyse my data. In the next section, I propose to present how the research methodology of my study ensured adherence to the ethical requirements that the social sciences research demand.



3.5. Ethical Considerations

Qualitative researchers protect participants by upholding the principles of academic integrity, research ethics, and human dignity (McComack et al., 2012). The Canadian Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS) (as quoted in McComack et al., 2012) warns that:

[Some ethical issues] may be identified in the design phase. Others [may] arise during the research itself, which will require the exercise of discretion, sound judgement and flexibility commensurate with the level of risk and potential benefit arising from the research, and considering the welfare of the participants, individually, and or collectively (p. 33).

In upholding the principles of academic integrity, research ethics, and human dignity, my study has maintained the necessary ethical considerations.

In this study, I maintain anonymity by not citing the participants' names in the final report of the study. I also treated the information provided by the participants with high confidentiality. Under no circumstance would the information be traced back to the participants' names and used for any other purpose other than the analysis of the current study.

I also explained to the participants the purpose of the study, the data collection methods, and the time required from the participants, so that they are clear on what they were about get into. Participating in this study also brought about some positive washback in the process since participants were involved in the alternative assessment discourse where they were likely to learn something about themselves, and language assessment and learning.

Prior to collection of data, I had written a letter (see Appendix 3) to the University of Namibia Research and Publication Committee to grant me (the researcher) permission to conduct research at a University of Namibia's academic centre: the Language Centre. Only then after all the necessary permits were granted that I began with my data collection process. I also had applied for and received ethical clearance (see Appendix 5) from the University of the Western Cape, where I am studying.

I made a participant consent form (see Appendices 6 and 7) available to the participants which they had to sign should they agree with the nature and conditions of the data collection process and to be participants in my study. I assured the participants that their participation was voluntary, and therefore they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without any obligations. My data collection process did not interfere with the normal progression of activities in the Language Centre. Some of the data collection events such as the lecturer interviews, completion of Multiple Intelligence Inventory, and student focus groups were conducted based on the participants' mutual availability. Hence, my study did not necessarily inconvenience the participants' schedules and their time was used productively. I, the researcher, was also ready to adhere to the code of conduct of the University of Namibia and that of the University of the Western Cape.

My study did not involve interventions with caged animals or clinical treatments. Therefore, I believe that there was no space or scope for the assessment of risk. As for anonymity and confidentiality, the names of all the participants are not part of the findings. In my study, I strived to comply with the ethical guidelines. I assured about the following before the study commenced:

- My study would not cause any physical harm, and I ensured that it would not cause any social, mental or emotional harm to participants or to any other member of the university community.
- The participation to this study was based on the participants' free and voluntary consent, expressed by completing, signing and returning the consent forms before the commencement of the study.
- I guaranteed the participants the right to withdraw from my study at any stage without any consequences.
- Participants had the right to anonymity; their identity and/or any key detail likely to unveil their anonymity do not appear in this document in any circumstance. Their evaluation and appreciations remain confidential.
- I treated the participants with dignity, equality and respect. I objectively considered their objectives, choices, beliefs and views.
- My study did not compromise the participants' good names.
- Should the need arise to work with children below the age of consent (18 years for Namibia), I would get consent from their teachers and/or parents would be asked to consent on their behalf (This was not very probable for First and Second Year students who started basic school at 6 years).
- All consent forms completed by participants were appended to the final thesis document.
- The research data were secured on my personal computer and a back-up drive both of which are password protected; only I had access to these passwords. The research data will be stored for a period of 5 years.

- The final copy of the approved thesis will be turned into the University of the Western Cape and an additional copy of the thesis will be provided to the University of Namibia.

3.6. Conclusion and Summary of the Chapter

In this chapter, I have presented the methodology of my study. I have presented the research design of my study as well as the rationale behind the choice of this research design. I have also presented the source of data of my study and the instruments that I used to collect data for my study. Furthermore, I presented the procedures that I followed to collect data as well as to analyse the data for my study. Finally, I have ended the chapter by presenting the ethical considerations of my research methodology, highlighting how it adheres to the ethical requirements in the Social Sciences research.



CHAPTER FOUR

Presentation and Analysis of Data

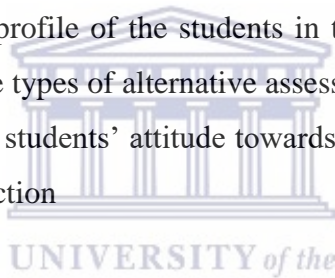
4.1. Introduction

Language assessment is a crucial component of language instruction and it is central to students' language-learning experience. My experience of using a learner-centered approach in my instruction of academic writing as well as my review of available literature showed that, any single measure may not be sufficient in regard to estimating the diversity of skills, knowledge, learning processes, and combined strategies to determine student progress (Sharifi, & Hassaskhah, 2011). In fact, language assessment scholars have begun to investigate the integration of alternative assessment methods in order to obtain more realistic information about students' achievement and classroom instruction (Bachman & Palmer, 2011; Barootchi & Keshavarz, 2002; Hamakali & Lumbu, 2016; Sharifi, & Hassaskhah, 2011; Reeves, 2000; Tsagari, 2004). Specifically, the purpose of my study is to investigate the integration and use of alternative assessment in the English for Academic Purposes course at the University of Namibia Language Centre. In light of this, as mentioned in my Methods chapter, the following research questions assume particular immediacy in my study:

1. How do lecturers of English for Academic Purposes integrate alternative assessment in academic writing instruction?
2. What are the factors influencing the integration of alternative assessment into academic writing instruction?
3. How do the assessment tools for academic writing match the types of students' intelligences?
4. What is the lecturers and students' attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction?
5. What type of framework could be employed to integrate alternative assessment in academic writing instruction?

In this chapter, I present an analysis of data collected from lecturers and students in the English for Academic Purposes course. I collected the data through lecturer interviews, student focus groups, multiple intelligence inventory, and observations of lessons. I analysed the data using the thematic method, which entailed my analysis of the data based on major themes derived from my research objectives and research questions of my study. Hence, I propose to present the data under the following themes:

1. Types of alternative assessment used in the English for Academic Purpose course
2. Factors influencing the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction
3. Intelligences profile of the students in the English for Academic Purposes course and the types of alternative assessment
4. Lecturers and students' attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction



I collected valuable data from the lecturer participants, student participants and the lesson sessions. At the time of data collection, the Language Centre consisted of 14 lecturers, of which seven lecturers were assigned to teach the course English for Academic Purposes. Using a convenience sampling for my study, out of the seven (7) lecturers who taught English for Academic Purposes at the time of collecting data for this study, I selected three (3) lecturers who were willing to be participants in the study. My sampling methods were based on a stance that, participants reserve the right to refuse partaking in the study (Gay et al., 2009). Hence, I found it fit for my study to employ a convenience sampling approach to select the students and lecturers who showed interest to be participants in my study. In the same vein as the selection of the lecturer participants, I also used a convenience sampling approach to select the student participants for my study. Therefore, I selected 12 willing students to be participants of this study. This translated into four (4) students from each one of the classes taught by each participating lecturer. In the end, my study experienced an attrition of two student participants who disappeared after

participating in the student focus groups discussions. I distributed the multiple intelligence inventory to all the participants (12 student participants) but only ten of them completed and returned the inventory to me. The other two were nowhere to be found. Participant attrition is not exceptional in research and its effect on the results of the study varies depending on the nature of the study. In a qualitative study such as my study where there are no controlled groups, the attrition effect is documented to be quite minimal and not significant (Gay et al., 2009; Young, Powers & Bell, 2006). My study is not comparative in nature nor it is statistical, and as a result, the attrition of the two student participants may not pose a significant problem to the outcomes of my study.

I must also provide clarity and justification for the quantum of data which, in the eyes of some researchers, may seem insufficient to build a conceptual category. In contrast, considering the predominantly qualitative nature of my study, I am inclined to believe that my quantum of data is sufficient to build a conceptual category. Hence, based on my judgement call, I understand that for a study with qualitative research design like my study, even a single incident or instance is sufficient to build a conceptual category (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 156). By the same token, the best insights could come from quite a small amount of data. I also base my judgement on the following views of Bleich (cited in Cooper, 1985) to provide further support to my position:

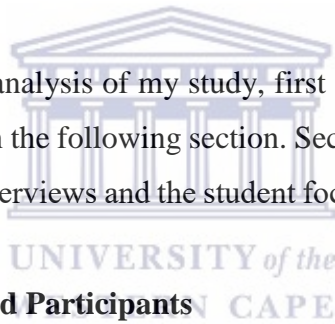
More is known... from small numbers of detailed reactions than from large numbers of one-word judgements. In this way, the process of teaching the development of detailed subjective response is simultaneously research into the nature of response processes (p. 261).

In sum and spirit, this can act as rich underpinnings to our research practices with which we will be amply equipped to propose subject-centred conceptualisation of the phenomenon of investigation, which would by pointing out how resistance to the arrogant discourse of quantitative researchers, can provide the stimuli and collaboration for me and my subjects to foster our voice, agency, and inter-subjectivity in developing ourselves. In light of this:

“...it is difficult for any institution to enforce its own desired meaning and thoughts. The hybridity of language enables subjects to represent alternate meanings denied by dominant institutions, if they can negotiate the inherent tensions strategically (Canagarajah, 1999, p. 185).

I also would like to establish here that my presentation of data is not a narrative of all the data collected for this study. My presentation consists of selective of data strands, which provide value and support the themes that have emerged from my analysis. My judgement and selectivity is also supported by Denzin and Lincoln (1998) who argued that the researcher is not obliged to write a narrative “in which everything is said to everyone” (p. 349).

Before I present the data analysis of my study, first I wish to present the bio data of the participants of my study in the following section. Second, I present the transcriptions and coding of the lecturers’ interviews and the student focus groups discussions, respectively.



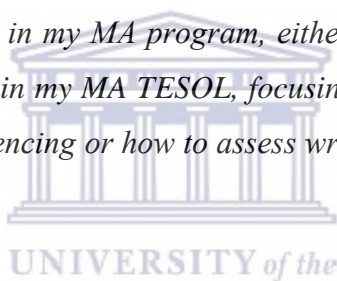
4.2. Bio Data: Setting and Participants

The lecturers who participated in this study were full-time employees of the University of Namibia, stationed at the Language Centre. The University of Namibia is one of the three institutions of higher education in Namibia. The other two are, namely: Namibia University of Science and Technology and The International University of Management. The University of Namibia’s Language Centre was formed for the purpose of serving as the Centre for language learning, teaching and research (University of Namibia, 2018). The primary mandate of the centre is on the upgrading of competence in the usage of English and the teaching of the University core courses, namely: English for Certificate Purposes, English for General Communication, English Communication and Study Skills, English for Academic Purposes, and Academic Writing for Postgraduate Students. All undergraduate students have to do one or two core courses offered by the Language Centre. Postgraduate students (Diploma, Masters and Doctorate) have to enrol for Academic Writing for Postgraduate Students.

The University of Namibia's Language Centre is staffed with a relatively young academic team. The lecturer participants were within the age range of 37 to 46 years. They indicated that, they have never undergone training specifically focused on alternative assessment or assessment of academic writing. However, some participants acknowledged having attended a course on language assessment training through staff development programmes, as well as one who attended a language assessment course (in general) in their Master's programme. For example, they indicated that:

"In academic writing, no I didn't. But in my school career as an ESL teacher, yes I did. But that's more on secondary level."

"I had one course in my MA program, either it was assessment and evaluation but there was one in my MA TESOL, focusing precisely on assessment, whether it's criterion referencing or how to assess writing, speaking, listening and so on. I had one."



All the lecturer participants are holders of a master's degree in language-teaching related specialisations. At the University of Namibia, a master's degree is the entry level qualification to an academic position or lecturer position. The lecturer participants have obtained their master degrees from various universities and countries, for instance Namibia, the United States of America and South Africa.

Students who participated in this study were full time students at the University of Namibia. These students came from various faculties and study programmes. The students sample consisted of both first year and second year students enrolled in the course English for Academic Purposes. The course English for Academic Purposes is a first year module aimed at preparing students, who just entered university from secondary school, with academic literacy skills that they may need in the their academic journey at university and beyond. However, there are cases where one may find second year students also doing this course. This could be because the students have failed it and have to repeat

the module, or they had to attend a fundamental language course during their first year and only in the second year that they could do the English for Academic Purpose course. The data were however not analysed based on whether the students were first or second year. The focus of my data analysis was also not on the study programmes that students are registered for, because the focus of my study was not necessarily meant to attempt comparisons between the two set of students.

Now that I have presented the bio data of the participants and have presented the setting of the origin of my data, in the next section, I present the transcriptions and coding of the lecturers' interviews and the student focus groups discussions. It is from these raw data that I have taken data strands to substantiate my remarks and observations that I have made in my study.

4.3. Presentation of the Raw Data from Lecturer Interviews and Student Focus

Groups Discussions

In this section, I present the raw data that I collected through lecturer interviews and student focus groups discussions as well as the coding of these data. First, I present the transcriptions of the lecturer interviews and students focus groups. Second, I present the coding of the raw data (lecturer interviews and student focus groups discussions). It was from the coding of these data that I took some of the data strands which I found to be relevant to support my analytical remarks and observations that I have made in my study. I will present my remarks and observations after this section, which I will present based on the themes that I derived from my research objectives.

For the purpose of anonymity, I have not used the names of lecturer participants' and student participants'. Therefore I have used a key to indicate the participants as follows:

Lecturer interview

R = Researcher

L1 = Lecturer participant for Interview 1

L2 = Lecturer participant for Interview 2

L3 = Lecturer participant for Interview 3

Student focus group discussions

R = Researcher

S1 = Student participant 1 (In each student focus group discussions)

S2 = Student participant 2 (In each student focus group discussions)

S3 = Student participant 3 (In each student focus group discussions)

S4 = Student participant 4 (In each student focus group discussions)

It should also be noted that I conducted 3 student focus groups discussions. Each group consisted of its own set of students, but the same labels (S1, S2, and S3) for student participants were used in each group. Hence, one should expect to see the same labels in each transcriptions of the three student focus group discussions. This should not cause any challenge with my analysis of data because the focus of my analysis was not to compare the group's responses, but it was particularly focused on the students' views and experiences with the use alternative assessment. I have used three asterisks (***) to indicate the beginning and ending of each of the transcriptions of the lecturer interviews or student focus group discussions. I will start with the presentation of the transcriptions of the three lecturer interviews below.

4.3.1. Transcriptions of lecturer interviews

4.3.1.1. Transcriptions of Interview 1

R: I would like to inform you that this interview session will focus on how you assess your students in the English for Academic Purposes course. It is intended to get more insights about the relevance and the appropriateness of assessment methods used in the course. All the information you will give during this interview will be kept strictly confidential, and will only be used for the purpose of this research. If you do not understand any of the questions, please feel free to ask or interrupt for more precision and good understanding.

R: Have you attended any language assessment training?

L1: After receiving my Master's degree, no. But I have been interested in how we assess our students. Nothing specific I can recall, except I have done a certificate in Teaching English for Academic Purposes at Witwatersrand. But, we did not focus on assessment. I had one course in my MA program, either it was assessment and evaluation but there was one in my MA TESOL, focusing precisely on assessment, whether it's criterion referencing or how to assess writing, speaking, listening and so on. I had one.

R: Has the training included any assessment of academic writing?

L1: Not that I can recall of, no nothing like that.

R: In your view, do you think assessment is of great importance in academic writing instructions?

L1: It is important because, you know academic writing is not like creative writing. There are certain moves that are recognisable by other academics or just lecturers. For example, academic writing is said to be linear. What was the question again? It is, because even, if you read on genre analysis kind of, genre style of writing something like that, I do know, where you have to focus on purpose and audience, academic writing can be situational and things like that, and in context. It is very important to see whether the person has met the requirements. As I said earlier, creative writing sometimes, you can do what you want and you can get away with it. In academic writing, if you move away from certain moves, let's say topic sentences, it is not clear what you are saying in a specific paragraph. Or it's not clear that there is a bit of background information, thesis statement in the introductory paragraph. So, if you deviate from those academic moves, when I tell them, I actually dance a Michael Jackson dance, but I don't tell them. And then I ask them "Whose move is this?" And then they go like "Michael Jackson, the moon dance!" So I tell them that academic writing also has certain moves; that you need to have this and this. When those elements are missing, unfortunately students get punished by me. Even

though sentences are grammatically beautiful, but maybe topic sentences, background information or hook to capture the reader's attention is not there, then sorry. No matter how good your language is, you need to stick to certain moves in academic writing.

R: What is your philosophy/approach of assessment?

L1: My goodness! Will I even refer to any approach in this eclectic error? But let me tell you how I assess especially an essay. Perhaps, the essay, even though our marking grid says for in-text citation, for references, and for content, sometimes it does not specify what the content marks are exactly for. You understand? So what I do, for the introduction, I allocate a certain number of marks. For each of the other body paragraphs, I allocate a certain number of marks. For the conclusion, certain number of marks. And obviously for the references, a certain number of marks. What is key for me in each paragraph especially for this short theoretical paper that they write, for the body paragraph, I want to see an in-text citation that is valid, not just anything you know. Not just a website, so, to show me that you have read. And it's in each paragraph, because we say, let each of your paragraph be about a main idea. Okay, I look for in-text citation, I will look for a topic sentence, I will look for it, because I have taught it, I will look for it. And if it is not there, because what I feel for English for Academic Purposes for example, I even want to call it, this is supposed to be directed academic writing. Because these guys are novices. I feel they don't know what they are doing. So tell them that I want you to put the topic sentence in the initial position of your paragraph. If it is not there, they are in trouble. After that topic sentence, it doesn't no matter where the in-text citation is, I am looking for the supporting sentences. Do not deviate, because I tell them that this is directed. You follow what I tell you. So I will look for two three supporting sentences if they are not there, they are in trouble. And then I will also look for a concluding sentence. If you don't restate you topic sentence in your concluding sentence then you don't get anything from me again. So, what I believe in sometimes, lecturers, you know, subjectively allocate marks. Because, either the vocabulary is good and all other things are good, but is the structure okay. Because, for me the structure is more

important at the beginning. Because that structure itself is quite logical. You see, if a person gives a topic sentence, there is a logic there. If I say give a supporting sentence, it says you are providing example or proofs or something like that. And you are not just making claims without substantiation. So, I have also seen that in the EAP that is offered at UNISA, that marks are allocated for each paragraph. Yes, in that you can still look for content, in-text citation, you can still subtract marks for grammatical errors or language errors or language that is not academic. Maybe the person is writing as if they are speaking. But I believe, each paragraph on its own, I know an essay for example is a whole flowing document, but I allocate for each paragraph.

R: Apart from the prescribed assessments: the essay, test, and presentation, what are the other methods of assessment do you use particularly on academic writing?

L1: I believe in drafting. Writing is a process. As far as the final product should be rewarded marks, we should also reward the process where students go through. What do I do? As you can see on that table (*there are piles of draft essays*), I ask for multiple drafts. Now that my students are many, I don't ask for first two drafts, I just ask for the first one and then the final one. Because I have about 200 students. What do I do? I designed a checklist as you can see (*showing me the checklist*) it will be on top of each of those (draft essay). You can take one and see what I do. That checklist is stapled on top of the first draft. And then that first draft is given to another student. Because it will be too much of my work. That student will be the one looking for me, the elements of academic writing that I have put in the introduction, in the body, in the conclusion and everywhere. Before the students do that, I train them. This is what you are going to do. I teach them and then this is what you are going to do. After they have checked the first draft of a peer, the draft is given back to the peer, and check what is good already in there, and what is missing. I will now tell them, you have another week to make improvements. Now, if a student has successfully done the first draft, implemented some changes, and that's why when I mark the final draft I look at the first draft as well. Then that student

deserves an extra mark. I usually allocate five marks. I didn't do it this semester though. But I did punish those who did not submit their drafts. My marking was very severe because this is the person who did not want to go through the process, they think they can just write the essay in one day and things like that. I did subtract if you did not. But if you went through the process, you will get an extra mark. Yes, students still feel the lecturer is the expert and all that, and their paper should be looked at by the teacher, but all I reward is the process. If you don't do anything in that first draft, then you are in trouble.

R: What are some of the factors that influence your choice of assessment methods?

L1: It's just the objectives of what I expect from the students. For example, I taught English for General Communication and I know exactly what I have explained. I told them, give reasons maybe for why you think passion killing is rampant in the country. I did not ask these students to go and do research. Write an essay, have a topic sentence, support it with your own thinking. So what I have taught is what I really look for. What are the objectives? What do I want? Or what does the curriculum requires the students to achieve? And then I decide ok, let me do this. But informal assessment methods are very important. Sometimes even just by discussing with students in class and you tell them to ask questions and depending on the type of question they are asking "Sir, what really is a topic sentence." Sometimes it's the problems that I encounter, or rather I have encountered as a lecturer. Those problems, somehow I also include them: What are my students struggling with? I hummer that, I teach that, and if you don't give that back to me, you are in trouble. I think that really influences the type of assessment I adopt. You know, I am thinking even of writing a book based the type of academic language errors that students frequently make. So I will on purpose hummer on these things and I will allocate marks to see that students mastered these things.

R: How do students' characteristics influence your choice of the type of assessment tools that you may use?

Students have an influence in my choice. This is one problem that I have with English for Academic Purposes, for high 'schoolers'. You will realise that in some other countries, students come to university a little bit aware already of intellectual property or what plagiarism is. So these guys, you need to understand that it is their first time doing a small research paper and it has to be informed by other people's views. They have their own views. So these guys, they don't respect other people's views or other researchers' views. So I am a bit lenient. One way to get rid of that, I don't know whether I should go there. What I tell them for example, they say at this stage, Wikipedia or just Google search, you type in anything and it brings back, such is not really credible sources of information. It's not academic enough. For me I say, these are novice writers. They are just beginning. Please go ahead if you want to cite Wikipedia on your topic, or just any kind of information. Go ahead as long as you follow APA. I feel we need to be lenient on that. We need to guide them in the beginning and not to be harsh on plagiarism, but you should smoothly bring them into this world of academic writing. As it is called somewhere else academic tribes since students fall into different disciplines. So for them to become a member of the tribe or clan, unfortunately one thing they have to master is to respect other people's writing. But I am saying, that does influence. I am always mindful that it is the first time these guys are doing this. You let them go the first time, and then you warn them. I have failed a student in the past who in their final essay plagiarised blatantly, almost everything was just copied.

R: How often do you assess your students?

L1: Look, I don't even know. This just come naturally. Sometimes at the very beginning, it depends also on your goal. Like the paragraphs that we give to students, it could be scrambled sentences where topic sentences are put in, the supporting sentences are the first one and things like that. If I want to find out whether they are aware of what a topic sentence is, give it in the very beginning. In fact, instead of giving them maybe the rule

or the exact name of the subject you are going to cover, just start in the very middle and students by themselves will tell you that this is ABC. This is the issue of deductive and inductive. I think it is inductive where you don't start with the rule, at the beginning of the lesson. Only then towards the end of the lesson, I already started assessing them at the beginning of the lesson. I think that's one of my styles. Without informing them, you are already assessing them. And only you give them the rule and the "whys" why we are doing this at the end of the lesson. It's something that I learned from a colleague.

R: What is you take on authentic assessment?

L1: Look, I inform my students that English for Academic Purposes, this is supposed to be called in fact Academic Survival Skills. I make that known to them, that for you to survive your academic journey, this what we are going to talk about is important. I start by reminding them that each and every one of you will write, not maybe a big research paper, that kind of short research paper or concept paper they write in their final year which already start in the third year, I tell them that. I tell them that as you choose your topic today, think of something that you have interest in, so that you can even carry on with it after you have passed my English for Academic Purposes. Maybe this will be your final year project. But here is the good thing about English for Academic Purposes: We don't write imaginary things. We don't write about "Imagine you went for your holiday to Europe." What I tell them is, find a problem, your own unique individual problem. Think of how we can solve that problem. That makes it more unique. I showed them one of my Master's student's paper. He feels when he was at university, they had too many subjects and he thinks that struggle holds the student from paying enough attention to Mathematics because of the too many courses. So that's how I make it authentic. I bring in authentic papers not written by other students at the same institution. So I tell them, be original. Think of a problem you see. These guys don't have enough content of whatever they are going to study apart from a bit of grade 12 that they have. It's just that some of them it's their first year; first semester, they don't know about Law already for example. I, the lecturer, know more Law problems than them who are going to study Law. So that is the problem. That's why I believe, for these first year students, instead of even

giving them to choose a topic, sometimes they choose topics which seems to be authentic to them, but they don't even know how. That's why if we lecturer somehow can come up with a number of topics ourselves in Law, for Law students, and we give them to choose from those topics. Because they don't know how to choose topics. Sometimes they choose things that are not researchable. You know, problems that we see happening, problems about our youth in the ruling party for example. Things that they can go and research or read about how maybe the youth took the ruling party to court for being expelled. For Malaria, there was an outbreak of Malaria. When it comes to environment and climate change, we can talk about floods that are always there in the north. Most of the times, for example when they read article, these articles sometimes should be written from a student's perspective. Sometimes we give them articles that are written from lecturer's perspective: How to solve certain student problems. I always want to give them something to read or write about from their perspective as students. It becomes more authentic. How to get maybe credible sources from the Internet. How to quickly write a specific paper. I am telling you, recycling of errors for example or how to teach students ABC, sometimes we give them to write about these things and then they have to look at it as if they were lecturers. But there are so any problems because 90% of our students are first year and only a few are not.

R: What are the available platforms for information sharing on writing assessment?

L1: Nothing that I can think of, I don't think that there is any platform apart from the informal discussion of saying "Can you see what this person did here, can you see there is no conclusion here". But I do read on my own but sharing with others, not much.

R: Where do you get your assessment tools? Are they readily available at the centre for example, do you produce your own?

L1: I am always reading on the English for Academic Purposes. So far many of my research papers or just conference papers have been in English for Academic Purpose. For example, one of my theoretical paper was on "Are teaching methods in English for

Academic Purposes different from teaching methods in just General English classes? So by doing that already, I already get how to assess, how to do ABC. Because this is the problem: English for Academic Purpose is a discipline; apart from it being any other English course, it has grown so much because it is a branch of English for Specific Purposes. So I developed so much interest. Another one that I look at: British English Association of Lecturer for English for Academic Purposes (BEALEAP). That one sets the standards. When they realised that English for Academic Purpose has grown exponentially to become a discipline on its own, they formed an association of lecturers of English for Academic Purposes. I go there. In fact, if you read that document, you will see that not every lecturer with Master's degree is qualified to be an English for Academic Purposes lecturer. If you go there and read how the English for Academic Purpose out to be, it's somebody who has to be doing research. It's not your normal, because English for Academic Purpose is not just language, it involves so many skills: research and so on. So, fortunately just on my own I read so much. For example my latest paper that I went to present was on "Critical thinking aspects within English for Academic Purposes. Because you are not only assessing language or way of writing, you are also assessing how these people think by asking them to have a topic sentence and how they are going to substantiate to provide proof or an example or to support stance and things like that. Another thing I think is not right with us, we give students freedom to write on whatever topic they want to write on. But some essays, compare and contrast for example, the words that go in there in "compare and contrast", both, in spite, on the contrary, just those connector and many other words, we don't go in details. We ought to go in detail. We need to prescribe to students how an argumentative essay is organised for example. Or even a compare and contrast essay, the way it's organised, there is a block method, there is a point by point method, going in detail. These ought to influence the way we assess. Those things must influence whether a student has met the requirements of a specific genre. If a person's comment word is "an analysis, a discussion, an explanation, and so on, that also should determine how we are going to grade a specific student.

R: Any other contributions?

L1: While you are teaching, you are assessing informally. If while you are teaching you are not assessing informally, then you are in trouble. Look, while you are teaching, that is formative assessment I guess. It can be a test, quiz, observation, formative assessment while you are teaching should inform summative assessment at the end of the semester. But here is the problem, here you are talking about 16 lecturers teaching one course, English for Academic Purposes. Now I read somewhere about assessment concerning English for Academic Purpose. English for Academic Purposes ought to be student need driven. Now, if you are so many, you would rather meet institutional requirements as they call it. That you need to have this test and so on. But when I was alone, I was teaching Media Studies course at [another university], I would come up with my own assessment because I am the only lecturer. But it is not easy. I think in the future, I think we are ready, we should move away from what we have now which is English for general academic purposes where students from different faculties could be in one class. Yes, it is a little bit specific because they choose their own topic. Now there is what we call Specific English for Academic Purposes where students from Law are all in one class and they have a specific lecturer at the Language Centre and almost the entire content looks at even how to do all these footnotes in academic writing. But I am not saying general is bad, because I have read somewhere, that is going to be a very expensive exercise as some lecturer will need to be retrained to specifically meet needs of IT students or Medical Doctor students. Even the type of course that the student is doing should inform. Yes I believe that students should now write almost something general, not necessarily specific because they are not, they don't have mastery of specific courses yet.

R: Thank you for your time and participation

4.3.1.2. Transcriptions of Interviews 2

R: I would like to inform you that this interview session will focus on how you assess your students in the English for Academic Purposes course. It is intended to get more insights about the relevance and the appropriateness of assessment methods used in the course. All the information you will give during this interview will be kept strictly confidential, and will only be used for the purpose of this research. If you do not understand any of the questions, please feel free to ask or interrupt for more precision and good understanding.

R: Have you attended any language assessment training on academic writing?

L2: In academic writing, no I didn't. But in my school career as an ESL teacher, yes I did. But that's more on secondary level.

R: In your view, do you think assessment is of great importance in academic writing instructions?

L2: I think it's very important. We need to know that students know what we are teaching, that is very important. Also, it gives us direction towards where we are right now, and where we are going. Moreover, it also enables students to sort of plot themselves as far as their understanding is concerned, regarding the course outline and the course content that they need to know. So I think assessment is pivotal in academic writing.

R: What is your philosophy/approach of assessment?

The philosophy is that knowledge is constructed as we interact in our daily activities. So I believe that my students construct the knowledge within the classroom. So that enables me to sort of assess my students as knowledge is constructed continuously. So my philosophy is that, we construct knowledge, it's a social activity and therefore it enables me to assess my students as knowledge is constructed continuously in class. It's a constructivist philosophy that I adhere to in my classroom.

R: Apart from the prescribed assessments: the essay, test, and presentation, what are the other methods of assessment do you use particularly on academic writing?

L2: I have very informal ways of assessing my students. One way would be to teach and ask my students after ten minutes to explain to each other what I have just said in the last ten minutes. By doing that, students are constantly aware of the progress of the lesson and the progress of the content. So that's one way of doing informal assessment, asking them to tell each other what I have just said in the last ten minutes. Another way, I let them do worksheets, where they share ideas, and construct. When things are not clear, they negotiate for meaning. Another way that I do is, at the end of every lesson, I would ask my students, "What is the most important thing you have learned in today's lesson?" That should sort of enable them to critically think of the content they have learned that day. I always include an element of critical thinking in my assessment. Think it's pivotal.

R: What are the factors that influence your choice of assessment methods?

L2: I look at questions from students. If students did not understand and they ask a lot of questions about a specific unit or specific topic that I have covered, and also when I notice in class that the students pretend that they understand but they didn't, that also helps me to decide that now I am not going to teach, they should come and teach. Somebody should come and teach the class. By doing that, they construct their own knowledge. They can tell that this is wrong or right. So that's another way of assessing. It allows students to reteach what I have taught. A student can come in front of the class and teach essay title formulation, then he or she serves as a teacher and a guide, and so on.

R: How do the students' characteristics influence the choice of the type of assessment tools that you may use?

What I do is, I assess the level of understanding first and then that determine what kind of assessment I will be using. So, if I determine that my students did not understand a certain topic, I definitely would then use that as a means to assess what I have taught. It all depends on the level of cognition. If I have bright students I might not do a lot of

assessments. But with slower students who struggle to understand the content, I will definitely reinforce through formal and informal assessment.

R: How often do you assess your students?

L2: For me assessment is continuous. It's a continuous progressive process. I would teach and then after five minutes I would ask students to tell each other what they have learnt or explain to each other what I have just said. And then I would teach again, and students would ask me questions, and then I would refer back the question to the class in order to see if everything is understood. By doing that, both the lecturer and the students construct knowledge and negotiate for meaning in the process.

R: What is your take on authentic assessment?

L2: I think it's important at the beginning of the lesson that you outline the purpose of the lesson and how that connects to the reality of the academic life. If I teach APA referencing for instance, then I would tell them that, you use this in all your academic writing, in all your assignments and so forth. I think the fact that you make them conscious of the realities of the Unit or the topic you are covering is very important. So that also determines whether students would understand or not.

R: What are the available platforms for information sharing particularly on academic writing assessment?

L2: To be honest, currently it's just personal reading; I read articles on assessment. But there hasn't been a conscious effort to liaise with my colleagues and sit down and talk about assessment per say. I haven't done that. But I am just reading.

R: Where do you get your assessment tools? Are they readily available at the centre or do you produce your own?

L2: I think there are templates of assessments already at the Language Centre. Since we need to have uniformity, we all follow the same template. So, I think the informal assessment is more of my personal assessment in class. But when it comes to the

formative assessment then I follow the prescribed assessment template provided by the Language Centre.

R: Any other contributions?

I think teaching informs assessment. Teaching is the process where the whole dimension between students, knowledge. They call it the triangle: the teacher, the knowledge and the students interact. So through that, you analyse that and then, you can plot an assessment activity through that. So I think that teaching informs. Because through the learning and teaching activity, an assessment format can come out of it.

R: Thank you so much for you time and participation.

4.3.1.3. Transcriptions of Interviews 3

R: I would like to inform you that this interview session will focus on how you assess your students in the English for Academic Purposes course. It is intended to get more insights about the relevance and the appropriateness of assessment methods used in the course. All the information you will give during this interview will be kept strictly confidential, and will only be used for the purpose of this research. If you do not understand any of the questions, please feel free to ask or interrupt for more precision and good understanding.

R: Have you attended any language assessment training on academic writing?

L3: No. I haven't.

R: In your view, do you think assessment is of great importance in academic writing instructions?

My take is that the more you assess students in whatever way, the more it becomes realistic. But if we look at only the formal assessment tasks that are set on a semester period, then to me that does not give a true reflection. But if we say right from the beginning of the course, throughout we assess on a daily basis, on a weekly basis, the by the end of the examination, even the results that we will get will show a true reflection which the students are also able to give in a real situation which is not a classroom based situation.

R: What is your philosophy/approach of assessment?

Well, assessment is an evaluation of students to measure how good or how bad they are in a certain given task. So given that, I believe that when you get students to do the task or to do practical, that's when you are able to assess them affectively. For instance, I believe when it comes to writing, students should write in order to prove their skills or the skills that they have learnt. Because, when they have written several times, then you are able to see whether they have understood or they have picked up the skill or not. So my philosophy on assessment is that, when assessment is being carried out through practices, then we are able to see whether the students have understood or not.

R: Apart from the prescribed assessments, what other assessment do you use to assess your students' academic writing?

L3: There are several ways of assessing from my point of view when it comes to writing. There is one that I usually do which is almost informal. The first one is questioning. I ask them questions pertaining to writing. How do they see writing? What are the things that they feel they are not well equipped in writing. What do they want to get from writing? Throughout as I teach I ask them about their knowledge on writing. That is now on a daily basis. Just asking questions orally before they start writing, that is prewriting. I ask the students before they do the practical work. I ask them how they understand certain skills

or how they understand a certain way of writing certain things. Then secondly, the formal one is to get them to do the work that they are going to give to me in order to read through and see how they write. This is done, not on a daily basis like the questioning, but it is done occasionally. It can be formal or informal. The formal work are the set assessment work that we give to students on a semester based period, and the other one is the one that I give them in class after class which is also not on a daily basis but maybe once a week especially when I finish teaching a certain chapter, then I will give them written work that I can assess to see how they have acquired the knowledge that I have instilled in them.

R: What are the factors that influence your choice of assessment?

L3: As I mentioned earlier, in the prewriting tasks, when I question them and try to figure out, that can already give me the level or the pace at which they are working on. So their knowledge, the pre-knowledge that they had before they even came to class will determine which approach I should choose, assessment approach. Should I give them work to write then they give me feedback so that I can see what they have written and I give them also feedback to inform them about the level they are? Or should we just do this as mere discussion? Also, after they have written, sometime we do pre-writing tasks in a way of games or quizzes. So that can already inform me of the approach I should take.

R: How do the students' characteristics influence the choice of the type of assessment tools that you may use?

L3: Not that I have noted.

R: How often do you assess your students?

The actual assessment is done always at the end of the chapter. When I finish teaching a chapter, then I would ask them to write something to give me feedback especially on the written tasks. Let's say it's a summary writing task, when we finish then I ask them to write a summary, then I get to know where they are. Otherwise, the questioning one which

is quite informal and does not necessarily have structured questions, those kind of assessments are just done on a daily basis, throughout.

R: How often do you assess your students?

L3: Throughout the lesson.

R: What is your take on authentic assessment?

L3: In my case as a lecturer, right from the beginning I tell my students, I make sure that they understand that whatever we are giving them in these courses, should not only be necessarily used in the class, but they should be able to use them back in their faculties and also beyond the study period here. So they should be able to use them in academia and beyond that - that is now in their career. And this is something that we have had a very length discussion with them. I want to make sure that they understand what I mean by saying: this information should be instilled in them so that they can use this information after they have finished their studies here. Not only that but on a daily basis, like in the case of writing, they should be able to write real application letters which are highly formal, reports and all that they will be required to write in a working environment.

R: What are the available platforms for information sharing particularly on academic writing assessment?

L3: Maybe just in the corridors with my colleagues. I believe the Teaching and Learning Unit also here at UNAM are readily available to provide information on that. However, that is not my responsibility to do that; it's them to share with us. But on a personal point of view, I think the platform in academia can be anywhere: We have conferences, we have workshops. So if I am given the opportunity, I will share this information at the conferences that we have here, workshops that we have here, and we also tend to attend sparingly writing training. So those are some of the platforms that this information can be circulated.

R: Where do you get your assessment tools? Are they readily available at the centre or do you produce your own?

L3: Well in my case I prefer coming up with my own tools. For example, from the Internet there are quite useful tools that you can use to test students on different skills. Although there are few that are readily available, the ones we come up with when we look at our course reviews, then we can say let us use these as a tool for assessing students, I strongly believe the ones that I get, either I create them myself, or I combine whatever I came up with, with something that I get from the Internet. Because they are a bit more broad. The ones that we use here are somehow limited.

R: Any other contributions?

L3: I am not an educational assessment expert, but my contribution will be that I think certain measures should be put in place to enhance the assessment of students, not only in this course but at the whole university. So with this I suggest or I wish every unit had a person who is responsible for creating suitable assessment tools. Sometimes we are not well informed on that, and we come up with assessments which are not suitable for certain tasks. So if we had educational assessment experts who will serve either for all the units specifically for assessment, or we have somebody sitting in each unit who is an expert, whether they are lecturers or they are just for assessment, who will see to it that the assessment tools that are used are compatible with the tasks that are given.

R: Thank you so much for you time and participation.

I have now presented the transcriptions of the three lecturer interviews. In the next subsection, I present transcriptions of the three student focus groups discussions.

4.3.2. Transcriptions of Student Focus Groups Discussions

4.3.2.1. Transcription of Student Focus Group Discussion 1

R: Dear Students, I would like to inform you that this focus group discussion will centre on your experiences with the assessment methods used by your lecturer of English Academic Purposes. It is intended to get more insights about the relevance and the appropriateness of assessment methods used in the course. All the information you will give during this interview will be kept strictly confidential, and will only be used for the purpose of this research. If you do not understand any of the questions, please feel free to ask or interrupt for more precision and good understanding.

R: How do you understand the term or concept “assessment”?

S1: Me, I think assessment is a criteria that one can use to rate or grade your, let me say your academic work or something that you have written. It is just the way, after a lecturer has looked at the work and give you marks according to the content.

S2: My understanding, assessment is a way of teaching and evaluating to see whether the way you (lecturer) are conveying the message, the students are grasping. At the same time also like my colleague said, you evaluate to see whether it is impacting the way you want it to be conveyed.

S3: I agree, I just see assessment as a way of evaluation, and after that evaluation, the students see where they stand. The lecturer sees how good they are at conveying the message. After that, you see how much progress you have made from the beginning.

S4: It is just to check what the person did and then to rate it in the same proportion with the criteria.

R: Is there a relationship between assessment and teaching? Is it one thing or two different things?

S2: For me I would say, bringing the word teaching means that first, I believe I will not be assessed if I am not taught. First I need to be taught, then the lecturer will then be able to assess whether what he has impacted has really been sucked in for him now to say “yes, what I have taught this person, he or she has taken it”. He will assess me to see whether the knowledge which I have put in is what he really wanted it to be; whether I can now also try to reproduce what was taught.

S1: It can also teach you like, if you are awarded low marks, you learn something that I need to improve. There is really a big difference between teaching and assessment. But, that doesn't make them independent.

S4: It is more or less the same but teaching is something different and assessment is something different. But, through assessing, you can learn something, either you are doing good or not good.

S2: I also want to come in, you know it's the word 'assessing'. If I was told that I will be assessed tomorrow, my understanding is that I will be observed while doing what the lecturer has taught me. There is a thin line to differentiate the two.

R: How do you tell when the lecturer is teaching or assessing you? Do you notice it easily or the lecturer need to explain in detail that now I am assessing or teaching you?

S3: I think it depends on the lecturer. Some lecturers would come and then they teach you, and then later they would tell you that we are going to write a test, or we are going to have a quiz later on. With other lecturers, while they are busy teaching you, they are also busy assessing you with the questions that they are asking you during the lesson.

R: Do you like being assessed? And why?

S3: I personally enjoy being it. Because I am very critical, and you know I get the chance to see my mistakes; I feel I can grow from there. I see that no, this and this I am wrong and I need to improve on that. And I can go back and say let me just read through this more.

S1: For me, since we are at university, we should really be not bothered by the way we were assessed. As long as we are learning and our lecturers are qualified. I think we are just being assessed or rated at the university level. So we cannot really say it is bad or some lecturers are too lenient or something like that. The assessment will just be according to your academic work that you have presented.

S2: Individuals differ. Some want to be told that “I will assess you”, then they will prepare themselves to that extent that they shouldn’t make mistakes. Others don’t like being told because they assume that being in the institution of higher learning, the lecturer can come anytime with different ways of conducting assessment. Like she has indicated (S3), others will assess you while they are teaching, at the same time they will ask you questions to see whether you have grasped what was taught. So it is a form of assessing.

S4: For me personally just like my colleague has indicated, I don’t have any preference for specific form of assessment. Any method the lecturer uses, it’s fine with me, as long as what was taught is what was assessed.

R: In English for Academic Purposes, you are taught academic listening, speaking, reading and writing. So I am focused on academic writing. Do you feel like you are assessed enough when it comes to academic writing. Or how often are you assessed?

S4: I don’t think we are assessed enough.

S2: I think the challenge which I have personally encountered when it comes to assessment of our writing, there is a time when we are required to do critical thinking. You see, critical thinking, when now you are writing, we are not that much exposed to say, when you are writing, what do you really need to present on paper if you are putting it down. You know some of us are now old, we came out of school a long time ago, and coming back to university and a person is telling you critical thinking, you even get confused simply by the word critical thinking. So when you are putting it down, even if you are given an essay to write, it becomes a challenge. Just like she said, we are not that much given enough opportunity to do much of writing.

R: How often does the lecturer assess your writing skills?

S1: We get the one for the essay. So he gives us freedom to choose your topic which is related to your field of study then you formulate a title then you write your paper as your assignment. You follow the academic way of writing and then you also present it. So you must also make a PowerPoint presentation out of the same topic.

S3: For me, how do you expect me to improve on my academic writing if I am only given one thing to go and write? You know I came to learn something. Maybe I was probably never even exposed to this. You know there are some kids who came from school, they had say maybe English Core. Maybe if you had English Higher level first language, you were more exposed to it. Now you come here and you are told “No, write 1500 words, it has to be this format this format, go and do it”. And it’s just that one thing, you are not even given feedback on you know “I think you have to improve on this, you people have to do this this”. How do you expect me to know or grow as a student? I just feel like at the end of the semester, I would leave the same way I came in.

S4: What matters now is that that, if I pass then yes. Regardless whether you passed having learned something or just studying to pass for that specific purpose. Because there are people who study just to learn, I mean there are people who study to learn and know something, and there are those that study to pass. So I can be studying

today, writing tomorrow, after writing I forget everything. But people are different. You cannot really say the way she feels is how everybody looks at it.

S2: I think the challenge here is, you know like some of us who have been away from school for more than 20 years, and the system we used was the old system, the Cape Education. Currently now, the English now which we are doing here is more advanced. I only know the spoken English. So writing differs from speaking. So now to put it, you have things like suffixes, prefixes, these are things I am learning like for the first time again. Now, when you are writing now, to construct a proper grammatical sentence it becomes a challenge. And now the influence of saying you should not write ordinary English, it must be academic English where you have to use words, those bombastic words. You see now, it becomes a challenge that even you are writing for example an essay, at the end of the day you won't even understand what does it entail. And the formatting is also a challenge because the format you are taught introduction, you write introduction but you don't know what should be in the introduction. Conclusion, you don't know now what should be in the conclusion. Thesis statement, that was even the worst now, thesis statement. These are things that we are not properly taught to see what do you need when you are writing and for you to understand. It is like we are raising against time of just teaching, finishing the syllabus, write your test, done. But, just like you are saying, at the end of the day, if you are not here for the purpose of learning, just for the purpose of passing, you will pass, but you will be empty.

R: Apart from the essay that specifically assesses your academic writing, are there other assessments that are given to you in the course?

S1: We only wrote a test, and then the presentation which was based on the essay. So it was just a matter of copying and putting it on PowerPoint.

S2: I think we will be writing an exam, right?

R: (Follow up question) You raised a concern on giving feedback on marked assessments. How does the lecturer mark?

S3: We haven't gotten anything.

S2: For now, we got our tests and our presentation score sheets, but the challenge is, it's just marks. But you know now, it's not something you can question about. Maybe on an individual level, you go to the lecturer, you try just to see, oh, how did I score seven here out of ten. What did I do wrong? Maybe just for one on one.

S1: That is the feedback people want. It's not like coming to class and giving the answers. It's telling *aah*, how did you get fifteen out of twenty while the other person is getting maybe seven out of twenty?

S4: For me I think, the lecturer doesn't necessarily need to say individual person should be given feedback. He can generalise it to say, "I have seen that majority of you have failed to get this thing right. What was the problem?" Then maybe collectively we go through it, ok, "this is where we did not do right, but ok we didn't because of A, B, C, D..." So, the feedback doesn't necessarily need to be individually but it should be collectively, *yah*, the weakest points. Because we are just interested in where we are failing, our weakest link, so that we can improve on that.

R: When the lecturer gives you a writing task, how do they convey the criteria that you should try to meet? How do they ensure that you are clear on what to do?

S3: We were given something for the academic essay. We were given a format to follow.

S2: You are also told, you write how many pages, font type, style of referencing, which kind of sources. So those are your guiding tools. The instruction is always there. It is straight forward. The problem sometimes is with us when we interpret that information differently. You would be reading the same paper but you answer differently.

R: When lecturers assess, they use a document called a rubric. It consists of the assessment criteria and marks allocations. In your view, how helpful could it be to complete your assessments if it was provided to you in advance?

S1: People who assess the whole paper as a whole do not really give the meaning of the marks. Because, if I am being assessed for the introduction, for the abstract, for the conclusion, for the references, then if I get one out of three in the introductory paragraph, then I know I must do something. If a lecturer had to assess the whole paper, then he gives me 15 out of 20, I would just assume everything is fine. But maybe, the fifteen marks came from the body and conclusion, but here (introduction) I didn't do well. I think partitioning the paper in different section really helps to recognise where to put more effort.

S2: For me, I see the lecturers are doing that, where you see that introduction maybe you say it should be out of five, the body maybe is out of 15, and the conclusion maybe is two, references is three then it is out of twenty. But the challenge is, when you are writing your introduction, they say it's one paragraph, it's out of five and then you are given one. This is where the problem comes that you don't know: Was my paragraph very short, or something is not there? Because the problem is when you are writing your introduction, you don't know what should be there. But with our academic writing, what I have learned now is that, you are taught what should be there, which is a very good thing. So that even when you are starting your introduction, you know that I am talking of this topic, it must be there. I am talking of this writer, it must be there – specific things that you are required to put in the intro, then you are told the last sentence of your introduction should be this, then you know what should be done. The allocation of marks is there, but we still don't know that how the lecturer arrived to give you maybe he awarded you three out of five. You don't know now the two marks which you did wrong.

S3: I think the rubric could be very helpful because you have what is expected of you. You also know that, okay, maybe for my introduction, it will be this this, and I can work towards that. Instead of me you know being given a topic to go and write an essay of seven pages, and yes I am told the format, but I don't really know what is

expected of me. At the end, I ended up writing an essay that I don't even understand. You know, it's handed into a lecturer and only after the marks and everything has been entered, I see no, no, I was supposed to do this. My chance is gone, then no second opportunity.

S4: Just to add, sometimes when you are only given how many words to write, you end up only justifying your marks based on the number of words, which is very difficult. Coming back to the rubric, even if you say "write your essay on your chosen topic", the mark allocation will guide you.

R: Do you think what you are required to perform will be required in the real world?

S2: Personally, like myself, this short period I have been in an English class, I feel that it helped me a lot to understand especially when it comes to writing reports in the course of my work and to present a proper formal document. Now I know what is required. I am learning for the purpose but not just for the purpose to pass. I am learning to integrate it within my life.

R: Apart from assessments that awarded marks, are there any other assessments that you are given particularly on academic writing?

S3: There is this one time he gave us a summary to write. I don't even think he marked it. I don't remember getting it back.

S2: He gave us a topic, find your topic then you bring it to him and he looks at it, and then he would say whether you should go find another one or rephrase it. So this is a form of assessment for you to put your things, because sometimes it's just the wording, to know which one comes first. Sometimes we don't know whether "it's a verb, it's a noun?" You only know that it's English.

S4: Another way I have seen, assessment in class is observation of participation of students. Because, as a lecturer you are there, you will see who your active participants in the class are. It's one way of assessing who is learning. If a student

never participated in class since the beginning of the year, I as a lecturer would be worried that maybe the person doesn't understand. So sometimes he tries to pose a question to an individual especially that maybe they are always quiet.

R: For you to prefer one assessment method over the other, what are some of the factors that influence your preference?

S3: I think lecturers should use a variety of assessments. Assess students using the small things, like going to the community and reporting back to the class in writing. I think the small things are the ones that really help us to learn the most. Instead of you know, from the beginning of the semester until now, then you just give four questions to go and write an assignment.

S2: The other thing, I believe students learn better when they get involved, also by seeing. English for me is a very complex language. If you are just reading in the book, at least I would prefer that by means of other visual materials, it becomes easier to even remember. For example, when he was writing this on the whiteboard, I remember. But if we only come in the classroom and he is only paging through the book, I will leave without knowing what was done that day.

S1: Basically what we are doing is just reading. Even just to see a picture reminds of everything.

S2: Let me come back. When it comes to the presentation, I think it was a challenge for some. You are told, come and do a PowerPoint presentation but preparation is not done accordingly. It is not all of us who are used to public speaking. But this is for marks; it's counting. In the end, you might fail because you do not know what is required from you.

S4: Even confidence, some people are not that confident to stand in front of people. Your presentation can be good, but the way you are doing it can cost you marks.

R: (Follow up question) You mentioned that your presentation was based on your essay. Is there any lesson you have learnt with reference to the way you should write?

S3: One thing that I have learnt is to summarise. You know you convert your 7 pages essay to a page or two. We were taught how to summarise but it was not that much into detail. It was a challenge for some of us because when you are given five minutes and your work is for more than that, so instead of writing sentences you have to write keywords.

R: Are there any other contributions you would like to make with regard to assessment of English for Academic Purposes?

S4: I think I want to add something. This is a university and it is not only in English where we are required to write academic texts. There is a need for more opportunities for assessments even those that are not marked, but just for practice. You see, the more you do the more you learn. If you just give me this one assignment, I will write and submit then I will know may be two or three mistakes, but I think I still have more. If I could have more, it's just like Mathematics, you can't just solve two problems then you say you know. Keep practicing. Just a piece of writing, submit, like that you equip your students with English vocabulary. Most of the words that we use is just general English.

S2: My only concern, we need more training. It is useful in real life.

R: Thank you so much.

4.3.2.2. Transcriptions of Student Focus Group Discussion 2

R: Dear Students, I would like to inform you that this focus group discussion will centre on your experiences with the assessment methods used by your lecturer of English Academic Purposes. It is intended to get more insights about the relevance and the appropriateness of assessment methods used in the course. All the information you will give during this interview will be kept strictly confidential, and will only be used for the purpose of this research. If you do not understand any of the questions, please feel free to ask or interrupt for more precision and good understanding.

R: How do you understand the term or concept “assessment”?

S1: To find out what the person know.

S2: To evaluate.

R: Is there a relationship between assessment and teaching? Is it one thing or two different things?

S3: Like for me, I thing teaching should come first, then after we teach, we have to assess. What you have taught before, you capture it the way you want it to be learned.

S4: From my side, there is a difference between teaching and assessing. By teaching, you are giving knowledge. By assessing, you are trying to see if the people you have taught got what you gave them.

S2: Sometimes I notice it. But there are cases when I need more like explanation of what I really have to do.

R: Do you like being assessed? And why?

S3: I only like to be assessed when I am taught. If you didn't teach me, don't assess me.

S1: Actually, one should be assessed because if you are taught something, then you must prepare to be assessed, then you can know that now you know what you were taught.

S2: I think so, because if you are not assessed, for example you are taught something and you are not assessed, it would be pointless because you might not get what you were taught. Let's say for example, just in general like in real life you won't be able to use what you were taught. So if you are assessed, it makes it easier for you to know what you don't know.

R: In English for Academic Purposes, you are taught academic listening, speaking, reading and writing. So I am focused on academic writing. Do you feel like you are assessed enough when it comes to academic writing. Or how often are you assessed?

S4: We were assessed three times before the exam: we had an essay to write as part of the assessment, we had oral presentation, and a test. And from there, exam. So that's about four times.

R: Apart from the essay that specifically assesses your academic writing, are there other assessments that are given to you in the course?

S1: He used random questions during the lecture.

R: When the lecturer gives you a writing task, how do they convey the criteria that you should try to meet? How do they ensure that you are clear on what to do?

S2: They just write the mark, how much you got. They don't specify that you are good or you are bad. They just give the marks and that's all.

S1: But that one is a bit different for our lecturer. After you write you let me say your essay, then from there he can tell you how he marked it, or maybe he was looking at it using which criteria and so on. Then you know that *ohoo* I must improve here and here.

S3: For me, I am quite happy with it.

S2: If I could use percentage, I would give 70%. The 30% would be taken away by some weakness like, they don't, how can I say this? They only assess us through tests and activities. I mean through test and exam. There is no other way of them assessing us. So they lost the 30% because of that. Maybe they could give us more activities so that we know where we stand.

S4: You know, if you don't give activities and you just go straight to the main test, it's kind of not good.

R: Do you think what you are required to perform will be required in the real world?

S1: For me, I hated the thing for references. But as I have checked like in my course of study, I still have to deal with referencing and so on. Even in my sixth year, I will be doing a research for one year and I still have to write a report and reference. So the referencing part is really important for me.

R: (Follow up question) Which course are you doing?

S2: Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine.

S4: Almost everything you are taught is because they know you will use it later in life. So everything is important. We will use it.

R: When lecturers assess, they use a document called a rubric. It consists of the assessment criteria and marks allocations. In your view, how helpful could it be to complete your assessments if it was provided to you in advance?

S2: I prefer being asked random questions because if I happen to say something wrong, then at that point he can tell me the correct answer.

S3: I prefer the test. You see, the test asks almost everything that was taught.

S1: For me, when it comes to essay writing, it was really good assessment because, even in the near future, you would know how to write an essay, how to write a report. So

it was really fantastic. You also have broad thinking criteria. But during the test, the time is limited, you just have short period of time to give what you were taught.

S4: I think essay will be the way to assess.

S4: I would rather be assessed by essay writing because there is plenty of time. So you can make some research, read, so you can score high. Not like tests, they give you three hours then you are squeezed to think in that limited period of time. Sometimes you might end up making some simple mistakes, which may cost you some marks also.

S1: Even during the essay writing, you can even consult the people who know things better and ask questions instead of a test, it's only you and the paper.

R: (Follow up question) You mentioned that your presentation was based on your essay. Is there any lesson you have learnt with reference to the way you should write?

S3: I learnt that while you are writing, you have to make sure that you write things clearly, just to put yourself in the shoes of someone who is going to read it. You have to write something that is clear; everything must be vivid. When you are going to present, you do the same thing.

S2: I think writing also limits what you have to give to whoever is going to get your knowledge. Speaking, you can say out even the things you didn't write.

S1: Even give additional examples. (Adding to the previous speaker)

R: Any other contributions?

S2: Yes, they must increase their activities, just these random activities for people to know where they stand academically. They mustn't just pop with tests that we are going to write a test. Let me give an example of the test we wrote: I didn't know how the question paper looks like, just the basic concept of how the question paper is. So they have to come up with some activities just to give us an idea of how the question paper will look like. So the format is very important.

S1: When it comes to research, it should be a bit researchable. It should be things whereby students can go out in the field and research things that can make sense, not to imagine.

R: (Follow up question) How do you come up with your essay topic? Does the lecturer provide one for you or each student formulates their own?

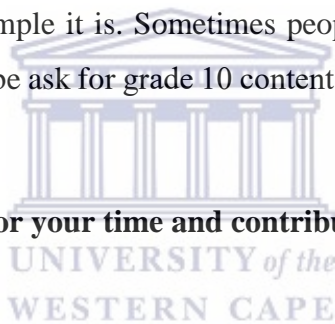
S1: You come up with it, maybe in line with your field of study.

S4: But in my case you have to come up with your title based on your field of study, then the lecturer has to approve it. He approves the topic if it's good or not. If it's bad, you look for another topic again.

R: (Follow up question) For the topic to be good or bad is based on what?

S3: It is based on how simple it is. Sometimes people just bring up topics that are too simple. It might only maybe ask for grade 10 content. It's weak. It should be at university level.

R: Thank you so much for your time and contributions.



4.3.2.3. Transcriptions of Student Focus Group Discussion 3

R: Dear Students, I would like to inform you that this focus group discussion will centre on your experiences with the assessment methods used by your lecturer of English Academic Purposes. It is intended to get more insights about the relevance and the appropriateness of assessment methods used in the course. All the information you will give during this interview will be kept strictly confidential, and will only be used for the purpose of this research. If you do not understand any of the questions, please feel free to ask or interrupt for more precision and good understanding.

R: How do you understand the term or concept “assessment”?

S1: The way we are evaluated in class.

S2: The way that what has been taught reflects on you or what you have picked up from what you have been taught.

R: Is there a relationship between assessment and teaching? Is it one thing or two different things?

S1: I think these are different aspects of teaching. Like, first you have to convey the information to the students and then you have to assess whether they understand what you taught. So both of them are like components of teaching.

S2: I think that they go hand-in-hand, because you can't teach without assessing whether what you taught has been understood, and then you can't just assess without having given some information. I think they are different but they go hand-in-hand.

R: Do you like being assessed? If yes, why?

S1: I think it depends on the way you are being assessed. Yeah, some things are actually fun like presentations, but it also depends if you are an out spoken person. If you are very into academics, then you will enjoy like writing a test rather than speaking or oral.

S2: Because, if I were the kind of person that prefer to just be, like I was introverted, I prefer to have just my test and show what I can do there, and only the lecturer knows. And if I didn't feel like I am a good test taker, then I prefer to just express myself in class. I actually prefer being assessed by the lecturer only without having everyone watching.

S3: I actually prefer, enjoy being assessed presentation-wise. I don't like having to write and things like that.

S4: Because you are also in class when you present stuff, you can talk out of your mind. It's not something that you have to study, if you like have general knowledge, you can just speak.

R: In English for Academic Purposes, you are taught academic listening, speaking, reading and writing. So I am focused on academic writing. Do you feel like you are assessed enough when it comes to academic writing. Or how often are you assessed?

S1: So far we being assessed I think three times.

S2: I think, formal assessment were the tests, presentations and an essay. I feel like that was not enough. I wanted like more, I would like to have chances to improve. And I think that, three different things that didn't have second chances didn't leave much room for improvement. If you had written an essay and had the first draft marked properly and then do another one which is also marked, that would have improved it, and written more than one test. Or have different other types of assessments, completely.

R: (Follow up question) You mentioned something, “formal assessment.” What do you mean by that?

S2: Formal, because in class we would have activities where, I think these are informal where it's like, this is how to do APA. “I am giving you this information, write it in APA format.” And then he can just look at it and give it back to you. I call it informal because you don't have to sit down, you don't have a set timeframe, and you just show what you can do. And it doesn't get recorded.

S4: And even discussions in class when Sir asks a question and then we give the answer, we are basically being evaluated, everyone. Because maybe one says something wrong and then someone else says it's not this. Basically formal assessment means, it is part of the curriculum.

R: (Follow up question) Can you just tell me some of the informal assessments that were used by your lecturer with reference to academic writing?

S1: Our lecturer would write things on the board and he could ask us to complete the task, kind of like a homework or classwork. We are evaluated on that and then he gives us a mark.

S2: And the he would also teach us academic summary in one lecturer, for example on a Monday, and then in the next session we would write a short summary which he would mark and give it to us and give us feedback in the next lecture. But it wasn't recorded as part of our marks. So, it's only to check whether we understand.

S3: I also think, our teacher specifically like, if we write a sentence, he would tell us whether we got like four out four or two out of four. Just to see like, to break down each section of the writing. To see where we can improve.

R: (Follow up question) Apart from the mark, the number, let's talk about the summary for example, what other kind of feedback do you get when the lecturer marks your work?

S2: Just generally, if we all wrote something, he would highlight what he spotted as a trend that we all doing, "you guys shouldn't do this. I see that you doing this a lot. Do this instead." Or "this is well done", or "this is not well done, this is the example of how it should be done". It wouldn't be written notes on your paper, but you would just give general feedback based on what the whole class did.

R: How often does the lecturer assess your writing skills?

S4: The thing is, I don't think we are taught enough in class. We have a study guide where you can pick different parts of how to write the introduction, how to reference, how to what, but we are not given something holistically on how to do an entire piece of academic writing.

S1: And this is like we are given pieces of information at different times. It's very self-study.

S3: And that's really hard because the time is limited. We don't have enough time to learn or catch up with all the other things that are in the module so we can write one nice piece of essay writing. Time is very limited.

S2: Right now as well having to study for exams, you write down question sections in the exam, and then you have to look for the piece of where it's explained in the study guide.

Whereas if you have been taught, you would be able to have your notes to refer to. I don't think that's available.

R: Could you provide any suggestions for the betterment of how the English for Academic Purposes course is conducted.

S1: I actually feel that the way people have been assessed, to see how necessary the course is. A lot of children need the English, like I understand why it's necessary. But there are a lot of children who like had English higher in high school and passed it and they are basically redoing the same stuff that they did in high school. So they could be spending more time on other subjects.

S2: I feel that each unit should be taught thoroughly and not have bits and pieces picked of certain page in each lecturer. So like this week we are doing unit one, we gonna finish it, this is what I want you to do, what I want you to know at the end of this unit. Have smaller assessments instead on one big one and then you don't quite know where all this came from.

S4: Because, the course reader is like a summary of all the information you should know. So like, if you have to self-study, maybe you won't understand. Maybe there will be things missing.

S3: I feel like each assessment should have a second opportunity because some of us came from backgrounds where English was not really a spoken language. So at least when we make the first mistake in the first assessment, we have a second assessment to you know boost our marks or replace the first one.

S4: Because we also learn from our mistakes.

S3: Exactly.

R: What type of assessments do you prefer, and why?

S1: I would say the essay, when we had to do it on research work. It kind of forced us to look into things that we would have looked at without the subject. Because it was kind of personal, because we have to pick a topic based on our career choice.

S4: But it also had something to do with the community. So it kind of make you research more on your career choice, which is good, and makes you involved in the community, because it involves you as well while you are writing.

S3: I would say it was presentation, because with most students who are introverts, I think it will give them confidence, it will boost their confidence so that they can do better or communicate better with others in class.

S2: I think it was also the presentation, because as a researcher if you do a piece of writing, I mean you can get it published. But then, I am in the Science field, and usually in Science you have to present your work to your peers. And I think being able to talk about what you have written about, acquiring that skill, I think it's very important – being able to defend what you wrote and all that.

R: In English for Academic Purposes, you are taught academic listening, speaking, reading and writing. So I am focused on academic writing. Do you feel like you are assessed enough when it comes to academic writing. Or how often are you assessed?

S4: I feel like we haven't been assessed enough. Because I don't like unnecessary assessment like if we write an essay I don't feel like we should write another essay, but that didn't happen so.

S3: I feel, I would rather present something face to face instead of writing something. Because when I present something, if the lecturer does not understand then they are able to ask me right there and then "What do you mean by this?" But then when you write, there is no opportunity for you to answer like "What do you mean by ABCD?" If it is wrong, it's just wrong, and if it is right it's just right.

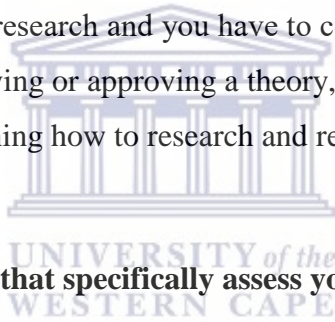
S1: But it also depends, because sometimes you have to learn how to get all the necessary information into your writing. Because it also depends on what career you are going into, whether you are going into Journalism or Media or something. Like to be able to do that without speaking and so on.

R: Do you think what you are required to perform will be required in the real world?

S1: Well for me, for the essay, because it was a research essay. Like in your career and job you have to do research sometimes to improve as you go through your career. So I think that it's good to like force yourself to learn how to do a research essay and to write on it because you also understand what you research.

S3: For me it will be the presentation, because what I am studying has to do with community work. A lot of time I will be required to stand in front of a lot of people. This could be community members or donors. I will be required to present my proposal, or a community's proposal.

S4: In this case I would say both the essay and the presentation because in Science again you have to do your own research and you have to compare it to other people's research whether you are disapproving or approving a theory, and then you will have to present it to your peers. I think learning how to research and reference and not plagiarize.



R: Apart from the essay that specifically assess your academic writing, are there other assessments that are given to you in the course?

S2: I enjoy something that I have to be creative. When I write a test, there is nothing creative about it. It's just right or wrong. So then I would not prefer that. If I have to make a presentation or construct an essay, I am sort of asked to voice my opinion. The fact and visual effects that I am choosing, that's also like part of it's my choosing. And I like it when I am able to be creative about something and express myself. And where I am not given room to do that, those are the assessments that I don't like.

R: (Follow up question) You mentioned that your presentation was based on your essay. Is there any lesson you have learnt with reference to the way you should write?

S1: I actually feel like when I did my PowerPoint presentation, I used a lot of sentences in the essay. But then when I spoke, I said them in a different way that was clearer. So like, you only realise once you actually speak what you have written that some of it could be said differently, or some of it could be said more clearly. You can give more clarification.

S2: I notice as well that when I was writing, I was writing based on my course, like something in my course. When presenting, I try to put it in layman's terms. So, in my academic writing I would be using what we were taught, the structure and everything, but then however when I am presenting, I sort of stray from that a little bit. So maybe, it would've been better if I have kept the structure that was required, and I mean I use the same words and everything but when I am presenting, it changes from academic to more informal. So, to be able to balance.

R: (Follow up question) What was the order of the two assessments, essay and presentation? Was the essay submitted first then you do the presentation later or vice versa?

S1: The thing is, again it depends because, like for us, it didn't really help because after we submitted the essay we got it back exactly the same, there weren't any notes written on it. We didn't get any feedback from the lecturer. He told us that we had to evaluate each other. We had to get a partner and swap the papers and then we evaluate each other.

S4: But I don't see how that works if we are still learning, how can we test someone else. Or how can we see that the other person did mistakes if we do the same mistakes. So I feel like it doesn't matter in our case if we got it back after or before because it was the same for us.

S2: If it was like she said the draft was marked, we could have improved on that, and then got it back and then present it. That would've been better because now you know what is

required. But now you are like presenting something that's not necessarily correct, but you think it is.

R: Any other contributions?

S3: I want to say, I don't see the need for this English to have an exam. I feel like the assessments are enough. Whatever you get from those assessments is your final mark. The exams is just a repetition of what we were assessed on in the other assessments. So what's the point of us having the exam and having to put so much pressure on ourselves during exam time? "I have to study for English and then I have another module, then I have another one following."

S1: And it's a lot of pressure because you know that if you fail this exam, you won't get another chance. It's like you have to redo the course again.

R: Thank you so much for your time and contributions.

I have now presented the transcriptions of the three lecturer interviews and student focus groups discussions. In the next subsection, I present coding of the data collected through the lecturer interviews and student focus groups discussions. The first coding of data that I will present is for the data collected through lecturer interviews.

4.4. Coding of Data from Lecturer Interviews and Student Focus Groups

Discussions

4.4.1. Coding of Data from Lecturer Interviews

Data (Lecturer participants L1, L2, and L3) (Researcher - R)	Themes
L1: After receiving my Master's degree, <u>no</u> . But I have keen interest in how we assess our students. <u>Nothing specific</u> I can't recall, except I have done a certificate in	Assessment Training No training General training

<p>Teaching English for Academic Purposes at Witwatersrand. But, we did not focus on assessment. I <u>had one course in my MA program, either it was assessment and evaluation but there was one in my MA TESOL</u>, focusing precisely on assessment, whether it's criteria on referencing or how to assess writing, speaking, listening and so on. I had one.</p> <p>L2: <u>Not that I can recall</u> of, no nothing like that.</p> <p>L3: <u>No</u>. I haven't.</p>	<p>General training</p> <p>No training</p> <p>No training</p>
<p>L1: <u>It is important because</u>, you know academic writing is not like creative writing. There are certain moves that are recognisable by other academics or just lecturers. For example, academic writing is said to be linear. What was the question again?</p> <p>L2: <u>It is</u>, because even, if you read on genre analysis kind of, genre style of writing something like that, I do know, where you have to focus on purpose and audience, academic writing can be situational and things like that, and in context. It is very important to see whether the person has met the requirements. As I said earlier, creative writing sometimes, you can do what you want and you can get away with it. In academic writing, if you move away from certain moves, let's say topic sentences, it is not clear what you are saying in a specific paragraph. Or it's not clear that there is a bit of background information, thesis statement in the introductory paragraph. So, if you deviate from those academic moves, when I tell them, I actually dance a Michael Jackson dance, but I don't tell them. And then</p>	<p>Importance of Assessment: Attitude?</p> <p>Positive attitude</p> <p>Positive attitude</p>

<p>I ask them “Whose move is this?” And then they go like “Michael Jackson, the moon dance!” So I tell them that academic writing also has certain moves; that you need to have this and this. When those elements are missing, unfortunately students get punished by me. Even though sentences are grammatically beautiful, but maybe topic sentences, background information or hook to capture the reader’s attention is not there, then sorry. No matter how good your language is, you need to stick to certain moves in academic writing.</p> <p>L2: <u>I think it’s very important. We need to know that students know what we are teaching, that is very important. Also, it gives us direction towards where we are right now, and where we are going. Moreover, it also enable students to sort of plot themselves as far as their understanding is concerned, regarding the course outline and the course content that they need to know. So I think assessment is pivotal in academic writing.</u></p>	<p>Positive attitude</p> <p>Positive attitude</p> <p>Positive attitude</p> <p>Positive attitude</p>
<p>L1: My goodness! Will I even refer to any approach in this eclectic error? But let me tell you how I assess especially an essay. Perhaps, the essay, even though our marking grid says for in-text citation, for references, and for content, sometimes it does not specify what the content marks are exactly for. You understand? <u>So what I do, for the introduction, I allocate a certain number of marks. For each of the other body paragraphs, I allocate a certain number of marks. For the conclusion, certain number of marks. And obviously for the references, a certain number of marks.</u> What is key for me in each</p>	<p>Assessment</p> <p>Philosophy</p> <p>Analytical assessment</p>

paragraph especially for this short theoretical paper that they write, for the body paragraph, I want to see an in-text citation that is valid, not just anything you know. Not just a website, so, to show me that you have read. And it's in each paragraph, because we say, let each of your paragraph be about a main idea. Okay, I look for in-text citation, I will look for a topic sentence, I will look for it, because I have taught it, I will look for it. And if it is not there, because what I feel for English for Academic Purposes for example, I even want to call it, this is supposed to be directed academic writing. Because these guys are novices. I feel they don't know what they are doing. So tell them that I want you to put the topic sentence in the initial position of your paragraph. If it is not there, they are in trouble. After that topic sentence, it doesn't no matter where the in-text citation is, I am looking for the supporting sentences. Do not deviate, because I tell them that this is directed. You follow what I tell you. So I will look for two three supporting sentences if they are not there, they are in trouble. And then I will also look for a concluding sentence. If you don't restate you topic sentence in your concluding sentence then you don't get anything from me again. So, what I believe in sometimes, lecturers, you know, subjectively allocate marks. Because, either the vocabulary is good and all other things are good, but is the structure okay? Because, for me the structure is more important at the beginning. Because that structure itself is quite logical. You see, if a person gives a topic sentence, there is a logic there. If I say give a supporting sentence, it says you are providing examples or proofs

<p>or something like that. And you are not just making claims without substantiation. So, I have also seen that in the EAP that is offered at UNISA, that marks are allocated for each paragraph. Yes, in that you can still look for content, in-text citation, you can still subtract marks for grammatical errors or language errors or language that is not academic. Maybe the person is writing as if they are speaking. But I believe, each paragraph on its own, I know an essay for example is a whole flowing document, but I allocate for each paragraph.</p>	
<p>L2: Well, <u>assessment is an evaluation of students to measure how good or how bad they are in a certain given task.</u> So given that, I believe that when you get students to do the task or to do practical, that's when you are able to assess them affectively. For instance, I believe when it comes to writing, students should write in order to prove their skills or the skills that they have learnt. <u>Because, when they have written several times, then you are able to see whether they have understood or they have picked up the skill or not.</u> So my philosophy on assessment is that, when assessment is being carried out through practices, then we are able to see whether the students have understood or not.</p>	<p>Evaluation of students</p> <p>Multiple assessments</p>
<p>L3: The philosophy is that <u>knowledge is constructed</u> as we interact in our daily activities. So I believe that my students construct the knowledge within the classroom. So that enables me to sort of assess my students as knowledge is constructed continuously. <u>So my philosophy is that, we construct knowledge,</u> it's a social activity and therefore it enables me to assess my students</p>	<p>Constructivist view</p> <p>Constructivist view</p>

<p>as knowledge is constructed continuously in class. It's a <u>constructivist philosophy</u> that I adhere to in my classroom.</p>	<p>Constructivist view</p>
<p>L1: I believe in drafting. <u>Writing is a process. As far as the final product should be rewarded marks, we should also reward the process where students go through.</u> What do I do? As you can see on that table (<i>there are piles of draft essays</i>), I ask for multiple drafts. Now that my students are many, I don't ask for first two drafts, I just ask for the first one and then the final one. Because I have about 200 students. What do I do? I designed a <u>checklist</u> as you can see (<i>showing me the checklist</i>) it will be on top of each of those (draft essay). You can take one and see what I do. That checklist is stapled on top of the first draft. And then that first draft is given to another student. Because it will be too much of my work. <u>That student will be the one looking for me, the elements of academic writing that I have put in the introduction, in the body, in the conclusion and everywhere.</u> Before the students do that, I train them. This is what you are going to do. I teach them and then this is what you are going to do. <u>After they have checked the first draft of a peer, the draft is given back to the peer, and check what is good already in there, and what is missing.</u> I will now tell them, you have another week to make improvements. Now, if a student has successfully done the first draft, implemented some changes, and that's why when I mark the final draft I look at the first draft as well. Then that student deserves an extra mark. I usually allocate five marks. I didn't do it this semester though. But I did punish those who did not submit their drafts. My marking</p>	<p>Types of Assessment</p> <p><u>Process-genre approach</u></p> <p>Checklist</p> <p>Self-assessment</p> <p>Diagnostic assessment</p>

<p>was very severe because this is the person who did not want to go through the process, they think they can just write the essay in one day and things like that. I did subtract if you did not. But if you went through the process, you will get an extra mark. Yes, students still feel the lecturer is the expert and all that, and their paper should be looked at by the teacher, but all I reward is the process. If you don't do anything in that first draft, then you are trouble.</p> <p>L3: There are several ways of assessing from my point of view when it comes to writing. There is one that I usually do which is almost <u>informal</u>. The first one is questioning. I <u>ask them questions pertaining to writing</u>. How do they see writing? What are the things that they feel they are not well equipped in writing. What do they want to get from writing? Throughout as I teach I ask them about their knowledge on writing. That is now on a <u>daily basis</u>. <u>Just asking questions orally before they start writing that is prewriting</u>. I ask the students before they do the <u>practical work</u>. I ask them how they understand certain skills or how they understand a certain way of writing certain things. Then secondly, the formal one is to get them to do the work that they are going to give to me in order to read through and see how they write. This is done, not on a daily basis like the questioning, but it is done occasionally. It can be formal or informal. The <u>formal work are the set assessment work that we give to students on a semester based period</u>, and the other one is the one that I give them in class after class which is also not on a daily basis but maybe once a week especially when I finish teaching a certain chapter, then I will give them written work that I can assess to see how they have acquired the knowledge that I have instilled in them.</p>	<p>Informal assessment, Student –lecturer questions technique</p> <p>Diagnostic assessment</p> <p>Institutionally set assessments</p>
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<p>L1: It's just the objectives of what I expect from the students. For example, I taught English for General Communication and I know exactly what I have explained. I told them, give reasons maybe for why you think passion killing is rampant in the country. I did not ask these students to go and do research. Write an essay, have a topic sentence, support it with your own thinking. So what I have taught is what I really look for. What are the objectives? What do I want? Or what does the curriculum requires the students to achieve? And then I decide ok, let me do this. <u>But informal assessment methods are very important.</u> Sometimes even just by discussing with students in class and you tell them to ask questions and depending on the type of question they are asking "Sir, what really is a topic sentence." Sometimes it's the problems that I encounter, or rather I have encountered as a lecturer. Those problems, somehow I also include them: What are my students struggling with? I hammer that, I teach that, and if you don't give that back to me, you are in trouble. I think that really influences the type of assessment I adopt. You know, I am thinking even of writing a book based on the types of academic language errors that students frequently make. So I will on purpose hammer on these things and I will allocate marks to see that students mastered these things.</p> <p>L2: I look at questions from students. <u>If students did not understand and they ask a lot of questions about a specific unit or specific topic that I have covered,</u> and also when I notice in class that the students pretend that they understand but they didn't, that also helps me to decide that now I am</p>	<p>Assessment Preferences</p> <p>Positive attitude (informal assessment)</p> <p>Assessment based on students' needs</p>
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<p>not going to teach, they should come and teach. Somebody should come and teach the class. By doing that, they <u>construct their own knowledge</u>. They can tell that this is wrong or right. So that's another way of assessing. It allows students to reteach what I have taught. A student can come in front of the class and teach essay title formulation, then he or she serves as a teacher and a guide, and so on.</p> <p>L3: As I mentioned earlier, in the prewriting tasks, when I question them and try to figure out, that can already give me the level or the pace at which they are working on. So their knowledge, the <u>pre-knowledge that they had before they even came to class will determine which approach I should choose, assessment approach</u>. Should I give them work to write then they give me feedback so that I can see what they have written and I give them also feedback to inform them about the level they are? Or should we just do this as mere discussion. Also, after they have written, sometimes we do pre-writing tasks in a way of games or quizzes. So that can already inform me of the approach I should take.</p>	<p>Constructivist approach</p> <p>Student characteristic effect on assessment choice</p>
<p>L1: <u>Students have an influence in my choice</u>. This is one problem that I have with English for Academic purposes, for high 'schoolers'. You will realise that in some other countries, students come to university a little bit aware already of intellectual property or what plagiarism is. So these guys, you need to understand that it is their first time doing a small research paper and it has to be informed by other people's views. They have their own views. So these guys, they don't respect other people's views or other</p>	<p>Student effect on the assessment choice</p> <p>Student influence the lecturer's choice</p>

<p>researchers' views. So I am a bit lenient. One way to get rid of that, I don't whether I should go there. What I tell them for example, they say at this stage, Wikipedia or just Google search, you type in anything and it brings back, such is not really credible sources of information. It's not academic enough. For me I say, these are novice writers. They are just beginning. Please go ahead if you want to cite Wikipedia on your topic, or just any kind of information. Go ahead as long as you follow APA. <u>I feel we need to be lenient on that.</u> We need to guide them in the beginning and not to be harsh on plagiarism, but you should smoothly bring them into this world of academic writing. As it is called somewhere else academic tribes since students fall into different disciplines. So for them to become a member of the tribe or clan, unfortunately one thing they have to master is to respect other people's writing. But I am saying, that does influence. I am always mindful that it is the first time these guys are doing this. You let them go the first time, and then you warn them. I have failed a student in the past who in their final essay plagiarised blatantly, almost everything was just copied.</p> <p>L2: What I do is, I assess the level of understanding first and then that determine what kind of assessment I will be using. So, if I determine that my students did not understand a certain topic, I definitely would then use that as a means to assess what I have taught. <u>It all depends on the level of cognition. If I have bright students I might not do a lot of assessments.</u> But with slower students who struggle to understand the content, I will definitely reinforce through formal and informal assessment.</p> <p>L3: Not that I have noted.</p>	<p>Need to be lenient</p> <p>Student influence the lecturer's choice</p>
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<p>L1: Look, I don't even know. <u>This just come naturally.</u> <u>Sometimes at the very beginning, it depends also on your goal.</u> Like the paragraphs that we give to students, it could be scrambled sentences where topic sentences are put in, the supporting sentences are the first one and things like that. If I want to find out whether they are aware of what a topic sentence is, give it in the very beginning. In fact, instead of <u>giving them maybe the rule or the exact name of the subject you are going to cover, just start in the very middle and students by themselves will tell you that this is ABC.</u> This is the issue of deductive and inductive. <u>I think it is inductive where you don't start with the rule, at the beginning of the lesson.</u> Only then towards the end of the lesson, I already started assessing them at the beginning of the lesson. I think that's one of my styles. <u>Without informing them, you are already assessing them. And only you give them the rule and the "whys" why we are doing this at the end of the lesson.</u> It's something that I learned from a colleague.</p> <p>L2: For me assessment is continuous. <u>It's a continuous progressive process.</u> I would teach and then after five minutes I would ask students to tell each other what they have learnt or explain to each other what I have just said. And then I would teach again, and students would ask me questions, and then I would refer back the question to the class in order to see if everything is understood. By doing that, both the lecturer and the students <u>construct knowledge</u> and negotiate for meaning in the process.</p> <p>L3: <u>The actual assessment is done always at the end of the chapter.</u> When I finish teaching a chapter, then I would ask</p>	<p>Frequency of Assessment</p> <p>Irregular pattern of assessment frequency</p> <p>Inductive approach</p> <p>Inductive approach</p> <p>Formative assessment</p> <p>Constructivist view</p> <p>Summative assessment</p>
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<p>them to write something to give me feedback especially on the written tasks. Let's say it's a summary writing task, when we finish then I ask them to write a summary, then I get to know where they are. Otherwise, the questioning one which is quite informal and does not necessarily have structured questions, those kind of assessments are just done on a daily basis, throughout. L3: Throughout the lesson.</p>	
<p>L1: Look, I inform my students that English for Academic Purposes, this is supposed to be called in fact Academic Survival Skills. I make that known to them, that for you to survive your academic journey, this what we are going to talk about is important. <u>I start by reminding them that each and every one of you will write, not maybe a big research paper, that kind of short research paper or concept paper they write in their final year which already start in the third year, I tell them that.</u> I tell them that as you choose your topic today, think of something that you have interest in, so that you can even carry on with it after you have passed my English for Academic Purposes. Maybe this will be your final year project. But here is the good thing about English for Academic Purposes: We don't write imaginary things. <u>We don't write about "Imagine you went for your holiday to Europe."</u> What I tell them is, find a problem, your own <u>unique individual problem.</u> Think of how we can solve that problem. That makes it more unique. I showed them one of my Master's student's paper. He feels when he was at university they had too many subjects and he thinks that struggle holds the student from paying enough attention to Mathematics because of the too many courses. So that's how</p>	<p>Authentic Assessment</p> <p>Linking to the real academic practices in their faculties</p> <p>Real life topics, not fiction</p>

<p>I make it authentic. <u>I bring in authentic papers written by other students at the same institution.</u> So I tell them, be original. Think of a problem you see. These guys don't have enough content of whatever they are going to study apart from a bit of grade 12 that they have. It's just that some of them it's their first year, first semester, they don't know about Law already for example. I, the lecturer, know more Law problems than them who are going to study Law. So that is the problem. That's why I believe, for these first year students, instead of even giving them to choose a topic, sometimes they choose topics which seems to be authentic to them, but they don't even know how. That's why if we lecturers somehow can come up with a number of topics ourselves in Law, for Law students, and we give them to choose from those topics. Because they don't know how to choose topics. <u>Sometimes they choose things that are not researchable.</u> You know, <u>problems that we see happening, problems about our youth in the ruling party for example. Things that they can go and research or read about how maybe the youth took the ruling party to court for being expelled. For Malaria, there was an outbreak of Malaria. When it comes to environment and climate change, we can talk about floods that are always there in the north. Most of the times, for example when they read article, these articles sometimes should be written from a student's perspective.</u> Sometimes we give them articles that are written from lecturer's perspective: How to solve certain student problems. I always want to give them something to read or write about from their perspective as students. It becomes more authentic. How to get maybe credible sources from the Internet. How to quickly write a specific paper. I am telling</p>	<p>Exposing students to authentic papers</p> <p>Need to choose authentic topic, researchable</p> <p>Examples of authentic writing situations</p>
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<p>you, recycling of errors for example or how to teach students ABC, sometimes we give them to write about these things and then they have to look at it as if they were lecturers. But there are so any problems because 90% of our students are first year and only a few are not.</p> <p>L2: I think it's important at the beginning of the lesson that you <u>outline the purpose of the lesson and how that connects to the reality of the academic life</u>. If I teach APA referencing for instance, then I would tell them that, you use this in all your academic writing, in all your assignments and so forth. I think the fact that you make them conscious of the realities of the Unit or the topic you are covering is very important. So that also determines whether students would understand or not.</p> <p>L3: My take is that the more you assess students in whatever way, the more it becomes realistic. <u>But if we look at only the formal assessment tasks that are set on a semester period, then to me that does not give a true reflection</u>. But if we say right from the beginning of the course, throughout we assess on a daily basis, on a weekly basis, then by the end of the examination, <u>even the results that we will get will show a true reflection which the students are also able to give in a real situation which is not a classroom based situation</u>. In my case as a lecturer, right from the beginning I tell my students, I make sure that they understand that whatever we are giving them in these courses, should not only be necessarily used in the class, but they should be able to use them back in their faculties and also beyond the study period here. So they should be <u>able to use them in academia and beyond that - that is now in their career</u>. And this is something that we have had a very length discussion with them. I want to make sure that</p>	<p>Link between course objective and real life situations</p> <p>Need to supplement formal/traditional assessment</p> <p>Reliability</p> <p>Authenticity</p>
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<p>they understand what I mean by saying: this information should be instilled in them so that they can use this information after they have finished their studies here. Not only that but on a daily basis, like in the case of writing, they should be able to write real application letters which are highly formal, reports and all that they will be required to write in a working environment.</p>	
<p>L1: Nothing that I can think of, I don't think that there is any platform apart from <u>the informal discussion of saying</u> "Can you see what this person did here, can you see there is no conclusion here". <u>But I do read on my own</u> but sharing with others, not much.</p> <p>L2: To be honest, currently it's <u>just personal reading</u>; I read articles on assessment. <u>But there hasn't been a</u> conscious effort to liaise with my colleagues and sit down and talk about assessment per say. I haven't done that. But I am just reading.</p> <p>L3: Maybe just <u>in the corridors with my colleagues</u>. I believe the <u>Teaching and Learning Unit also here at UNAM are readily available to provide information on that</u>. However that is not my responsibility to do that; it's them to share with us. But on a personal point of view, I think the platform in academia can be anywhere: <u>We have conferences</u>, we have workshops. So if I am given the opportunity, I will share this information at the conferences that we have here, <u>workshops</u> that we have here, and we also tend to attend sparingly</p>	<p>Information Sharing Platforms</p> <p>Informal discussion</p> <p>Self-studies</p> <p>Self-studies</p> <p>Informal discussions</p> <p>Workshops</p> <p>Conferences</p> <p>Workshops</p>

<p><u>writing training</u>. So those are some of the platforms that this information can be circulated.</p>	<p>Training</p>
<p>L1: <u>I am always reading on</u> the English for Academic Purposes. So far many of my research papers or just conference papers have been in English for Academic Purpose. For example, one of my theoretical paper was on “Are teaching methods in English for Academic Purposes different from teaching methods in just General English classes? <u>So by doing that already, I already get how to assess, how to do ABC</u>. Because this is the problem: English for Academic Purpose is a discipline; apart from it being any other English course, it has grown so much because it is a branch of English for Specific Purposes. So I developed so much interest. <u>Another one that I look at is the British English Association of Lecturer for English for Academic Purposes (BEALEAP)</u>. That one sets the standards. When they realised that English for Academic Purpose has grown exponentially to become a discipline on its own, they formed an association of lecturers of English for Academic Purposes. I go there. In fact, if you read that document, you will see that not every lecturer with Master’s degree is qualified to be an English for Academic Purposes lecturer. If you go there and read how the English for Academic Purpose out to be, it’s somebody who has to be doing research. It’s not your normal, because English for Academic Purpose is not just language, it involves so many skills: research and so on. So, fortunately just on my own I read so much. <u>For example my latest paper that I went to present was on “Critical thinking aspects within</u></p>	<p>Sources of Assessment Tools</p> <p>Self-studies</p> <p>Research and Conferences</p> <p>Self-studies</p> <p>Research and conferences</p>


<p><u>English for Academic Purposes. Because you are not only assessing language or way of writing, you are also assessing how these people think by asking them to have a topic sentence and how they are going to substantiate to provide proof or an example or to support stance and things like that.</u></p> <p>Another thing I think is not right with us, we give students freedom to write on whatever topic they want to write on. But some essays, compare and contrast for example, the words that go in there in “compare and contrast”, both, in spite, on the contrary, just those connectors and many other words, we don’t go in detail. We ought to go in detail. We need to prescribe to students how an argumentative essay is organised for example. Or even a compare and contrast essay, the way it’s organised, there is a block method, there a point by point method, going in detail. These ought to influence the way we assess. Those things must influence whether a student has met the requirements of a specific genre. If a person’s comment word is “an analysis, a discussion, an explanation, and so on, that also should determine how we are going to grade a specific student.</p>	
<p>L2: <u>I think there are templates of assessments already at the Language Centre.</u> Since we need to have uniformity, we all follow the same template. So, I think the informal assessment is more of <u>my personal assessment in class.</u> But when it comes to the formative assessment then <u>I follow the prescribed assessment template provided by the Language Centre.</u></p>	<p>Course materials</p> <p>Self-studies</p> <p>Course materials</p>
<p>L3: Well in my case, <u>I prefer coming up with my own tools.</u> <u>For example, from the Internet there are quite useful tools</u></p>	<p>Self-studies</p>

<p>that you can use to test students on different skills. Although there are few that are <u>readily available</u>, the ones we come up with when we look at our course reviews, then we can say let us use these as a tool for assessing students, I strongly believe the ones that I get, either I create them myself, or I combine whatever I came up with, with something that I get from the Internet. Because they are a bit more broad. The ones that we use here are somehow limited.</p>	<p>Course materials</p>
<p>L1: While you are teaching, you are assessing informally. If while you are teaching you are not assessing informally, then you are in trouble. Look, while you are teaching, that is <u>formative assessment</u> I guess. It can be a test, quiz, observation, formative assessment while you are teaching should inform summative assessment at the end of the semester. But here is the problem, here you are talking about 16 lecturers teaching one course, English for Academic Purposes. Now I read somewhere about assessment concerning English for Academic Purpose. English for Academic Purposes ought to be student need driven. Now, <u>if you are so many, you would rather meet institutional requirements as they call it. That you need to have this test and so on.</u> But when I was alone, I was teaching Media Studies course at [another university], I would come up with my own assessment because I am the only lecturer. But it is not easy. I think in the future, I think we are ready, we should move away from what we have now which is English for general academic purposes where students from different</p>	<p>Teaching vs Assessment</p> <p>Understanding of assessment</p> <p>Formative assessment</p> <p>Barriers: Institutional prescriptions</p>

<p>faculties could be in one class. Yes, it is a little bit specific because they choose their own topic. Now there is what we call Specific English for Academic Purposes where students from Law are all in one class and they have a specific lecturer at the Language Centre and almost the entire content looks at even how to do all these footnotes in academic writing. But I am not saying general is bad, because I have read somewhere, that is going to be a very expensive exercise as some lecturer will need to be retrained to specifically meet needs of IT students or Medical Doctor students. Even the type of course that the student is doing should inform. Yes I believe that students should now write almost something general, not necessarily specific because they are not, they don't have mastery of specific courses yet.</p> <p>L2: I think teaching informs assessment. Teaching is the process where the whole dimension between students, knowledge. They call it the triangle: the teacher, the knowledge and the students interact. So through that, you analyse that and then, you can plot an assessment activity through that. So I think that teaching informs. Because through the learning and teaching activity, an assessment format can come out of it.</p>	
<p>L3: I am not an educational assessment expert, but my contribution will be that I think certain measures should be put in place to enhance the assessment of students, not only in this course but at the whole university. So with this I suggest or <u>I wish every unit had a person who is responsible for creating suitable assessment tools.</u> Sometimes we are not well informed on that, and we come up with assessments</p>	<p>Suggestions for improvements</p> <p>Need for quality assessment tools</p>

<p>which are not suitable for certain tasks. So if we had educational assessment experts who will serve either for all the units specifically for assessment, or we have somebody sitting in each unit who is an expert, whether they are lecturers or they are just for assessment, who will see to it that the <u>assessment tools that are used are compatible with the tasks</u> that are given.</p>	<p>Need for well aligned assessment tools</p>
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4.4.2. Coding of Data from Student Focus Groups Discussions

<p>Data (Student participants – S1, S2, S3, And S4) (Researcher – R)</p>	<p>Themes</p>
<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>UNIVERSITY of the WESTERN CAPE</p> </div> <p>S1: Me, I think assessment is a criteria that one can use to <u>rate or grade</u> your, let me say your academic work or something that you have written. It is just the way, after a lecturer has looked at the work and give you marks according to the content. It is just to check what the person did and then to rate it in the same proportion with the criteria.</p> <p>S2: My understanding, assessment is a way of <u>teaching</u> and <u>evaluating</u> to see whether the way you (lecturer) are conveying the message, the students are grasping. At the same time also like my colleague said, you evaluate</p>	<p>Understanding of Assessment</p> <p>Factors: Understanding of Assessment</p> <p>Rating or grading</p> <p>Teaching Evaluation</p>

<p>to see whether it is impacting the way you want it to be conveyed.</p> <p>S3: I agree, I just see assessment as <u>a way of evaluation</u>, and after that evaluation, <u>the students see where they stand</u>. The lecturer sees how good they are at conveying the message. After that, you see how much progress you have made from the beginning.</p> <p>S4: It is just to <u>check what the person did and then to rate it in the same proportion with the criteria</u>.</p> <p>S1: To <u>find out what the person know</u>.</p> <p>S2: To <u>evaluate</u></p> <p>S2: <u>Sometimes I notice it</u>. But there are cases when I need more like explanation of what I really have to do.</p> <p>S1: The way we are evaluated in class.</p> <p>S2: The way that what has been taught reflects on you or what you have picked up from what you have been taught.</p>	<p>Evaluation</p> <p>Monitoring</p> <p>Rating in relation to the course objectives</p> <p>Measurement/diagnosis</p> <p>Evaluation</p> <p>Noticing assessment</p>
<p>S3: I think it depends on the lecturer. Some lecturers would come and then they teach you, and then later they would tell you that we are going to write a test, or we are going to have a quiz later on. With other lecturers, while they are busy teaching you, they are also busy assessing you with the question that they are asking you during the lesson.</p>	<p>Assessment vs Teaching</p> <p>Factors: Understanding of Assessment</p>

<p>S1: I think these are different aspects of teaching. Like, first you have to convey the information to the students and then you have to assess whether they understand what you were taught. So both of them are like components of teaching.</p>	
<p>S2: I think that they go hand-in-hand, <u>because you assess whether what you taught has been understood,</u> and then you can't just assess without having given some information. I think they are different but they go hand-in-hand.</p>	<p>Assessment preference</p>
<p>S3: <u>I personally enjoy being it.</u> Because I am very critical, and you know I get the chance to see my mistakes; I feel I can grow from there. I see that no, this and this I am wrong and I need to improve on that. And I can go back and say let me just read through this more.</p>	<p>Like being assessed Positive attitude</p>
<p>S1: For me, since we are at university, <u>we should not really be bothered by the way we were assessed.</u> As long as we are learning and our lecturers are qualified. I think we are just being assessed or rated at the university level. So we cannot really say it is bad or some lecturers are too lenient or something like that. The assessment will just be according to your academic work that you have presented.</p>	<p>Positive attitude</p>
<p>S2: Individuals differ. Some want to be told that "I will assess you", then they will prepare themselves to that extent that they shouldn't make mistakes. Others don't like being told because they assume that being in the institution of higher learning, the lecturer can come anytime with different ways of conducting assessment. Like she has indicated (S3), others will assess you while</p>	

<p>they are teaching, at the same time they will ask you questions to see whether you have grasped what was taught. So it is a form of assessing.</p> <p>S4: For me personally just like my colleague has indicated, <u>I don't have any preference for specific form of assessment. Any method the lecturer uses, it's fine with me, as long as what was taught is what was assessed.</u></p> <p>S3: Like for me, I think teaching should come first, then after we teach, we have to assess. What you have taught before, you capture it the way you want it to be learned.</p> <p>S4: <u>From my side, there is a difference between teaching and assessing. By teaching, you are giving knowledge. By assessing, you are trying to see if the people you have taught got what you gave them.</u></p>	<p>Positive attitude</p> <p>Understanding of assessment</p>
<p>S3: I think lecturers should use a variety of assessments. Assess students using the small things, <u>like going to the community</u> and reporting back to the class in writing. I think the small things are the ones that really help us to learn the most. Instead of you know, from the beginning of the semester until now, then you just give four questions to go and write an assignment.</p> <p>S2: The other thing, I believe students learn better when they get involved, also by seeing. English for me is a very complex language. If you are just reading in the book, at least I would prefer that by means of other visual materials, it becomes easier to even remember. For example, when he was writing this on the whiteboard, I remember. But if we only come in the classroom and he</p>	<p>Assessment preferences</p> <p>Variety of assessments</p> <p>Authenticity</p>

<p>S3: <u>I prefer the test.</u> You see, the test asks almost everything that was taught.</p>	<p>Traditional assessment</p>
<p>S1: For me, when it comes to essay writing, it was really good assessment because, <u>even in the near future, you would know how to write an essay, how to write a report. So it was really fantastic.</u> You also have broad thinking criteria. But during the test, <u>the time is limited, you just have short period of time</u> to give what you were taught.</p>	<p>Authenticity Critique: traditional assessment</p>
<p>S4: I think essay will be the way to assess. S4: I would rather be assessed by essay writing because there is plenty of time. So <u>you can make some research, read, so you can score high. Not like tests, they give you three hours then you are squeezed to think in that limited</u> period of time. Sometimes you might end up making some simple mistakes, which may cost you some marks also.</p>	<p>Authenticity Critique: traditional assessment</p>
<p>S1: Even during the essay writing, <u>you can even consult the people who know things better</u> and ask questions instead of a test, it's only you and the paper.</p>	<p>Authenticity</p>
<p>S1: I think it depends on the way you are being assessed. Yeah, some things are actually fun like presentations, but it also depends if you are an out spoken person. If you are very into academics, then you will enjoy like writing a test rather than speaking or oral.</p>	
<p>S2: Because, if I were the kind of person that prefer to just be, <u>like I was introverted,</u> I prefer to have just my test and show what I can do there, and only the lecturer knows. And if I didn't feel like I am a good test taker, then I prefer to just express myself in class. I actually</p>	<p>Multiple intelligence</p>

<p>S2: I enjoy something that I have to be <u>creative</u>. When I write a test, there is nothing creative about it. It's just right or wrong. So then I would not prefer that. If I have to make a presentation or construct an essay, I am sort of asked to voice my opinion. The fact and visual effects that I am choosing, that's also like part of it's my choosing. And I like it when I am able to be creative about something and express myself. And where I am not given room to do that, those are the assessments that I don't like.</p>	<p>Constructivism</p>
<p>S4: <u>I feel like we haven't been assessed enough</u>. Because I don't like unnecessary assessment like if we write an essay I don't feel like we should write another essay, but that didn't happen so.</p>	<p>Need for more assessments</p>
<p>S3: I feel, I would rather <u>present something face to face</u> instead of writing something. Because when I present something, if the lecturer does not understand then they are able to ask me right there and then "What do you mean by this?" But then when you write, there is no opportunity for you to answer like "What do you mean by ABCD?" If it is wrong, it's just wrong, and if it is right it's just right.</p>	<p>Authenticity</p>
<p>S1: But it also depends, <u>because sometimes you have to learn how to get all the necessary information into your writing. Because it also depends on what career you are going into, whether you are going into Journalism or Media or something. Like to be able to do that without speaking and so on.</u></p>	<p>Authenticity</p>
<p>S2: <u>I think so</u>, because if you are not assessed, for example you are taught something and you are not assessed, it would be pointless because you might not get what you were taught. Let's say for example, just in general like</p>	<p>Positive attitude</p>

<p>in real life you won't be able to use what you were taught. So if you are assessed, it makes it easier for you to know what you don't know.</p>	
<p>S1: We get the one for the essay. So he gives us freedom to choose your topic which related to your field of study then you formulate a title then you write your paper as your assignment. You follow the academic way of writing and then you also present it. So you must also make a PowerPoint presentation out of the same topic.</p> <p>S3: For me, <u>how do you expect me to improve on my academic writing if I am only given one thing to go and write?</u> You know I came to learn something. Maybe I was probably never even exposed to this. You know there are some kids who came from school, they had say maybe English Core. Maybe if you had English Higher level first language, you were more exposed to it. Now you come here and you are told "No, write 1500 words, it has to be this format this format, go and do it". And it's just that one thing, you are not even given feedback on you know "I think you have to improve on this, you people have to do this this". How do you expect me to know or grow as a student? I just feel like at the end of the semester, I would leave the same way I came in.</p> <p>S4: What matters now is that, if I pass then yes. Regardless whether you passed having learned something or just studying to pass for that specific purpose. Because there are people who study just to learn, I mean there are people who study to learn and know something, and there are those that study to pass. <u>So I can be studying today, writing tomorrow, after writing I forget</u></p>	<p>Assessment frequency</p> <p>Need for more assessments</p> <p>Authenticity</p>

everything. But people are different. You cannot really say the way she feels is how everybody looks at it.

S2: I think the challenge here is, you know like some of us who have been away from school for more than 20 years, and the system we used was the old system, the Cape Education. Currently now, the English now which we are doing here is more advanced. I only know the spoken English. So writing differs from speaking. So now to put it, you have things like suffixes, prefixes, these are thing I am learning like for the first time again. Now, when you are writing now, to construct a proper grammatical sentence it becomes a challenge. And now the influence of saying you should not write ordinary English, it must be academic English where you have to use words, those bombastic words. You see now, it becomes a challenge that even you are writing for example an essay, at the end of the day you won't even understand what does it entails. And the formatting is also a challenge because the format you are taught introduction, you write introduction but you don't know what should be in the introduction. Conclusion, you don't know now what should be in the conclusion. Thesis statement, that was even the worst now, thesis statement. These are things that we are not properly taught to see what do you need when you are writing and for you to understand. It is like we are raising against time of just teaching, finishing the syllabus, write your test, done. But, just like you are saying, at the end of the day, if you are not here for the purpose of learning, just for the purpose of passing, you will pass, but you will be empty.

<p>S4: <u>I don't think we are assessed enough.</u></p> <p>S2: I think the challenge which I have personally encountered when it comes to assessment of our writing, there is a time when we are required to do critical thinking. You see, <u>critical thinking</u>, when now you are writing, we are not that much exposed to say, when you are writing, what do you really need to present on paper if you are putting it down. You know some of us are now old, we came out of school a long time ago, and coming back to university and a person is telling you critical thinking, you even get confused simply by the word critical thinking. So when you are putting it down, even if you are given an essay to write, it becomes a challenge. Just like she said, we are not that much given enough opportunity to do much of writing.</p> <p>S4: We were assessed three times before the exam: we had an <u>essay</u> to write as part of the assessment, we had oral presentation, and a test. And from there, exam. So that's about four times.</p> <p>S1: For me, I am quite happy with it.</p> <p>S2: If I could use percentage, I would give 70%. The 30% would be taken away by some weakness like, they don't, how can I say this? <u>They only assess us through tests and activities.</u> I mean through test and exam. There is no other way of them assessing us. So they lost the 30% because of that. Maybe they could give us more activities so that we know where we stand.</p>	<p>Attitude: Satisfaction with Assessment</p> <p>Need for more assessment</p> <p>Awareness of critical thinking</p> <p>Types of assessment</p> <p>Critique: traditional assessment.</p>
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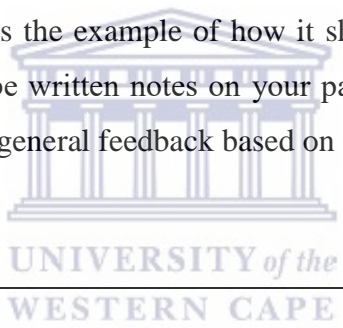
<p>S4: You know, if you don't give activities and you just go straight to the main test, it's kind of not good.</p> <p>S1: So far we being assessed I think three times.</p> <p>S2: I think, formal assessment were the tests, presentations and an essay. I feel like that was not enough. I wanted like more, I would like to have chances to improve. And I think that, three different things that didn't have second chances didn't leave much room for improvement. If you had written an essay and had the first draft marked properly and then do another one which is also marked, that would have improved it, and written more than one test. Or have different other types of assessments, completely.</p> <p>S2: Formal, because in class we would have activities where, <u>I think these are informal where it's like</u>, this is how to do APA. "I am giving you this information, write it in APA format. And then he can just look at it and give it back to you. I call it informal because you don't have to sit down, you don't have a set timeframe, and you just show what you can do. And it doesn't get recorded.</p> <p>S4: The thing is, I don't think we are taught enough in class. We have a study guide where you can pick different parts of how to write the introduction, how to reference, how to what, but we are not given something holistically on how to do an entire piece of academic writing.</p> <p>S1: And this is like we are given pieces of information at different times. It's very self-study.</p> <p>S3: And that's really hard because the time is limited. We don't have enough time to learn or catch up with all the other things that are in the module so we can write one nice piece of essay writing. <u>Time is very limited.</u></p>	<p>Informal assessment</p> <p>Authenticity</p>
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<p>S2: Right now as well having to study for exams, you write down question sections in the exam, and then you have to look for the piece of where it's explained in the study guide. Whereas if you have been taught, you would be able to have your notes to refer to. I don't think that's available.</p>	
<p>S3: We were given something for the academic essay. <u>We were given a format to follow.</u></p> <p>S2: You are also told, you write how many pages, font type, style of referencing, which kind of sources. So those are your guiding tools. <u>The instruction is always there.</u> It is straight forward. <u>The problem sometimes is with us when we interpret that information differently.</u> You would be reading the same paper but you answer differently.</p>	<p>Assessment instruction</p> <p>Assessment instruction</p> <p>Misinterpretation of assessment</p>
<p>S1: People who assess the whole paper as a whole do not really give the meaning of the marks. <u>Because, if I am being assessed for the introduction, for the abstract, for the conclusion, for the references, then if I get one out of three in the introductory paragraph, then I know I must do something. If a lecturer had to assess the whole paper, then he gives me 15 out of 20, I would just assume everything is fine.</u> But maybe, the fifteen marks came from the body and conclusion, but here (introduction) I didn't do well. I think partitioning the paper in different section really helps to recognise where to put more effort.</p> <p>S2: For me, I see the lecturers are doing that, where you see that introduction maybe you say it should be out of five,</p>	<p>Use of Rubric</p> <p>Need for analytical assessment, Critique for holistic assessment</p> <p>Need for analytical assessment</p>

<p>the body maybe is out of 15, and the conclusion maybe is two, references is three then it is out of twenty. <u>But the challenge is, when you are writing your introduction, they say it's one paragraph, it's out of five and then you are given one.</u> This is where the problem comes that you don't know: Was my paragraph very short, or something is not there? Because the problem is when you are writing your introduction, you don't know what should be there. But with our academic writing, what I have learned now is that, you are taught what should be there, which is a very good thing. So that even when you are starting your introduction, you know that I am talking of this topic, it must be there. I am talking of this writer, it must be there – specific things that you are required to put in the intro, then you are told the last sentence of your introduction should be this, then you know what should be done.</p>	<p>Feedback</p>
<p><u>The allocation of marks is there, but we still don't know that how the lecturer arrived to give you maybe he awarded you three out of five.</u> You don't know now the two marks which you did wrong.</p>	<p>Feedback</p>
<p>S3: <u>I think the rubric could be very helpful because you have what is expected of you.</u> You also know that, ok, maybe for my introduction, it will be this this, and I can work towards that. Instead of me you know being given a topic to go and write an essay of seven pages, and yes I am told the format, but I don't really know what is expected of me. <u>At the end, I ended up writing an essay that I don't even understand. You know, it's handed into a lecturer and only after the marks and everything has been entered, I see no, no, I was supposed to do this. My chance is gone, then no second opportunity.</u></p>	<p>Support for rubric</p> <p>Result of not having a rubric</p>

<p>S4: Just to add, sometimes when you are only given how many words to write, you end up only justifying your marks based on the number of words, which is very difficult. Coming back to the rubric, even if you say write your essay on your chosen topic, the mark allocation will guide you.</p>	
<p>S3: <u>We haven't gotten anything.</u></p> <p>S2: For now, <u>we got our tests and our presentation score sheets, but the challenge is, it's just marks.</u> But you know now, it's not something you can question about. Maybe on an individual level, you go to the lecturer, you try just to see, oh, how did I score seven here out of ten. What did I do wrong? Maybe just for one on one.</p> <p>S1: That is the feedback people want. <u>It's not like coming to class and giving the answers. It's telling aah, how did you get fifteen out of twenty while the other person is getting maybe seven out of twenty.</u></p> <p>S4: For me I think, the lecturer doesn't necessarily need to say individual person should be given feedback. <u>He can generalise it to say,</u> "I have seen that majority of you have failed to get this thing right. What was the problem?" Then maybe collectively we go through it, ok, "this is where we did not do right, but ok we didn't because of A, B, C, D..." So, the feedback doesn't necessarily need to be individually but it should be collectively, yah, the weakest points. Because we are just interested in where we are failing, our weakest link, so that we can improve on that.</p>	<p>Feedback technique</p> <p>Lack of feedback</p> <p>Insufficient feedback</p> <p>Collective feedback needed</p> <p>Collective feedback</p>

<p>S2: They just write the mark, how much you got. <u>They don't specify that you are good or you are bad.</u> They just give the marks and that's all.</p> <p>S1: <u>But that one is a bit different for our lecturer. After you write you let me say your essay, then from there he can tell you how he marked it, or maybe he was looking at it using which criteria and so on.</u> Then you know that <i>ohoo</i> I must improve here and here.</p> <p>S2: Just generally, if we all wrote something, <u>he would highlight what he spotted as a trend that we all doing, "you guys shouldn't do this. I see that you doing this a lot. Do this instead."</u> Or "this is well done", or "this is not well done, this is the example of how it should be done". It wouldn't be <u>written notes on your paper</u>, but you would just give general feedback based on what the whole class did.</p>	<p>Insufficient feedback</p> <p>Good feedback</p> <p>Good feedback</p>
<p>S1: We only wrote a test, and then the presentation which was based on the <u>essay</u>. So it was just a matter of copying and putting it on PowerPoint.</p> <p>S2: I think we will be writing an exam, right?</p> <p>S3: There is this one time he gave us a summary to write. I don't even think he marked it. <u>I don't remember getting it back.</u></p> <p>S2: He gave us a topic, find your topic then you bring it to him and he looks at it, and then he would say whether you should go find another one or rephrase it. So this is a form of assessment for you to put your things, because sometimes it's just the wording, to know which</p>	<p>Types of Assessments used</p> <p>Essay</p> <p>Lack of feedback</p>



<p>one comes first. Sometimes we don't know whether "it's a verb, it's a noun?" You only know that it's English.</p> <p>S4: Another way I have seen, <u>assessment in class is observation of participation of students</u>. Because, as a lecturer you are there, you will see who your active participants in the class are. It's one way of assessing who is learning. If a student never participated in class since the beginning of the year, I as a lecturer would be worried that maybe the person doesn't understand. So sometimes he tries to pose a question to an individual especially that maybe they are always quiet.</p> <p>S1: He <u>used random questions</u> during the lecture.</p> <p>S1: Our lecturer would write things on the board and he could ask us to complete the task, kind of like a homework or classwork. We are evaluated on that and then he gives us a mark.</p> <p>S2: And then he would also teach us academic summary in one lecturer, for example on a Monday, and then in the next session we would write a short summary which he would mark and give it to us and give us <u>feedback in the next lecture</u>. But it wasn't recorded as part of our marks. So, it's only to check whether we understand.</p> <p>S3: I also think, our teacher specifically like, if we write a sentence, he would tell us whether we got like four out four or two out of four. Just to see like, to break down each section of the writing. To see where can improve.</p>	<p>Observation of students (Think aloud protocol)</p> <p>Student-lecturer question technique</p> <p>Good feedback</p>
<p>S2: Personally, like myself, this short period I have been in an English class, I feel that it helped me a lot to</p>	<p>Factor: Authenticity</p>

<p>understand especially when <u>it comes to writing reports in the course of my work and to present a proper formal document.</u> Now I know what is required. I am learning for the purpose but not just for the purpose to pass. I am learning to integrate it within my life.</p> <p>S1: For me, I hated the thing <u>for references. But as I have checked like in my course of study, I still have to deal with referencing and so on.</u> Even in my sixth year, I will be doing a research for one year and I still have to write a report and reference. So the referencing part is really important for me.</p> <p>R: (Follow up question) Which course are you doing?</p> <p>S2: Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine.</p> <p>S4: Almost everything you are taught is because they know you will use it later in life. So everything is important. We will use it.</p>	<p>Authentic: Writing reports in their study programs</p> <p>Authentic: Referencing</p>
<p>S4: I think I want to add something. This is a university and it is not only in English where we are required to write academic texts. <u>There is a need for more opportunities for assessments</u> even those that are not marked, but just for practice. You see, the more you do the more you learn. If you just give me this one assignment, I will write and submit then I will know may be two or three mistakes, but I think I still have more. If I could have more, it's just like Mathematics, you can't just solve two problems then you say you know. Keep practicing. Just a piece of writing, submit, like that you equip your students with English vocabulary. Most of the words that we use is just general English.</p>	<p>Additional contribution</p> <p>Need for more assessments</p>

<p>S2: My only concern, we need more training. It is useful in real life.</p>	
<p>S2: Yes, <u>they must increase their activities</u>, just these random activities for people to know where they stand academically. They mustn't just pop with tests that we are going to write a test. Let me give an example of the test we wrote: <u>I didn't know how the question paper look like</u>, just the basic concept of how the question paper is. So they have to come up with some activities just to give us an idea of how the question paper will look like. So the format is very important.</p>	<p>Need for more assessments</p> <p>The influence of the assessment format</p>
<p>S1: <u>When it comes to research, it should be a bit researchable</u>. It should be things whereby students can go out in the field and research things that can make sense, not to imagine.</p>	<p>Authenticity</p>
<p>S3: I want to say, <u>I don't see the need for this English to have an exam</u>. I feel like the assessments are enough. Whatever you get from those assessments is your final mark. The exams is just a repetition of what we were assessed on in the other assessments. <u>So what's the point of us having the exam and having to put so much pressure on ourselves during exam time?</u> "I have to study for English and then I have another module, then I have another one following."</p> <p>S1: And it's a lot of pressure because you know that if you fail this exam, you won't get another chance. It's like you have to redo the course again.</p>	<p>Student negative attitude towards traditional assessment</p> <p>Student negative attitude towards traditional assessment</p>
<p>S3: <u>I learnt that while you are writing, you have to make sure that you write things clearly</u>, just to put yourself in the shoes of someone who is going to read it. You have to</p>	<p>Benefit of presentation on writing</p>

<p>write something that is clear; everything must be vivid. When you are going to present, you do the same thing.</p> <p>S2: I think writing also limits what you have to give to whoever is going to get your knowledge. Speaking, you can say out even the things you didn't write.</p> <p>S1: Even give additional examples. (Adding to the previous speaker)</p> <p>S1: I actually feel that the way people have been assessed, to see how necessary the course is. A lot of children need the English, like I understand why it's necessary. But there are a lot of children who like had English higher in high school and passed it and they are basically redoing the same stuff that they did in high school. So they could be spending more time on other subjects.</p> <p>S2: I feel that each unit should be taught thoroughly and not have bits and pieces picked of certain page in each lecturer. So like this week we are doing unit one, we gonna finish it, this is what I want you to do, what I want you to know at the end of this unit. <u>Have smaller assessments instead of one big one and then you don't quite know where all this came from.</u></p> <p>S4: Because, the course reader is like a summary of all the information you should know. So like, if you have to self-study, maybe you won't understand. Maybe there will be things missing.</p> <p>S3: I feel like each assessment should have a second opportunity because some of us came from background where English was not really a spoken language. So at least when we make the first mistake in the first assessment, we have a second assessment to you know boost our marks or replace the first one.</p>	<p>More assessments needed</p>
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<p>So I feel like it doesn't matter in our case if we got it back after or before because it was the same for us.</p> <p>S2: If it was like she said the draft was marked, we could have improved on that, and then got it back and then present it. That would've been better because now you know what is required. But now you are like presenting something that's not necessarily correct, but you think it is.</p>	
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In this section, I have presented the raw data that I collected through lecturer interviews and student focus groups discussions as well as the coding of the data. This data will be useful to my analytical remarks and observations that I need to make in this chapter, in the next sections. In the next sections of this chapter, I present my analysis of data which I will base on the themes that I derived from my research objectives. In my presentation, I will be making continuous reference to the data strands that I will take from the data collected through lesson observations, lecturer interviews, multiple intelligence inventory, and student focus groups discussions. In the following section, I present the analysis of data that I believe is consistent with the theme “Types of alternative assessment used in academic writing instruction”.

4.5. Types of Alternative Assessment Used by Lecturers in the English for Academic Purpose Course

The data that I present here has been gathered through lesson observations, lecturer interviews, and student focus groups discussions. This suggests that the data indicates the types of alternative assessment that I observed being used in the English for Academic Purposes lessons as well as those I identified from the lecturer interviews and student focus groups discussions. The data that I collected through lesson observations were collected in a naturally occurring contexts, rather than in contrived classrooms that were set up to emphasise the researcher's control over variables (Bailey & Nunan, 1996). In order to identify the alternative assessments used by the lecturers, I based my analysis on whether an assessment manifests some of the features of alternative assessments that I

had addressed in my Literature Review chapter, namely: authenticity, formative, flexible, validity, reliability, contextualized, washback, criterion-referenced, critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration. The first alternative assessment that I picked up was the use of checklist.

4.5.1. Checklist

I observed a lesson on academic feature in academic essays. The main objective of the lesson was for students to identify academic features from their academic essays. At this stage, the students already had been taught the academic features. The lecturer wanted to ensure that the features learnt were integrated in the students' essays, which is meant to make their essays academic. The academic essay that they wrote was to be submitted in partial fulfilment for the completion of the English for Academic Purposes course.

The lecturer prepared a checklist (see Figure 4.1 below) for students. The checklist consisted of the items that should be part of students' essays. Each student was given a checklist and they had to check whether all the items listed in the checklist were part of their essays. The support materials for this activity were the study guide for the course and of course the students' essays. The lecturer asked the students to identify the examples of the items and say it to the class. I observed that both the students and the lecturers were involved in providing feedback to the rest of the class. The lecturer used the checklist in Figure 4.1 as a formative assessment technique to assess students' performance on their academic essays.

Author _____ Reviewer _____

Academic Essay Writing Checklist 1, _____

Please write down each of the following elements from the author's essay.

1. Title

a. Comment _____

b. Topic _____

c. Focus _____

2. Introduction

a. Thesis statement _____

3. Paragraph 1 Subheading _____

a. Topic sentence _____

4 Paragraph 2 Subheading _____

a. Topic sentence _____

5. Paragraph 3 Subheading _____

a. Topic sentence _____

6. Paragraph 4 Subheading _____

a. Topic sentence _____

7. Conclusion

Please tick if the following can be found from the conclusion, if not found cross

Summary _____ Restatement of the thesis _____ Recommendation _____

Warning _____ Others _____

8. How many in-text are in the text ? _____ How many entries are in the reference list? _____

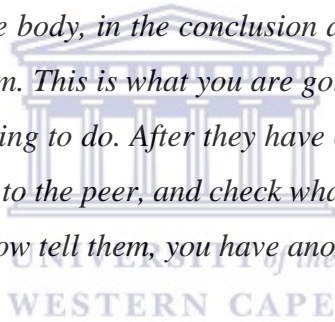
9. Write yes or no for the following questions.

	YES OR NO
a. Do the title, surname, initials and student number appear on page 1?	_____
b. Are title and subtitles in bold, not underlined, start with CAP?	_____
c. Is the document justified?	_____
d. Is the font size 12 and Arial?	_____
e. Is the document 1.5 spaced?	_____
f. Is the reference list in alphabetical order and hanging?	_____
g. Does every body paragraph have in-text citation?	_____
h. Is every in-text citation in the reference list?	_____

Figure 4.1. Checklist

My observation showed that students were given and still had an opportunity to go and make the necessary changes on their essays based on the feedback they received in class. The due date for the submission of the final draft of the essay was not on the date I observed the lesson where the checklist was used; but the due date was one week ahead (see Figure 4.2 below). In addition, during the lecturer interviews, one of the lecturer also explained how the checklist was administered to the students. The lecturer reported that:

“I designed a checklist as you can see [while showing me the checklist] it will be on top of each of those [draft essay]. You can take one and see what I do. That checklist is stapled on top of the first draft. And then that first draft is given to another student. Because it will be too much of my work. That student will be the one looking for me, the elements of academic writing that I have put in the introduction, in the body, in the conclusion and everywhere. Before the students do that, I train them. This is what you are going to do. I teach them and then this is what you are going to do. After they have checked the first draft of a peer, the draft is given back to the peer, and check what is good already in there, and what is missing. I will now tell them, you have another week to make improvements.”



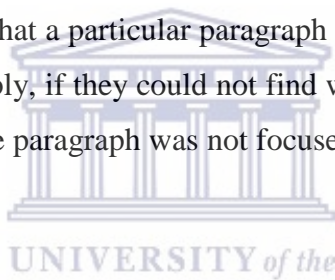
ULEA 3519 - SEMESTER 1 PLAN - 2017

WEEK STARTING/ENDING	LECTURE 1	LECTURE 2	LECTURE 3	LECTURE 4
06 -10 Feb	Student enrolment and Academic ethics	Student enrolment and Academic Ethics	Student enrolment & introduction to ULEA	Student enrolment & introduction to ULEA
13 – 17 Feb	Unit 1: Academic Listening, comprehension and note taking	Unit 1: Academic Listening, comprehension and note taking	Unit 1: Academic Listening, comprehension and note taking	Unit 2: Basic Academic Study Skills
20 – 24 Feb	Unit 2: Basic Academic Study Skills	Unit 2: Basic Academic Study Skills	Unit 3: Academic Reading & researching,	Unit 3: Academic Reading & researching Academic Essay Title Formulation
27 Feb – 03 March	Unit 3: Academic Reading & researching Academic Essay Title Formulation	Unit 3: Academic Reading & researching Academic Essay Title Formulation	Unit 3: Academic Reading & researching Academic Essay Title Formulation	Unit 7: Functional situation in Academic writing/ The Essay
06 – 10 March	Unit 7: Functional situation in Academic writing/ The Essay ESSAY TITLE	Unit 7: Functional situation in Academic writing/ The Essay ESSAY TITLE	Unit 7: Functional situation in Academic writing/ The Essay FINALIZE ESSAY TITLE	Unit 7: Functional situation in Academic writing/ The Essay
13 – 17 March	Unit 10: The APA referencing Skills Using Sources: how not to plagiarize, using quotations, paraphrase and summary	Unit 10: The APA referencing Skills Using Sources: how not to plagiarize, using quotations, paraphrase and summary	Unit 10: The APA referencing Skills Using Sources: how not to plagiarize, using quotations, paraphrase and summary	Unit 10: The APA referencing Skills Using Sources: how not to plagiarize, using quotations, paraphrase and summary
20 – 24 March	Semester break starts	Semester break starts	Semester break starts	Semester break starts
27 – 31 March	Unit 4: Academic Vocabulary: Learning Strategies	Unit 4: Academic Vocabulary: Learning Strategies	Unit 4: Writing Academic paragraphs: Planning & Organizing an essay, introduction, body and Conclusion, developing coherent paragraphs Summary Writing	Unit 4: Writing Academic paragraphs: Planning & Organizing an essay, introduction, body and Conclusion, developing coherent paragraphs Summary Writing
03 – 07 April Test 8 April 2017 SATURDAY	Unit 6: Writing Academic paragraphs: Planning & Organizing an essay, introduction, body and Conclusion, developing coherent paragraphs Summary Writing	Unit 6: Writing Academic paragraphs: Planning & Organizing an essay, introduction, body and Conclusion, developing coherent paragraphs Summary Writing	Unit 5: Mechanics in Academic writing The Checklist was used in this lesson	Unit 5: Mechanics in Academic writing
10 – 14 April Test date yet to be determined	Unit 7: Mechanics in Academic writing	Unit 8: Selecting and Synthesizing	Unit 8: Selecting and Synthesizing ESSAY DUE 12/13 April	PUBLIC HOLIDAY: GOOD FRIDAY 14 APRIL
17-21 April	PUBLIC HOLIDAY EASTER MON 17 APRIL	Unit 12: Academic Speaking	Unit 12: Academic Speaking	Academic presentations
24 – 28 April	Academic presentations/ Speaking	Academic presentations/ Speaking	Academic presentations/ Speaking	Academic presentations/ Speaking
01 – 05 May	PUBLIC HOLIDAY: 01 MAY	Academic presentations/ Speaking	Academic presentations/ Speaking	PUBLIC HOLIDAY: CASSINGA DAY 04 MAY
08 – 12 May	Revision of all work done	Submit all CA Marks to ULEA Coordinator	Releasing of all CA marks	12 May - LECTURES END
15 – 19 May	REGULAR EXAMINATIONS COMMENCE			

Figure 4.2. The 2017 Semester 1 Plan for English for Academic Purposes,

In Figure 4.2 above, I have presented the semester plan of the course English for Academic Purposes, indicating the date of submission of the final draft of the essay, and the date of the lesson that I observed, where the checklist was used. This is ample time for student to revisit their essays and rework on them before the final submission.

It appeared, however, that students seemed to have difficulty linking the items in the checklist to their representations in their essays. This was based on the observation that their participations were limited. Although student participation was limited, the lecturer encouraged participation by allowing more opportunities for students to identify the academic features in their essays. The lecturer also directed them towards identifying these features by providing hints on what to look for in particular. For example, when some students could not identify the topic sentences, the lecturer advised them to focus on sentences that stated what a particular paragraph is about. The lecturer also indicated to the students that, possibly, if they could not find what a particular paragraph is about, then it could mean that the paragraph was not focused on a particular idea, or there were not topic sentences at all.



My observation also showed that the content that was being assessed corresponded to the course objectives. For instance, some of the objectives that related to the essay writing activity, where the checklist was used, were to “construct an introductory, body, and concluding paragraphs” and “construct written paragraphs that have topics sentences, supporting sentences, and linking words” (also see Figure 4.3 below). In this case, the students were in the process of completing their essays and the features which were assessed needed to be part of their final submission (See the academic essay assignment in Figure 4.4). Therefore, the assessment was authentic in a manner that it was applicable to the achievement of the target objectives of the course.

UNIT 6
WRITING ACADEMIC PARAGRAPHS

Introduction

In academic writing, students are required to divide their essays into several types of paragraphs: introductory paragraph, main paragraphs and a concluding paragraph. If an academic essay is one continuous piece of a text, it is difficult for any reader to follow the argument. Therefore, academic essays need paragraphs.

A paragraph is a group of sentences that develop one topic or idea. The topic of one paragraph should follow logically from the topic of the previous paragraph and should lead on to the next paragraph. The paragraphs in an academic essay have different topics, but they all develop a main idea, i.e. they add information, explain, and provide examples and illustrations until the main theme is fully explained to the reader.

This unit will help you understand the mechanics of good paragraphs.

Objectives

At the end of this unit students should be able to:

- Construct an introductory paragraph, main paragraphs and a concluding paragraph;
- Identify the components of a main paragraph;
- Identify topic sentences in a main paragraph;
- Identify supporting sentences and linking words in a paragraph;
- Construct written paragraphs that have topic sentences, supporting sentences and linking words.

Figure 4.3. The course objectives in Unit 6 of the English for Academic Purposes study guide (Izaks et al., 2017)

Academic Essay Assignment, 2017 Semester 1

Peer editing session (Checklist): 05 April 2017

Due date (Final Draft): 12 April 2017

Write an academic essay of 1200-1500 words long. You will identify your own topic of interest and formulate an appropriate academic essay title.

Specifications of the essay

Length of essay: 1200-1500 words (excluding cover page, [Table of Content] and reference list)

Presentation:

- i. Cover page: - student number, surname, initials, title, lecturer's name, group (slot).
- ii. (Table of Contents.)
- iii. All pages numbered (Excluding the Cover page and Table of Content).
- iv. Type on one side of A4 paper only - **Arial 12, 1.5 Line Spacing.**
- v. Paragraphs clearly spaced or indented.
 1. Introductory (General statements and thesis sentence), Body/Main (Topic Sentence and Supporting Sentences), and Concluding paragraphs
 2. Linking words.
- vi. List of References on a separate page (APA)
 1. A minimum of 5 sources
 2. A maximum of 10 sources
 3. The majority of sources should be academic.
 4. In-text citation and reference list (APA)
- vii. Academic conventions adhered to (academic and formal)
- viii. Thoroughly edited. Remember: **"Writing is re-writing."**

Figure 4.4. Academic essay assignment

My analysis further showed that the authenticity of the usage of checklists in language assessment was also observed in the students' responses. During the student focus groups discussions, some students reported that after they had completed the assessment task, using the checklist, they could identify their weaknesses and were ready to rework on their essays. One of the students indicated that:

"Now I know what is required. I am learning for the purpose but not just for the purpose to pass. I am learning to integrate it within my life."

The students could also connect the purpose of the assessment to its application in real life settings. This is to say, students could apply the assessed content and skills to real life settings such as academic essay writing. I based this observation on one of the students who reported that:

“For me, I hated the thing for references. But as I have checked like in my course of study, I still have to deal with referencing and so on. Even in my sixth year, I will be doing a research for one year and I still have to write a report and reference. So the referencing part is really important for me.”

My observation also found that the classroom set-up, as illustrated in Figure 4.5, was favourable to the assessment techniques. The parallel classroom set up was favourable because students were using the checklist to assess each other’s essays, doing it in pairs. In one of the interviews, the lecturers whose lesson was I observed while students used the checklist have also explained that:

“After they [students] have checked the first draft of a peer, the draft is given back to the peer, and check what is good already in there, and what is missing.

Thus, based on this observation and lecturer’s explanation, I am drawn to deduce that the whole class observation and self-assessment techniques could proceed apace in the parallel set up.

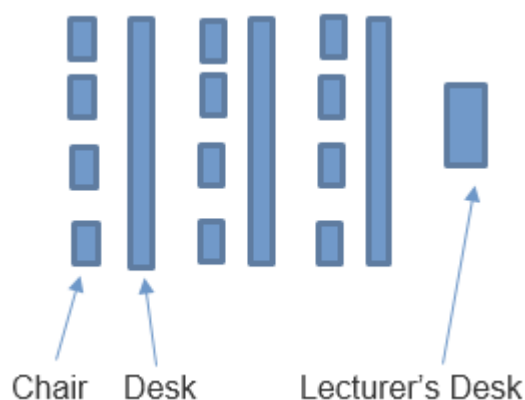
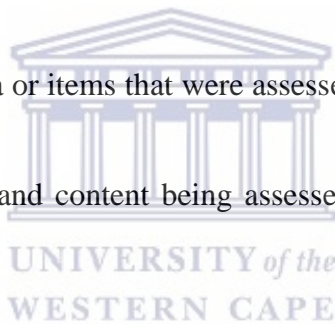


Figure 4.5. Parallel classroom set up

Overall, the lecturer used an assessment that seemed to be instrumental in facilitating the assessment of the students' progress, and students' ability to assess their own learning. The assessment enabled students to identify the omitted academic features in their essays. For proper monitoring of the students learning, the lecturer asked the students to submit their final drafts accompanied by their first drafts and marking grid. My analysis has shown here that, a checklist could be used as one of the alternative assessment tools as it was evident in my analysis that, the way it was administered, it exhibits the following features of alternative assessment, namely:

- Formative:
 - The students had an opportunity to assess their essays before the final submission of final draft of their essays.
- Authenticity:
 - The criteria or items that were assessed were corresponding to the course objectives.
 - The skills and content being assessed were applicable to students' real situation.



Another alternative assessment that I identified in my analysis was the student-lecturer question technique. I present it in the next sub-section.

4.5.2. Student-lecturer question technique

My analysis of data showed that the student-lecturer question techniques constituted another type alternative assessment used by lecturers of English for Academic Purposes. During my lesson observations, I observed a follow up lesson to another lesson where the lecturer had taught the students how to write an academic summary. Academic summary writing skills are of great importance to students because they tend to feel daunted by the need to summarise other writer/speaker's ideas before they use them in their own writing. This skill is implicitly assessed in the academic essay that the students had to submit in the English for Academic Purposes course. It is also explicitly assessed in one of the sections of a semester test and the final examination of the course. The lecturer made sure

that he assessed the students' mastery of the academic summary writing skills through classroom assessment before he decided to carry on with the subsequent items to be taught in the course.

Students had written an academic summary in their individual capacity. During the lesson, the lecturer used the student-lecturer question technique to assess whether the students were able to identify the main ideas from the text and if they have included them in their summaries. The students were asked to identify all the main ideas in the text and read them aloud to the class. All students seemed to have completed the summary activity. When the lecturer asked everyone to take out their summaries, all students had their summaries on their desks. Whether they had completed the summaries correctly or not, I wish to note that it was not part of my data collection process. However, the students' participation in the whole class discussion of their summaries appeared to be skewed but consistent. This could be an indication that although all students have attempted to complete the summary writing activity, it could only be some of them who were able to achieve some mastery of the summary writing skills.

UNIVERSITY of the

This assessment event was aided by some support materials. The students had access to their study guides where the guidelines for writing academic summaries are provided. In addition, the students were provided with auxiliary handouts with more information about how to write academic summaries. My analysis of data showed that this assessment seemed to be a valuable mean of providing feedback to students. During the assessment event, the lecturer made use of the whiteboard to provide feedback to the students. The importance of feedback was also emphasised by the students during the student focus groups discussions. Some of the students seemed to have encouraged provision of feedback when they indicated that:

“And then he would also teach us academic summary in one lecture, for example on a Monday, and then in the next session we would write a short summary which he would mark and give it to us and give us feedback in the next lecture. But it

wasn't recorded as part of our marks. So, it's only to check whether we understand."

"So, the feedback doesn't necessarily need to be individually but it should be collectively, yah, the weakest points. Because we are just interested in where we are failing, our weakest link, so that we can improve on that."

Students also had mobile phones in their possession although the lecturer did not seem to have capitalised on them. Mobile phones could have been useful if, for example, the lecturer had identified online sites that consist of support information on the assessed skills or content, in this case the academic summary. The lecturer explicitly asked random students, instead of just waiting for those who raised their hands up, to answer. He also integrated humour in his instruction as well as used welcoming/enthusing language. Students were continuously encouraged to perform better and were never made to feel discouraged by their current weaknesses.

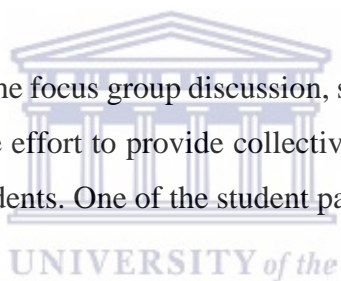
The aspect of authenticity did not seem to be incorporated satisfactorily in the assessment event. The only way that authenticity could be qualified in the assessment was the fact that it was linked to the course objectives. However, the lecturer did not explain to the students how and where in real life situations they would be required to summarise a text; except in the examination settings. The academic summary that the students were asked to write was a single, isolated paragraph of the main ideas taken from a text. The real life settings where they would be expected to write such a paragraph was not explained to the students.

Students were given a score for the task. The challenge that I found with the score is that it was not self-explanatory as in what it really meant for the students. Whether a student has 20 out of 20 or 10 out of 20, it was not clear of what the latter may need to do in order to reach the score of the former. During the student focus groups discussions, one of the student participants also registered their dissatisfaction of lecturers' feedback when they indicated that:

“They (lecturers) just write the mark, how much you got. They don’t specify that you are good or you are bad. They just give the marks and that’s all.”

Therefore, my judgement of this observation points to some weakness of the assessment in terms of feedback. Nevertheless, the lecturer provided remedial lessons incorporated with feedback to the assessed task. This is an indication that the assessment task was formative and diagnostic. The assessment task was used as formative assessment in a manner that the lecturer provided feedback based on the students’ weaknesses and strengths. It also served as a diagnostic tool for students’ skills on the target skills and knowledge. The lecturer prompted students to justify their responses to the questions. This is an indication that the assessment task promoted critical thinking among students.

Correspondingly, during the focus group discussion, students also suggested that perhaps lecturers could even make effort to provide collective feedback, in case it is impossible to attend to individual students. One of the student participants suggested that:



“For me I think, the lecturer doesn’t necessarily need to say individual person should be given feedback. He can generalise it to say, ‘I have seen that majority of you have failed to get this thing right. What was the problem?’ Then maybe collectively we go through it, ‘Ok, this is where we did not do right, but ok we didn’t because of A, B, C, D...’ So, the feedback doesn’t necessarily need to be individually but it should be collectively, yah, the weakest points. Because we are just interested in where we are failing, our weakest link, so that we can improve on that.”

I also identified the use of student-lecturer question methods in another lesson which was on academic essay title formulation. One feature of alternative assessment that I have found in this lesson was authenticity. The lecturer linked the assessment task to real life situations in which the students may need essay title formulation skills. For example, one of the student participants expressed that:

“...in my case you have to come up with your title based on your field of study, then the lecturer has to approve it. He approves the topic if it’s good or not. If it’s bad, you look for another topic again.”

The real life situations I am referring to here do not only include the process of formulation of the academic essay title but also take on board the title of the students’ research proposals. In addition to this, they include the process of analysing essay questions that lecturers pose to students via assignments or examinations by identifying the four essay elements, namely: topic, focus, comment, and viewpoint. For example, what is presented below (Table 4.1), in Example 1 is an essay question or prompts that students might come across in an examination paper or assignment. In Example 2 is an academic essay title that students would have to formulate themselves, same as in the case of the essay they were required to complete in the course English for academic Purposes.

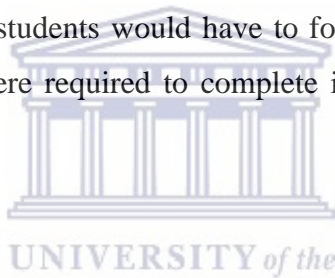
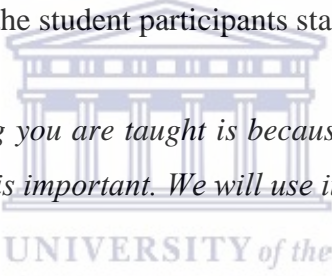


Table 4.1
Essay Elements in an Essay Question and Essay Title

Example 1	<i>Explain the reasons why smoking is dangerous to human health</i>
Example 2	<i>An explanation of the reasons why smoking is dangerous to human health</i>

Students should take note of the difference in structure and wording in the two examples that I presented in Table 4.1. In both the examples, four elements are included. To illustrate, the general *topic* in this essay title/question is “smoking”, the specific *focus* is “reason why smoking is dangerous to human health”, and the *comment* is to “explain”, and the *viewpoint* is negative because the student should assume the role of a writer who feels that smoking is dangerous to human health.

I made an interesting observation with regards to the principle of authenticity. In one of my lesson observations, one of the students asked the lecturer whether it was possible for a title to consist of more than one comment. Although the lecturer indicated that it was not possible, the student further cited the University of Namibia's postgraduate guide that, more than one comment in a title is required in the research title. The student was concerned about the disjuncture between what they were taught and what they are expected to do in their courses. This calls for proper consideration of the issue of authenticity in academic writing because students come to class with expectation and belief that what they are taught is to be used somewhere in their real life function. My analysis of data collected through student focus groups discussion also showed that students seemed to have expectations in that there should be a link between what is taught and how it is applied in real life situation. For example, during one of the student focus group discussions, one of the student participants stated that:



“Almost everything you are taught is because they know you will use it later in life. So everything is important. We will use it.”

In another lesson on selecting and synthesising, I observed authenticity while the lecturer used the student-lecturer question technique. One of the students asked the lecturer whether it was acceptable if one uses ideas from one source only. The lecturer discouraged reliance on a single source because it leads to a biased argument in one's essay. The lecturer cautioned students that the way they are required to write their synthesis is the same way they were going to synthesise ideas to reinforce their ideas in their essays. In addition, the question-answer method was aimed at assessing mastery of synthesising skills as stipulated in the course objectives in Unit 8 of the English for Academic Purposes Study Guide (see course objectives in Figure 4.6 below).

Introduction

This unit deals with the skills of selecting and synthesising of ideas and /or information when writing an academic essay. Essay writing is one of the most important academic assignments required from students and should be based on research. Therefore before an assignment is written a student has to read on the given topic. This entails selecting relevant facts, ideas, theories and concepts from various sources, i.e. books, journals, newspapers, electronic media and many others.

Good academic written assignments combine various ideas to form one coherent whole. This is called synthesizing. However, ideas and information taken from other sources should be acknowledged by direct quotations or citations. Ideas are synthesized purposely to support ideas, justify the writer's thinking and arguments and also to provide evidence of research. When written tasks are supported by external sources, the sources must be acknowledged as part of the research conducted, in order to avoid plagiarism. A good academic paper is therefore based on selected relevant ideas, well integrated into the paper (Murray & Johanson, 1996).

Objectives

At the end of this unit students should be able to:

- Select relevant ideas from various sources;
- Synthesise own ideas and information from various sources into an essay;
- Identify opposing ideas from a text;
- Read closely and critically;
- Identify criteria for academic writing;
- Analyse the title of an article;
- Write an academic essay.

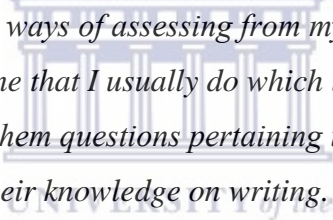
Figure 4.6. The course objectives in Unit 6 of the English for Academic Purposes study guide (Izaks et al., 2017)

During the lecturer interviews, I also recorded how the student-lecturer question technique was used by one of the lecturer participants. The lecturer reported that:

“There is one that I usually do which is almost informal. The first one is questioning. I ask them questions pertaining to writing. How do they see writing? What are the things that they feel they are not well equipped in writing. What do

they want to get from writing? Throughout as I teach I ask them about their knowledge on writing. That is now on a daily basis. Just asking questions orally before they start writing that is prewriting. I ask the students before they do the practical work. I ask them how they understand certain skills or how they understand a certain way of writing certain things.”

The type of alternative assessment techniques described by the lecturer above is quite common amongst the lecturers of English for Academic Purpose in the participant university. Even during the lesson observation sessions, I have noticed that it was one of the techniques that hardly goes without being used in their lessons. During the lecturer interviews, lecturers’ responses presented below point to the use of this type of assessment:



“There are several ways of assessing from my point of view when it comes to writing. There is one that I usually do which is almost informal. The first one is questioning. I ask them questions pertaining to writing... Throughout as I teach I ask them about their knowledge on writing. That is now on a daily basis. Just asking questions orally before they start writing that is prewriting. I ask the students before they do the practical work. I ask them how they understand certain skills or how they understand a certain way of writing certain things.”

“But informal assessment methods are very important. Sometimes even just by discussing with students in class.”

“One way would be to teach and ask my students after ten minutes to explain to each other what I have just said in the last ten minutes. By doing that, students are constantly aware of the progress of the lesson and the progress of the content.”

The latter data strand also shows that the lecturer-student question technique was administered diagnostically. This is evident in the lecturer participant’s response when it

is said that through the lecturer-student question techniques, the students keep track of the progress of the lesson.

In addition, this type of assessment was also featured in some of the student participants' responses. Some of the student participants mentioned that:

“With other lecturers, while they are busy teaching you, they are also busy assessing you with the questions that they are asking you during the lesson.”

“...others will assess you while they are teaching, at the same time they will ask you questions to see whether you have grasped what was taught.”

In this subsection, I have presented the student-lecturer question technique as a type of assessment used by the lecturers of English for Academic Purposes. My analysis showed that this type of assessment is administered diagnostically, to monitor students' strengths and weaknesses in the skills and contents being presented; it was formative. My analysis also showed that this type of assessment was used in an authentic manner. My analysis of data further showed that this type of assessment is a good mean of providing feedback to both the lecturer and the students. In the next subsection, I will present another type of assessment, the academic essay, which is used in the English for Academic Purposes course.

4.5.3. Academic Essay

My analysis of data showed that lecturers of English for Academic Purposes used essay as an alternative assessment. During my observation of lessons, lecturer interviews, and student focus groups, I have found that students were involved in the process of completing an academic essay. During the lecturer interviews and student focus group discussions, both lecturer and student participants reported on the usage of academic essay as one of the assessments in the English for Academic Purposes course. My analysis detected the usage of essay as an alternative assessment when one of the lecturer

participants provided an explanation on how the essay was administered to the students. The lecturer explained that:

“As you can see on that table (there are piles of draft essays), I ask for multiple drafts... What do I do? I designed a checklist as you can see (showing me the checklist) it will be on top of each of those (draft essay). You can take one and see what I do.”

In addition, when I asked the students to tell me the types of assessments they received, they also mentioned “essay” to be one of the assessments. They reported that:

“We were assessed three times before the exam: we had an essay to write as part of the assessment, we had oral presentation, and a test. And from there, exam. So that’s about four times.”

“We get the one for the essay. So he gives us freedom to choose your topic which related to your field of study then you formulate a title then you write your paper as your assignment. You follow the academic way of writing and then you also present it. So you must also make a PowerPoint presentation out of the same topic.”

“I think, formal assessment were the tests, presentations and an essay.”

“We only wrote a test, and then the presentation which was based on the essay. So it was just a matter of copying and putting it on PowerPoint.”

Typically, an essay may be assessed in an examination or test setting. Such practices do not qualify the essay to be considered as an alternative assessment, but traditional assessment. However, in the case of the academic essay that was administered to the students in the English for Academic Purposes course, the assessment qualified to be an alternative assessment because it was administered in a different manner.

First, the students were assessed in an authentic manner that they had access to resources and they did not have to complete the essay in some controlled environment such as an examination hall or classroom. The students also acknowledged this practice that it allowed them to write effectively. For example, some of the student participants indicated that:

“Even during the essay writing, you can even consult the people who know things better and ask questions instead of a test, it’s only you and the paper.”

“I would rather be assessed by essay writing because there is plenty of time. So you can make some research, read, so you can score high. Not like tests, they give you three hours then you are squeezed to think in that limited period of time. Sometimes you might end up making some simple mistakes, which may cost you some marks also.”

The students were given liberty to find academic topics of their interests. Students’ responses during the student focus groups discussions showed that, students seemed to be in favour of the liberty to choose one’s own topic to write on. In one of the student participants’ responses, I recorded that:

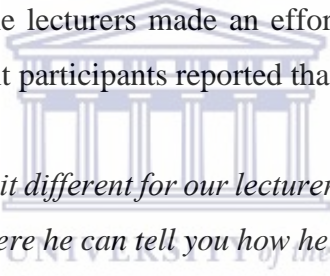
“Well for me, for the essay, because it was a research essay. Like in your career and job you have to do research sometimes to improve as you go through your career. So I think that it’s good to like force yourself to learn how to do a research essay and to write on it because you also understand what you research.”

I am encouraged to infer from this response that it seems students prefer to write on topics that are related to what they know, their interest or their fields of studies.

Secondly, students had multiple opportunities to work on their essays. This is to suggest that they could write a number of drafts, consult the lecturer or other sources for any assistance. The focus was not only on the final product, the academic essay, but it was

also on the process, which is also in accordance with current thinking on academic writing which follows the process approach. Students had almost the whole semester to complete the essay, and from time to time they discussed various aspects of the academic essay in class, and mini-assessments were also administered to assess the students' progress and mastery of the academic writing skills. During class, they were also given opportunities to practise how to write various parts of the essay, as well as incorporate all the required elements of an academic essay.

This assessment was also both formative and summative. It was formative because students were assessed on various aspects of the essay and the lecturer had an opportunity to provide feedback to the students while students had an opportunity to rework on areas that they had not mastered. During the student focus groups discussions, students described how some of the lecturers made an effort to provide feedback to them. For example, one of the student participants reported that:



“But that one is a bit different for our lecturer. After you write you let me say your essay, then from there he can tell you how he marked it, or maybe he was looking at it using which criteria and so on. Then you know that ohoo I must improve here and here. After you write you let me say your essay, then from there he can tell you how he marked it, or maybe he was looking at it using which criteria and so on. Then you know that ohoo I must improve here and here.”

The assessment was also summative because the lecturer had to award a mark in the end, and the mark contributed to the continuous assessment mark of the students, of which a portion (60%) contributes to the students' final/exit mark of the course.

Another element that qualifies this assessment to be regarded as alternative assessment is that it involved criterion-referenced orientation. The focus of assessment was on evaluating whether the students have accomplished the objectives of the course. Through the academic essay, the lecturer could assess students' academic writing skills which include but not limited to: paragraphing (introduction [general statements and thesis],

body [topic sentence and supporting sentences], and conclusion), paraphrasing, summarising, referencing/acknowledging sources (in this case APA format), hedging, selecting and synthesising ideas, and formulating essay titles. The focus is however not on ranking students in some order of their level of performances. Most of these elements are part of the items listed in the checklist (see Figure 4.1 on page 185) that one of the lecturers used in some of the lessons that I observed. One of the lecturer participants also explained how the focus of this assessment was on the students' mastery of specific elements of academic writing. The lecturer explained that:

“So what I do, for the introduction, I allocate a certain number of marks. For each of the other body paragraphs, I allocate a certain number of marks. For the conclusion, certain number of marks. And obviously for the references, a certain number of marks. What is key for me in each paragraph especially for this short theoretical paper that they write, for the body paragraph, I want to see an in-text citation that is valid, not just anything you know. Not just a website, so, to show me that you have read. And it's in each paragraph, because we say, let each of your paragraph be about a main idea. Okay, I look for in-text citation, I will look for a topic sentence, I will look for it, because I have taught it, I will look for it.”

In this section I have presented the types of alternative assessment that I observed through lesson observation, those that lecturers have shared with me during interviews, and those that students have shared with me during student focus group discussions. My analysis showed that there seemed to be a limited number of alternative assessments in the course English for Academic Purposes. From my analysis of data collected through lesson observation, lecturer interviews, and student focus groups discussions, I could only find the use of student-lecturer question technique, checklist, and academic essay to be the type of assessments that present some features of alternative assessment. The rest of the assessments such as the test and the end of semester examination is regarded as traditional assessment as they do not include the features of assessment that are advocated for by current thinking such as those of alternative assessment.

In the next section, I present the intelligences profile of the students in the English for Academic Purposes course. I also present the analysis of whether or not the types of assessment used in the English for Academic Purposes course match the intelligences profile of the students.

4.6. Intelligences Profile of the Students in the English for Academic Purposes Course

I collected data of the students' intelligences profile through the multiple intelligence inventory. The inventory is designed to identify intelligences that students may be dominant among others. My analysis was not focused on how many students were dominant in an intelligence, but as long as an intelligence was a dominant one for a student, it was significant for my analysis to consider it. The main purpose of bringing in the element of multiple intelligence was because alternative assessment should aim for inclusivity where no student is left out. In Table 4.2 below, I present the specific activities or features that were selected by the student participants under various intelligences in Part A of the multiple intelligence inventory that they completed.

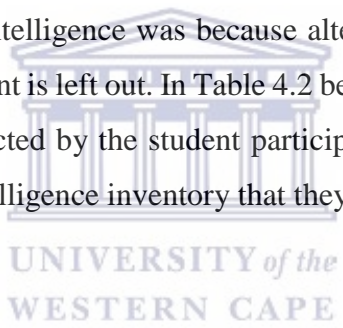


Table 4.2

Intelligences profile of the students in the English for Academic Purposes course

Type of intelligence	Activities selected by student participants	Activities not selected by student participants
Interpersonal	<p>I'm the sort of person that people come to for advice and counsel at work or in my neighbourhood.</p> <p>I prefer group sports like badminton, volleyball, or softball to solo sports such as swimming and jogging.</p>	I would rather spend my evenings at a lively party than stay at home alone.

When I have a problem, I'm more likely to seek out another person for help than attempt to work it out on my own.

I have at least three close friends.

I favour social pastimes such as Monopoly or Bridge over individual recreations such as video games and solitaire.

I enjoy the challenge of teaching another person, or groups of people, what I know how to do.

I feel comfortable in the midst of a crowd.

I consider myself a leader (or others have called me that).

I like to get involved in social activities connected with my work, church, or community.

Logical-
Mathematical

Math and/or science were among my favourite subjects in school.

I can easily compute numbers in my head.

I enjoy playing games or solving brainteasers that require logical thinking.

I like to set up little "what if" experiments (for example, "What if

I double the amount of water I give to my rosebush each week?")

My mind searches for patterns, regularities, or logical sequences in things.

I'm interested in new developments in science.

I believe that almost everything has a rational explanation.

I like finding logical flaws in things that people say and do at home and work.

I feel more comfortable when something has been measured, categorized, analysed, or quantified in some way.

Visual-Spatial

I often see clear visual images when I close my eyes.

I have vivid dreams at night.

I'm sensitive to colour.

I frequently use a camera or camcorder to record what I see around me.

I enjoy doing jigsaw puzzles, mazes, and other visual puzzles.

I can generally find my way
around unfamiliar territory.

I like to draw or doodle.

Geometry was easier for me than
algebra in school.

I can comfortably imagine how
something might appear if it were
looked down upon from directly
above in a bird's-eye view.

I prefer looking at reading material
that is heavily illustrated.

Musical

I can tell when a musical note is
off-key.

I have a pleasant singing
voice.

I frequently listen to music on
radio, records, cassettes, or
compact discs.

If I hear a musical
selection once or twice, I
am usually able to sing it
back fairly accurately.

I play a musical instrument.

My life would be poorer if there
were no music in it.

I sometimes catch myself walking
down the street with a television
jingle or other tune running
through my mind.

I can easily keep time to a piece of music with a simple percussion instrument.

I know the tunes to many different songs or musical pieces.

I often make tapping sounds or sing little melodies while working, studying, or learning something new.

Naturalist

I thrive on having animals around the house.

I'm involved in a hobby that involves nature in some way (e.g., bird watching).

I like to read books and magazines, or watch television shows or movies that feature nature in some way.

When on vacation, I prefer to go off to a natural setting (park, campground, hiking trail) rather than to a hotel/resort or city/cultural location.

I love to visit zoos, aquariums, or other places where the natural world is studied.

I like to spend time backpacking, hiking, or just walking in nature.

I belong to some kind of volunteer organisation related to nature (e.g., Sierra Club), and I'm concerned about helping to save nature from further destruction.

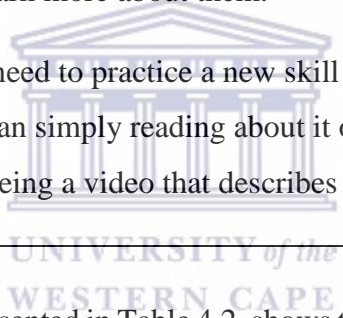
I've enrolled in courses relating to nature at community centers or colleges (e.g. botany, zoology).

I'm quite good at telling the difference between different kinds of trees,

		dogs, birds, or others types of flora or fauna.
		I have a garden and enjoy working regularly in it.
Verbal-Linguistic	<p>Books are very important to me.</p> <p>I get more out of listening to the radio or a spoken-word cassette than I do from television or films.</p> <p>I enjoy word games like Scrabble, Anagrams, or Password.</p> <p>Other people sometimes have to stop and ask me to explain the meaning of the words I use in my writing and speaking.</p> <p>English, Social Studies, and History were easier for me in school than Math and Science.</p> <p>When I drive down a freeway, I pay more attention to the words written on billboards than to the scenery.</p> <p>My conversations include frequent references to things that I've read or heard.</p>	<p>I can hear words in my head before I read, speak, or write them down.</p>

	<p>I've written something recently that I was particularly proud of or that earned me recognition from others.</p>	
Intrapersonal	<p>I regularly spend time alone meditating, reflecting, or thinking about important life questions.</p> <p>I am able to respond to setbacks with resilience.</p> <p>I have a special hobby or interest that I keep pretty much to myself.</p> <p>I have some important goals for my life that I think about on a regular basis.</p> <p>I have a realistic view of my strengths and weaknesses (borne out by feedback from other sources).</p> <p>I would prefer to spend a weekend alone in a cabin in the woods rather than at a fancy resort with lots of people around.</p> <p>I consider myself to be strong willed or independent minded.</p>	<p>I have attended counselling sessions or personal growth seminars to learn more about myself.</p> <p>I keep a personal diary or journal to record the events of my inner life.</p> <p>I am self-employed or have at least thought seriously about starting my own business.</p>
Bodily-Kinesthetic	<p>I engage in at least one sport or physical activity on a regular basis.</p>	<p>My best ideas often come to me when I'm out for a long walk or jog, or when I'm</p>

I find it difficult to sit still for long periods of time.	engaging in some other kinds of physical activity.
I like working with my hands at concrete activities such as sewing, weaving, carving, carpentry, or model building.	I enjoy daredevil amusement rides or similar thrilling physical experiences.
I frequently use hand gestures or other forms of body language when conversing with someone.	I would describe myself as well coordinated.
I need to touch things in order to learn more about them.	
I need to practice a new skill rather than simply reading about it or seeing a video that describes it.	



My analysis of data, as presented in Table 4.2, shows that most of the activities or features under different types of intelligence were selected by one more student participants. Although there were some few features or activities not selected by the student participants, the fact that some features were selected in each type of intelligence is still an indication that English for Academic Purposes classrooms consist of students who may bring along various levels and types of intelligences to the classroom. Therefore, my analysis of data collected from the sample of students in the English for Academic Purposes shows that, the students in this course tend to have a pluralistic intelligence profile where individual students are varyingly dominant in different types of intelligence. Based on this analysis, one should expect a group of students with different cognitive needs in English for Academic Purposes classrooms and it may take a diverse assessment approach to accommodate their needs inclusively.

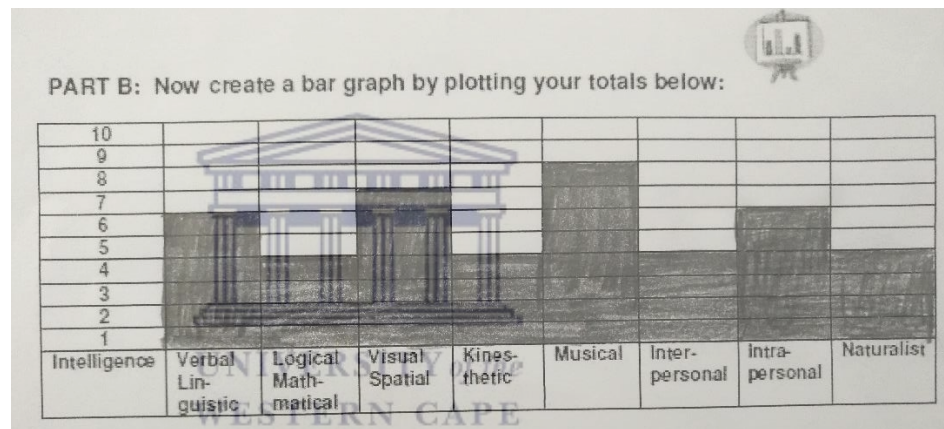
This variation that I have presented in Table 4.2 is also evident in the data that I have presented in Table 4.3. This data consists of the summaries of individual student participants' responses, which they had to complete in Part B of the multiple intelligence inventory. In Table 4.3, I present the summaries of individual student participants' responses on each type of intelligence in the multiple intelligence inventory.

Table 4.3

Summaries of individual student participants' responses on each type of intelligence in the multiple intelligence inventory

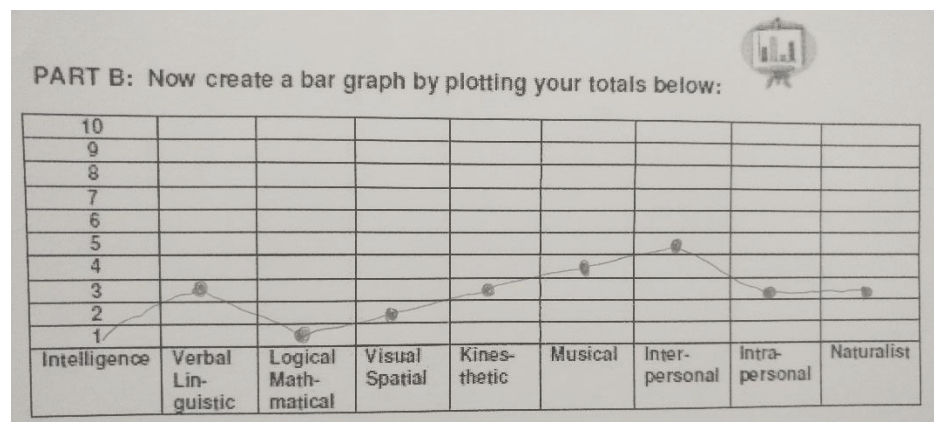
Student

A

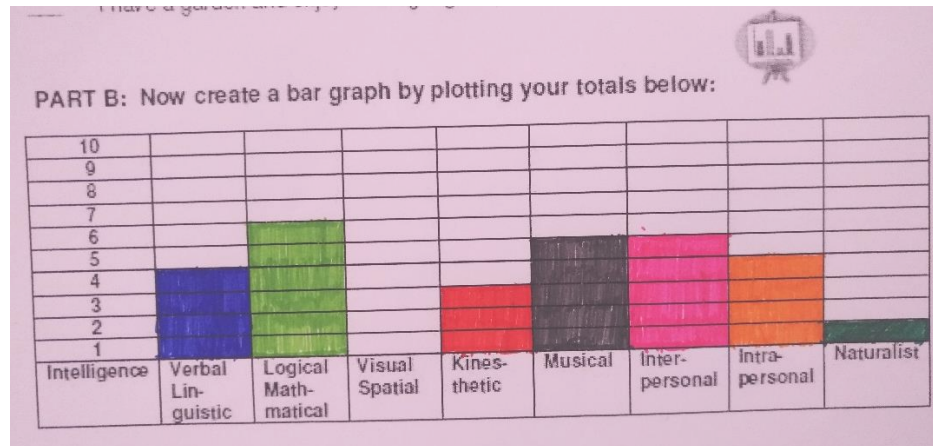


Student

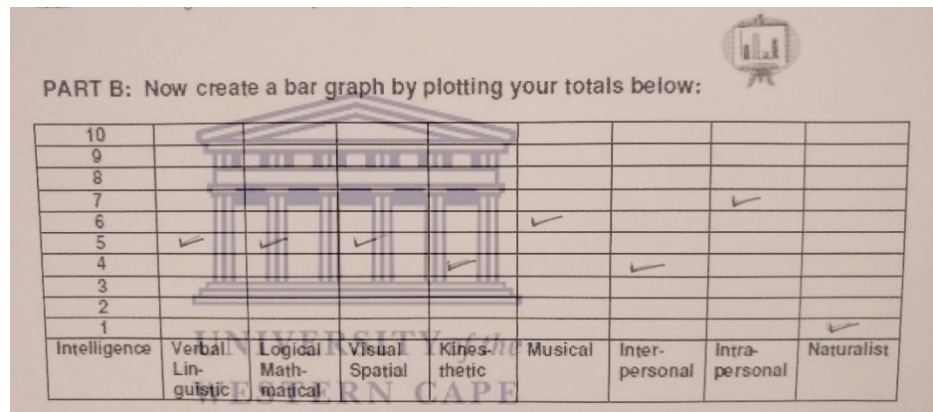
B



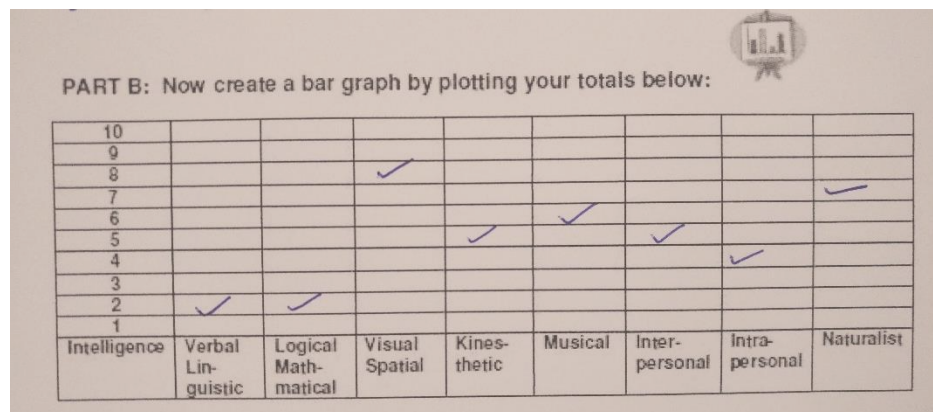
Student
C



Student
D

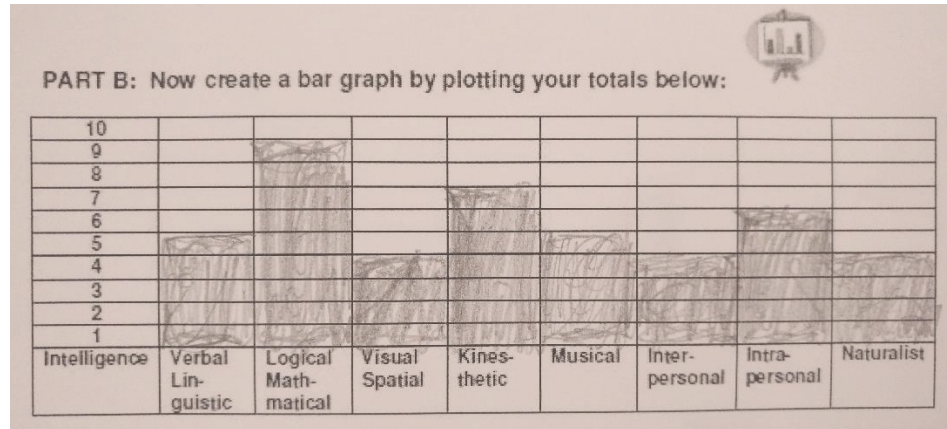


Student
E



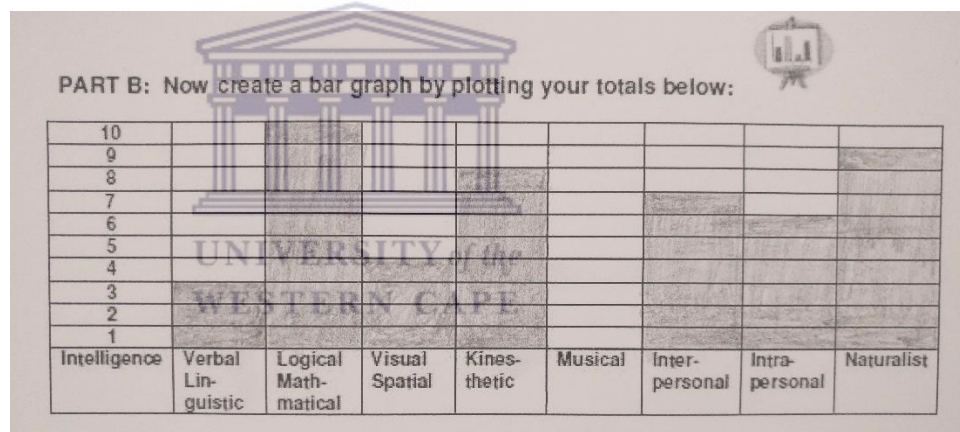
Student

F



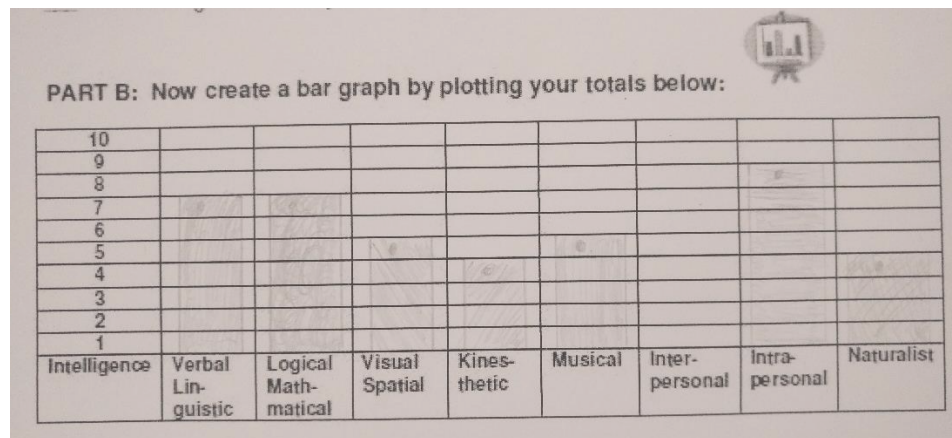
Student

G

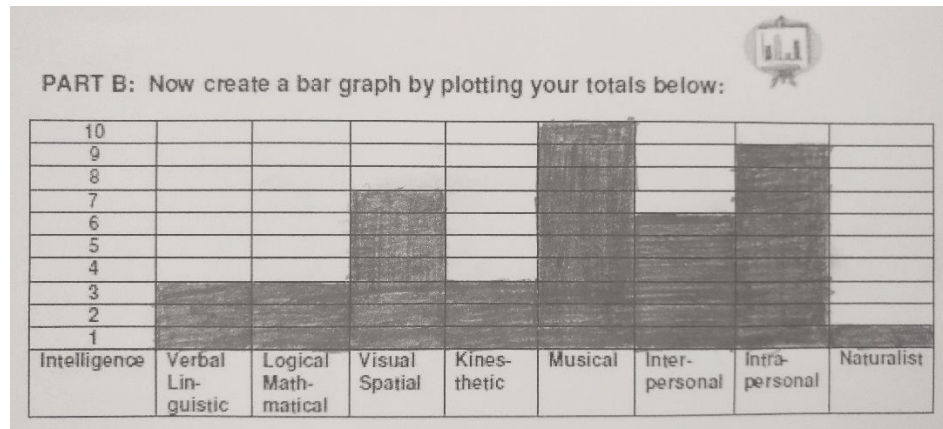


Student

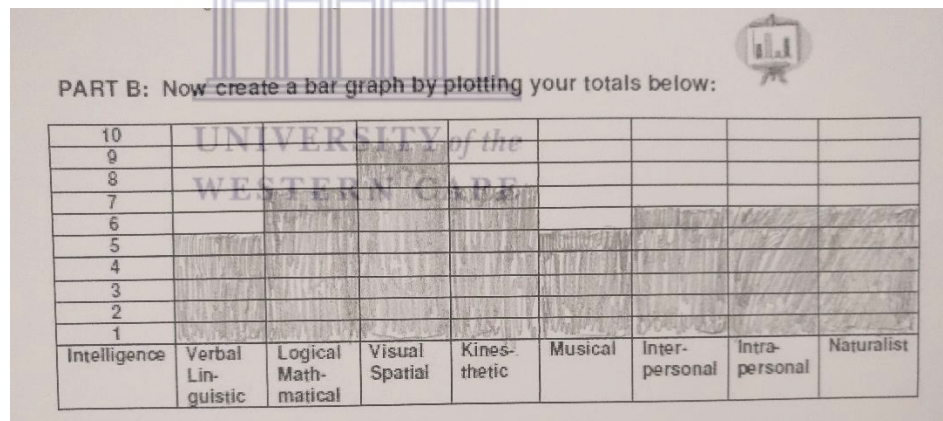
H



Student I



Student J



It is evident from the data I have presented in Table 4.3 that, my analysis of data that I collected through the multiple intelligence inventory shows that students are dominant in various intelligences. Interestingly, in the sample that forms a part of my study, all the intelligences were represented by one or more students. This is an indication that English for Academic Purposes classrooms may be constituted by students with various dominant intelligences. The data that I have presented in this section is also useful for my analysis in the next section. In the next section, I present my analysis on how the types of

alternative assessments used by lecturer participants are or not corresponding to the intelligence profile of the student participants.

4.7. Intelligences Profile of the Students in the English for Academic Purposes

Course and the Types of Alternative Assessment

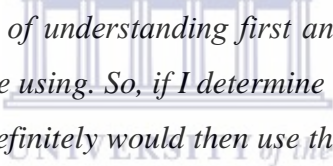
The analysis of data that I present in this section concerns my research question “How do the assessment tools for academic writing match the types of students’ intelligences?” I based this analysis on the data that I collected through the multiple intelligence inventory, lesson observations, lecturer interviews, and student focus groups discussions. The intelligence profile of student participants was derived from the data collected through the multiple intelligence inventory, and it was presented in the previous section (Section 4.6). The types of alternatives assessment were obtained from data collected through lesson observations, lecturer interviews, and student focus group discussions, and it was presented in an earlier section of this chapter (see Section 4.5).

The analysis of data that I collected through the multiple intelligence inventory, and presented in Table 4.3 in the previous section showed that there was a full representation of all the types of intelligences among the student participants. This full representation means that the English for Academic Purposes classrooms consist of students who may have various dominant intelligences. It could be for this reason that students also emphasised, during the student focus group discussion, the need to employ the multiple approach, which is advocated by the Multiple Intelligence theory, where various instructional techniques, (such as, both linguistic and visual techniques) are used in order to cater for various students’ needs. Some of the student participants specifically suggested that:

“I think lecturers should use a variety of assessments. Assess student using the small things, like going to the community and reporting back to the class in writing.”

“The other thing, I believe students learn better when they get involved, also by seeing. English for me is a very complex language. If you are just reading in the book, at least I would prefer that by means of other visual materials, it becomes easier to even remember. For example, when he was writing this on the whiteboard, I remember. But if we only come in the classroom and he is only paging through the book, I will leave without knowing what was done that day.”

During the lecturer interviews, I asked the lecturer participants to explain how the students’ characteristics influence the choice of the assessments they used in their English for Academic Purposes lessons. It appears that lecturers tend to focus more on the students’ level of understanding of the target knowledge and skills only, without considering the students learning abilities such as their dominant intelligences. Their responses were:



“I assess the level of understanding first and then that determine what kind of assessment I will be using. So, if I determine that my students did not understand a certain topic, I definitely would then use that as a means to assess what I have taught. It all depends on the level of cognition. If I have bright students I might not do a lot of assessments. But with slower students who struggle to understand the content, I will definitely reinforce through formal and informal assessment.”

“So these guys, you need to understand that it is their first time doing a small research paper and it has to be informed by other people’s views. They have their own views. So these guys, they don’t respect other people’s views or other researchers’ views. So I am a bit lenient.... I feel we need to be lenient on that. We need to guide them in the beginning and not to be harsh on plagiarism, but you should smoothly bring them into this world of academic writing. As it is called somewhere else academic tribes since students fall into different disciplines. So for them to become a member of the tribe or clan, unfortunately one thing they have to master is to respect other people’s writing. But I am saying, that does influence. I am always mindful that it is the first time these guys are doing this.

You let them go the first time, and then you warn them. I have failed a student in the past who in their final essay plagiarised blatantly, almost everything was just copied.”

“... in the prewriting tasks, when I question them and try to figure out, that can already give me the level or the pace at which they are working on. So their knowledge, the pre-knowledge that they had before they even came to class will determine which approach I should choose, assessment approach.”

Based on the data strands that I have presented above, I am inclined to infer that lecturers of the English for Academic Purpose course do not seem to have awareness of the role that students’ dominant intelligences could play in academic writing instruction and learning. I could also link my inferences to the limited variety of assessments that emerged from my data analysis (see Section 4.5 in this chapter). The limited variety of assessment methods in the academic writing lesson means that there could be some students left out due to their dominant intelligences which may not be stimulated by the types of assessments used by the lecturers.

During the lesson observations, I observed some English for Academic Purposes lessons where the lecturers used some alternative assessments. However, the few alternative assessments that emerged from my data analysis did not include activities that may benefit students who are dominant in some of the intelligences. As such, only some of the students may benefit. I based this analysis on how the assessment was administered, and whether it, to any extent, correspond to the features or activities that were selected by students in the multiple intelligence inventory (see Tables 4.2 and 4.3). In Table 4.4 below, I present the types of alternative assessment used by the lecturers in the English for Academic Purposes with the intelligences they respond to. Further, I also provide a narrative on how each type of alternative assessment that I have presented in my analysis responds to the students’ intelligences.

Table 4.4

The Representation of Multiple Intelligence by Alternative Assessments in the English for Academic Purposes course.

Type of alternative assessment	Checklist	Student-lecturer question technique	Academic Essay
Type of intelligence			
Logical-Mathematical	√		√
Verbal-Linguistic	√	√	√
Visual-Spatial			
Bodily-Kinesthetic			
Interpersonal	√	√	√
Intrapersonal	√	√	√
Musical			
Naturalist			

Note. The mark (√) indicates that the students' intelligence(s) was/were somehow represented in the assessment that lecturer participants used.

When I compared the administration of the three alternative assessments, which emerged from my data analysis (see Section 4.5 in this chapter), to the features/activities selected by students under each type of intelligence (see Table 4.2), I found that overall, the assessments did not seem to accommodate the visual-spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, musical, and naturalist intelligences. Based on the alternative assessment principles, I hasten to suggest that this is a misrepresentation of the students' needs. It is a misrepresentation because my analysis of data (as presented in Tables 4.2 and 4.3) indicated that students'

responses in the multiple intelligence inventory showed that each intelligence was indicated to be dominant in one or more student participants.

Below, I present how the types of assessment used by lecturer participants responded to the intelligences as indicated in Table 4.4: logical-mathematical, verbal-linguistic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligences. My presentation will continuously make reference to the features/activities selected by students in the multiple intelligence inventory as presented in Table 4.2. The first type of assessment that I will present is the Checklist.

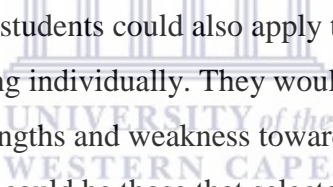
4.7.1. Checklist

Checklist is one of the alternative assessments that emerged from my data analysis to be used by the lecturers of English for Academic Purposes. Students were given a worksheet or document with a list of items which they have to confirm whether they have incorporated the items in their essays. Checklist could be a good assessment for accommodating the logical-mathematical, verbal-linguistic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligences. The students could apply the logical-mathematical intelligence as they tried to relate what and how they have written their academic essay to the criteria or items listed in the checklist. This would require application of logical intelligence and it would relate better to students who selected features such as *“I believe that almost everything has a rational explanation”* and *“I like finding logical flaws in things that people say and do at home and work”* under the logical-mathematical intelligence in the multiple intelligence inventory.

The students could also apply the verbal-linguistic intelligence as they evaluate their own written language and see when their ideas are well presented and convincing to the reader. When students evaluate their own or their peers' language, my analysis found this activity to be related to feature/activities such as *“My conversations includes frequent references to things that I've read or heard”*, *“I've written something recently that I was particularly proud of or that earned me “English, social studies, and history were easier for me in school than math and science”* under the verbal-linguistic intelligence in the multiple

intelligence inventory. Students who may relate to these features may find it interesting to evaluate other students' or their own written language.

By using the checklist to evaluate other students' essays, students could activate their interpersonal intelligence, provided that they were asked to evaluate their essays in pairs or groups. While working together, they would need to apply their interpersonal communication skills so that together they could arrive to a common conclusion. This task may be interesting to students who selected these features "*I'm the sort of person that people come to for advice and counsel at work or in my neighbourhood*", "*When I have a problem, I'm more likely to seek out another person for help than attempt to work it out on my own*" and "*I enjoy the challenge of teaching another person, or groups of people, what I know how to do*" under the interpersonal intelligence in the multiple intelligence inventory.



While using the checklist, students could also apply the intrapersonal intelligence provided they were working individually. They would have to understand oneself in order to discover their strengths and weakness towards the assessment. Students who may benefit from this task could be those that selected these features "*I am able to respond to setbacks with resilience*" and "*I have a realistic view of my strengths and weaknesses (borne out by feedback from other sources)*" under the intrapersonal intelligence in the multiple intelligence inventory.

The next type of alternative assessment that I will present is the students-lecturer question technique where I will provide an explanation on how this type of assessment responded to students' intelligences.

4.7.2. Student-lecturer question technique

The student-lecturer question techniques is of one of the alternative assessments that emerged from my data analysis to be used by the lecturers of English for Academic Purposes. In this technique, the lecturer verbally engages students with questions in the classroom about the learnt skills or content. The use of the student-lecturer question

technique accommodated the verbal-linguistic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligences. This assessment could require students to involve the verbal-linguistic as they manipulate language to convince the lecturer that they have mastery of the information they convey. The students who could benefit from the usage of language in this assessment could be those who selected these features: *“Other people sometimes have to stop and ask me to explain the meaning of the words I use in my writing and speaking”*, and *“English, social studies, and history were easier for me in school than math and science”* under the intrapersonal intelligence in the multiple intelligence inventory. These are likely to be students who are comfortable using language and have developed or possess good level or command of the target language skills.

The student-lecturer question techniques may also require students to apply the interpersonal intelligence since students are in a way participating in a social interaction with the lecturer and they may need to understand the lecturer’s communicative intentions, and that of their fellow students. Students whose dominant intelligence may be interpersonal intelligence may perform smoothly in this assessment. This is because, the students have selected features such as *“I prefer group sports...”* and *“I enjoy the challenge of teaching another person, or groups of people, what I know how to do”* under the interpersonal intelligence in the multiple intelligence inventory.

While the lecturer used the student-lecturer question techniques, students could also apply the intrapersonal intelligence in cases where the questions were directed to individual students, and a student should, through understanding of one’s feeling and motivation, motivate oneself in order to respond to the questions accordingly. One of the features that was selected under the intrapersonal intelligence in the multiple intelligence inventory which seem to also relate well with students’ ability to motivate oneself was *“I am able to respond to setbacks with resilience”*.

Another type of assessment that I will present is the academic essay. Similarly, I will also present how this type of assessment responded to the students’ intelligences.

4.7.3. The academic essay

The academic essay is one of the alternative assessments that emerged from my data analysis to be used by the lecturers of English for Academic Purposes. In this technique, the lecturer gave the students a writing task where they have to write an academic essay. This assessment also contributed to their continuous assessment marks. The assessment was not administered once-off (as in test or examination setting), but they had to complete their essays independently and gradually throughout the semester. This is to suggest that they had about two months and a few weeks to complete the assignment (academic essay).

The use of an academic essay as an assessment responded to the logical-mathematical, verbal-linguistic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligences. While completing this assessment, students could use the verbal-linguistic intelligence to manipulate language so that they can express themselves rhetorically in order to convey their point of argument. They could also use language when they carry out their research in order to gather information for their essays. Students who may find this exercise easy could be those who selected the feature *“Books are very important to me”* under the verbal-linguistic intelligence in the multiple intelligence inventory. The feature *“Other people sometimes have to stop and ask me to explain the meaning of the words I use in my writing and speaking”* may also indicate that the student has good command of the target vocabulary needed in academic writing.

Students could use the logical-mathematical intelligence to some extent to reason deductively and think logically. Although this intelligence is most often associated with scientific and mathematical thinking, students could apply it when synthesising ideas and drawing informed conclusions. For example, students who identified themselves with the feature *“My mind searches for patterns, regularities, or logical sequences in things”* may find it easy to write well flowing paragraphs. They can also identify lines of arguments in other writers’ academic texts. In addition, students who identified themselves with the feature *“I’m interested in new developments in science”* may also be willing and eager to participate in scientific enquiries and write about their results.

Students could apply the interpersonal intelligence by effectively interpreting communicative intentions of others, especially when they complete the assessment in pairs or groups. Students who would appreciate such exercises could be those who selected the feature *“I’m the sort of person that people come to for advice and counsel at work or in my neighbourhood”*, *“I enjoy the challenge of teaching another person, or groups of people, what I know how to do”* and *“I have at least three close friends”*. Based on these features, I would add that these students would be interested in teaching others about academic writing, and also learning from them. Having some close friends in their life could also facilitate their confidence to connect with their peers.

Students could also engage the intrapersonal intelligence when they try to understand one's own feelings and motivations as they govern oneself towards the completion of the assessment. When students write on a selected topic, it requires proper thinking and reflection for one to gather ideas and write a coherent essay. Therefore, students who selected the feature *“I regularly spend time alone meditating, reflecting, or thinking about important life questions”* may have found it interesting to work on their essays individually. Moreover, students who selected the feature *“I have some important goals for my life that I think about on a regular basis”* may be in a better position to set goals of completing their essay timeously.

In this section, so far I have presented the analysis of data on the compatibility between the students’ intelligences and the types of alternative assessment used in the English for Academic Purposes course. It seems, there is a need for lecturer to start considering the students characteristics such as their intelligences when selecting the types of assessments to use in the English for Academic Purposes course. During the student focus group discussion, the student participants have also indicated the need for a multiple approach in assessing academic writing. One of the students suggested that:

“I think lecturers should use a variety of assessments. Assess students using the small things, like going to the community and reporting back to the class in writing.”

In this way, the focus is not only on writing (verbal linguistic), but other intelligences such as interpersonal (interacting with people in the community) could be encouraged through academic writing assessment. Furthermore, during the student focus group discussions, students have expressed their preference for being assessed via academic essay, and they pointed to the benefit of consulting other sources or people during the process of completing the essay. Some of the students stated that:

“Even during the essay writing, you can even consult the people who know things better and ask questions instead of a test, it’s only you and the paper.”

“When it comes to research, it should be a bit researchable. It should be things whereby students can go out in the field and research things that can make sense, not to imagine.”

In the next section, I will present the analysis of my data on the factors that influence the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing.



4.8. Factors Influencing the Integration of Alternative Assessment into Academic Writing Instruction

My analysis of data on the factors that influence the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction was based on the data that I collected through the lecturer interviews, student focus group discussions, and lesson observations. My presentations of these findings still follow the thematic approach; that is, I present them by classifying them into different factors, but not necessarily according to the data collection method used. However, where I find it necessary, I will indicate the source of the data. The first factor that I will present is the understanding of assessment, both from the point of view of the lecturers and the students.

4.8.1. Lecturers and students’ knowledge of assessment

During the lecturer interviews, I asked the lecturer to share with me their philosophies or approaches that inform their assessment style, or choices of assessments. It is my belief

in this study, of course informed by theory, that the way the assessor views assessment may influence the way they assess. Therefore, in this section, I would like to present the different views that lecturers might have towards assessment. My analysis of the lecturer participants' responses show that lecturers seem to have their own understanding of what assessment is about as well as their approaches on assessment.

One of the lecturer participants' view of assessment seemed to be that of evaluation and measurement. The participant defined assessment as follows:

“Well, assessment is an evaluation of students to measure how good or how bad they are in a certain given task.”

This lecturer participant also believes that assessment should involve completion of a given task while students are being evaluated. The participant stated that:

“...I believe that when you get students to do the task or to do practical, that's when you are able to assess them effectively. For instance, I believe when it comes to writing, students should write in order to prove their skills or the skills that they have learnt. Because, when they have written several times, then you are able to see whether they have understood or they have picked up the skill or not. So my philosophy on assessment is that, when assessment is being carried out through practices, then we are able to see whether the students have understood or not.”

Another lecturer participant seemed to be following an analytical approach to assessment where specific aspects of the task or specific skills are evaluated individually. Although, the participant did not coin a specific approach, the explanation given seems to fit an analytic assessment approach; the opposite is the holistic approach where the assessor would assign a mark for the whole task. When I asked the participant to share with me his philosophy of assessment, the participant responded as follows:

“My goodness! Will I even refer to any approach in this eclectic error? But let me tell you how I assess especially an essay. Perhaps, the essay, even though our marking grid says for in-text citation, for references, and for content, sometimes it does not specify what the content marks are exactly for. You understand? So what I do, for the introduction, I allocate a certain number of marks. For each of the other body paragraphs, I allocate a certain number of marks. For the conclusion, certain number of marks. And obviously for the references, a certain number of marks. What is key for me in each paragraph especially for this short theoretical paper that they write, for the body paragraph, I want to see an in-text citation that is valid, not just anything you know. Not just a website, so, to show me that you have read. And it’s in each paragraph, because we say, let each of your paragraph be about a main idea.”

In another interview with a lecturer participant, when I asked the participant about their philosophy of assessment, the lecturer’s explanation paralleled the constructivist’s view of assessment. The participant’s response appears to suggest that assessment should encourage knowledge construction through social interactions. The participant explained that:

“The philosophy is that knowledge is constructed as we interact in our daily activities. So I believe that my students construct the knowledge within the classroom. So that enables me to sort of assess my students as knowledge is constructed continuously. So my philosophy is that, we construct knowledge, it’s a social activity and therefore it enables me to assess my students as knowledge as knowledge is constructed continuously in class. It’s a constructivist philosophy that I adhere to in my classroom.”

“For me assessment is continuous. It’s a continuous progressive process. I would teach and then after five minutes I would ask students to tell each other what they have learnt or explain to each other what I have just said. And then I would teach again, and students would ask me questions, and then I would refer back the

question to the class in order to see if everything is understood. By doing that, both the lecturer and the students construct knowledge and negotiate for meaning in the process.”

My analysis shows that the lecturer participants speculate that, they view assessment as an evaluation and measurement of students’ academic writing skills, and therefore, that assessment should be focused on specific skills as well as promote construction of knowledge through social interaction.

My analysis also included the students’ understanding of assessment since this may influence the way they respond to assessments administered to them. During the student focus groups discussions, I asked the student participants to share with me how they understand assessment. I asked them to define it at the same time demonstrating their perception of it. Students gave various definitions as follows:

“My understanding, assessment is a way of teaching and evaluating to see whether the way you [lecturer] are conveying the message, the students are grasping. At the same time also like my colleague said, you evaluate to see whether it is impacting the way you want it to be conveyed.”

“I agree, I just see assessment as a way of evaluation, and after that evaluation, the students see where they stand. The lecturer sees how good they are at conveying the message. After that, you see how much progress you have made from the beginning.”

“To evaluate”

These student participants’ responses suggest that they view assessment as a way of evaluating and monitoring students’ work as well as instruction. So these responses do not only define assessment as evaluation of the students’ performances but also of pedagogy.

Another definition provided by one student participant could be linked to one of the lecturer participant's definition of assessment presented earlier, which involves completion of a given task while students are being evaluated. The student participant referred to assessment as a way to:

"...find out what the person know."

Another student participant used a definition of assessment which suggests the use of rubrics in language assessment. When I asked the student participants during the student focus group discussion about their understanding of assessment, the student responded that:

"Me, I think assessment is a criteria that one can use to rate or grade your... let me say your academic work or something that you have written. It is just the way, after a lecturer has looked at the work and give you marks according to the content. It is just to check what the person did and then to rate it in the same proportion with the criteria."



The element of using a set criteria that featured in the student participant's response above corresponds to the analytical assessment approach which one of the lecturer participants follows when assessing the students' academic writing.

Student participants indicated that sometimes they are able to tell when they are being assessed, but sometimes the lecturer needs to provide explicit statements that they are going to be assessed on a particular topic or skill. One of the participants mentioned that:

"Sometimes I notice it. But there are cases when I need more like explanation of what I really have to do."

Another student participants indicated that for one to tell whether they are assessed, depends on the lecturer. The student explained that:

“I think it depends on the lecturer. Some lecturers would come and then they teach you, and then later they would tell you that we are going to write a test, or we are going to have a quiz later on. With other lecturers, while they are busy teaching you, they are also busy assessing you with the question that they are asking you during the lesson.”

The student participants further indicated how they distinguish between assessments and teaching. Their responses show that they saw assessment and teaching as different aspects of teaching. One of them explained that:

“I think these are different aspects of teaching. Like, first you have to convey the information to the students and then you have to assess whether they understand what you taught. So both of them are like components of teaching.”

Even though student participants saw assessment and teaching as two different conducts, they acknowledged that they are interdependent. One of them explained that:

“I think that they go hand-in-hand, because you can't teach without assessing whether what you taught has been understood, and then you can't just assess without having given some information. I think they are different but they go hand-in-hand.”

In this subsection, I have presented lecturers and students' understanding of assessment as a factor influencing the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing. Another factor that emerged from my analysis is students' assessment preferences and I will present it in the next subsection.

4.8.2. Students' assessment preferences

During the student focus group discussions, I asked students to share with me their assessment preferences. In other words, I asked them to indicate how they prefer to be assessed. I further suggested that they should imagine that should they had power to

choose how they should be assessed, then what would be their prescriptions. Their responses suggested various preferences of assessment, which is not so surprising because the students are also different individuals.

My analysis shows that students seem to prefer lecturers who use a variety of assessment. Some of the student participants suggested that lecturers should vary their assessment methods instead of only focusing on the usual pen and paper method. They voiced their responses:

“I think lecturers should use a variety of assessments. Assess students using the small things, like going to the community and reporting back to the class in writing. I think the small things are the ones that really help us to learn the most. Instead of you know, from the beginning of the semester until now, then you just give four questions to go and write an assignment.”

“...they must increase their activities, just these random activities for people to know where they stand academically.”

“There is a need for more opportunities for assessments even those that are not marked, but just for practice. You see, the more you do the more you learn. If you just give me this one assignment, I will write and submit then I will know may be two or three mistakes, but I think I still have more. If I could have more, it’s just like Mathematics, you can’t just solve two problems then you say you know. Keep practising. Just a piece of writing, submit, like that you equip your students with English vocabulary. Most of the words that we use is just general English.”

“If I could use percentage, I would give 70%. The 30% would be taken away by some weakness like, they don’t, how can I say this? They only assess us through tests and activities. I mean through test and exam. There is no other way of them assessing us. So they lost the 30% because of that. Maybe they could give us more activities so that we know where we stand.”

“You know, if you don’t give activities and you just go straight to the main test, it’s kind of not good.”

“And if I didn’t feel like I am a good test taker, then I prefer to just express myself in class. I actually prefer being assessed by the lecturer only without having everyone watching.”

Students feel that there should be a number of smaller assessments instead of one major assessment. They indicated that when they are given one major assessment, sometimes they tend not to remember certain items learnt. At times, they even wonder if such items were taught, unlike when things are assessed in bits, multiple times and in various ways.

My analysis also shows that students are likely to enjoy assessment when lecturers provide clear instruction and guidance on the task that students have to complete. In particular, one student referred to an assessment: a presentation which was part of their continuous assessment in the English for Academic Purposes course. Given that this study is focused on academic writing, the reason why I considered the presentation to be relevant in this analysis is that what the students are required to do is based on students’ piece of academic writing. Basically, students give an oral presentation of an academic topic they have written about; they present their academic paper to the class or peers. The student participants raised a concern on insufficient guidance that their lecturers provided to them for assessment. The student explained that:

“When it comes to the presentation, I think it was a challenge for some. You are told, come and do a PowerPoint presentation but preparation is not done accordingly. It is not all of us who are used to public speaking. But this is for marks; it’s counting. In the end, you might fail because you do not know what is required from you.”

However, other student participants acknowledged that sometimes they were given clear instructions but the problem is the students who misinterpreted the information. They mentioned that:

“We were given something for the academic essay. We were given a format to follow.”

“You are also told, you write how many pages, font type, style of referencing, which kind of sources. So those are your guiding tools. The instruction is always there. It is straight forward. The problem sometimes is with us when we interpret that information differently. You would be reading the same paper but you answer differently.”

Another students' assessment preference that emerged from my analysis was linked to the likeliness that students do not seem to support some of the traditional assessment methods in place. I am referring to the students' idea of running the English for Academic Purposes course without an end-term pen-and-paper examination. In particular, one of the student participants suggested as follows:

“I want to say, I don't see the need for this English to have an exam. I feel like the assessments are enough. Whatever you get from those assessments is your final mark. The exams is just a repetition of what we were assessed on in the other assessments. So what's the point of us having the exam and having to put so much pressure on ourselves during exam time?”

This is an indication that students seem to be in favour of alternative assessment in that they opted for it over the traditional assessment in place.

In this subsection, I have presented student preferences as a factor influencing the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing. Another factor that emerged from my analysis is the issue of feedback, which I will present in the next subsection.

4.8.3. Feedback

Feedback is another factor that emerged from my analysis as having an influence on the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. My analysis shows that students would benefit from an assessment if they understood the message they received after their tasks were evaluated. During the student focus groups discussions, student participants indicated that they would benefit better from the assessments if lecturers provided meaning or interpretation to the marks they awarded. The student participants reported that:

“They just write the mark, how much you got. They don’t specify that you are good or you are bad. They just give the marks and that’s all.”

“People who assess the whole paper as a whole do not really give the meaning of the marks. Because, if I am being assessed for the introduction, for the abstract, for the conclusion, for the references, then if I get one out of three in the introductory paragraph, then I know I must do something. If a lecturer had to assess the whole paper, then he gives me 15 out of 20, I would just assume everything is fine. But maybe, the fifteen marks came from the body and conclusion, but here (introduction) I didn’t do well. I think partitioning the paper in different section really helps to recognise where to put more effort.

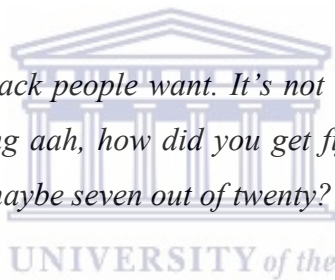
In other words, the student’s explanation above seem to be in favour of analytic assessments over holistic assessments. Mildly, another student acknowledged that there are some lecturers who use analytic assessment. They allocate marks to specific aspects of a piece of writing written by the students. However, the students were still not satisfied because the marks allocated to specific aspects of their writing do not say enough about the students’ performance. The students explained that:

“For me, I see the lecturers are doing that, where you see that introduction maybe you say it should be out of five, the body maybe is out of fifteen, and the conclusion

maybe is two, references is three then it is out of twenty. But the challenge is, when you are writing your introduction, they say it is one paragraph, it's out of five and then you are given one [mark]. This is where the problem comes that you don't know: Was my paragraph very short, or something is not there? Because the problem is when you are writing your introduction, you don't know what should be there."

"For now, we got our tests and our presentation score sheets, but the challenge is, it's just marks. But you know now, it's not something you can question about. Maybe on an individual level, you go to the lecturer, you try just to see, oh, how did I score seven here out of ten. What did I do wrong? Maybe just for one on one."

"That is the feedback people want. It's not like coming to class and giving the answers. It's telling aah, how did you get fifteen out of twenty while the other person is getting maybe seven out of twenty?"



The students even suggested that feedback could be generalised to the whole group or class so that they can pick up the areas they need to improve on. The students clarified that:

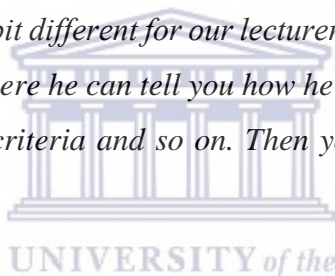
"So, the feedback does not necessarily need to be individually, but it should be collectively, yah, the weakest points. Because we are just interested in where we are failing, our weakest link, so that we can improve on that."

The students feel that, such incomplete feedback is incompatible with the writing instruction they receive. They indicated that, in contrast, they are given specific instruction on what each section of an academic essay should consist of. But the feedback they receive does not speculate their performance on each element of each sections of the academic essay. One of the student participants explained that:

“...what I have learned now is that, you are taught what should be there, which is a very good thing. So that even when you are starting your introduction, you know that I am talking of this topic, it must be there. I am talking of this writer, it must be there – specific things that you are required to put in the intro, [and] then you are told the last sentence of your introduction should be this, then you know what should be done. The allocation of marks is there, but we still don’t know how the lecturer arrived to give you maybe he awarded you three out of five. You don’t know now the two marks which you did wrong.”

My analysis, however, noted some student participants who acknowledged that there were some lecturers who provided effective feedback. The students acknowledged that:

“But that one is a bit different for our lecturer. After you write you let me say your essay, then from there he can tell you how he marked it, or maybe he was looking at it using which criteria and so on. Then you know that, ohoo I must improve here and here.”



“Just generally, if we all wrote something, he would highlight what he spotted as a trend that we all doing, “you guys shouldn’t do this. I see that you doing this a lot. Do this instead.” Or “this is well done”, or “this is not well done, this is the example of how it should be done”. It wouldn’t be written notes on your paper, but you would just give general feedback based on what the whole class did.”

My analysis shows that students seems to suggest that lecturers could provide a rubric that accompany a given writing task, which should serve as guidance for what is expected from students. That way, the lecturers can provide feedback based on the criteria stipulated in the feedback. The students explained that:

“I think the rubric could be very helpful because you have what is expected of you. You also know that, ok, maybe for my introduction, it will be this this, and I can work towards that. Instead of me you know being given a topic to go and write

an essay of seven pages, and yes I am told the format, but I don't really know what is expected of me. At the end, I ended up writing an essay that I don't even understand. You know, it's handed into a lecturer and only after the marks and everything has been entered, I see no, no, I was supposed to do this. My chance is gone, then no second opportunity."

"Just to add, sometimes when you are only given how many words to write, you end up only justifying your marks based on the number of words, which is very difficult. Coming back to the rubric, even if you say write your essay on your chosen topic, the mark allocation will guide you."

In this subsection, I have presented the feedback as one of the factors influencing integration of alternative assessment in academic writing. Another factor that has emerged from my analysis is authenticity. I will present it in the next subsection.

4.8.4. Authenticity

In my analysis, I reckoned with authenticity as another factor that influenced the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing. My analysis shows that assessment is likely to be of great importance to students if there is some real life application of the content or skills being assessed. One of the student participants confirmed how authenticity in the assessment used by their lecturer helped them to develop interest in the content or skill being assessed. The student mentioned that:

"For me, I hated the thing for references. But as I have checked like in my course of study, I still have to deal with referencing and so on. Even in my sixth year, I will be doing a research for one year and I still have to write a report and reference. So the referencing part is really important for me."

My analysis of the student participants' responses also seem to suggest that they enjoy assessment that allow enough time for them to conduct research and consult the relevant sources before they complete their tasks. Unlike some of the traditional assessments

which are once off and more controlled, students have opportunities to seek assistance and gather information in the same way that they would be completing a real-life writing task. During the student focus groups discussions, the students mentioned that:

“For me, when it comes to essay writing, it was really good assessment because, even in the near future, you would know how to write an essay, how to write a report. So it was really fantastic. You also have broad thinking criteria. But during the test, the time is limited, you just have short period of time to give what you were taught.”

“I think essay will be the way to assess.”

“I would rather be assessed by essay writing because there is plenty of time. So you can make some research, read, so you can score high. Not like tests, they give you three hours then you are squeezed to think in that limited period of time. Sometimes you might end up making some simple mistakes, which may cost you some marks also.”

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“Even during the essay writing, you can even consult the people who know things better and ask questions instead of a test, it’s only you and the paper.”

When I asked the lecturer participants about their take on authentic assessment, their responses also demonstrated some awareness of the need for authenticity in assessing academic writing. One of the lecturer participants highlighted some of the writing events that students could write on, which are based on real life problems and would make the assessment being completed more authentic. The lecturer highlighted the following writing events or situations:

“You know, problems that we see happening, problems about our youth in the ruling party for example. Things that they can go and research or read about how maybe the youth took the ruling party to court for being expelled. For Malaria,

there was an outbreak of Malaria. When it comes to environment and climate change, we can talk about floods that are always there in the north.”

These are writing tasks that are addressing issues pertaining to local problems in Namibia. The lecturer participants also alluded the importance of sensitising the students about how the skills and contents being assessed are related to their real life practices. The lecturers’ responses also seem to suggest a positive relationship between the authenticity of an assessment and the possibility for students to perform better in that assessment. They mentioned that:

“I think it’s important at the beginning of the lesson that you outline the purpose of the lesson and how that connects to the reality of the academic life. If I teach APA referencing for instance, then I would tell them that, you use this in all your academic writing, in all your assignments and so forth. I think the fact that you make them conscious of the realities of the Unit or the topic you are covering is very important. So, that also determines whether students would understand or not.”


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“In my case as a lecturer, right from the beginning I tell my students, I make sure that they understand that whatever we are giving them in these courses, should not only be necessarily used in the class, but they should be able to use them back in their faculties and also beyond the study period here. So they should be able to use them in academia and beyond that - that is now in their career.”

In this section, I have presented authenticity as one of the factors influencing the integration of alternative assessment in writing instruction. Another factor that emerged in my analysis is lecturer’s expertise and training in assessment and I will present it in the next subsection.

4.8.5. Expertise and training in alternative assessment

In my analysis, I also found the lecturer's expertise and training in alternative assessment to be one of the factors influencing the integration of alternative assessment into academic writing instruction. During the lecturer interviews, I asked lecturer participants about the kind of assessment training that they may have received, either during their undergraduate or postgraduate programmes, or during some special programmes like workshops.

One of the lecturer participants acknowledged having attended some training on assessing students during their undergraduate programmes. The lecturer reported that:

“...there was one in my MA TESOL, focusing precisely on assessment, whether it's criteria on referencing or how to assess writing, speaking, listening and so on. I had one.”

However, some of the participants indicated that they have never received assessment training. Since the lecturers have not received extensive training on assessment, alternative assessment in particular, I further asked them to share with me how they developed their assessment skills as well as from where they got their assessment tools. It appeared that the lecturers had found various survival skills on how to develop their assessment skills as well as how to generate assessment tools for their course.

One of the ways to develop one's assessment skills was through information sharing platforms such as colleague-to-colleague conversations. The lecturers mentioned that:

“I don't think that there is any platform apart from the informal discussion of saying: Can you see what this person did here, can you see there is no conclusion here?”

“Maybe just in the corridors with my colleagues.”

The lecture participants also reported that even though colleague-to-colleague platforms are available, mostly they sharpen their assessment skills via self-studies. For example, some of the participants indicated that:

“I do read on my own but sharing with others, not much.”

“To be honest, currently it’s just personal reading; I read articles on assessment. But there hasn’t been a conscious effort to liaise with my colleagues and sit down and talk about assessment per say. I haven’t done that. But I am just reading.”

The lecturers also developed their assessment skills and knowledge through workshops that are arranged by their university as well as conferences where one could attend presentation of paper on language assessment or academic writing in particular. One of the lecturer participants reported that:

“I believe the Teaching and Learning Unit also here at UNAM are readily available to provide information on that. However that is not my responsibility to do that; it’s them to share with us. But on a personal point of view, I think the platform in academia can be anywhere: We have conferences, we have workshops. So if I am given the opportunity, I will share this information at the conferences that we have here, workshops that we have here, and we also tend to attend sparingly writing training. So those are some of the platforms that this information can be circulated.”

Since the lecturer participants reported that they have never received or have received limited training in language assessment in particular, and that there are not adequate platforms for developing their assessment knowledge and skills, I thought it will be interesting to find out from them about the sources of their assessment tools. Based on their responses, in my analysis I categorised the sources of assessment tools in 3 groups, namely: assessment tools from the Internet and self-studies (Internet and Self Studies);

those learnt from conferences (Conference); and those that are readily available in the course material (Course Material). I have presented the results in Table 4.5 below:

Table 4.5

Sources of assessment tools used in the English for Academic Purpose course

Source of assessment tools	Responses from lecturer participants
Internet and Self-studies	<p><i>“Well in my case I prefer coming up with my own tools. For example, from the Internet there are quite useful tools that you can use to test students on different skills”</i></p>
	<p><i>“I designed a checklist as you can see (showing me the checklist) it will be on top of each of those (draft essay). You can take one and see what I do. That checklist is stapled on top of the first draft.”</i></p>
	<p><i>“I strongly believe the ones that I get, either I create them myself, or I combine whatever I came up with, with something that I get from the Internet. Because they are a bit more broad. The ones that we use here are somehow limited.”</i></p>
	<p><i>“Nothing that I can think of, I don’t think that there is any platform apart from the informal discussion of saying ‘Can you see what this person did here, can you see there is no conclusion here’. But I do read on my own but sharing with others, not much.”</i></p>
	<p><i>“Another one that I look at is the British English Association of Lecturer for English for Academic</i></p>

Purposes (BEALEAP). That one sets the standards. So, fortunately just on my own I read so much.”

Conferences

“...one of my theoretical paper was on “Are teaching methods in English for Academic Purposes different from teaching methods in just General English classes? So by doing that already, I already get how to assess, how to do ABC.”

“I believe the Teaching and Learning Unit also here at UNAM are readily available to provide information on that.”

“We have conferences, we have workshops.”

Course Materials

“I think there are templates of assessments already at the Language Centre. Since we need to have uniformity, we all follow the same template.”

“...when it comes to the formative assessment then I follow the prescribed assessment template provided by the Language Centre.”

“...there are few that are readily available, the ones we come up with when we look at our course reviews, then we can say let us use these as a tool for assessing students.”

I have learned from the lecturer participants’ responses during the interviews that although there are not proper measures to ensure that lecturers’ expertise in language assessment is enhanced, the lecturers are still eager to promote quality language

assessment practices in their course. They feel that there is still more that needs to be done. For example, one of the lecturers expressed concerns on the need for expertise in assessment practices as follows:

“I am not an educational assessment expert, but my contribution will be that I think certain measures should be put in place to enhance the assessment of students, not only in this course but at the whole university. So with this I suggest or I wish every unit had a person who is responsible for creating suitable assessment tools. Sometimes we are not well informed on that, and we come up with assessments which are not suitable for certain tasks. So if we had educational assessment experts who will serve either for all the units specifically for assessment, or we have somebody sitting in each unit who is an expert, whether they are lecturers or they are just for assessment, who will see to it that the assessment tools that are used are compatible with the tasks that are given.”

In this subsection, I have presented ‘expertise and training in alternative assessment’ as one of the factors influencing the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. My analysis shows that, there still seems to be a need for training in alternative assessment for lecturers of English for Academic Purposes. This training could improve the lecturers’ expertise in the assessment of students. Another factor that may influencing the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction is the classroom setup, and I will present it in the next subsection.

4.8.6. Classroom setup

My analysis also found that classroom setup is also one of the factors influencing the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. During the classroom observation, I came to learn that the classrooms where the English for Academic Purposes course is conducted had a fixed classroom setup. Figure 4.7 below illustrates the fixed, parallel classroom set up in the English for Academic Purposes classrooms.

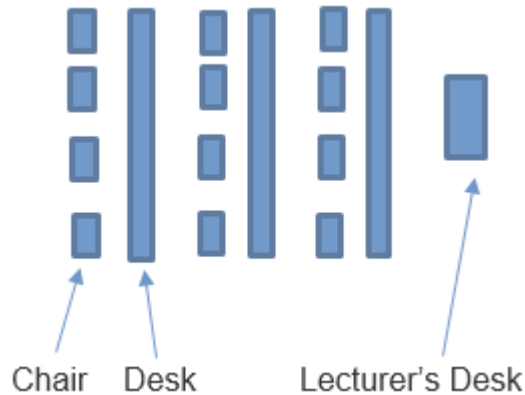
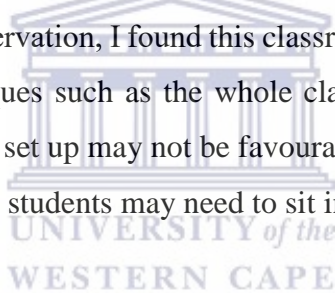


Figure 4.7. Fixed, parallel classroom set up in the English for Academic Purposes classrooms

This is a set up where the furniture are arranged in rows parallel to each other and the students sit facing the direction perpendicular to the front wall where there is also the lecturer's desk. In my observation, I found this classroom set-up to be favourable to some of the assessment techniques such as the whole class observation and self-assessment techniques. However, this set up may not be favourable to an assessment technique such as group discussion where students may need to sit in a mini circle facing each other.



In this section, I have presented my analysis of the factors influencing the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. This analysis of data informs my study in terms of the considerations that I will have to put into place when my study proposes a comprehensive framework that will serve as a guidance for integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. In the next section, I present the results of my analysis on the lecturers and students' attitudes towards alternative assessment in academic writing instructions.

4.9. Lecturers and Students' Attitude towards Alternative Assessment in Academic Writing Instruction

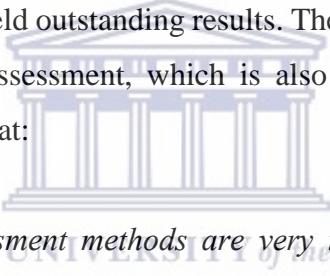
Based on the theoretical assumptions of my study, I believe that lecturers and students' attitude towards alternative assessment may have a significant effect on its integration into academic writing. In this section, I present the lecturers and students' attitude towards

alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. First, I present the lecturers' attitude, and after that I present the students' attitude. I have derived these from the data collected through lecturer interviews and student focus groups discussions, respectively.

4.9.1. Lecturers' attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction

In this subsection, I present my analysis of lecturers' attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. This analysis was based on both explicit and implicit indications of lecturers' attitude towards alternative assessment.

Firstly, my analysis found that, lecturers feel that assessment plays a significant role in academic writing instruction. Therefore, if it is carried out effectively, then the academic writing instruction may yield outstanding results. The lecturer participants mentioned the importance of informal assessment, which is also an integral element of alternative assessment. They stated that:



“...informal assessment methods are very important. Sometimes even just by discussing with students in class and you tell them to ask questions and depending on the type of question they are asking ‘Sir, what really is a topic sentence’. Sometimes it’s the problems that I encounter, or rather I have encountered as a lecturer. Those problems, somehow I also include them: What are my students struggling with?”

“I have very informal ways of assessing my students. One way would be to teach and ask my students after ten minutes to explain to each other what I have just said in the last ten minutes. By doing that, students are constantly aware of the progress of the lesson and the progress of the content.”

“My take is that the more you assess students in whatever way, the more it becomes realistic. But if we look at only the formal assessment tasks that are set on a semester period, then to me that does not give a true reflection. But if we say

right from the beginning of the course, throughout we assess on a daily basis, on a weekly basis, the by the end of the examination, even the results that we will get will show a true reflection which the students are also able to give in a real situation which is not a classroom based situation.”

“If I have bright students I might not do a lot of assessments. But with slower students who struggle to understand the content, I will definitely reinforce through formal and informal assessment.”

Another lecturer added that:

“I think it’s very important. We need to know that students know what we are teaching, that is very important. Also, it gives us direction towards where we are right now, and where we are going. Moreover, it also enable students to sort of plot themselves as far as their understanding is concerned, regarding the course outline and the course content that they need to know. So I think assessment is pivotal in academic writing”

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My analysis also found that some lecturers support current thinking on assessment which does not only focus on the final product but also the process that students go through to complete their writing tasks. When I asked the lecturers about the types of assessment they use, some of the lecturers demonstrated a positive attitude towards alternative assessment, where they highlighted the importance of assessing students’ progress before they turn in their final products, the essay. The lecturer participants indicated that:

“I believe in drafting. Writing is a process. As far as the final product should be rewarded marks, we should also reward the process where students go through. What do I do? As you can see on that table (there are piles of draft essays), I ask for multiple drafts. Now that my students are many, I don’t ask for first two drafts, I just ask for the first one and then the final one. Because I have about 200

students. What do I do? I designed a checklist as you can see [showing me the checklist] it will be on top of each of those (draft essay)."

"I believe that my students construct the knowledge within the classroom. So that enables me to sort of assess my students as knowledge is constructed continuously. So my philosophy is that, we construct knowledge, it's a social activity and therefore it enables me to assess my students as knowledge is constructed continuously in class."

The use of a checklist is also another indication of promotion and support for the use of alternative assessments. It is also evident in the lecturer's response that, despite the challenge of having many students, the lecturer still feels that it is important to assess the process, and not only the product.

My analysis also found that although lecturers are keen to integrate alternative assessment in academic writing, they tend to be limited by the institutional prescriptions of how to assess. I have presented some of the lecturers' concerns below:

"English for Academic Purposes ought to be student need driven. Now, if you are so many, you would rather meet institutional requirements as they call it. That you need to have this test and so on."

"I think there are templates of assessments already at the Language Centre. Since we need to have uniformity, we all follow the same template."

"But if we look at only the formal assessment tasks that are set on a semester period, then to me that does not give a true reflection."

The lecturers' willingness to explore various alternatives of assessment is rather reduced by the "formal" assessment practices that are set by the institution. Hence, some lecturer

participants also commented on the danger of only glorifying the formal assessments which are largely traditional:

“My take is that the more you assess students in whatever way, the more it becomes realistic. But if we look at only the formal assessment tasks that are set on a semester period, then to me that does not give a true reflection. But if we say right from the beginning of the course, throughout we assess on a daily basis, on a weekly basis, then by the end of the examination, even the results that we will get will show a true reflection which the students are also able to give in a real situation which is not a classroom based situation.”

“Because, when they have written several times, then you are able to see whether they have understood or they have picked up the skill or not.”

In this subsection, I have presented the results of my analysis on the lecturers’ attitude towards the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing. Overall, my analysis seems to show that lecturers have a positive attitude towards alternative assessment even though the current set up continues to consider traditional assessment as the more legitimate formal assessment. In the next subsection, I present my analysis of data on the students’ attitude towards the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing.

4.9.2. Students’ attitude towards the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing

In this subsection, I present my analysis of data on the students’ attitude towards the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing. During the student focus group discussions, the student participants shared their views on how they feel about the way they are assessed.

During the student focus groups discussions, I asked the student participants whether they like being assessed. My analysis of the students’ responses seems to suggest that students

do not have a problem being assessed. Some of the students even pointed it out that they personally enjoy being assessed. In particular, they mentioned that:

“I personally enjoy being assessed. Because I am very critical, and you know I get the chance to see my mistakes; I feel I can grow from there. I see that no, this and this I am wrong and I need to improve on that. And I can go back and say let me just read through this more.”

“First I need to be taught, then the lecturer will then be able to assess whether what he has impacted has really been sucked in for him now to say ‘yes, what I have taught this person, he or she has taken it’. He will assess me to see whether the knowledge which I have put in is what he really wanted it to be; whether I can now also try to reproduce what was taught.”

“It (assessment) can also teach you like, if you are awarded low marks, you learn something that I need to improve.... But, through assessing, you can learn something, either you are doing good or not good.”

“Actually, one should be assessed because if you are taught something, then you must prepare to be assessed, then you can know that now you know what you were taught.”

“...if you are not assessed, for example you are taught something and you are not assessed, it would be pointless because you might not get what you were taught. Let’s say for example, just in general like in real life you won’t be able to use what you were taught. So if you are assessed, it makes it easier for you to know what you don’t know.”

From these responses, it can also be inferred that the students understand the importance of assessment in their writing excellence. The students feel that assessment can enable them to identify their weaknesses so that they can address them accordingly. Students’

responses seem to suggest that they should not reject the way they are assessed but they should have confidence in the assessment used, because it is designed for their benefit. However, they showed concern that assessment should be aligned to what was taught. The students indicated that:

“For me, since we are at university, we should not really be bothered by the way we were assessed. As long as we are learning and our lecturers are qualified. I think we are just being assessed or rated at the university level. So we cannot really say it is bad or some lecturers are too lenient or something like that. The assessment will just be according to your academic work that you have presented.”

“For me personally just like my colleague has indicated, I don’t have any preference for specific form of assessment. Any method the lecturer uses, it’s fine with me, as long as what was taught is what was assessed.”

“I only like to be assessed when I am taught. If you didn’t teach me, don’t assess me.”

My analysis has also helped uncover another substantiation of the students’ support for alternative assessment. The elements of construction of knowledge and creativity featured in one of the student participants’ response. The student somehow seemed to have criticised the use of traditional assessment (in this case the test). The student further explained how alternative assessment (such as essay and presentation) would promote creativity among students. The student indicated and explained that:

“I enjoy something that I have to be creative. When I write a test, there is nothing creative about it. It’s just right or wrong. So then I would not prefer that. If I have to make a presentation or construct an essay, I am sort of asked to voice my opinion. The fact and visual effects that I am choosing, that’s also like part of it’s my choosing. And I like it when I am able to be creative about something and

express myself. And where I am not given room to do that, those are the assessments that I don't like."

It was interesting for my study to find that there were some student participants who indicated that they do not enjoy writing activities, which seem to be the most common means of assessment in the course and in the their faculties. In other words, they would not enjoy assessment of academic writing that would be carried out by means of written activities. They indicated that they would rather be given a presentation instead of written activities. One of the students mentioned that:

"I actually prefer, enjoy being assessed presentation-wise. I don't like having to write and things like that."

Presentations, as an assessment in the English for Academic Purposes course, are administered in a manner that students present the contents of their academic essays; both the presentation and essay accounts for the students' continuous assessment marks. In my analysis, I would link the students' preferences for presentation to the types of dominant intelligences that the students possess. Arguably, this is a constituent of alternative assessment that I will need to emphasise and reinforce on in my discussion chapter. A similar reference also surfaced in some of the student participants' responses. The students mentioned that:

"...some things are actually fun like presentations, but it also depends if you are an outspoken person. If you are very into academics, then you will enjoy like writing a test rather than speaking or oral."

"...if I were the kind of person that prefers to just be, like I was introverted, I prefer to have just my test and show what I can do there, and only the lecturer knows. And if I didn't feel like I am a good test taker, then I prefer to just express myself in class. I actually prefer being assessed by the lecturer only without having everyone watching."

Based on the data analysed in this section, it is evident that students presented various attitudes towards the way they are assessed and of course on alternative assessments. It is the theoretically informed and research-based assumptions of my study that the students' attitude may have a significant effect on the success of integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

4.10. Conclusion and Summary of the Chapter

In this chapter, I have presented my analysis of the data that I collected from lecturers and students through lecturer interviews, student focus groups discussions, and Multiple Intelligence Inventory, as well as the English for Academic Purposes classrooms/lessons. I have presented the results on the types of alternative assessment used in the English for Academic Purpose course. I have also presented an analysis of the data on the intelligence profile of students in the English for Academic Purposes classrooms, as well as how the assessment used by lecturers of English for Academic Purpose responds to the students' dominant intelligences. I have also presented an analysis of the factors influencing the integration of alternative assessment into academic writing instruction, as well as the analysis of data on the lecturers and students' attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

My analysis of data shows that there seems to be limited stock of alternative assessments used by the lecturers of English for academic Purposes. A number of factors influencing the integration of alternative assessment in English for academic Purposes have also emerged from my analysis of data. Furthermore, my analysis of data shows that there might be students of various dominant intelligences in the English for Academic Purposes classrooms, but the assessments used do not seem to respond to all the type of intelligences that may be dominant to different students in these classrooms. Based on my analysis of data that I have presented in this chapter, I will present a discussion of my findings in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion of Findings

The purpose of my study is to investigate the assessment of students in the English for Academic Purposes course at the University of Namibia Language Centre. My study recalls and responds to some assessment issues that have been raised in the assessment arena and the same which have been regarded as hindrance to the realisation of quality assessment methods and practices in academic language course(s) or academic writing in particular. One of the issues that I am referring to is that there has been increasing criticism of traditional assessment practices (standardised tests and examinations), and it has brought into question the value of other indirect approaches to language assessment. As a response to this concern, literature on language assessment suggests that alternative assessment provides a wealth of information which can initiate and sustain a more socially attuned interpretation of the results produced from assessments of students' language abilities (Balliro, 1993; Banda, 2016; Byrnes, 2002; Dikli, 2003; Fiktorius, 2013; Finch, 2002; Wiggins, 1998). This is to say, alternative assessment may serve as a significant complement and value-added notion in academic language assessment practices (Byrnes, 2002). My study is also concerned with the issues of poor quality assessment practices. It is for such reasons that my study focuses on the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. As mentioned earlier both in my introduction chapter as well as methodology chapter, my study attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. How do lecturers of English for Academic Purposes integrate alternative assessment in academic writing instruction?
2. What are the factors influencing the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction?
3. How do the assessment tools for academic writing match the types of students' intelligences?
4. What is the lecturers and students' attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction?

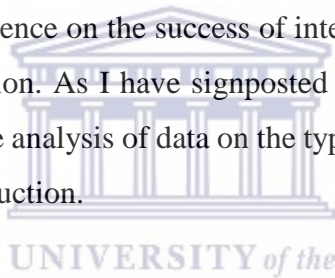
5. What type of framework could be employed to integrate alternative assessment in academic writing instruction?

In this chapter, I present my discussion based on the analysis of my data that was collected from lecturers and students in the English for Academic Purposes Course. I collected the data through lecturer interviews, student focus groups, Multiple Intelligence Inventory, and observations of lessons. The multiple-data collection methods that I used is encouraged and recommended in qualitative research because it enables triangulation of data. With reference to Gay et al., (2009), triangulation enabled me to obtain a more complete picture of the issues under study, as well as to cross-check information. My methodology embraced the advice of Gay et al. (2009) that, the strength of qualitative data research, such as my study, lies in collecting data in many ways, rather than just relying on one method. I analysed the data using the thematic method, where I analysed the data and presented the analysis of data based on the themes derived from the research objectives and questions of my study. In light of this, I present my discussion chapter under the following themes:

1. Types of alternative assessment used in the English for Academic Purpose course.
2. Factors influencing the integration of alternative assessment into academic writing instruction.
3. Intelligences profile of the students in the English for Academic Purposes course and the types of alternative assessment.
4. Lecturers and students' attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

At this juncture, I must inform my readership that the fifth research question of my study “What type of framework could be employed to integrate alternative assessment in academic writing instruction?” will only be addressed in Chapter 6, under recommendations. In this chapter, I first present the findings of my study on the types of alternative assessment used in the English for Academic Purpose course. In this section, I would also like to explain, with reference to the literature, the eligibility of the

assessment to be considered as alternative assessment. Second, I present the findings of my study on the factors influencing the integration of alternative assessment into academic writing instruction. In doing this, I attempt to provide an informed interpretation of these factors at the same time also correlating them to related studies in the literature. Next, I present the findings of my study on the intelligence profile of the students in the English for Academic Purposes course in relation to the types of alternative assessment. In this section, I explore the significance of using alternative assessment that accommodates various needs of the students, especially the different dominant intelligences that students may possess. Lastly, I present findings of my study on the lecturers and students' attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. In this section, I will refer concurrently to my analysis of data and the literature that I have reviewed in order to discuss how the attitude of lecturers and students may have significant influence on the success of integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. As I have signposted earlier, in the first section below, I present a discussion on the analysis of data on the types of alternative assessment used in the academic writing instruction.



5.1. Types of Alternative Assessment Used in the English for Academic Purpose Course

In this section, I focus my discussion on the types of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. My discussion explores the types of alternative assessment that emerged from the analysis of data that I have presented in Chapter 4: Section 4.5. In this section of my discussion, I also assess, with reference to available literature, the eligibility of the assessments presented thereof to be considered as alternative assessment. Although there were other assessments reported by the lecturer participants, only some of them qualify to be considered as alternative assessments. Hence, I base my assessment on whether a given assessment is consistent with one or more features of alternative assessment. Some of the features that I have identified from literature are: authenticity (Finch, 2002), formative (Alderson & Banerjee, 2001; Pierce, 1998), flexible (Chirimbu, 2013; Mussawy, 2009), validity (Dikli, 2003; Huerta-Macias, 1995), reliability (Bachman & Palmer, 2011), contextualised (Canagarajah, 2006), washback (Alderson & Banerjee,

2001), criterion-referenced (Bachman & Palmer, 2011), critical thinking (Gronlund, 1998), creativity (Alderson & Banerjee, 2001), and collaboration (Pierce, 1998). My analysis of data (see Section 4.5) confirms that there were a limited stock of alternative assessments used by the lecturers of English for Academic Purposes. The possible factors contributing to the lean stock are discussed in later sections of my discussions. The alternative assessments that emerged from my analysis (see Section 4.5) are: checklist, student-lecturer question technique, and academic essay. First, I present a discussion of data on the usage of checklist to assess academic writing in the English for Academic Purpose course.

5.1.1. Checklist

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.5.1) confirms that lecturers used checklist as one of the alternative assessments used in the English for Academic Purpose course. The use of checklist is also documented by scholars such as Boud and Falchikov (1989) and Yancey (1992). They affirm that this assessment serves to support current thinking on language assessment, based on the assumption that assessment is no longer a responsibility left to the lecturer alone but all the parties are actual participants. According to Yancey (1992), the student whose work is being assessed is more than an object of someone else's perusal. Therefore, this confirms that the use of checklist has a crucial role to play in the students' self-assessment of their academic written work. Pierce (1998) advised that it is important that students are also taught how to engage in self-assessment in order to maximize the amount and quality of feedback they may need.

I considered the checklist as an alternative assessment because it manifests the feature of “less control” and “flexibility” (Chirimbu, 2013; Mussawy, 2009). My analysis (see Chapter 4: Section 4.5.1) confirms that the students completed this assessment without traditional control measures such as inaccessibility to materials. I base my confirmation here on the fact that my data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.5.1) showed that, students under study were allowed to consult their study guides while they were evaluating their academic essay, using the checklist. There was also permission for “collaboration” (Pierce, 1998) since my data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.5.1) further showed that, students

were involved in the provision of feedback to the rest of the class. It was in a way a joint learning activity. Student collaboration could enable them to negotiate meaning in order to complete their assessments effectively. Negotiation of meaning corresponds to the element of “interaction” in one of the theories that informs my study: the sociocultural theory (Van Lier, 2000). I wish to relate to Van Lier’s (2000) view here that through negotiating meaning, a piece of language that was not comprehensible becomes comprehensible as a result of negotiation; it can also then become part of the student’s target language inventory. Additionally, Van Lier (2000) believes that since simpler explanations rather than complex ones are preferred by students, learner-learner interaction can be effective in facilitating learning and completion of assessment tasks.

My study comments on the use of checklist because of another major feature of alternative assessment: authenticity. Authenticity is advocated in the language assessment literature that students should be assessed on skills and knowledge that can be related to real life application (Bachman and Palmer, 2011; Dunn & Mulvenon, 2009; Finch, 2002; Reeves, 2000). That is, alternative assessment aims at providing an improved evaluation of students’ academic writing proficiency and reliable forecasting of the students’ potential to persevere in the real academic world and world of work (Dunn & Mulvenon, 2009). In light of this, my analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.5.1) confirms that, the design of the checklist that was used by the students in the English for Academic Purposes course incorporated the authenticity feature in the assessment since the items included in the checklist (see Figure 1. in Chapter 4: Section 4.5.1) were incongruent to the course objectives (see Figure 4.2 in Chapter 4: Section 4.5.1) as well as to the academic needs of the students after completion of the course.

Feedback, one of the important elements of alternative assessment (Ferris, 2010; Mungungu-Shipale, 2016), appears to have facilitated the success of this assessment. It could be confirmed based on the data analysed in Chapter 4, Section 4.5.1 that, through feedback, the lecturer could guide and direct the students towards the effective completion of the assessment. In my analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.5.1), I reported on one challenge that this assessment faced, but through feedback the lecturer

managed to carry the students through the challenge. It occurred to me that when students had to report back to the rest of the class, there was limited participation. My observation showed that there seemed to be some students who could not identify the relation between the items in the checklist and their correspondences in their essays. In response to this problem, the lecturer provided more explanation on what they needed to do and also provided additional opportunities for the students to complete their tasks. The lecturer's intervention that emerged from my analysis (Chapter 4: Section 4.5.1) is thus in keeping with Ferris (2010) and Mungungu-Shipale's (2016) stance that feedback or rather corrective feedback can improve the accuracy of students' academic writing.

My discussion of findings presented above has helped to verifiably support the use of checklist as an alternative assessment in the English for Academic Purposes course. In my discussion, I have reflected on the role that checklist plays in enhancing learning among the students. My finding also provides theoretical significance of using checklist in academic writing instruction. In the next subsection, I will present a discussion on the use of another alternative assessment that emerged in my analysis of data that I presented in Chapter 4: the student-lecturer question technique.

5.1.2. Student-lecturer question technique

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.5.2) showed that, lecturer participants used the student-lecturer question technique to assess their students in the English for Academic Purposes course. The use of student-lecturer question technique was evident in my data collected during the lesson observations, student focus group discussions and lecturer interviews. It emerged from my analysis (see Chapter 4: Section 4.5.2) that, the use of student-lecturer question technique featured in all the lessons that I have observed in my study. This confirms that this type of assessment tends to be one of the most common assessments used in academic writing classrooms.

I wish to argue that, the principle of formative assessment directed the use the student-lecturer question technique. This is based on my analysis (see Chapter 4: Section 4.5.2) that showed that, the scores which were awarded to the students were not used as exit

criteria for the course. The formative nature of the assessment connects this type of assessment to the pool of alternative assessments (Alderson & Banerjee, 2001; Dikli, 2003). My analysis (see Chapter 4, Section 4.5.12) also confirms that the practice of not using the scores as exit criteria for the course is another verifiable confirmation that the student-lecturer question technique was used diagnostically. This shows that the assessment could enable the lecturer to provide feedback to the students as this way of assessment is synonymous with the term “formative assessment” (Alderson & Banerjee, 2001; Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010). Formative assessment is also documented to be useful in diagnostic assessment, when a lecturer wants to assess the strengths and weaknesses of students in a given skill or content (Dikli, 2003). My data (see Chapter 4, Section 4.5.2) is, therefore, consistent with what is documented by Dikli (2003), and I wish to argue that the student-lecturer question technique can be instrumental in diagnostic assessment of academic writing.

Notwithstanding what I have mentioned above, the formative nature of alternative assessment can also benefit the students as they receive feedback about their strengths and weakness with regard to the learning task or objectives (Pierce, 1998). My data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.5.2) supports the above statements as it emerged from my analysis that, following the process-genre approach (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010; Hamayan, 1995), students wrote a number of drafts, at the same time consulting the lecturer or other sources for any assistance, before submitting their final drafts. In support of this point, the available literature on alternative assessment also comments positively on its formative element because this assessment embraces/upholds the longitudinal approach in which the assessment avails more opportunities for the lecturer to observe students’ skills and to redirect the lesson to the students’ needs accordingly (Mussawy, 2009). In other words, it elucidates what the students have learned and what they still need to learn.

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.5.2) also showed that there was some evidence of authenticity in the lessons where the student-lecturer techniques was used. This evidence was not from the side of the lecturer but it came about as an authentic concern of a student. In one of the lessons, I observed a student who posed a question to

the lecturer about whether it was possible for an academic title to have more than one comment (see Chapter 4: Section 4.5.2). The student was referring to the four elements of an academic title that they were taught, namely: topic, comment/instruction, focus, and viewpoint. The lecturer responded that it was not possible. However, the student further referred to the University of Namibia's requirement for research projects/thesis that requires more than one comment. In my opinion, this is a gap that is linked to lack of contextualised instruction. I believe that this is consistent with what Canagarajah (2006) writes. He is of the view that the use of language may have different meanings in different contexts. Therefore, he cautions assessors to develop assessment tools with imagination and creativity to assess writing in the complex communicative needs of English as a lingua franca. In other words, in this case, the instruction is not in congruence with the real life and academic needs of the students, and thus it needs to be contextualised in order to avoid confusion among students.

My analysis (see Chapter 4: Section 4.5.2) could also confirm another observation that, except that the assessment was linked to the course objectives, there was poor incorporation of authenticity in the usage of the student-lecturer question techniques. This was in one of the lessons that I observed, and the lesson was on academic summary writing. The student-lecturer question techniques, as an alternative assessment, was supposed to be used in a manner that it presents high validity by incorporating assessment tasks that closely parallel real-life writing situations, which students may encounter outside the classroom (Dikli, 2003). In contrast, my analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.5.2) showed that in this particular lesson, the lecturer did not explain to the students how and when the skills under assessment would be applied in real life settings or outside the classroom setting. I wish to argue that, such an omission could present an unfavourable gap between the skills being learned and the real life application of such skills.

I also developed some concerns with the validity of the scores that were awarded to the student's academic summaries. My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.5.2) showed that the lecturer awarded marks to the students' academic summaries. However, the

marks were mere numbers without any meaning attached to them; a given student would not really know the aspects of their summary that they performed well and the ones that they need to improve. I wish to argue that this way of scoring students' written work is not in keeping with recommendations made by the Assessment Competency and Professional Learning Framework, which says that assessment should provide feedback to the students and instruct them to improve their learning and teaching, respectively (Shin, 2015). It appears though, that the lecturer used holistic scoring, which does not really seem to be favourable in alternative assessment.

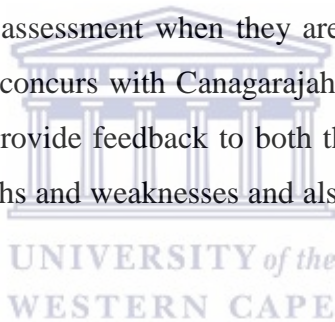
In one of the elements of the Validity Framework (Evaluation) that I have reviewed in Chapter 2, Section 2.5.4, I have said that a score and its meaning awarded to student's performance can have comparable meanings for different populations (Oliveri et al., 2015). At this juncture, I am aware that Oliveri et al. (2015) are of the view that a scoring rubric that includes "succinct writing" as an aspect of good writing, for example, may not be favourable to those who feel that it is impolite to direct and consider writing in a less direct way as more appropriate. In light of this, I also concur with Pierce's (1998) advice that a single number or letter grade may not be sufficient to serve as feedback, but one should provide specified criteria in a rubric. Students' involvement is imperative in the design of the rubric and the criteria. It should be agreed upon and well understood by both parties (lecturer and students). According to Derakhashan, Razaei, and Alemi (2011), it is essential for both learners and teachers to be involved in and have control over the assessment methods, procedures and outcomes, as well as their underlying rationale. Hence, based on my data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.5.2) discussed in this subsection, the literature and the Validity Framework, I believe that it is imperative that students have a good understanding of the meaning of scores provided in their written works.

In this subsection, I have presented a discussion on the use of student-lecturer question technique as an alternative assessment in the English for Academic Purposes course. I have explored the role of this technique in improving academic writing assessment and instruction at large. My analysis of data (see Chapter 4, Section 4.5.1) has shown that there are still some gaps that need to be filled with regard to the use of student-lecturer

question techniques. I have also highlighted possible intervention to closing or reducing such gaps. In the next subsection, I will present a discussion of another alternative assessment: the academic essay.

5.1.3. Academic essay

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4, Section 4.5.3) indicated that lecturers of English for Academic Purposes also used an academic essay as a means to assess the students' academic writing skills. My data in Chapter 4, Section 4.5.3 confirms that, the manner in which the essay was administered, as an assessment, presents some qualities of alternative assessment. I wish to point out here that literature on language assessment explains that the manner in which academic essays are used as assessment tools defines them whether they fall or not in the category of alternative assessment tools. For example, academic essays can be alternative assessment when they are used diagnostically. My data (see Chapter 4, Section 4.5.3) concurs with Canagarajah (1999) who writes that, alternative assessments are used to provide feedback to both the teacher/lecturer and the students about their writing strengths and weaknesses and also to allow students to learn through errors.



I am now able to trace the diagnostic aspect of this assessment to its formative nature. Although the assessment was both formative and summative, the former presented diagnostic features since the students were assessed on various elements of the essay and the lecturer could provide feedback on the students' performance and progress accordingly. The assessment was also summative because the assessment produced scores that had to be part of the students' continuous assessment marks. At the University of Namibia, students should attain a continuous assessment mark of minimum 40%, for them to obtain admission to write the end of semester/year examination of a course (University of Namibia, 2013). I wish to argue that, the formative element of this assessment facilitates learning since students still have an opportunity to remedy their weaknesses. This appears to tally with what Shin (2015) has pointed out: "When [lecturers] wait for test and examination results to be known to them, it is too late to help their students through follow-up teaching and learning activities" (p. 2). It is for this

reason that alternative assessments like this one, the academic essay, could serve the students more effectively when it is not only administered for summative purposes, but also formatively.

Another interesting finding that emerged from my analysis (see Chapter 4: Section 4.5.3) was that, the usage of academic essay as an assessment of academic writing in the English for Academic Purposes course entailed a criterion-referenced orientation. According to Bachman and Palmer (2011), criterion-referenced orientation elicits information about the actual students' language abilities in real life situations. Based on this orientation, the focus of an assessment is directed to whether the students have mastered the learning content or language skills taught in a given language lesson or program. Similarly, my analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.5.3) confirms that the focus of using the academic essay as an assessment was to evaluate students' mastery of the objective of the course. It did not involve ranking of students' in the course, as it would be in assessments that involve norm-referenced orientation (Bachman & Palmer, 2011). Therefore, I wish to argue that this orientation could provide a better opportunity for the lecturers to assess and evaluate the learning content, the student, instruction and the learning process.

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.5.3) also showed that this assessment presented some authenticity, a key element of alternative assessment. Traditionally, one would find an assessment of academic essays administered in test and examination settings (Di Gennaro, 2006). Sharifi and Hassaskhah, (2011) indicated that traditional assessment, such as tests and examination, tend to have a weakness of incompatibility of process learning and product assessment, and there has also been discrepancy between the information needed and the information derived through traditional assessment. In contrast, the element of authenticity advocates for assessment that presents compatibility between what is taught and the demands of the real world (Bachman & Palmer, 2011). In light of this, my analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.5.3) confirms that the academic essay was administered in harmony with the principles of alternative assessment. For example, the students were given liberty to write on an academic topic of their interest, and they also had access to resources. Conversely, in most examinations setting, students

are not allowed to consult resources such as books and the Internet. I wish to argue that such practice does not support the principle of authenticity in language assessment, where in real life one is required to cite sources to support their ideas with other writers' works.

Another observation that transpired in my analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.5.3) was that, although students were allowed to work individually, they were encouraged to work in pairs or groups. Working in pairs is supported in the literature on alternative assessment for a number of reasons. One of the reasons is that group or pair work reduces the affective filter since students tend to feel relaxed and less threatened when assessed in groups or pairs (Ortega, 2009). This has also been confirmed by research, with reference to Krashen's (2009) Affective Filter hypothesis, which postulate the relationship between various effective variables and the success of language learning. His review shows that students with high motivation, self-confidence and a good self-image, and low anxiety tend to be better language students. Working in pairs/groups presents a conducive environment for a student to be motivated by his/her peers and also to identify oneself with the positive, capable image of the group. The fact that students were allowed to work in pairs/groups (see Chapter 4: Section 4.5.3) confirms that the way the assessment (academic essay) was administered followed the alternative approach.

I would like, however, to voice some precaution that I have taken from the literature with regards to the use of pair or group work. Lecturers are being cautioned that scoring of group tasks could be subjective, and it is advisable that one could consider taking multiple assessments from each group or pair in order to achieve some level of reliability (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010). Another way to minimise scoring biasness is to design a clear rubric or guideline for scoring the students' tasks (Andrade, 2000; Brown, 2013; Lombardi, 2008). There could be situations where some students are paired with "weak" students and it would be unfair to compare their achievement to the ones with well-matched partners (Brown, 2013); students could, therefore, be asked to perform tasks in multiple groups or pairs. Brown (2013) adds that, lecturers may also find it a challenge if there is limited participation from the side of the students, which may result in limited data for the lecturer to assess and evaluate the actual students' performance. I wish to

argue that, awareness of these precautionary issues that I have voiced above could prepare lecturers and assessors of academic writing to interpret my data analysis with care, and to be able to use pair or group work with informed caution.

Analogous to real life settings, my data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.5.3) showed that students had opportunities to write multiple drafts before they submitted the final draft which is graded and awarded the final mark that contributed to the students' continuous marks. I wish to argue that, this practice also reflects on preparation for real life research-based writing, where students are not forced to write one perfect piece of writing in one attempt, but they have a chance to revise their work several time until when they are satisfied that their text is a true reflection of the best they could write. This practice is in keeping with the process approach which is more akin to alternative assessment, in comparison to the product approach. Brown and Abeywickrama (2010) have observed that the process approach places more emphasis on the way the student processes the learning content. The performance and behaviour of the student towards the learning contents is at the center of assessment. The product approach, however, concentrates on the outcome or final product of the performance or behaviour (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010); the assessment is more focused on what the student produces and a grade or score is likely to be obtained. In keeping with Brown and Abeywickrama's (2010) observation, my data (see Section 4.5.3) confirms that there is a huge gap that has been filled by the way the academic essay was administered. The lecturer could identify the strengths and weakness of the students, starting from: the approaches they used to complete their essay; the challenges they face and how they overcome them; their styles of writing, their progress, as well as their interpersonal skills. I wish to argue that, when lecturers assess both the process and the product, the assessment provides an extensive and comprehensive coverage of the students' strengths and weaknesses. It also positions the lecturer at an advantageous angle to effectively respond to the students' academic writing challenges.

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.5.3) showed that, the main focus of this assessment, the academic essay, was on students' academic writing skills, but I could not

find any feature related to integration of personal writing in the academic essay writing process. My review of literature in Chapter 2 indicated that, while academic student writers may produce transactional language such as academic essays and scientific reports which convey meaning explicitly, they may also multiply their chances to practice writing through expressive language when they write reflections about their academic work (Mlynarczyk, 2006). Therefore, I wish to argue that, it could be an advantage to the students in the English for Academic Purposes course if the assessors (lecturers) considered the link between personal and academic writing and take advantage of the influence that the former has on the latter's development.

5.1.4. Conclusion

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.5) suggests that there is still more to be done with regards to the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. In my analysis (see Chapter 4: Section 4.5), I have only identified three assessments that suits the classification of alternative assessment, namely: checklists, student-lecturer question techniques, and academic essay. At this juncture, the limited stock of alternative assessment that emerged from my analysis of data could be explained by the lack of or limited lecturer training in language assessment in particular. It emerged from my analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.2) that none of the lecturer participants acknowledged having gone through training on language assessment, if not assessment of academic writing.

I would also like to refer my explanation of limited alternative assessment to one of the theories that inform my study, the Teacher Knowledge theory. The theory, which refers to the particular knowledge that teachers have that relates to knowing how to teach (Bresler, 1995), informs my explanation here that the lean stock of alternative assessment was due the limited knowledge and skills of alternative assessment that lecturers possess. I could also pin my explanation to other research findings that showed that the development and implementation of alternative assessment can be hampered by the lack of assessment literacy among educators (Aschbacher, 1993). In addition to that, it is documented that lecturers' previous experiences as students, teachers or lecturers, as well

as through their professional training, may influence their subjective perception of their teaching/assessment (Kumaravadivelu, 1994; 2001). My analysis of data (see section 4.8) has also shown other factors that influence the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing, and I propose to present these factors in the next section. In light of this, having so far presented a discussion on the types of alternative assessments used in the English for Academic Purposes course to assess academic writing, I now wish to proceed to the next section of my discussion to present a discussion of data on the factors influencing the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

5.2. Factors Influencing the Integration of Alternative Assessment into Academic Writing Instruction

In this section, I present a discussion on the factors that may have an influence on the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. My discussion considers the factors that emerged from my analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8) as well as incorporate those that emerged from my review of available literature. My study has found that there are a number of factors that may influence the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction and in the English for Academic Purposes course in particular. I believe that, knowledge of these factors can significantly help assessors to successfully implement the agenda of integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction, which is also the purpose of my study. The factor that I will present in the first subsection is “lecturer and students’ knowledge of assessment”.

5.2.1. Lecturers and students’ knowledge of assessment

The analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.1) that I will cite in this subsection was derived from the data that I collected from lecturer and student participants through lecturer interviews and student focus groups discussions, respectively. In addition, my discussion also makes reference to definitions of alternative assessment that I have reviewed in Chapter 2: Literature Review.

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.1) confirms that there tends to be varied understanding of assessment from both the lecturers and the students. In line with the

Teacher Knowledge theory (Bresler, 1995), I wish to argue that the lecturers and students' knowledge of assessment may influence the possibility of integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. According to Bresler (1995), the Teacher Knowledge theory refers to the particular knowledge that teachers have that relates to knowing how to teach. Based on this theory, I wish to argue that the knowledge that lecturers and students possess can determine whether lecturers and students will/not be willing to use/participate in alternative assessments.

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.1) confirms that some of the lecturers view assessment as evaluation and measurement of students' language abilities, knowledge and skills. The aspect of evaluation that was mentioned in the lecturers' definition of assessment appears to tally with Fiktoris' (2013) definition of alternative assessment. Fiktorius (2013) defines alternative assessment as a process of evaluating (evaluation) student's performance, lecturer's teaching methods, and learning materials in order to reconsider the way of teaching and to make the necessary adjustments. The part of this definition where it features evaluation of students' performance also seems to tally with the lecturer participants' view (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.1) of alternative assessment that it should involve completion of a given task while students are being evaluated. At this juncture, it is also necessary for me to relate the aspect of measurement to Dikli's (2003) definition where alternative assessment is defined as any method used to find out (measure) the current knowledge and skills that a language student possesses in line with their learning objectives or practices. I wish to argue that the correspondence of the lecturers' view of assessment and the definitions of alternative assessment in the literature demonstrates a favourable opportunity for the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing; because the lecturer's perception of assessment is crucial in this integration.

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.1) also confirms that the aspect of evaluation in assessment was also featured in the students' definition of assessment. My data indicated (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.1) that the students also viewed assessment as a way to evaluate students' work, and thereafter students would know their strengths and

weaknesses with regards to the content and skills being learnt. More importantly, students also seem to view assessment as not only a means of evaluation, but also as pedagogy; that is, a way of teaching/learning. Even though some student participants viewed assessment and teaching as two different constructs, my data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.1) showed that they acknowledged that they are interdependent. The element of teaching in assessment that is featured in the students' view of assessment blends in well with the concept of 'wash back' (Alderson & Banerjee, 2001). According to Alderson and Banerjee (2001), washback refers to the effect that an assessment has onto the students and lecturer. I wish to state that the link between the element of teaching in the students' view of assessment (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.1) and the concept of washback is worth considering in my study, because the literature that I reviewed in Chapter 2 showed that alternative assessment has a great impact on learners' behaviour towards learning tasks and content (Dikli, 2003). It also teaches them something about how they should approach their written task. For example, research has shown that students tend to put more effort on learning tasks which had been more challenging to complete (Finch, 2002). As a result, the lecturer may be able to adopt another method of remedially teaching the learning task that appeared difficult to the students. This verifiably confirms that the students' understanding of assessment points to the alternative approach, and this is an advantage to the process of integrating alternative assessment in academic writing.

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.1) also confirms that, some lecturers seemed to be following an analytical approach to assessment, where specific aspects of the task or specific skills are evaluated individually. The analytical approach to assessment is documented by Beyreli and Ari (2009) that, it involves evaluation of certain components constituting students' writing. In the same vein, my data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.1) showed that some lecturers assess students' academic writing by allocating a certain number of marks to various components of the students' written work. For example, some of the components that are allocated marks would be: introduction, body paragraphs, conclusion, and references. Although analytic assessment can sometimes be time-consuming, Beyreli and Ari (2009) reported that it has received support from a number of researchers because it is wider, more comprehensive and useful. In particular,

analytic assessment could be useful because it presents opportunities for both lecturers and students to receive feedback from the assessment, and also to allow students to learn through errors (Canagarajah, 1999). In light of this, my analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.1) showed that students viewed assessment as a way to find out whether or not students performed their task as per the set criteria. These findings can help confirm that, lecturers and students seem to have expectations of assessment practices which are concomitant to the alternative approach.

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.1) also confirms that, some of the lecturers understand that assessment should involve knowledge construction. This confirms that these lecturers seem to adhere to constructivist philosophy in their classrooms. They believe that students construct knowledge, it's a social activity, and therefore it enables the lecturer to assess his or her students as knowledge is constructed continuously in class. Interestingly, my study which reverse the principles of alternative assessment is also informed by the constructive view of education. The constructivist view of knowledge sees students as constructors of new knowledge, and this knowledge is negotiated in the classroom through learning activities and experiences (Canagarajah, 1999). My study supports this view that assessment should promote creativity, critical thinking, application of knowledge and independent learning through alternative assessment. In this regard, I concur with Canagarajah (1999; 2006) who opposes pedagogy that insists on uniform variety of language or discourse as it only promotes monolingual ideologies and linguistic hierarchies. I wish to argue that the form of pedagogy opposed by Canagarajah (1999; 2006) does not best serve the practical set ups or students' real academic language needs in the academic writing classrooms, especially in second language settings like Namibia. My data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.2) can support my argument in that, students suggested that lecturers should vary their assessment methods instead of only focusing on the usual pen and paper method. For example, one of the students specifically proposed (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.2) that lecturers should assess them by means of "using the small things, like going to the community and reporting back to the class in writing". This verifiably confirms the students' need for an alternative approach to assessment that allows construction of knowledge.

In this subsection, I have presented a discussion of data on how lecturers and students' understanding may influence the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. I am inclined to deduce from these findings that, both lecturer and student participants' definitions captured some of the aspects of the definition of alternative assessment as it is documented in the literature. It is in keeping with my stance in this study that the immediate stakeholders' (the lecturers and students) understanding is crucial in the process of integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. In the next subsection, I will present a discussion of data on how students' assessment preferences may influence the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

5.2.2. Students' assessment preferences

In this subsection, I present a discussion of data of how students' assessment preference may influence the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. I found that students presented various preferences of assessment. For the purpose of the agenda of my study, my analysis (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.2) was focused on identifying how the students' assessment preferences may or may not be in favour of alternative assessment.

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.2) confirms that students tend to prefer a variety of assessment methods instead of only being assessed with the usual pen and paper method. The pen and paper method which the students seem not to prefer falls under the traditional assessment methods such as tests and written examinations. These types of assessment have indeed been criticised in the literature with reference to the incompatibility of process learning and product assessment, and the discrepancy between the information needed and the information derived through traditional assessment (Sharifi & Hassaskhah, 2011). My data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.2) confirms, in particular, that students prefer to be assessed with small tasks such as going to the community and reporting back to the class in writing.

I deduce from my analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.2) that students seem to prefer alternative assessment that are dynamic. There is support for this in the literature that, the acknowledgement of the value of alternative assessment in language programs assumed relevance and substance after some critics (Reeves, 2000; Tsagari, 2004) argued that traditional assessment may not be functional in all assessment situations of academic writing. This argument appears to be consistent with my findings since students did not seem to support some of the traditional assessment methods; in fact, they even suggested the idea of running the English for Academic Purposes course without an end-of term pen-and-paper examination. The shift of academic writing instruction towards the learner-centred approach seems to have made it rather impractical for a single measure to be sufficient of estimating the diversity of skills, knowledge, learning processes, and combined strategies to determine student progress. Furthermore, it is also linked to the advent of the communicative approaches such as the process writing, communicative competence, and whole language (Ortega, 2009). Therefore, in this case, the students' preference that emerged from my analysis (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.2) related well to current thinking in language assessment, which is a shift towards alternative assessment.

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My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.2) further confirms that students seem to prefer assessments that are administered with sufficient and comprehensible instruction. From this analysis, the students indicated that they were concerned and unsatisfied with the limited guidance that lecturers provided to them for assessment. I wish to argue that, if assessments are administered with limited and comprehensible instruction, it is likely that students' participation may be minimal. As a result, lecturers may find it a challenge if there is limited participation from the side of the students, which may result in limited data for the lecturer to assess the actual students' performance (Brown, 2013). I wish to clarify that, it appeared though from my analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.2) that, sometimes clear instructions are provided, but the problem is that the students misinterpret the information.

All in all, this is an indication that, in either cases, it is important that assessments are administered with clear directions on what is expected from the students: whether to

respond in a paragraph, complete sentences, list or diagrams (Educational Testing Services, 2009). Precaution should be taken though, that although assessors are advised to use clear and accessible language, there should be exemptions when complex language is part of the construct under assessment.

In this subsection, I have so far presented a discussion of data on how students' assessment preference may influence the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. It is important to note here that lecturers and assessors should consider the students' preferences when designing their assessments, because it could affect the efficiency of the process and outcome of using such assessments. In the next subsection, I will present a discussion of data on how feedback may influence the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

5.2.3. Feedback

In this subsection, I present a discussion of data on how feedback may have an influence on the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.3) confirms limited students' satisfaction with the feedback they received from some of the lecturers. This finding suggests that the element of feedback plays a major role in the assessment of students' academic writing skills. The role played by the element of feedback in alternative assessment is also presented in the the definitions of alternative assessment (Balliro, 1993; Dikli, 2003; Fiktorius, 2013) that I have reviewed in Chapter 2, which seemed to suggest that alternative assessment is one that assesses students' progress, and it can provide feedback to both the students and the lecturer in the belief that the feedback obtained can be useful to inform the pedagogy as well as direct the students in their learning. In my study, the students indicated (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.3) that they could benefit from assessments better if they were provided with feedback after they have completed an assessment task. This finding tallies with findings from other studies where it was reported that both lecturers and students tend view corrective feedback as essential in language learning and instruction (Mungungu-Shipale, 2016). Similarly, Ferris' (2010) also opposed previous claims that

corrective feedback tends to depress students by maintaining that corrective feedback can improve the accuracy of students' writing.

Considering the issue that I have discussed earlier, I can make specific reference to students' responses (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.3) in which they reported that although there were some lecturers who provided feedback by means of allocating marks to specific aspects of a piece of writing written by the students, they were still not satisfied because the marks allocated to specific aspects of their writing did not say enough about their performance. The students feel that such incomplete feedback is incompatible with the writing instruction they receive. They indicated that, in contrast, they are given specific instruction on what each section of an academic essay should consist of, but the feedback they receive does not speculate their performance on each element of each sections of the academic essay. This is a concern that has long been addressed by Pierce (1998) through advice that, a single number or letter grade may not be enough as feedback; one should provide specified criteria in a rubric. This practice is also confirmed by the data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.3) that I collected through lesson observation. It emerged from the data that, although students were given a score for a given task, they still found a challenge with the score because it was not self-explanatory as in what it really meant for the students. Whether a student has 20 out of 20 or 10 out of 20, it was not clear of what the latter may need to do in order to reach the score of the former.

My data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.3) confirms that there were, however, some students who acknowledged that some lecturers provided effective feedback on their academic writing. Students also registered appreciation for feedback that is generalised to the whole group or class so that they can pick up the areas they need to improve. The students' expectations for feedback presented above tallies with Shin's (2015) belief that, assessment should provide feedback to the students and lecturers for them to improve their learning and teaching, respectively. In addition, my data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.3) confirms that, students suggested that lecturers should provide criteria of an assessment in a form of rubric that accompany a given writing task, which should serve as guidance for what is expected from students. I wish to argue that if students are

provided with such rubrics, then it makes it easier for the lecturer to provide specified feedback targeting criteria that students may have not performed well. It is also documented in the literature that effective feedback could be enhanced through the use of rubrics in academic writing assessment. In this regard, I refer to Andrade (2000) who has presented some reasons as to how and why rubrics are useful for both the lecturer and the students. First, rubrics help students become more critical evaluators of the quality of their work as well as those of their peers. Second, they are time saving because lecturers can have a clear criteria of success being assessed. Considering the benefits that can come from the usage of a rubric in the assessment of academic writing, it should be noted that, according to Pierce (1998), students' involvement is imperative in the design of the rubric. Hence, it is imperative that the rubric or evaluation criteria is agreed upon and well understood by both parties (lecturer and students).

In this subsection, I have so far presented a discussion of data on how feedback may influence the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. I believe that, if students are provided with effective feedback, which is a major element of alternative assessment, then the process of integrating alternative assessment may be a success. In the next subsection, I will present a discussion of data on how authenticity may influence the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

5.2.4. Authenticity

In this subsection, I present a discussion of data on how authenticity may have an influence on the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. Literature has it that alternative assessment techniques feature more authenticity (Finch, 2002). My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.4) showed that the authenticity of an assessment tends to have an effect on the success of that assessment; the element of authenticity enhanced the students' interest in the course English for Academic Purposes. For example, my data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.4) showed that the students developed interest in the content and skills that were assessed after they realised that the course content for the English for Academic Purposes would enable them to endure the academic obligations in their respective faculties, as well as in postgraduate endeavors. I wish to

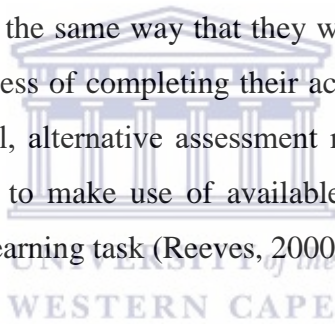
argue that the significance of the element of authenticity is apparent because some scholars (Barootchi & Keshavarz, 2002; Finch, 2012) even used the term ‘authentic assessment’ when referring to alternative assessment, and this could be because authenticity enormously illuminates alternative assessment. In light of the points discussed above, I infer that authenticity should be one of the core elements of alternative assessment.

My analysis of data (see Section 4.8.4) further confirms different avenues in which authenticity was considered significant in the assessment of academic writing. My data (see Section 4.8.4) showed that lecturers ensured that students are sensitised about how the skills and contents being assessed are related to their real life practices. For example, the lecturers made sure that students pay attention to what is taught and assessed in class, and they should not only be able to perform the assessed skills in the class; but they should also be able to use them back in their faculties and also beyond their study period in their faculties. I wish to argue that, this practice corresponds well with the criterion-referenced orientation (Bachman & Palmer, 2011), which also informs alternative assessment as it enables elicitation of information about the actual students’ language abilities in given real life situations. In this orientation, the focus of assessment is directed to whether the students have mastered the learning content or language skills taught in a given language lesson or program.

In light of the points I have discussed in this section (see Chapter 4: Section 5.2.4) so far, I am inclined to infer that there seems to be a positive relationship between the authenticity of an assessment and the possibility for students to perform better in that assessment. It seems students may benefit exponentially from assessment that is purposefully designed to address their academic needs in their respective faculties or specific academic contexts. Therefore, alternative assessment, which is promoted in my study, should assist students to be able to use the academic language effectively for specific purposes, function, and discourse in specific communities (Canagarajah, 2006). I wish to argue with reference to Dunn and Mulvenon’s (2009) writing that, if authenticity is properly incorporated in alternative assessment, it can provide a better evaluation of

students' academic writing proficiency, as well as reliably predict the students' potential to persevere in the real academic world and world of work.

Another indication of the need for authenticity in assessment of academic writing was also perceptible in my analysis (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.4) where students indicated that they would enjoy assessment that allows enough time for them to conduct research and consult the relevant source before they complete their task. This kind of students' preference could be addressed by the real-like feature of alternative assessment because, according to Alderson and Banerjee (2001), the alternative approach of assessment comes with limited control of the process of completing assessment tasks. Unlike some of the traditional assessments which may be once off and more controlled, my analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.4) showed that students had opportunities to seek assistance and gather information in the same way that they would be completing a real life task, especially during the process of completing their academic essays. Since students have access to support material, alternative assessment may assess both the students' final product, and their ability to make use of available human and physical resources to effectively complete the learning task (Reeves, 2000).



In this section, I have so far presented a discussion of data on how authenticity may have an influence on the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. My findings suggest that there is a need for authenticity in the assessment of academic writing, and being one of the essential elements of alternative assessment, it should be incorporated in the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. In the next subsection, I will present a discussion of my data on how expertise and training in alternative assessment can have an influence on the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

5.2.5. Expertise and training in alternative assessment

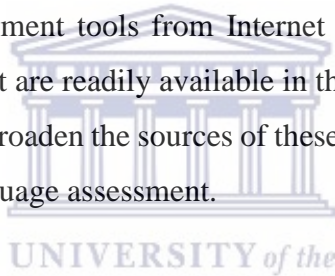
In this subsection, I present a discussion of my data on how expertise and training in alternative assessment may have an influence on the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. It is my belief in this study that the nature of training and

expertise that lecturers may possess could influence their language assessment approaches. This belief, which is informed by the Teacher Knowledge theory (Blesler, 1995) also informs my study.

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.5) suggests that lecturers may still need more empowerment with assessment knowledge and skills. My data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.5) showed that, some lecturers indicated that although they had received training on assessment during their teaching degree programmes, the training was not well specialised on language assessment, if not alternative assessment. Some lecturers further indicated that they have never received training in language assessment in particular, especially those whose qualification is on pure Linguistics, but not necessarily in English language teaching. However, in keeping with the teacher's knowledge theory (Blesler, 1995), my study acknowledges that lecturer empowerment through training on assessment have a crucial role to play in the way they assess their students. Therefore, I wish to argue that if lecturers of academic writing are equipped with the necessary assessment knowledge and skills, then their keenness and ability to explore various types of assessment can be improved.

Research suggests that teacher knowledge should not be viewed as something objective and independent of the teacher, but it should be seen as a collection of the teacher's whole personal, social, academic and professional experience (Xu & Liu, 2015). This is to suggest that lecturers could be bounded by the minimal exposure to alternative assessment, and as a result, they may be adamant to integrating alternative assessment in their academic language classrooms. Blesler (1995) is of the view that, a major characteristic of teacher knowledge is that it is contextual rather than abstract. This is to say, assessment knowledge is not out there, but it is constituted by the experiences that the lecturers have developed over time. This can help confirm the need for improved assessment literacy for lecturers of academic writing, given that my analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Sections 4.7 and 4.8.5) showed a gap in the lecturers' awareness about alternative assessments.

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.5) has shown that, alternatively, some lecturers made attempts on their own, to develop their assessment knowledge through various avenues. To me, this is a good indication as it confirms that lecturers seem to have awareness of the values of assessment literacy; which is also featured in the teacher knowledge theory (Bresler, 1995). For example, some of the avenues that lecturers indicated (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.5) were such as: sharing of assessment knowledge through colleague-to-colleague conversation or meetings; some of them refined and updated their assessment knowledge through self-studies; and they used opportunities such as workshops and conference arranged by the university to receive related training and listen to paper presented on language assessment, in order to improve their assessment skills. With all these attempts, the sources of lecturers' assessment tools remain thin. It turned out from my analysis (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.5) that, lecturers mainly found their assessment tools from Internet (via self-studies), conferences, and those assessment tools that are readily available in the course material. I believe, there is more that can be done to broaden the sources of these assessment tool, especially through training of lecturer in language assessment.



It is interesting, though, for my study that there seems to be some lecturer determination in bringing about improved assessment practices in their classroom, and this determination could be of significant advantage to the process of integrating alternative assessment in academic language instruction. My review of literature in Chapter 2 also showed that the need for improved lecturers' assessment knowledge or competence has received some attention in the literature where attempts to improve assessment competencies of lecturer were documented. I feel it is necessary here to refer to the Assessment Competency and Professional Learning Framework (ACPLF) which was developed by the National Institute of Education in Singapore (NIES) (Shin, 2015). This framework has been motivated by the growing worldwide interest in helping educators (in this case lecturers) to enhance their assessment practices. This framework advocates for a comprehensive and systematic framework that defines a set of knowledge and skill-based competencies for lecturers to be assessment literate in the classrooms of tomorrow.

In this subsection, I have so far presented a discussion of data on how expertise and training in alternative assessment may have an influence on the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. Although it turned out that lecturers have limited avenues for assessment knowledge and skills development, they still go an extra mile on their own to improve their assessment literacy. This is an indication that there is a need for a maintained platforms and programmes for improving lecturers' assessment knowledge and skills. In the next subsection, I will present a discussion of data on how classroom setup may have an influence on the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

5.2.6. Classroom setup

Research has shown that classroom set up is an important factor in the process of carrying out instructional activities in the classroom, and it should facilitate language learning instruction by not being static and unresponsive to instructional activities (Zerin, 2009). In contrast, my analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.6) showed that the classrooms where the English for Academic Purposes course was conducted have a fixed classroom setup, which I have illustrated in Figure 5.1 below.

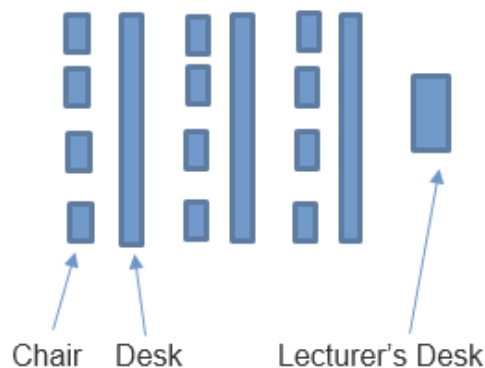


Figure 5.1. Parallel classroom set up

As it could be seen in Figure 5.1, this is a set up where the furniture is arranged in rows parallel to each other and the students sit facing the direction perpendicular to the front wall where there is also the lecturer's desk, and the white board (not visible in Figure 5.1). These are common classroom or lecturer hall arrangements in most universities

where the lecture method is widely used. I came to learn from my analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.6) that, the parallel classroom set up may only be favourable to some of the assessment techniques such as the whole class observation and self-assessment techniques. However, I wish to argue that this set up may not be favourable to an assessment technique such as group discussion where students may need to sit in a mini circle facing each other.

It is important for my discussion that I explain, with reference to Falout's (2014) study, why the parallel classroom set up such as the one in Figure 5.1 may not be favourable to current instructional approaches. As I invoke Falout (2014), I wish to point out that, there tends to be an area in the classroom where the most interest, excitement and class participation is likely to occur, which Falout (2014) termed "action zone" (see Figure 5.2 below).

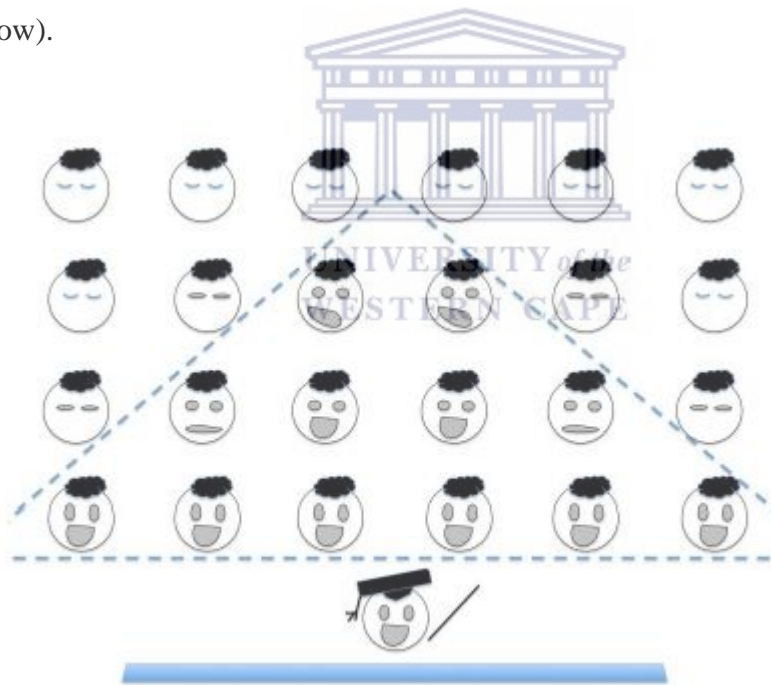


Figure 5.2. Triangle-shaped action zone formed in parallel classroom set up (Falout, 2014)

Falout (2014) argued that although lecturers might claim that they can manage a classroom of 50 or more students (including those sitting at the back of the classroom), the students sitting outside the action zone may still not receive enough attention from the lecturer, in contrast to those sitting inside the action zone. This is because the

formation of action zones are closely related to the proximity, visual contact, and students' perpendicular orientation with the lecturer. This confirms that the classroom set up that emerged from my analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.8.6) may not inclusively and equally be to the advantage of all the students in the classroom. Hence, I wish to argue that the success of students in academic writing performance may be enhanced when they sit inside the action zone, while the performance of the ones outside of it could face some challenges.

In this section, I have presented a discussion of my data on factors that may have an influence on the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. In order for alternative assessment to be implemented successfully in academic writing instruction, lecturers of academic writing and other related stakeholders should consider the factors that I have discussed in this section. Apart from the factors that I have discussed in this subsection, my study has also focused on another element that may influence the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing. This element is the students' intelligence profile. Thus, in the next section, I will present a discussion of data on the relationships between the students' intelligences profiles and the types of alternative assessments that were used in the English for Academic Purposes course. In light of this, I propose to explore the appropriateness of the alternative assessments used in the English for Academic Purposes course towards different students' intelligences, with reference to Gardener's (1984) Multiple Intelligence theory.

5.3. Intelligences Profile of the Students in the English for Academic Purposes

Course and the Types of Alternative Assessment

In my study, I found that the types of alternative assessments that lecturers used in the English for Academic Purposes course did not seem to accommodate all the students' intelligences. My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Sections 4.6 and 4.7) adapted the classification of intelligences based on Gardner's (1984) eight intelligences that are presented in his Multiple Intelligence theory, namely: logical-mathematical intelligence, linguistic intelligence, spatial intelligence, musical intelligence, bodily-kinaesthetic

intelligence, the two personal intelligences (the interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences), and naturalist intelligence.

In spite of my finding (see Chapter 4: Section 4.7) that not all the intelligences were accommodated by the types of assessments, my data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.7) also showed that each intelligence was indicated to be dominant in one or more student participants. This can help confirm that, the assessment practices that emerged from my analysis of data (see Section 4.7) did not seem to fulfil ideologies advocated in Gardener's (1984) theory of Multiple Intelligences. I wish to argue that the usage of assessments that do not accommodate all the students' needs, in this case their intelligences, may be skewed towards the narrow/one dimensional and uniform view of assessing students. Such a narrow view may present serious misinterpretation of the student's performances. For example, Gardener (1984) notes that sometimes being the best and brightest students as well as being rewarded with the best grades does not mean one is also better ranked in life. This is why he proposed a pluralistic view of assessing and enhancing students' abilities, which is also similar to the real life demands that they may face after completing the English for Academic Purpose course. The similarity between what is assessed and the real life demands also depict authenticity, one of the core elements of alternative assessment.

My analysis of data (Section 4.7.1) showed that there were three alternative assessments used in the English for Academic Purposes course, namely: checklist, student lecturer question technique and the academic essay. It emerged from my analysis of data (see Section 4.7) that, these assessments only seemed to accommodate four out of the eight intelligences that are stipulated in Gardener's (1984) Multiple Intelligence theory, namely: the logical-mathematical, verbal-linguistic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligences. Below, I present an explanation of how each of the four intelligences were accommodated by the types of alternative assessment used in the English for Academic Purposes course. The first explanation that I present is concerned with the logical-mathematical intelligence.

5.3.1. Logical-mathematical intelligence

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Sections 4.7.1 and 4.7.3) confirms that the logical-mathematical intelligence was represented in the usage of checklist and academic essay. In the usage of checklist (see Chapter 4: Section 4.7.1), students were given a checklist that consists of items that should be part of their academic essays. They used the checklist to check whether they have incorporated these items in their academic essays. I wish to argue that, in this case, students could apply their logical-mathematical intelligence as they tried to relate their writings to the criteria or items listed in the checklist. This, I believe, is consistent with Gardener's (1984) definition of the logical-mathematical intelligence that, it consists of the ability to detect patterns, reason deductively and think logically.

Further to the points raised above, this intelligence was also represented in the usage of academic essay as a whole. My data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.7.3) confirms that students could apply this intelligence while they were synthesising ideas and drawing conclusions. In the same vein, Lunenburg and Lunenburg (2014) explained that in an academic writing classroom, students can be given problem solving projects that they must report back in writing. Such a problem solving project could be in the form of academic essay. Lunenburg and Lunenburg (2014) added that students can also be presented with data that they should analyse and draw conclusion or estimations. They further explained that although the focus is on writing, the assessment takes advantage of the students' strength, the logical/mathematics intelligence, to develop the students' academic writing skills. In next subsection, I present the explanation as to how the verbal linguistic intelligence was represented by the types of alternative assessment used in the English for academic Purpose course.

5.3.2. Verbal-linguistic intelligence

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Sections 4.7.1, 4.7.2 and 4.7.3) confirms that the verbal-linguistic intelligence was represented by all the three types of assessments, namely: checklist, student lecturer question technique and the academic essay. At this juncture, I wish to invoke Gardener (1984) who describes that this intelligence involves

having a mastery of language. In the context of my study, this involves the mastery of academic language. Gardner (1984) added that this intelligence also involves effective manipulation of language to express oneself, as well as the usage language as a means to remember information. I have learned and observed that it may be unlikely for any type of language assessment to not represent this intelligence because it involves the usage of language. Therefore, lecturers should take precautions not to overlook other intelligences, and only focus on the verbal-linguistic intelligence which is in a way blended in the nature of the learning content of academic writing courses.

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.7.1) confirms that the usage of the checklist could activate students' verbal-linguistic intelligence while they were evaluating their own written language. They could assess their work in terms of whether their ideas were well presented. According to Gardner (1984), this intelligence includes the ability to express oneself rhetorically. In the context of my study, the assessment prompted students to assess and evaluate whether their writings were convincing to the reader. At this juncture, I hold that students have a significant role to play in their learning, through self-assessment. I also concur with Yancey (1992), who argues that assessment is no longer seen as a process where students submit their works to the lecturer or peers with no influence on how the work is performed or interpreted. All the parties (lecturer and student) are actual participants, and the student whose work is being assessed is more than an object of someone else's perusal. Hence, I wish to argue that the students' verbal-linguistic intelligence may be an advantage when students assess various language aspects and structures (paragraphing [introduction, body, and conclusion], paraphrasing, summarising, referencing/acknowledging sources [in this case APA format], hedging, selecting synthesising ideas, and formulating essay titles) in their academic writing.

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.7.2) confirms that another assessment that accommodated the verbal-linguistic intelligence was the student-lecturer question technique. This assessment prompted students to “manipulate language” (Gardener, 1984) in order to convince the lecturer and their peers that their utterances are indeed correct. To a large extent, the student-lecturer question technique is likely to exploit the

verbal-linguistic intelligence because it wholly involves the usage of language. Both the lecturer and students can therefore evaluate their mastery of the learning content, both implicitly and explicitly. The implicit evaluation may occur when students identify their strength and weaknesses on language elements which may not be the target of the assessment. The explicit evaluation, on the other hand, may occur when students are prompted to respond to the lecturer or their peers' questions; and through their attempt to respond to the question, they may be able to weigh their strengths and weaknesses on the topic being discussed. Although this assessment may be directed to assessing students' mastery on some aspects of academic writing, I wish to argue that it can also present a good opportunity for the students to improve their Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) (Cummins, 1984). This is to say, the students have an opportunity to practise their formal (academic) speaking skills, through reasoning and presenting informed arguments to the lecturer and their peers.

Further to the points raised above, my analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.7.3) confirms that the verbal-linguistic intelligence could be represented in the usage of academic essay to assess the students' academic writing skills. Academic essay are mainly applied and demonstrated through a medium of written words (Denscombe & Robins, 1980); thus, the verbal-linguistic intelligence may play a significant role. For example, my analysis of data (see Section 4.7.2) showed that students were required to do extensive reading in order to select and synthesise ideas that would qualify their arguments. I wish to argue that, during the reading stage students could exploit their verbal-linguistic intelligence in order to thoroughly comprehend what other writers have written; so that they can cite other writers' works in their own writing. Citation of other writer's work demands sound knowledge and skills of selecting the most relevant ideas and synthesising them to achieve a coherent, meaningful, convincing piece of writing. This is also cemented in the NCTE (2013) framework that fosters practices that help students to be able to design and share information at global level, for different purposes. The framework suggested that students of the 21st century need to develop awareness of the world around them, in and outside their classroom and be able to "select, organise, and design information to be shared, understood, and distributed beyond their classroom.

In the next subsection, I present an explanation as to how the interpersonal intelligence was represented by the types of alternative assessment used in the English for Academic Purpose course.

5.3.3. Interpersonal intelligence

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Sections 4.7.1, 4.7.2 and 4.7.3) confirms that the interpersonal intelligence was represented in all the three alternative assessments used in the English for Academic Purposes course, namely: checklist, student lecturer question technique and the academic essay. According to Lunenburg and Lunenburg (2014), this intelligence promotes the student's ability to interact with and relate to other students and lecturers, and it fosters the students' ability to understand, relate to and interact with others (other students and lecturer) with a win-win result.

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.7.1) showed that students could engage their interpersonal intelligence when they were asked to evaluate their essays in pairs/groups, using checklists. This appears to be in keeping with Lunenburg and Lunenburg's (2014) view that, while working in pair/groups, students would be required to understand, relate to, and interact with each other in order to achieve a win-win result, in this case receiving effective feedback from each other. The practice of students using checklists to evaluate their essays in pairs/groups also reverberates the ideologies of the sociocultural theory (Van Lier, 2000), which also informs my study. One of this theory's central elements, interaction, suggests that through negotiating meaning, a piece of language that was not comprehensible becomes comprehensible as a result of negotiation; it can then become part of the student's target language inventory. In line with this theory, I wish to argue that the use of checklists by students working in pairs or groups may also activate the students' interpersonal intelligence to help others comprehend the complex aspects of the target language skills being assessed. I wish to further point out that there is an advantage in learner-learner interaction. In this regard, I invoke Van Lier (2000) who writes that, learner-learner interaction can be an effective tool for students to complete assessment tasks, because students tend to share simpler explanations among themselves, and simpler explanations are preferred to students than complex ones. To add on the

advantages of learner-learner interaction, Takahashi and Sato (2003) also affirms that, alternative assessment helps students to flee from isolation, oppression and create a learning community where peer to peer and peer to lecturer collaboration is at the students' disposal. Hence, in my study, I regard checklist as an alternative assessment that provides avenues for negotiation of meaning.

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.7.2) confirms that interpersonal intelligence was also represented in the student-lecturer question technique. My data (see Section 4.5.2) showed that the student-lecturer question technique involved the lecturer posing questions (about the lesson content) to students, and students were expected to respond to the questions. In this assessment, sometimes students may also ask some questions to the lecturer, for example, asking for clarification. I wish to argue that, during this assessment, students needed to engage their interpersonal intelligence since they were involved in a social interaction with the lecturer and their peers, and as a result, they needed to understand the lecturer and other students' communicative intentions. My finding appears to concur with the Sociocultural theory (Van Lier, 2000) and the ZPD (Lantolf, 2000; Schunk, 2009), because I found the student lecturer question technique to be a platform that can serve as a socialising driving force among students as well as between the students and the lecturer (Sharifi & Hassaskhah, 2011). In addition, as Canagarajah (1999) believes, through student-student and student-lecturer interaction (for instance, through student-lecturer questions), students' interpersonal skills can be enhanced through alternative assessment.

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.7.2) further confirms that the interpersonal intelligence was activated when the lecturer used the academic essay to assess students' academic writing skills. In this assessment, the lecturer gave the students an academic essay on a topic of their interest. Some of the lecturers made it a rule that students should either work in pairs/groups, while others let the students choose whether to work individually, in pairs or in groups. I wish to argue as I invoke Lunenburg and Lunenburg (2014) that, working with a peer/peers provided an opportunity for students to apply their interpersonal intelligence in order to relate to and understand others during the process of

completing the assigned academic essay. In addition, they could also engage their interpersonal intelligence in order to effectively interpret communicative intentions of their peers.

In the next subsection, I present the explanation as to how the intrapersonal intelligence was represented by the types of alternative assessment used in the English for Academic Purposes course.

5.3.4. Intrapersonal intelligence

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Sections 4.7.1, 4.7.2 and 4.7.3) confirms that the intrapersonal intelligence was represented in all the three types of alternative assessments that were used in the English for Academic Purposes course. According to Gardner (1984), this intelligence involves the ability to understand one's own feelings and motivations. I am inclined to believe that as pointed out by Lunenburg & Lunenburg (2014), it also fosters the ability to know oneself and assume responsibility for one's life and learning (Lunenburg & Lunenburg, 2014).

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Sections 4.7.1) confirms that the intrapersonal intelligence was represented in the usage of checklist to assess students' academic writing in the English for Academic Purposes course. I wish to argue that, in this assessment, students could engage their intrapersonal intelligence in cases where they were asked to use the checklist to assess their own academic writing. I align my argument with Brown and Abeywickrama's (2010) view that, when students compare their work to the items/criteria in the checklist, they may have to try to understand oneself so that they could identify their strengths and weaknesses with regard to the skills and content being assessed. In this regard, I believe that, the students can then redirect their focus onto areas that may need improvement.

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Sections 4.7.2) also confirms that the intrapersonal intelligence was also represented in the student-lecturer question technique. I wish to argue that, in this assessment, the students could activate their intrapersonal intelligence

in cases where the lecturer posed questions to individual students, and a student had to, through understanding of oneself and motivation (Lunenburg & Lunenburg, 2014), motivate oneself to respond to the question accordingly. I also wish to relate my argument to Lunenburg and Lunenburg's (2014) advice that, students' intrapersonal intelligence can best be put at use when students are given authentic problem-solving activities. It appears from my review of literature on alternative assessment that, there tends to be positive results on the significance of "authenticity" (Bachman & Palmer, 2011; Barootchi & Keshavarz, 2002; Ho, 2013) in academic writing assessment. I wish to argue here that, if alternative assessment advocates for assessment that drives students' authentic performance in academic writing, then even assessment of the students' writing that are not necessarily administered in written form should be authentic too. In this case, I am referring to the usage of student-lecturer question technique, and I am inclined to believe that students could benefit from their dominant intelligence (intrapersonal intelligence) as they motivate themselves to respond to questions that are asking about authentic learning content and skills.

Further to the points I have discussed above, my analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.7.3) also confirms that, the intrapersonal intelligence was represented in the usage of academic essay to assess the students' academic writing skills in the English for Academic Purposes course. I wish to argue that, in this assessment, the students could engage their intrapersonal intelligence when they worked on their essays individually. In this regard, I take note that my data (see Chapter 4: Sections 4.5.3 and 4.7.3) indicated that, some students worked in pairs; however, I understand that these students still had to divide work among themselves which they then had to combine and discuss as a pair/group from time to time. Hence, I wish to consider Gardener's (1984) view as I argue that, when students activate their intrapersonal intelligence, they will be able to understand their own feelings and motivations as they govern themselves towards the completion of the assessment: the academic essay.

5.3.5. Conclusion

In this section, I have so far presented a discussion on the relationships between the students' intelligences profiles and the types of alternative assessments that were used in the English for Academic Purposes course. I have made an attempt to explore the appropriateness of the alternative assessments used in the English for Academic Purposes course towards different students' intelligences, with reference to Gardener's (1984) Multiple Intelligences theory. In keeping with this theory, my stance in this study confirms my belief that alternative assessment should be designed and administered in consideration of the various intelligences that students may possess. In this way, students are likely to benefit better from the assessments used, and their learning could be improved. My study has also explored another significant element that may influence the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction: the lecturers and students' attitude. In the next section, I will present a discussion of data on the lecturers and students' attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

5.4. Lecturers and Students' Attitude towards Alternative Assessment in Academic Writing Instruction

In this section, I focus my discussion on the lecturers and students' attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing. My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.9) confirms that there seems to be varied attitude towards alternative assessment from both the lecturers and students. Some of the lecturers and students' responses showed positive attitudes towards alternative assessment, while some of the other responses showed negative attitude towards alternative assessment. In this discussion, I am of the view that the lecturers and students' attitude also have a significant effect on the process of administering alternative assessment effectively.

In this section, I will also attempt to provide explanations for the varied attitudes from the two sets of participants by making reference to my analysis of data as well as the literature. I will structure my discussion in this section as follows: First, lecturers' attitudes towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction; and second, students' attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. In the

first subsection, I present a discussion of data (see Section 4.9.1) on the lecturers' attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

5.4.1. Lecturers' attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction

My study found that the lecturers' attitude could influence the process of designing and using alternative assessment in academic writing. Their attitude may also be influenced by various circumstances in which lecturers operate. My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.9.1) showed that lecturers' responses seemed to manifest some positive attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

In my study, it turned out in my analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.9.1) that, lecturers have acknowledged the significance of assessment in academic writing instruction. This confirms that lecturers value the role played by alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. For example, my data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.9.1) showed that, lecturer participants reported how informal assessments are equally important as formal assessments since they allow students to ask for clarification in a relaxing environment. The lecturers' positive attitude was also evident in my analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.9.1), where the lecturers supported the assessment of students in pairs or groups. This finding is in keeping with Ortega's view (2009) who writes about the need to create learning/assessment environments that can lower the students' affective filter so that they can perform their assessment tasks with minimal anxiety. Furthermore, I wish to relate my finding to Krashen (2009) as he writes in his Affective Filter hypothesis that, group or pair work lowers the affective filter since students tend to feel relaxed and less threatened when assessed in groups or pairs.

In another instance, my analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.9.1) confirms the lecturers' positive attitude towards alternative assessment, through their support for current thinking on assessment; that assessment does not only focus on the final product but also focuses on the process that students go through while completing their assessments. My data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.9.1) also confirms that, the lecturers

believe that writing is a process, and as a result, a process approach would be instrumental in academic writing assessment. At this juncture, it is important for my discussion to clarify that, according to Brown & Abeywickrama (2010), the process approach places more emphasis on the way the students process the learning content, and in light of this the performance and behaviour of the students towards the learning contents becomes the center of assessment. This is in contrast to the product approach that concentrates on the outcome or final product of the performance or behaviour, and it tends to be the focus of traditional assessments. This can help to confirm that, my data (see Section 4.9.1) verifiably suggest that lecturers support the alternative approach. I also wish to point out here that the points I have discussed above are in keeping with Canagarajah (1999) who writes that, the constructivist view of knowledge sees students as constructors of new knowledge, and this knowledge is negotiated in the classroom through learning activities and experiences. Based on this view, I concur with lecturers who support inclusion of assessing the learning in their instruction on the basis that the process of negotiating knowledge and experience also need to be assessed, and hence it may be improved.

My data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.9.1) confirms that, despite the challenges of having many students in a given classroom, some of the lecturer participants did not seem to be discouraged to integrate alternative assessment in their instruction. This is to suggest that, the lecturers still feel that it is important to assess the process, and not only the product. I attribute this to the fact that, my data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.5.1) indicated that some lecturer participants used checklist to allow students to assess their own written work, an assessment that assessed the writing process. I wish to argue that the lecturer's support for the usage of alternative assessment approach could be dependent on their exposure to the alternative approach of language assessment. In this regard, I also invoke the Teacher Knowledge theory, which also informs my study, and that states that each teacher/lecturers has a particular knowledge that relates to knowing how to teach (Bresler. 1995). This is to suggest that, the lecturers' knowledge and skills of alternative assessment can be an influencing factor in the usage of alternative assessment. I know that, according to research, most students prefer learning processes that enable them to

be active, and thus it advises faculties teaching large classes to try to include constructive instruction in their course whenever possible (Carpenter, 2006).

Lecturer participants in my study (see Chapter 4: Section 4.9.1) also showed perseverance towards the use of alternative assessment despite instances of limitations stipulated by institutional prescription of how to assess. I must acknowledge, though, that the institution under study (in my study) allows for the use of alternative assessment. In light of this, the University of Namibia (2013) Assessment Policy “does not constrain the development of alternative or additional forms of effective assessment, provided such assessments are consistent with the principles stated in the policy” (p. 3). However, lecturer participants indicated (see Chapter 4: Section 4.9.1) that sometimes circumstances found in specific departments may lead them to rather opt for traditional assessment. For instance, they explained that in cases where a course is taught by many lecturers, such as the English for Academic Purposes, one may be forced to meet the institutional requirements which may stipulate specific number of tests, for example. This is to confirm that, although there is lecturers’ willingness to use alternative assessment, the institutional influence of whether its policies support or discourage the usage of such assessment could undermine or facilitate the success of integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

In this subsection, I have presented a discussion of data on the lecturers’ attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. In the next subsection, I will also present a discussion of data on students’ attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

5.4.2. Students’ attitude towards the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing

In this subsection, I present a discussion on the students’ attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. It is my belief that students’ attitude in this study may have an effect on the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. That is to say, if students develop a negative attitude towards assessment,

then the integration of assessment in academic writing is rather unlikely to yield fruitful results. My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.9.2) on students' attitude towards alternative assessment can help inform the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. This is to suggest that lecturers could administer the assessments in a manner that it persuades students' willingness to participate in such assessment and the learning process.

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.9.2) confirms that, students seemed to have a positive attitude towards alternative assessment. In this analysis, students' responses acknowledged their willingness to be assessed. I could deduce their willingness from the fact that they indicated (see Chapter 4: Section 4.9.2) that, they feel they can grow and work on their weakness through assessment. This is to suggest that students may enjoy being subjected to alternative assessment because of its formative nature. I wish to argue that, the students' positive attitude, especially towards formative assessment (alternative assessment), is a good indication for my study. This is because, according to the literature that I reviewed in Chapter 2, formative assessment aims at assessing students' learning and responding to them (OECD, 2005). I believe that, this can be achieved through alternative assessment where students can receive feedback about their strengths and weakness with regard to the learning task or objectives.

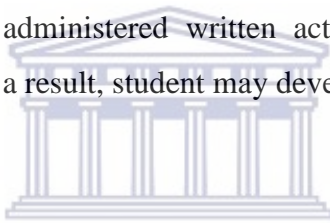
My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.9.2) also confirms another indication of students' positive attitude towards alternative assessment. In this analysis, students indicated that they enjoy assessments tasks that require creativity. This helps to suggest that students may welcome alternative assessment, and they may be willing to participate in these assessment tasks. This finding is in keeping with the literature that I reviewed in Chapter 2 that, current thinking, which inform alternative assessment, also advocates for creativity in language assessment. In this regard, I wish to invoke Canagarajah (1999; 2006; Muchiri et al., 2014) who opposes pedagogy that insists on uniform variety of language or discourse as it only promotes monolingual ideologies and linguistic hierarchies. Alternatively, he reveres the constructivist view of knowledge in that he wants lecturers to start seeing students as constructors of new knowledge. In light of the

above, I wish to argue that, students' preference for assessments that feature creativity could contribute to the success of integrating alternative assessment in academic writing.

My analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.9.2) on students' attitude toward alternative assessment also showed that, students seemed to have criticised the use of traditional assessment in academic writing instruction. It appears from my analysis of data (see Section 4.9.2) that, they would rather prefer alternative assessment. This finding, though interesting, has not really come as a surprise to me, since literature on language assessment has also criticised traditional assessment. To illustrate, some critics (Reeves, 2000; Tsagari, 2004) argued that, traditional assessment may not be functional in all assessment situations of academic writing. For instance, standardised testing has been criticised as being adversative to process learning (Sharifi, & Hassaskhah, 2011). According to Sharifi and Hassaskhah (2011), traditional assessment has also been criticized with reference to the incompatibility of process learning and product assessment, and the discrepancy between the information needed and the information derived through traditional assessment. Similarly, the analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.9.2) in my study showed that, students felt that when they are asked to write a test, they found limited or no creativity in the assessment. Hence, they indicated that they would not prefer such type of assessment. In particular, the students further explained that when they have to construct an essay, they are able to apply their creativity when they select the relevant facts to support their ideas. This can further help confirm that, students would welcome assessment tasks that feature more creativity, which is also advocated in alternative assessment.

It emerged from my analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.9.2) that, in contrast to the points I have discussed above, there were some students who voiced their preference of spoken activities over writing activities. This is to suggest that, there was some negative attitude detected over a type of alternative assessment. It is important for my study to discuss this finding because, written activities are a significant and essential element of academic writing instruction. Particularly, according to Denscombe and Robins (1980), the academic essay has been significant in the Social Sciences where the grasp of the

subjects is predominantly applied and demonstrated through a medium of written words. Nevertheless, it is my view that, although students might have shown signs of negative attitude towards written activities, it should not completely puzzle the agenda of my study since literature may still provide some useful explanations. First, I wish to invoke Brown and Abeywickrama (2010) who indicated that, it may be difficult to provide a concrete distinction between alternative and traditional assessment; some forms of assessment may even fall in between the two while others combine the two. Canagarajah (1999) also explained that the manner in which academic essays are used as assessment tools defines them whether they fall or not in the category of alternative assessment tools. For example, academic essays can be alternative assessment when they are used diagnostically. Based on these explanations, I am inclined to believe that, it could be possible that lecturers could also be faced with the difficulty raised by Brown and Abeywickrama (2010), and as such they may have administered written activities following the principles of traditional assessment. As a result, student may develop negative attitudes towards these assessments.



I must clarify here that, students' preference of spoken or oral activities should not be fully considered as negative attitude towards alternative assessment. Language skills are interdependent. Therefore, I wish to argue that, although my study is focused on academic writing activities, it is through oral activities, such as presentation, that students can discuss and negotiate meaning of the content they have written. This is in keeping with Takahashi and Sato (2003) who explained that, one of the reasons why students tend to prefer alternative assessment methods is because they can be engaged in both interactive speaking and writing activities. In addition, allowing students to present their written content can also maximise the opportunity to benefit from their multiple intelligences that they may possess.

There was another concern on the side of students. It appeared from my analysis of data (see Chapter 4: Section 4.9.2) that, students felt that sometimes their assessments are not aligned to what was taught as well as what they are expected to do later on in real life situations. This concern has also received attention in the literature and this is where the

issue of authenticity also comes to play. It is documented in the literature on alternative assessment that alternative assessment techniques feature more authenticity (Finch, 2002). The significance of authenticity in alternative assessment can be traced to Finch's (2012) work where he synonymously uses the term 'authentic assessment' to refer to alternative assessment. He believes that authentic/alternative assessment presents high validity because they use assessment tasks which closely parallel real-life writing situations which students may encounter outside the classroom (Dikli, 2003). It is, therefore, for this reason that my study promotes alternative assessments which features authenticity and thus incite students' positive attitude towards alternative assessment.

In light of the above-stated point, alternative assessment can address the students' issue with the element of real-life practices, because it employs criterion-referenced orientation. As pointed out by Bachman and Palmer (2011), this orientation elicits information about the actual students' language abilities in given real life situations. Based on this orientation, the focus of assessment is directed to whether the students have mastered the learning content or language skills taught in a given language lesson or program. In return, this is the kind of assessment that students would like to have; assessment that parallels the content taught as well as the real-life practices.

In in this sub-section, I have so far presented a discussion of data on students' attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. The signs of positive attitude towards alternative assessment from the lecturers and students serve to support the principal agenda of my study which is to illuminate the importance of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. It is also evident in the discussion that students' attitude seemed to be in favour of assessments that feature principles of alternative assessment.

5.4.3. Conclusion

Based on my discussion of the findings, my study encourages me to believe that lecturers and students' attitude towards alternative assessment can be molded to the benefit of the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. In light of this, Xu

and Liu (2015) warn that, teacher knowledge (and of course that of the students) is not something objective and independent of the teacher. It is a collection of the teacher's whole personal, social, academic and professional experience. I am inclined to confirm here that, students' knowledge of a given assessment is also a collection of the students' whole personal, social and academic experiences, and these experiences may influence the attitude that students may have towards alternative assessment. In the next section, I wish to propose to present the summary and conclusion of the chapter, where I will lay the groundwork for drawing the conclusions of my study in the next and final chapter.

5.5. Conclusion and Summary of the Chapter

In this chapter, so far, I have presented discussions on the findings of my study in light of the main objectives and the research questions of my study. Regarding the first research question that focused on how lecturers of English for Academic Purposes integrate alternative assessment in academic writing instruction, the discussion focused on identifying the alternative assessments that were used by the lecturers in the English for Academic Purpose course. Under the same question, my discussion also focused on qualifying how the types of assessment that emerged from my analysis could be considered as alternative assessment. There was limited stock of assessment that featured the characteristics of alternatives assessment. In light of this, the second research question was meant to explore the factors that influence the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing, where I made attempts to explain some verifiable factors that may hinder/motivate the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing. This explanation included how the factors may influence this integration from both the angles of lecturers and students. The third research question focused on how the assessment tools for academic writing match with the types of students' intelligences. In order to further identify possible gaps that may affect the process of integrating alternative assessment in academic writing, my discussion acknowledged the pluralistic nature of the student population in the academic writing classrooms. With reference to the Multiple Intelligence theory, my discussion focused on how students may possess varied dominant intelligences, and how certain assessment could be to an advantage/disadvantage to certain types of intelligences. In light of this, this discussion induced the element of

inclusion in assessment in the academic writing classroom. Regarding the fourth research question that was to assess the lecturers and students' attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction, my discussion focused on the lecturers and students' willingness to use and participate in alternative assessments, respectively. I believe that their attitude can affect the usage of alternative assessment; hence, it was important for my study to explore the gaps that may exist with regards to lecturers and students' attitude towards certain types of assessments. At this juncture, I wish to declare that my fifth research question that was to propose a framework that could be employed to integrate alternative assessment in academic writing instruction will/can only be addressed in my recommendation section in the next Chapter. Having done that, I would now proceed to present the conclusions, implications, limitations and recommendations of my study.



CHAPTER SIX

Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations

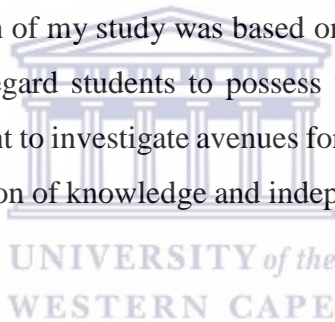
6.1. A Reappraisal

In this chapter, I recapitulate on the main findings of my study in order to state my conclusions for this study. First, I wish to reinforce the rationale for my study, re-emphasise the significance of the selected methodology for my study and relate my study findings to the research questions. Moreover, I wish to highlight the research insights that my study has generated and then later articulate the significance of my findings on language assessment practice, theory and research. I also present the recommendations for my study along with the limitations of my study, and lastly the insights and issues for future research.

Upon approaching the conclusions of my study, I wish to remind my readership that my study was triggered by the observation that, although the traditional approach to language assessment (which uses traditional assessment techniques) is prevalent in most Namibian educational and language programs, educators and critics from various backgrounds have voiced quiet a number of concerns about the effectiveness of these techniques in some learning situations (Tzagari, 2004). It was argued that traditional assessment tends to be incongruent with the current practices in the language classrooms. I came to learn that, language assessment scholars have begun to explore and promote alternative assessment methods in the belief that they will yield more realistic information about students' achievement and classroom instruction (Bachman & Palmer, 2011; Barootchi & Keshavarz, 2002; Hamakali & Lumbu, 2016; Sharifi, & Hassaskhah, 2011; Reeves, 2000; Tzagari, 2004). The most questionable issue then was that, although the integration of alternative assessment seems to be promoted in agendas and legislations of various educational organisations such as in the University of Namibia's Assessment Policy, its practical application remained minimal. It was against such a background that I have initiated my current descriptive study at the University of Namibia's Language Centre.

My main investigation was aimed to investigate the integration of alternative assessment in writing instruction in the English for Academic Purposes course at the Language Centre. My study sought to make contribution to new knowledge and skills in effective, meaningful language assessment practices. My study attempted to explore and attain the following research objectives: 1) Explore the different alternative assessment tools that are used by English lecturers in academic writing instruction; 2) Analyse the factors that influence the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction; 3) Assess the compatibility of assessment tools used by lecturers and the type of students' intelligences; 4) Assess the lecturers and students' attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction; and 5) Propose a framework of integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

The theoretical orientation of my study was based on a constructivist view of education. In light of this view, I regard students to possess the ability to construct knowledge. Therefore, my study sought to investigate avenues for assessment that promote creativity, critical thinking, application of knowledge and independent learning, through alternative assessment.



I therefore found it fit to adapt a qualitative research design for my study, where I used multiple data collection methods (triangulation) to collect qualitative data. I collected data through four research methods, namely: observation, lecturer interviews, student focus groups, and Multiple Intelligence (MI) inventory. Using multiple methods of data collection enabled me to obtain in-depth coverage and understanding of the study. This also tallies with the research literature that, triangulation is useful when a researcher wants to obtain a more complete picture of what is being studied, as well as to cross-check information; the strength of qualitative data research lies in collecting data in many ways, rather than just relying on one method (Gay et al., 2009). In addition, my review of studies conducted on language assessment as well as alternative assessment in particular have also enabled me to grasp a broader understanding of the subject of my study.

Now that I have revisited the rationale for my study, in the next section I recapitulate on the main findings of my study by relating them to the research questions of my study.

6.2. Conclusions/Outcomes

My study investigated the assessment of students in the English for Academic Purposes course at the University of Namibia Language Centre. My study focused on the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. I wish to draw my conclusions based on the findings of my study and relate them to the research questions of my study in the following section:

1. How do lecturers of English for Academic Purposes integrate alternative assessment in academic writing instruction?
2. What are the factors influencing the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction?
3. How do the assessment tools for academic writing match the types of students' intelligences?
4. What is the lecturers and students' attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction?

At this juncture, I wish to signpost to my readership that the fifth research question “What type of framework could be employed to integrate alternative assessment in academic writing instruction?” will be addressed in the Recommendation Section of this Chapter (See Chapter 6: Section 6.4).

6.2.1. Research Question 1: How do lecturers of English for Academic Purposes integrate alternative assessment in academic writing instruction?

My study found that there is still a lot more to be done with regard to the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction, because there was a limited stock of assessments that suits the classification of alternative assessment, namely: checklists, student-lecturer question techniques, and academic essay.

The use of checklist as an assessment serves current thinking on language assessment, based on the assumption that assessment is no longer a responsibility left to the lecturer alone but all the parties are actual participants in it, and according to Yancey (1992), the student whose work is being assessed is more than an object of someone else's perusal. The use of student-lecturer questioning techniques also appeared to be one of the commonly used assessments in language classrooms, as it surfaced from all sets of data that I collected from three different data collection methods. However, my study found that, there are still some gaps that need to be filled with regard to the use of student-lecturer question technique. Given the ground that literature on language assessment explains that the manner in which academic essays are used as assessment tools defines them whether they fall or not in the category of alternative assessment tools, my study found that the manner in which the essay was administered, as an assessment, presents some qualities of alternative assessment.

My study has attempted to explain the limited stock of alternative assessment that emerged from my analysis of data with the lack of or limited lecturer training in language assessment in particular. In line with the Teacher Knowledge theory (Bresler. 1995), I am inclined to conclude that the lean stock of alternative assessment was due to the lecturers' lack of understanding of assessment literacy or their limited knowledge and skills of alternative assessment.

6.2.2. Research Question 2: What are the factors influencing the integration of alternative assessment into academic writing instruction?

In light of the findings that I have presented in Chapter Five of my study, my study found some factors that can influence the integration of alternative assessment into academic writing instruction. I wish to conclude that if assessors or lecturers are aware of the factors that may facilitate or hinder the implementation of alternative assessment in academic writing, then they would be in a better position to predesign and consider strategies that can help them get around hindering factors, thereby facilitating a successful implementation of those strategies.

My study found that lecturers and students' knowledge of assessment can influence the possibility of integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. The findings of my study showed that there was varied understanding of assessment from both the lecturers and the students: Some of them viewed assessment as measurement, while others viewed it as evaluation. I wish to conclude that the immediate stakeholders' (the lecturers and students) type of understanding of assessment is crucial in the process of integrating alternative assessment in academic language instruction.

My study also found that students' assessment preferences may influence the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. Findings on positive preference of assessments that are dynamic, authentic, provide feedback, and comprehensible, will facilitate the success of using alternative assessments. On the other hand, students' indication of low or none preference for written activities should be a concern to assessors or lecturers who are the initiators and doers of alternative assessment in academic writing.

My study found that the authenticity of an assessment can have an effect on the success of that assessment. Although alternative assessment techniques tend to feature more authenticity (Finch, 2002), my study found limited knowledge and skills of alternative assessment on the part of the lecturers. Based on the Teacher Knowledge theory (Blesler, 1995), this gap suggests that, the nature of training and expertise that lecturers may possess may influence their language assessment approaches.

My study also found that, classroom setups can influence the process of using alternative assessments. Given that the classroom setup used at the institution under study was fixed (Parallel classroom set up), I have learned from the literature that some of the types of assessments may not work favourably with some types of classroom setup, such as the parallel classroom setup.

Therefore I wish to conclude here that, there are a number of factors that lecturers of academic writing should consider, in order for alternative assessment to be implemented successfully in academic writing instruction.

6.2.3. Research Question 3: How do the assessment tools for academic writing match the types of students' intelligences?

I wish to reiterate to my readership that my study is informed by Gardner's (1984) Multiple Intelligence theory from which I adopted the classification of intelligences, namely: logical-mathematical intelligence, linguistic intelligence, spatial intelligence, musical intelligence, bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence, the two personal intelligences (the interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences), and naturalist intelligence. Although this theory advocates for assessment or instruction that accommodates students of different dominant intelligences, my study found that the types of alternative assessments that were used in the English for Academic Purposes course did not seem to accommodate all the students' intelligences. This was in spite of the findings that, each intelligence was indicated to be dominant in one or more student participants. I am then inclined to conclude that the assessment practices that were used by the lecturers did not seem to fulfil the ideologies advocated in Gardner's (1984) theory of Multiple Intelligences.

My study, therefore, wishes to induce effective assessment that should be designed and administered in consideration of the various intelligences that students may possess. In this way, students are likely to benefit better from the assessments used, and their learning could be improved.

6.2.4. Research Question 4: What is the lecturers and students' attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction?

My study found that, lecturers and students' attitude towards alternative assessment have a significant effect on the process of administering alternative assessment effectively. In light of this, I wish to conclude that the lecturers' attitude which is skewed towards the positive direction may be an indication that there could be hope for success in attempts to integrate alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. Similarly, my findings on students' attitude also support my conclusion as stated above, because students seemed to have a positive attitude towards alternative assessment. My findings showed that the students showed willingness to partake in assessments that manifest features of

alternative assessment, and somehow criticised the use of traditional assessment in academic writing instruction.

I wish to conclude that the signs of positive attitude towards alternative assessment on the part of the lecturers and students serve as a great support for the agenda of my study, which is meant to illuminate the importance of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. Having addressed the findings of my study with reference to the research questions, I will now point out the significance of the study.

6.3. The Significance/Implications of my Study

I wish to state that I intend to disseminate the findings of my study in different academic platforms, for instance academic journals, conference presentations, workshops and seminars. In this way, I believe that the findings of my study can be accessible to a wider scholarly audience as well as other language assessment stakeholders. In this section, I wish to present implications/significance of the findings of my study on various aspects of language assessment, namely: implications for language assessment policy and practice; and implications for theory.

6.3.1. Implications for language assessment policy and practice

I wish to highlight the implication of the findings of my study on language assessment policy and practice. Lecturers and those who may be involved in the design of assessments should consider factors that influence the use of alternative assessment when planning, designing and administering alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. My study also engendered the need for lecturers to consider the pluralistic nature of the student profile in their academic writing classroom, since they tend to possess various dominant intelligences, and as such, certain types of assessment may not equally benefit students who possess certain dominant intelligences.

The findings of my study also informs policy/decision makers on the decisions they make regarding the assessment of academic writing assessment. I find it remarkable that, my findings showed some elements of assessment, such as classroom setup, that were not

under the control of the lecturers. In light of this, my findings suggest that those entrusted with the layout and furnishing of academic writing classrooms should consider the fact that certain seating arrangements may not be consistent with some of the types of assessment practices. This is to suggest that, higher institution employers should promote and support opportunities for lecturers to develop their skills and knowledge of current thinking in language assessment.

6.3.2. Implications for theory

Since this study explores avenues for an integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction, it also contributes to the current body of knowledge of the language assessment discipline. The findings of my study complement some theoretical claims that inform the need for alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. I wish to acknowledge that, the findings of my study correspond as well as concur well with the theoretical and conceptual framework that I have chosen for this study.

First, my study is informed by a constructivist view of education where assessment is expected to promote creativity, critical thinking, application of knowledge and independent learning. My findings also support assessment that promote creativity and critical thinking, and students also reported that they would prefer assessment that enables them to make use of their creativity to construct new knowledge. Second, in keeping with the sociocultural theory (Lantolf, 2000), my study supports the idea of assessment for learning which is realised when students complete tasks collaboratively. My study found that some of the types of assessment that emerged from my analysis of data are those that promote collaborative learning. Third, in keeping with the Multiple Intelligences theory (Gardner, 1984), my study embraces assessment or rather pedagogy that acknowledges and accommodates the pluralistic/pluricentric nature of students.

As premised by the Teacher Knowledge theory (Blesler, 1995), my study acknowledges that teacher empowerment (through training on assessment) has a crucial role to play in the way they assess their students. The findings of my study appear to correspond to/with this theory in that the lecturers' knowledge of assessment emerged to be one of the factors

influencing the integration of assessment in academic writing. Somehow, the lecturers' knowledge of assessment was also linked to their attitude towards alternative assessment. Hence, my study strongly emphasises the need for lecturer education on assessment practices that respond to the current students' academic literacy needs.

In keeping with Freire's (1968) concept of "the education as liberation", my study also viewed the role of alternative assessment as one that provides freedom to the students to learn and think independently as well as apply and create knowledge in their classrooms. In line with this, my study found that students seemed to have criticised assessments that do not prompt them to apply their critical thinking skills, and they have also criticised particularly traditional assessments such as test and examination since they tend to require more controlled performance which does not really relate to authentic situations.

Lastly, based on the insights of Cummins' (2008) basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP), my study embraces assessments that serve the real language needs of the students. Normally, the BICS and CALP explain that students should develop the basic language skills first, and then they can carry on with the academic language skills. The findings of my study correspond with this notion in that, students acknowledged that their BICS (especially when it comes to writing skills) were not well developed for them to cope with the academic writing instruction. My study commends the University of Namibia's Language Centre that it has put in place some courses that students can do to improve their BICS before they take up the English for Academic Purposes course. Their placement in such courses is based on the pass grade that they obtained from English language in their Grade 12 certificates.

At this juncture, I am inclined to believe that the findings of my study contribute valuable input to various aspects of language assessment. I also believe that my findings can serve as an inviting rationale for the process of integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. Having said that I would now proceed to present the main recommendations of my study which address the fifth question of my study: "Research

Question 5: What type of framework could be employed to integrate alternative assessment in academic writing instruction?”

6.4. Recommendations

The findings of my study provide a verifiable foundation for the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. Based on the findings of my study, I wish to propose a framework for integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

6.4.1. The framework for integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction

6.4.1.1. Defining my framework

There are various definitions that define a framework in their respective contexts. In my study, my focus is on the operationalisation of the definition of framework to the application of theory to practice in the context of language assessment. According to Pearce et al. (2015), an assessment framework should detail how an assessment is to be operationalised by combining theory and practice to explain both the “what” and “how”. In my study, I have attempted to formulate a comprehensive framework that could be instrumental in the implementation of the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. I also invoke Nilsen’s (2015) notion of “determinant frameworks” which describes the generic determinants that may be hypothesised or have been found to have an impact on the implementation outcome. In my study, the implementation outcomes translate into the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

Nilsen (2015) further indicated that determinant frameworks can be developed based on the following sources of information: syntheses of empirical studies of barriers and enablers for implementation process; existing determinant frameworks and relevant theories in various disciplines; and originator’s own experience of implementing new practices. In light of this, my framework is consistent with the findings of my study.

6.4.1.2. The purposes of the framework

The purpose of my framework for integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction is to articulate a concerted set of principles that should guide the implementation of the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. Although my framework is not necessarily a legal document, I propose this framework based on the notion that it should be a commitment for academic literacy stakeholders to work towards realising a vision based on principles for improving assessment in academic literacy courses, and academic writing in particular. The type of stakeholders that I have referred to herein may not only be lecturers of academic literacy courses, but it may also include policy makers (especially in the university), scholars/researchers, curriculum or material developers/reviewer, and academic managers at different levels in the university. Since all these stakeholders work as a system, I believe that my framework can be a useful tool of reference and guidance in the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing and academic courses at large. I would like to clarify here that I do not intend to declare my framework as a substitute for frameworks already in place or underway, but this framework comes as a complementary tool that could add value to the way assessment is conducted in academic writing. In the next subsection, I present the guiding principles of my framework.

6.4.1.3. The guiding principles of the framework of integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction

As I have illustrated in Figure 6.1 below, my framework consists of seven (7) guiding principles, namely: authenticity, critical thinking, feedback, practicality, inclusivity, clear instructions, and assessment literacy development.

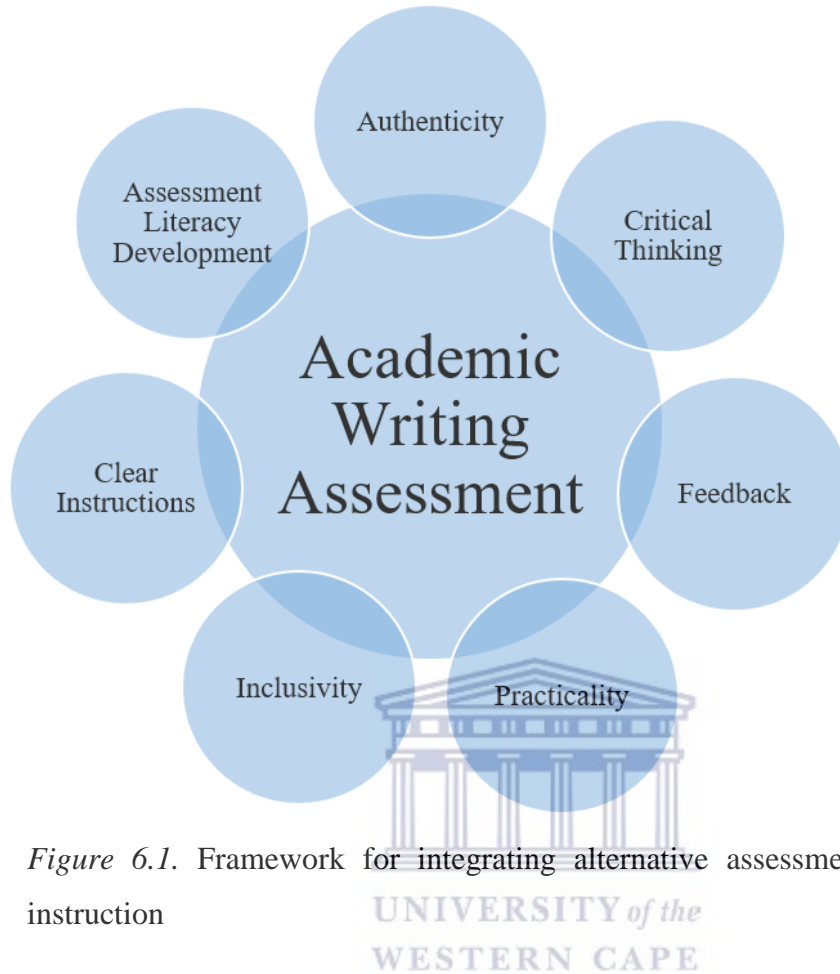


Figure 6.1. Framework for integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction

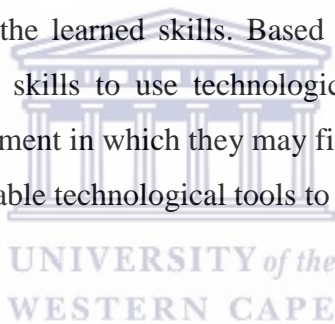
In this subsection, I would now present an explanation of the significance or operationalisation of each principle in the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction. The first principle that I present is authenticity.

6.4.1.3.1. Authenticity

My frameworks' principle of authenticity suggests that assessment of academic writing should incorporate authentic practices in the assessment events. Authenticity in assessment refers to the incorporation of replication of real life practices in the assessment task. This principle is supported in the concept of alternative assessment which I have advocated in this study, in that some scholars tend to refer to the concept of alternative assessment as 'authentic' assessment (Barootchi & Keshavarz, 2002; Finch, 2002). It is also evident in the findings of my study that students also tend to prefer assessment that features the principle of authenticity. For example, my findings showed that the students

developed interest in the content and skills that were assessed after they realised that the course content for the English for Academic Purposes would enable them to endure the academic obligations in their respective faculties, as well as in postgraduate endeavors.

Based on the principle of authenticity, assessment should focus more on employing criterion referenced orientation (Bachman & Palmer, 2011), where the emphasis is placed on ensuring that the target learning objectives are achieved by the students. I could also make reference to the The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) (2013) framework for 21st Century Curriculum and Assessment, where it is advised that assessment should seek to promote opportunities for students to consciously make connections between their academic work and that of the greater community. In other words, what is assessed in the classroom should be linked to real life, out-of-classroom expectations of applying the learned skills. Based on the NCTE framework, students should be equipped with skills to use technological tools in the classroom and the language learning environment in which they may find themselves, and they should also be able to select most suitable technological tools to solve particular problems as well as address certain needs.



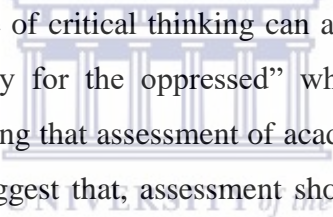
I believe that, the principle of authenticity could empower the students as they benefit from the assessment meaningfully. With reference to Freire’s view of “education as liberatory practice”, I believe that meaningful assessment where students can apply the assessed skills in real life practices, could liberate students in becoming independent and useful academic writers, and they may retain these skills even when they have left the academic writing classroom. The next principle of my framework is critical thinking.

6.4.1.3.2. Critical thinking

The principle of critical thinking in my framework suggests that assessment of academic writing should incorporate and promote critical thinking in the skills and contents being assessed. Assessment of students’ critical thinking skills is documented to be focused on students’ abilities to select, evaluate, analyse, reflect, question, infer, and make informed judgements (Vyncke, 2012). In the context of academic writing, these abilities are usually

demonstrated when students are asked to present an argumentation or produce an argument, for instance, the essay, thesis or dissertation.

The findings of my study support the principle of critical thinking in this framework since lecturers showed support for assessment that promote critical thinking, and most interestingly, students criticised assessments that do not prompt them to apply their critical thinking skills. The students also criticised particularly the traditional assessments such as test and examination since they tend to require more controlled performance which does not really promote critical thinking. Such assessments are in contrast to Freire's (1968; 2000) constructivist view that opposes assessment of students as if they were working at storing deposits entrusted to them; such an assessment may lead to less critical consciousness.



My framework's principle of critical thinking can also be illuminated by the notion of Freire's (1968) "pedagogy for the oppressed" which advocates for a pedagogy of liberation, further suggesting that assessment of academic writing should cover a multi-level scope. This is to suggest that, assessment should promote learning of skills and content that is applicable in the classroom and out of classroom settings. In this regard, I wish to make a reference to the NCTE (2013) framework for 21st century curriculum and assessment which states that, students of the 21st century need to develop awareness of the world around them, in and outside their classroom. They should be able to select, organise, and design information to be shared, understood, and distributed beyond their classroom: both in the local and international contexts. Furthermore, Kunnan's (2013) principle of justice also complements the principle of critical thinking in my framework that, assessment of academic writing should have benefits to society and should promote justice through public justification of the assessment. An assessment should be aimed at bringing benefits to society by making a positive social impact. It should also provide justice by publicly justifying the way students are assessed as well as what is assessed. Additionally, the framework seeks for assessment that prompts students to create, critique, analyse, and evaluate multimedia texts, because the 21st century students are expected to be critical users of information.

The constructivist view of education which informs my study also supports assessment of critical thinking in academic writing. Based on this view, my framework underscores the need for assessment that promotes creativity, critical thinking, application of knowledge and independent learning through alternative assessment. My framework is also in keeping with Gronlund (1998) who wrote that, assessment should promote application, synthesis, and evaluation skills, as well as creation of knowledge. These skills and competencies are also documented so that they help students to acquire higher levels of thinking as per different levels in the Bloom's taxonomy (O'Neill & Murphy, 2010).

The principle of critical thinking is featured in one of the theories that inform my study: the sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1962). This theory informs my study that meaning is not an individual construction but a social negotiation that depends on supportive interaction and shared use of language. It is therefore through this negotiation of meaning that critical thinking is also developed. Hence, this framework suggests that assessors of academic writing design assessment that affords opportunities for students to negotiate meaning and complete tasks collaboratively. The next principle of my framework is feedback.

6.4.1.3.3. Feedback

The principle of feedback in my framework suggests that assessment of academic writing should be a tool for gathering feedback on the learning process. Assessment should provide feedback to both the students and the lecturer in the belief that the feedback obtained can be useful to inform and direct pedagogy, the lecturer and students' learning (Balliro, 1993; Dikli, 2003; Fiktorius, 2013). Hence, Pierce (1998) advises that assessors or rather lecturers should teach students how to engage in various forms of assessment (for instance, peer assessment and self-assessment) in order to maximise the amount and quality of feedback they may need.

The significance of the principle of feedback in my framework is evident in the findings of my study. In this regard, my findings showed that students indicated dissatisfaction in feedback that is provided by means of only allocating marks (a number) to specific aspects of a piece of writing written by them, without any qualitative feedback about the students' performance in each aspect of the piece of writing. The students' concern with this kind of feedback has long been addressed by Pierce (1998) who warned that a single number or letter grade may not be enough as feedback; one should provide feedback on specified criteria. For instance, criteria could be stipulated in a rubric.

The principle of feedback in my framework also suggests that the purpose of an assessment should be explicitly defined, as to whether it seeks formative or summative feedback. An assessment could be planned for summative or formative purposes, and it could also be set for high or low stake decisions on the students' performances (Educational Testing Services, 2009). To illustrate, a test (which is usually considered summative and traditional) that is designed to give summative feedback can be formative if the lecturer uses it to provide feedback for the students (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2005). Additionally, the findings of my study also explained this complexity where an assessment (essay) was administered for both formative and summative feedback. It was diagnostic (formative) since the students were assessed on various elements of the essay and the lecturer could provide feedback on the students' performance and progress accordingly, whilst it was summative because the assessment had to be graded and its score added to the students' continuous assessment marks. Therefore, assessment of academic writing should involve purposeful gathering of feedback that inform both the lecturers and students about the weaknesses and the strength of the learning process and instruction. The next principle of my framework is practicality.

6.4.1.3.4. Practicality

The principle of practicality in my frameworks suggests that assessors should put in consideration the feasibility of assessments in a given context of academic writing instruction. Practicality refers to the resources (economic, human, and temporal) that may

be required to design, administer, score and report results for a given assessment (Bachman & Palmer, 2011; Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010). Although literature might have presented various types of assessments that could be used to assess academic writing, lecturers or assessors may need to put into consideration that various assessment settings or contexts may not accommodate all sort of assessments.

There could also be legislative allowances or barriers that may influence the possibility of administering a type of assessment to students. Universities tend to have policies put in place that govern how assessments should be conducted. For example, the University of Namibia (2013) Assessment Policy allows lecturers to employ various assessment practices, and the policy “does not constrain the development of alternative or additional forms of effective assessment, provided such assessments are consistent with the principles stated in the policy” (p. 3). In this case, the context could be favourable for lecturers to exercise their creativity in assessing academic writing. However, the findings of my study also showed that circumstance such as the need for uniformity, in cases when a course is taught by multiple lecturers, may also be a barrier to exercising assessment flexibility and creativity. Certain factors, such as the student-lecturer ratio, may have an influence on the applicability of certain types of assessment. The findings of my study showed that, high student-lecturer ratio in a classroom can be a challenge especially when it comes to providing individualised feedback. However, sometimes the student-lecturer ratio is not in the hands of the lecturers to decide, especially when there is high student intake with understaffing.

The principle of practicality is also based on Brown and Abeywickrama’s (2010) caution that, “Alternatives [of assessment] such as portfolio, conferencing with students on written work, or observation of learners over time all require considerable time and effort on the part of the [lecturer] and the student, as well as greater cost on the institutional budget” (p. 124). Some of the assessment practices may require certain tools or equipment, such as computers, to be completed. Hence, assessors should also ensure that the types of assessment they select would be feasible with the available resources from the side of both the lecturers and students.

The physical environment may also need consideration in the administration of a selected type of assessment. My study found that some types of seating arrangements may only be favourable to some of the types of assessment. Therefore, my framework suggests that lecturers consider seating arrangements that best fit the types of assessment they will use in a given lecture. My framework could also be used to refer to Falout's (2014) concept of "action zone", which is the area in the classroom where the most interest, excitement and class participation is likely to occur. The formation of action zones are closely related to the proximity, visual contact, and students' perpendicular orientation with the lecturer. Hence, I wish to argue that, the success of students in academic writing performance can be enhanced when they are seated inside the action zone, while the performance of the ones outside may face some challenges. In light of this, I wish to suggest some types of seating arrangements that I drew from Zerlin's (2009) study report:

- The **pairs** set up consists of two desks placed together and the students sit facing the blackboard in order to see the information displayed by the lecturer. In this arrangement, the lecturer is able to walk around the whole classroom and monitor the students' process of completing the task, and also assist the students where it may be necessary.
- **Clusters** set up usually consists of four to five desks placed together, facing each other. Each cluster consists of four or five students, respectively. This arrangement works well in classes where alternative groupings are used, and students would be able to make eye contact as well as assist each other. Since the main idea of this arrangement is to promote collaborative learning, lecturers should ensure that students in each cluster are at different levels of academic performance.
- The **semi-circle** set up consists of desks placed next to each other in a semi-circle shape. In this set up, students do classroom activities such as group discussions, where they could be brainstorming ideas, working on a writing project or even evaluating a certain written project. Here, the lecturer can also walk around the classroom to facilitate the process of completing the task. With further reference

to Falout (2014) who used the term “circular seating arrangements”, this set up “can bring people together, excite their senses, endear each one to the others, create an atmosphere of mutual care, and stimulate the entire circle into a social action zone” (p. 279). As I have illustrated in Figure 6.2 below, the whole class is turned into an action zone (represented by the dotted line) which leads to an all-includable instructional environment.

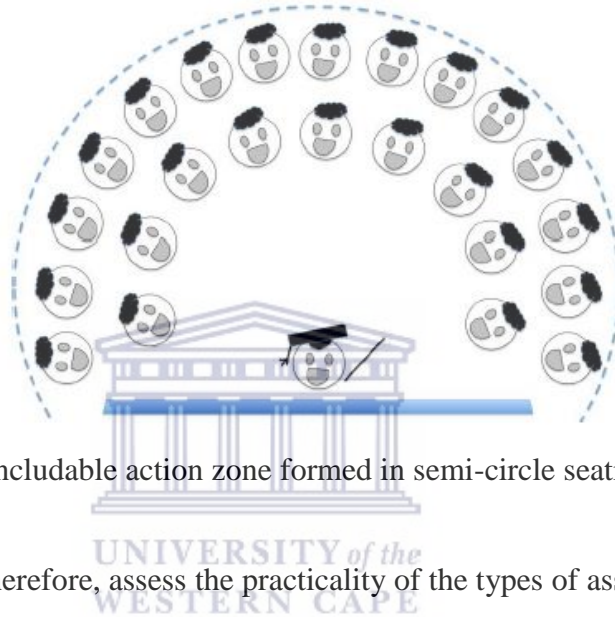


Figure 6.2. All-includable action zone formed in semi-circle seating (Falout, 2014)

Lecturers should, therefore, assess the practicality of the types of assessment they would like to use in academic writing instruction. The next principle of my framework is inclusivity.

6.4.1.3.5. Inclusivity

The principle of inclusivity in my framework suggests that assessment of academic writing should be, as much as possible, accommodative of different students’ circumstances and characteristics. According to Kneale and Collings (2015), inclusive assessment should enable assessors “to assess students equitably” (p. 1), so that they can demonstrate their skills or knowledge with no or minimal hindrance to meet their learning objectives. The principle of inclusivity calls for the fair and effective design and use of assessments that do not prevent students to exhibit their full potential of what they know, have learned, understand, and can do (Hockings, 2010).

The findings of my study suggest the need for inclusivity in academic writing instruction. With reference to Gardener's (1984) theory of Multiple Intelligence which opposes the one dimensional and uniform view of assessing students, the findings of my study showed that although students tend to possess various intelligences, it turned out that the types of assessments that emerged from my data analysis did not seem to fully respond to or accommodate all the dominant intelligences that students possess. The principle of inclusivity, therefore, recommends that assessors should be aware of the intelligences profile of their students so that they could design and use assessments that serve students equitably.

I am also inclined to relate the principle of inclusivity to the insights of Cummins' (2008) BICS and CALP. With regard to the students' level of BICS and CALP, this principle suggests that assessment should serve the real language needs of the students. Lecturers or assessors should design and use assessments in a flexible manner that they recognise the characteristics of the students. Normally, the BICS and CALP explain that students should develop the basic language skills first and then they can carry on with the academic language skills (Cummins, 2008). The findings of my study correspond to this notion in that my study found that students also felt that their BICS (especially when it comes to writing skills) were not well developed for them to cope with the rigors of academic writing instruction. Therefore, although the main focus of assessment in academic writing courses is the learning of CALP, the principle of inclusivity suggests that assessors should be ready to adjust their instructional approaches should there be a need to address the BICS of the students, which is a foundation for the CALP.

I wish to further relate the principle of inclusivity to Kunnan's (2013) principle of Fairness. The principle of fairness serves as guidance in the design and establishment of fair assessments, or rather reduce or eliminate unfairness in language assessment. Based on the principle of fairness, the principle of inclusivity calls for an assessment that is fair to all students and treats all of them with respect. In this regard, an assessment should provide enough and equal opportunity(ies) for the students to learn the skills, knowledge and abilities that are to be assessed. It should maintain consistency and meaningfulness

in its result interpretation. It should also be free of bias against any particular student; this could be achieved by assessing construct-relevant matters.

Assessment of academic writing should, therefore, be aimed at promoting inclusion of all autonomous students, and lecturers or assessors of academic writing should consider the student profile in their classrooms so that they design and use the types of assessment that best match the students' learning needs. The next principle of my framework is clear instruction.

6.4.1.3.6. Clear instructions

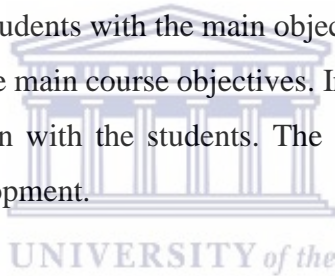
The principle of clear instructions in my framework suggests that assessment of academic writing should be accompanied by clear, precise, comprehensible, unambiguous instruction. This makes it easier for the lecturers to assess students' abilities effectively, as well as for the students not to be disadvantaged by the instructions used in an assessment. Based on this principle, students should not perform poorly in a given assessment because of poorly articulated instructions; instead, students' poor performance should rather be caused by their poor mastery of the skills, content or knowledge that was taught. Although this principle calls for the usage of simplified and clear instructions or accessible language in assessment, it should not overlook cases where complex or sophisticated language is part of the construct under assessment and should form part of the instructions.

The findings of my study support the need for clear instructions in the assessment of academic writing since the students seemed to prefer assessments that are administered with sufficient and comprehensible instructions. Therefore, the principle of clear instructions calls for assessment that contains clarification of expected and acceptable performance in terms of vocabulary, language and content from both the side of the students and the lecturers.

At this juncture, I wish to relate the principle of clear instructions to the element of validity stipulated in the "Guidelines for the Assessment of Language Learners"

published by the Educational Testing Services (2009). The guidelines discourage assessments that focus on factors that are irrelevant to the learning objective, target skills, or target level of proficiency. Instead, the guidelines aim at ensuring that assessments are used to assess what they are really intended to assess. The principle of clear instructions in my framework relates to these guidelines in that it correspondingly suggests that assessors provide clear directions on what is expected from the students – whether to respond in a paragraph, complete sentences, list or diagrams.

Drawing from Pierce’s (1998) advice, the principle of clear instructions suggests that assessment should consist of specified criteria, for instance in a form of a rubric. Lombardi (2008) labels a good rubric to be the one that identifies how and which work is to be judged, and the difference between excellent and weaker works. Time should be devoted to familiarising students with the main objectives of each task, and also how the objectives are linked to the main course objectives. In some cases, the rubric can even be developed in collaboration with the students. The next principle of my framework is assessment literacy development.



6.4.1.3.7. Assessment literacy development

The principle of assessment literacy development in my framework suggests that there should be support programmes that assist lecturers or assessors of academic writing to develop awareness and competence of high quality assessment methods or practices. In particular, language assessment literacy refers to:

“...the acquisition of knowledge, skills and principle of [assessment] construction, [assessment] interpretation and use, [assessment] evaluation, and classroom-based assessments alongside the development of a critical stance about the functions of assessment within a larger education context (Lam, 2015, p. 170).

Through the principle of assessment literacy development, and based on the findings of my study, I am inclined to believe that lecturers of academic writing would be keener to explore alternative assessments provided their knowledge and skills on these assessments

is enhanced. This principle is also pinned to the Teacher Knowledge theory which refers to the particular knowledge that teachers have that relates to knowing how to teach (Bresler, 1995), and in this context how to assess academic writing. The findings of my study suggest that lecturers may still need more empowerment with assessment knowledge and skills. Aschbacher (1993) believes that implementation of alternative assessment can be hampered by the lack of assessment literacy among educators. Research has also shown that, interventions that had been designed to improve teachers' assessment literacy were found to have positively contributed to the teachers' capacity and ability to design and make use of high quality classroom assessments (Ho, 2013).

The need for improved lecturers' assessment knowledge or competence has also received some attention in the literature where attempts to improve assessment competencies of lecturer were documented. I wish to refer to the Assessment Competency and Professional Learning Framework (ACPLF) which advocates for a comprehensive and systematic framework that defines a set of knowledge and skill-based competencies for lecturers to be assessment literate in the classrooms of tomorrow (Shin, 2015). Therefore, the principle of assessment literacy suggests that lecturers of academic writing should have access to sustained assessment literacy programmes so that they are equipped with the necessary and current knowledge and skills of high quality assessment practices.

Assessment literacy development is the last (but not least) principle of my framework in my study. For practical reasons, I believe it is important that I present a condensed checklist that could be used by assessors when selecting, designing and implementing alternative assessments in their academic writing programmes. I present it in Table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1

Checklist of the framework of integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction

Guiding Principle	Descriptors	Check
Authenticity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporates real life practices in the assessment task. • What is assessed in the classroom should be linked to real life practices. • Employs criterion referenced orientation. • Assessment linked to the target learning objectives of the course. • Enables students to exploit technological resources when writing. • Enables students to be able to select most suitable technological tools to solve particular problems as well as address certain needs. • Considers the need for academic integrity in academic writing. 	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
Critical thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assesses abilities to select, evaluate, analyse, reflect, questions, infer, and make informed judgements. • Assesses presentation of an argumentation or produce an argument. • Leads to critical consciousness. • Assesses skills and content that are applicable in the classroom and out of classroom settings. 	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

- Assessment should have benefits to society and promote justice through public justification of the assessment. _____
- Assess ability to create, critique, analyse, and evaluate multimedia texts. _____
- Promotes application, synthesis, and evaluation skills, as well as creation of knowledge. _____
- Avails opportunities for students to negotiate meaning and complete tasks collaboratively. _____

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| Feedback | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides feedback to both the students and the lecturer. _____ • Gathers useful feedback to inform the pedagogy. _____ • Enables students to learn how to engage in various forms of assessment. _____ • Provides feedback on specified criteria. _____ • Includes a rubric. _____ • Specified whether the assessment seeks formative or summative feedback. _____ • Specified whether the assessment is for low or high stake purposes. _____ |
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| Practicality | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers the feasibility of assessments in a given context. _____ • Complies with the institutional policies. _____ • Complies with the faculty and departmental regulations. _____ • Possible with the current student-lecturer ratio. _____ • Possible for completion with the available timeframe. _____ • Possible with the available workforce. _____ • Possible with the current seating arrangement _____ |
|--------------|---|

- Possible with the current resources. _____

Inclusivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodative of different students' circumstances and characteristics. _____ • Promotes inclusion of all autonomous students. _____ • Assesses students equitably. _____ • Enables students to demonstrate their skills or knowledge with no or minimal hindrance to meet their learning objectives. _____ • Does not prevent students to exhibit their fully potential of what they know, have learned, understand, and can do. _____ • Responds to the multiple-intelligence profile of the students. _____ • Assesses the real language needs of the students. _____ • Serves the real language needs of the students. _____ • Eliminates unfairness, fair to all students and treats them all with respect. _____ • Maintains consistency and meaningfulness in its result interpretation. _____ • Free of bias against any particular student. _____ • Assesses construct-relevant matters. _____
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Clear instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has clear, precise, comprehensible, unambiguous instruction. _____ • Makes it easier for the lecturers to assess students' abilities effectively. _____ • Students are not disadvantaged by the instructions used in an assessment. _____
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- Has clarification of expected and acceptable performance in terms of vocabulary, language and content from both the side of the students and the lecturers. _____
- Provides clear directions on what is expected from the students – whether to respond in a paragraph, complete sentences, list or diagrams. _____
- Scoring guidelines are disclosed to students. _____
- Rubric is used. _____

Assessment literacy development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are support programmes that assist lecturers or assessors of academic writing to develop awareness and competence of high quality assessment methods or practices. _____ • Equips lecturers with the necessary and current knowledge and skills of high quality assessment practices. _____ • There is provision of comprehensive and systematic guidelines that define a set of knowledge and skill-based competencies for lecturers to be assessment literate. _____
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The significance of my framework for integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction lies in the need for guiding principles that inform assessors and lecturers of academic writing on how they could use quality assessments in their academic writing courses. Therefore, this framework serves as a tool of reference when lecturers have to select, design and use various assessments of academic writing in their academic writing courses. This framework may also be informative to other stakeholders of academic writing assessment such as educational managers at various levels in a university setting. These stakeholders could have great influence on assessment policies that govern assessment practices in university programmes. My framework can also be

used by other researchers who may wish to conduct evaluation studies on assessment practices. My framework should not be regarded as a replacement of other assessment frameworks that may have been already in place, but it should be seen as a supplement and complement to other working assessment framework, aimed at improving the quality of assessment practices in language assessment and academic writing in particular. Having presented my framework, I would now proceed to state the limitations of my study.

6.5. Limitations of the Study

I will address the limitations of the study in this subsection.

6.5.1. Institutional setting

As a researcher working in an institutional setting, I have had to adhere to the constraints imposed on me. As a result, my autonomy was somehow restricted since I had to design my study and collect data within the requirements and setup of the institutional programs. This is to state that, I was not at liberty to prescribe specific topics to be assessed since I was not allowed to temper with the normal progress of teaching at the Language Centre. It would have been interesting to observe selected topics on academic writing.

6.5.2. Time

The fact that some of the target lessons that I chose to observe ran concurrently, it could be possible that I might have missed some of the assessment practices that could be of great significance to the findings of my study. I also had to ensure that my data collection, especially the observations and student interviews, were completed within a semester period, since English for Academic Purposes was a semester course. I could have observed the lesson for little longer and grasped a more complete picture of the assessment practices in the course.

6.5.3. Methodological Limitations

My study only collected data from two types of assessment stakeholders: lecturers and students. My study would also benefit from insights that could come from other

stakeholders, such as: policy makers in the institution, and lecturers from the faculties. Since I employed a qualitative research design, my study did not involve a larger population that could significantly allow generalisation of the data. However, the objective of qualitative data is not generalisation but in-depth understanding of phenomena and issues that are related to the subject matter: alternative assessment.

6.6. Insights/Issues for Further Research

As I approach the completion of my study, I wish to state that the findings of my study are neither conclusive nor definite. I would suggest further exploration and inquiry on the use of alternative assessment in academic language courses.

1. My study only focused on the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing. Future research on alternative assessment should also be directed to other academic language skills, such as: listening, speaking, reading, and academic conventions.
2. Provided that alternative assessment is integrated in the English for Academic Purposes course, future research can consider a tracer study to evaluate the skills that students have retained as a result of alternative assessment in the academic language courses that they may have attended.
3. In formulating my framework of integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction, I acclaim Shin's (2015) views that we need to continue working on innovative assessment practices so that we can keep pace with the dynamics of teaching and learning activities in various areas of education. It is for this reason that I suggest and encourage further empirical trials and evaluations of the assumptions I have made in my framework, so that the framework remains informed by research and various theories that feature language assessment practices.

4. In light of the Multiple Intelligences theory (Gardener, 1984), future research needs to look into the case of students autonomy in relation to assessment or instructional methods used in academic language courses.
5. Last but not least, I suggest that future research considers using a population comprising of a wider range of language assessment stakeholders, as well as explore the mixed methods approach to further study the subject matter from various angles and approaches.

All in all, my study advocates for an alternative assessment approach which promotes quality, meaningful assessment practices that brings value to students' learning and facilitates development of academic writing skills. The following quotations resonate with the beliefs and concerns that I have voiced in my study:

If you learn only the [language assessment] methods, you [will] be tied to your methods, but if you learn principles you can devise your own [quality, meaningful and effective assessment] methods (Ralph Waldo Emerson, quoted in Huitt, 2003).

There is a need to redefine the objectives of writing assessment, moving it from a punitive, gatekeeping tool that measures deficits, to a facilitative tool that informs novice academic writers of the characteristics of clear expression of thought, informs teachers of students' potential, and informs the classroom curriculum. The definition of writing development needs to be extended from the indication of increasing proficiency in editing mechanical errors to the increasing ability to successfully complete a wide variety of tasks (Massa, 1997, p. 7).

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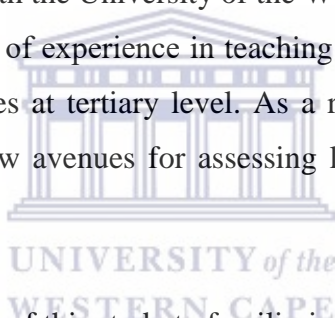
APPENDIX 1

Information Sheet

Faculty of Education
Private bag X17 Bellville 7535 South Africa
Tel. 021-959 2449/2442
Fax 021-959 3358

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Hafeni P. S. Hamakali. I am currently studying towards a PhD degree in Language and Literacy with the University of the Western Cape (UWC), South Africa. I have several years' worth of experience in teaching English as a Second Language and Academic Literacy courses at tertiary level. As a result, this has resulted in my keen interest in researching new avenues for assessing language in the Academic Literacy courses.



I kindly invite participants of this study to familiarise themselves with the content of this information sheet, and to freely ask questions or anything that may need clarification. There are two groups of participants: lecturers and students. The lecturers will participate in an interview and their lessons will also be observed. The students will participate in the focus group discussion as well as complete a multiple intelligence inventory. Participation in this study is voluntary and one is free to withdraw from the study without any obligations.

Research Title: *Assessing students in English for Academic Purposes: The role of alternative assessment tools in writing instruction*

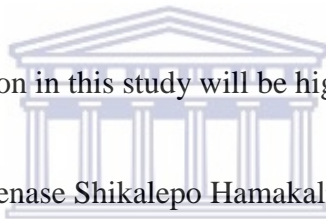
The research objectives of this study are to:

1. Explore the different alternative assessment tools that are used by English lecturers in academic writing instruction.


2. Analyse the factors that influence the integration of alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.
3. Assess the compatibility of assessment tools used by lecturers and the types of students' intelligences.
4. Assess the lecturers and students' attitude towards alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.
5. Propose a framework of integrating alternative assessment in academic writing instruction.

My hope is that this study improves the quality of assessment approaches in the English for Academic Purposes course and that it will strengthen my professional practices as a language educator.

Your voluntary participation in this study will be highly appreciated.



Researcher: Hafeni Pamwenase Shikalepo Hamakali (PhD Candidate UWC)

Signaturer:  UNIVERSITY of the
WESTERN CAPE

Date: 25/10/2016

Mobile: +264 81 148 9922

Email: hhamakali@yahoo.com

Should you have any queries in this regard, please contact my supervisor, Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam on the contact details below:

Signature:..... 

Date: 31.../...10.../...2016.....

Supervisor: **Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam**

Contact details: +27 (0) 21-959 2449; ssivasubramaniam@uwc.ac.za

APPENDIX 2

Statement by the Researcher

Faculty of Education
Private bag X17 Bellville 7535 South Africa
Tel. 021-959 2449/2442
Fax 021-959 3358

I, the undersigned, have accurately read out the information sheet to the participants, and to the best of my ability I have made sure that they have understood what they are expected to do.

I confirm that I have given them opportunity to ask questions about the study, and that I have answered all the questions to the best of my ability and to their satisfaction.

I also confirm that they have not been coerced into giving consent, and that their consent has been given freely and voluntarily.

Researcher: Hafeni Pamwenase Shikalepo Hamakali (PhD Candidate UWC)

Signaturer: 

Date: 25/10/2016

Mobile: +264 81 148 9922

Email: hhamakali@yahoo.com

Should you have any queries in this regard, please contact my supervisor, Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam on the contact details below:

Signature :..... 

Date : 31.../...10.../...2016.....

Supervisor: **Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam**

Contact details: +27 (0) 21-959 2449; ssivasubramaniam@uwc.ac.za

APPENDIX 3

Permission Request Letter to the University of Namibia Research Publication Office

Faculty of Education
Private bag X17 Bellville 7535 South Africa
Tel. 021-959 2449/2442
Fax 021-959 3358
25 October 2016

The Director: Research and Publications Office
University of Namibia
Private Bag 13301
Windhoek



Dear Dr Kapenda,

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIAN (UNAM) LANGUAGE CENTRE

I, **Hafeni Hamakali**, hereby request your good office to grant me permission to conduct research at your Centre, during the first semester of 2017.

I am currently a part-time registered PhD in Language and Literacy student at the University of the Western Cape (UWC), under the supervision of Prof. Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam. My research entitled “**Assessing students in English for Academic Purposes: The role of alternative assessment tools in writing instruction**” focuses on issues of language assessment as they manifest themselves in academic writing instruction.

I am aware of the ethical concerns involved with my data collection which entails interviews, student focus groups, observations, completion of a multiple intelligence inventory. As a result, I will apply for ethical clearance from both UNAM and UWC. The information to be collected from the participants will be treated with confidentiality and anonymity. In the final report findings, it will not be traced back to the individual participants at the University of Namibia Language Centre.

Should you have any queries regarding the study, you may also contact my supervisor, Prof. Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam at Tel: +27 21 959 2449 or ssivasubramaniam@uwc.ac.za

Yours sincerely,

Researcher: Hafeni Pamwenase Shikalepo Hamakali (PhD Candidate UWC)

Signaturer:  

Date: 25/10/2016

Mobile: +264 81 148 9922

Email: hhamakali@yahoo.com

Should you have any queries in this regard, please contact my supervisor, Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam on the contact details below:

Signature :..... 

Date : 31.../...10..../...2016.....

Supervisor: **Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam**

Contact details: +27 (0) 21-959 2449; ssivasubramaniam@uwc.ac.za

APPENDIX 4

Ethical Clearance from the University Of Namibia



ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

Ethical Clearance Reference Number: LC/334/2017 **Date: 18 October, 2017**

This Ethical Clearance Certificate is issued by the University of Namibia Research Ethics Committee (UREC) in accordance with the University of Namibia's Research Ethics Policy and Guidelines. Ethical approval is given in respect of undertakings contained in the Research Project outlined below. This Certificate is issued on the recommendations of the ethical evaluation done by the Faculty/Centre/Campus Research & Publications Committee sitting with the Postgraduate Studies Committee.

Title of Project: An Alternative Assessment In Academic Writing Instruction: Assessing Students In The English For Academic Purposes (EAP) Course In The University Of Namibia

Researcher: Hafeni P. S. Hamakali

Student Number: 3612525

Supervisor(s): Prof. Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam

Take note of the following:

- (a) Any significant changes in the conditions or undertakings outlined in the approved Proposal must be communicated to the UREC. An application to make amendments may be necessary.
- (b) Any breaches of ethical undertakings or practices that have an impact on ethical conduct of the research must be reported to the UREC.
- (c) The Principal Researcher must report issues of ethical compliance to the UREC (through the Chairperson of the Faculty/Centre/Campus Research & Publications Committee) at the end of the Project or as may be requested by UREC.
- (d) The UREC retains the right to:
 - (i) Withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance if any unethical practices (as outlined in the Research Ethics Policy) have been detected or suspected,
 - (ii) Request for an ethical compliance report at any point during the course of the research.

UREC wishes you the best in your research.

Prof. P. Odonkor: UREC Chairperson Ms. P. Claassen: UREC Secretary



** Amended Title: *Assessing students in English for Academic Purposes: The role of alternative assessment tools in writing instruction*

APPENDIX 5

Ethical Clearance from the University of the Western Cape



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR: RESEARCH
RESEARCH AND INNOVATION DIVISION

Private Bag X17, Bellville 7535
South Africa
T: +27 21 959 2988/2948
F: +27 21 959 3170
E: research-ethics@uwc.ac.za
www.uwc.ac.za

13 December 2016

Mr HPS Hamakali
Faculty of Education

Ethics Reference Number: HS/17/1/3

Project Title: An alternative assessment in academic writing instruction:
Assessing students in the English for Academic Purposes (EAP)
course in the University of Namibia.

Approval Period: 12 December 2016 -12 December 2017

I hereby certify that the Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee of the University of the Western Cape approved the methodology and ethics of the above mentioned research project.

Any amendments, extension or other modifications to the protocol must be submitted to the Ethics Committee for approval. Please remember to submit a progress report in good time for annual renewal.

The Committee must be informed of any serious adverse event and/or termination of the study.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Josias'.

*Ms Patricia Josias
Research Ethics Committee Officer
University of the Western Cape*

PROVISIONAL REC NUMBER - 130416-049

FROM HOPE TO ACTION THROUGH KNOWLEDGE.

** Amended Title: *Assessing students in English for Academic Purposes: The role of alternative assessment tools in writing instruction*

APPENDIX 6

Participant Consent Form

Faculty of Education
Private bag X17 Bellville 7535 South Africa
Tel. 021-959 2449/2442
Fax 021-959 3358

I, the undersigned, have accurately read the information sheet, and understand what is expected of me as a participant in this study.

I confirm that I have been given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and that the questions have been answered accurately and to my satisfaction.

I confirm that I have not been pressured into giving consent, and that my consent to participate in this study is given freely and voluntarily. I have also been informed that I may withdraw from this study at any time without any obligation.

Participant's full name:

Signature of participant:

Date:

Researcher: Hafeni Pamwenase Shikalepo Hamakali (PhD Candidate UWC)

Signature: 

Date: 25/10/2016

Mobile: +264 81 148 9922

Email: hhamakali@yahoo.com

Should you have any queries in this regard, please contact my supervisor, Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam on the contact details below:

Signature:..... 

Date: 31.../...10..../...2016.....

Supervisor: **Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam**

Contact details: +27 (0) 21-959 2449; ssivasubramaniam@uwc.ac.za



APPENDIX 7

Completed and Signed Participant Consent Forms

Annex 7.1 Signed Participant Consent Forms: Lecturer Participants

Faculty of Education
Private bag X17 Bellville 7535 South Africa
Tel. 021-959 2449/2442
Fax 021-959 3358

I, the undersigned, have accurately read the information sheet, and understand what is expected of me as participant in this study.

I confirm that I have been given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and that the questions have been answered accurately and to my satisfaction.

I confirm that I have not been pressured into giving consent, and that my consent to participate in this study is given freely and voluntarily. I have also been informed that I may withdraw from this study at any time without any obligation.

Participant's full name: Justina Amakali

Signature of participant: 

Date: 30 May 2017

Researcher: Hafeni Pamwenase Shikalepo Hamakali (PhD Candidate UWC)

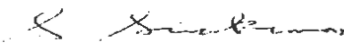
Signaturer: 

Date: 25/10/2016

Mobile: +264 81 148 9922

Email: hhamakali@yahoo.com

Should you have any queries in this regard, please contact my supervisor, Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam on the contact details below:

Signature :..... 

Date : 31.../...10.../...2016.....

Supervisor: **Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam**

Contact details: +27 (0) 21-959 2449; ssivasubramaniam@uwc.ac.za

Faculty of Education
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Tel. 021-959 2449/2442
Fax 021-959 3358

I, the undersigned, have accurately read the information sheet, and understand what is expected of me as participant in this study.

I confirm that I have been given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and that the questions have been answered accurately and to my satisfaction.

I confirm that I have not been pressured into giving consent, and that my consent to participate in this study is given freely and voluntarily. I have also been informed that I may withdraw from this study at any time without any obligation.

Participant's full name: Joseph Mukoroli

Signature of participant: Mukoroli

Date: 17.5.2017

Researcher: Hafeni Pamwenase Shikalepo Hamakali (PhD Candidate UWC)

Signaturer: Hafeni Pamwenase Shikalepo Hamakali

Date: 25/10/2016

Mobile: +264 81 148 9922

Email: hhamakali@yahoo.com

Should you have any queries in this regard, please contact my supervisor, Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam on the contact details below:

Signature :..... Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam

Date : 31.../...10..../...2016.....


Supervisor: **Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam**
Contact details: +27 (0) 21-959 2449; ssivasubramaniam@uwc.ac.za

I, the undersigned, have accurately read the information sheet, and understand what is expected of me as participant in this study.

I confirm that I have been given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and that the questions have been answered accurately and to my satisfaction.

I confirm that I have not been pressured into giving consent, and that my consent to participate in this study is given freely and voluntarily. I have also been informed that I may withdraw from this study at any time without any obligation.

Participant's full name: Patrick Panduleni Paulus

Signature of participant: 

Date: 16 May 2017

Researcher: Hafeni Pamwenase Shikalepo Hamakali (PhD Candidate UWC)

Signaturer: 

Date: 25/10/2016

Mobile: +264 81 148 9922

Email: hhamakali@yahoo.com

Should you have any queries in this regard, please contact my supervisor, Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam on the contact details below:

Signature :..... 

Date : 31.../...10..../...2016.....

Supervisor: **Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam**

Contact details: +27 (0) 21-959 2449; ssivasubramaniam@uwc.ac.za

Annex 7.2 Signed Participant Consent Forms: Student Participants

Faculty of Education
Private bag X17 Bellville 7535 South Africa
Tel. 021-959 2449/2442
Fax 021-959 3358

I, the undersigned, have accurately read the information sheet, and understand what is expected of me as participant in this study.

I confirm that I have been given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and that the questions have been answered accurately and to my satisfaction.

I confirm that I have not been pressured into giving consent, and that my consent to participate in this study is given freely and voluntarily. I have also been informed that I may withdraw from this study at any time without any obligation.

Participant's full name: Hanqula Hanfican Nangoto
Signature of participant: [Handwritten Signature]
Date: 05 | 05 | 2017

Researcher: Hafeni Pamwenase Shikalepo Hamakali (PhD Candidate UWC)
Signaturer: [Handwritten Signature]
Date: 25/10/2016
Mobile: +264 81 148 9922
Email: hhamakali@yahoo.com

Should you have any queries in this regard, please contact my supervisor, Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam on the contact details below:

Signature :..... [Handwritten Signature]

Date : 31.../...10..../...2016.....

Supervisor: **Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam**
Contact details: +27 (0) 21-959 2449; ssivasubramaniam@uwc.ac.za

I, the undersigned, have accurately read the information sheet, and understand what is expected of me as participant in this study.

I confirm that I have been given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and that the questions have been answered accurately and to my satisfaction.

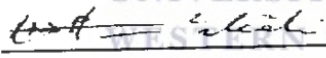
I confirm that I have not been pressured into giving consent, and that my consent to participate in this study is given freely and voluntarily. I have also been informed that I may withdraw from this study at any time without any obligation.

Participant's full name: ROGER LISEHO MANYANDO

Signature of participant: 

Date: 05 MAY 2017

Researcher: Hafeni Pamwenase Shikalepo Hamakali (PhD Candidate UWC)

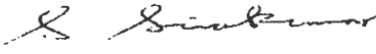
Signaturer: 

Date: 25/10/2016

Mobile: +264 81 148 9922

Email: hhamakali@yahoo.com

Should you have any queries in this regard, please contact my supervisor, Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam on the contact details below:

Signature :..... 

Date : 31.../...10.../...2016.....

Supervisor: **Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam**

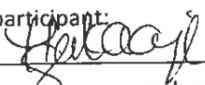
Contact details: +27 (0) 21-959 2449; ssivasubramaniam@uwc.ac.za

Faculty of Education
Private bag X17 Bellville 7535 South Africa
Tel. 021-959 2449/2442
Fax 021-959 3358


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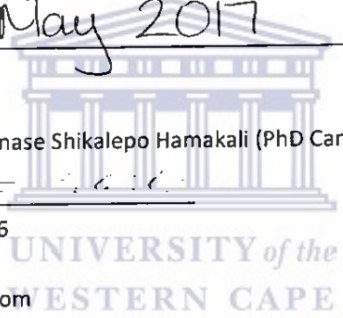
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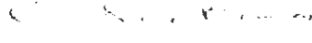
Participant's full name: Stevencia Grace Hakaaje
Signature of participant: 
Date: 5 May 2017

Researcher: Hafeni Pamwenase Shikalepo Hamakali (PhD Candidate UWC)

Signaturer: 
Date: 25/10/2016
Mobile: +264 81 148 9922
Email: hhamakali@yahoo.com



Should you have any queries in this regard, please contact my supervisor, Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam on the contact details below:

Signature :..... 

Date : 31.../...10.../...2016.....


Supervisor: **Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam**
Contact details: +27 (0) 21-959 2449; ssivasubramaniam@uwc.ac.za

Faculty of Education
Private bag X17 Bellville 7535 South Africa
Tel. 021-959 2449/2442
Fax 021-959 3358


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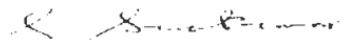
I confirm that I have not been pressured into giving consent, and that my consent to participate in this study is given freely and voluntarily. I have also been informed that I may withdraw from this study at any time without any obligation.

Participant's full name: NUNGUCHU M SIMANEICA
Signature of participant: 
Date: 05 May 2017

Researcher: Hafeni Pamwenase Shikalepo Hamakali (PhD Candidate UWC)

Signaturer: 
Date: 25/10/2016
Mobile: +264 81 148 9922
Email: hhamakali@yahoo.com

Should you have any queries in this regard, please contact my supervisor, Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam on the contact details below:

Signature :..... 

Date : 31.../...10..../...2016.....

Supervisor: **Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam**
Contact details: +27 (0) 21-959 2449; ssivasubramaniam@uwc.ac.za

Faculty of Education
Private bag X17 Bellville 7535 South Africa
Tel. 021-959 2449/2442
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Participant's full name: Tylor Shaanyenenge

Signature of participant: [Signature]

Date: 09/05/17

Researcher: Hafeni Pamwenase Shikalepo Hamakali (PhD Candidate UWC)

Signaturer: [Signature]

Date: 25/10/2016

Mobile: +264 81 148 9922

Email: hhamakali@yahoo.com

Should you have any queries in this regard, please contact my supervisor, Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam on the contact details below:

Signature :..... [Signature]

Date : 31.../...10..../...2016.....

Supervisor: **Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam**

Contact details: +27 (0) 21-959 2449; ssivasubramaniam@uwc.ac.za

Faculty of Education
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Participant's full name: EUGENE A. JACOBS

Signature of participant: JACOBS

Date: 04/05/2017

Researcher: Hafeni Pamwenase Shikalepo Hamakali (PhD Candidate UWC)

Signaturer: HAFENI SHIKALEPO HAMAKALI

Date: 25/10/2016

Mobile: +264 81 148 9922

Email: hhamakali@yahoo.com

Should you have any queries in this regard, please contact my supervisor, Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam on the contact details below:

Signature :..... Sivakumar

Date : 31.../...10.../...2016.....

Supervisor: **Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam**

Contact details: +27 (0) 21-959 2449; ssivasubramaniam@uwc.ac.za

Faculty of Education
Private bag X17 Bellville 7535 South Africa
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Fax 021-959 3358

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I confirm that I have not been pressured into giving consent, and that my consent to participate in this study is given freely and voluntarily. I have also been informed that I may withdraw from this study at any time without any obligation.

Participant's full name: MAENDO YAZAPO

Signature of participant: 

Date: 2017.05.09

Researcher: Hafeni Pamwenase Shikalepo Hamakali (PhD Candidate UWC)

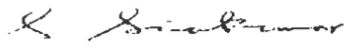
Signaturer:  UNIVERSITY of the

Date: 25/10/2016 WESTERN CAPE

Mobile: +264 81 148 9922

Email: hhamakali@yahoo.com

Should you have any queries in this regard, please contact my supervisor, Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam on the contact details below:

Signature :..... 

Date : 31.../...10..../...2016.....

Supervisor: **Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam**

Contact details: +27 (0) 21-959 2449; ssivasubramaniam@uwc.ac.za


Faculty of Education
Private bag X17 Bellville 7535 South Africa
Tel. 021-959 2449/2442
Fax 021-959 3358

I, the undersigned, have accurately read the information sheet, and understand what is expected of me as participant in this study.

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I confirm that I have not been pressured into giving consent, and that my consent to participate in this study is given freely and voluntarily. I have also been informed that I may withdraw from this study at any time without any obligation.

Participant's full name: IMENE SAKARIA T

Signature of participant: 

Date: 09/05/2017

Researcher: Hafeni Pamwenase Shikalepo Hamakali (PhD Candidate UWC)

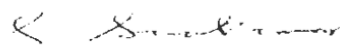
Signaturer: 

Date: 25/10/2016

Mobile: +264 81 148 9922

Email: hhamakali@yahoo.com

Should you have any queries in this regard, please contact my supervisor, Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam on the contact details below:

Signature :..... 

Date : 31.../...10..../...2016.....

Supervisor: **Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam**


Contact details: +27 (0) 21-959 2449; ssivasubramaniam@uwc.ac.za

Faculty of Education
Private bag X17 Bellville 7535 South Africa
Tel. 021-959 2449/2442
Fax 021-959 3358

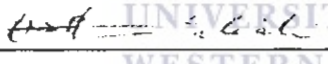
I, the undersigned, have accurately read the information sheet, and understand what is expected of me as participant in this study.

I confirm that I have been given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and that the questions have been answered accurately and to my satisfaction.


I confirm that I have not been pressured into giving consent, and that my consent to participate in this study is given freely and voluntarily. I have also been informed that I may withdraw from this study at any time without any obligation.

Participant's full name: Agnes Kavishe
Signature of participant: 
Date: 10 - 05 - 2017

Researcher: Hafeni Pamwenase Shikalepo Hamakali (PhD Candidate UWC)

Signaturer: 
Date: 25/10/2016
Mobile: +264 81 148 9922
Email: hhamakali@yahoo.com

Should you have any queries in this regard, please contact my supervisor, Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam on the contact details below:

Signature :..... 

Date : 31.../...10.../...2016.....

Supervisor: **Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam**
Contact details: +27 (0) 21-959 2449; ssivasubramaniam@uwc.ac.za

Faculty of Education
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Participant's full name: KAYLA-MARI GRELLMANN

Signature of participant: 

Date: 10th May 2017

Researcher: Hafeni Pamwenase Shikalepo Hamakali (PhD Candidate UWC)

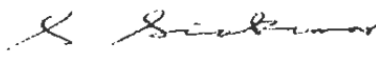
Signaturer: 

Date: 25/10/2016

Mobile: +264 81 148 9922

Email: hhamakali@yahoo.com

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Signature :..... 

Date : 31.../...10..../...2016.....

Supervisor: **Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam**

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Fax 021-959 3358

I, the undersigned, have accurately read the information sheet, and understand what is expected of me as participant in this study.

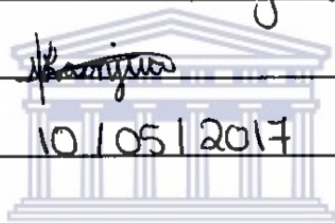
I confirm that I have been given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and that the questions have been answered accurately and to my satisfaction.

I confirm that I have not been pressured into giving consent, and that my consent to participate in this study is given freely and voluntarily. I have also been informed that I may withdraw from this study at any time without any obligation.

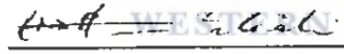
Participant's full name: Vitore Kaonjua

Signature of participant: 

Date: 10/05/2017



Researcher: Hafeni Pamwenase Shikalepo Hamakali (PhD Candidate UWC)

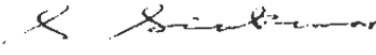
Signaturer: 

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Participant's full name: Halenge Hilaria

Signature of participant: 

Date: 10~~2~~-05-2017

Researcher: Hafeni Pamwenase Shikalepo Hamakali (PhD Candidate UWC)

Signaturer: 

Date: 25/10/2016

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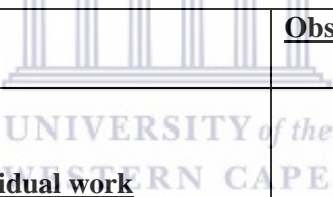
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APPENDIX 8

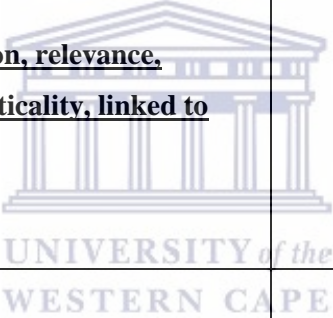
Lesson Observation Guide

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The observation form below will be used by the researcher as a guide to observe English for Academic Purposes lessons. The main focus will be on how the lecturers use alternative assessment in the course as well as how the students respond to it. The researcher's role will only be to observe; he will not participate in the teaching or assessment of students.



<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Observations</u>
<p><u>Assessment techniques:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- <u>Group, pair, individual work</u>- <u>Whole class discussions</u>- <u>Teacher learner questions</u>- <u>Formative or summative</u>	
<p><u>Students' reaction to the assessment technique:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- <u>Participation, class management, affective filter, students' clarity and comfortability with the assessment used</u>	
<p><u>Support for Multiple Intelligences:</u></p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Linguistic, musical, kinetics, special, interpersonal, intrapersonal, logical, naturalistic</u> 	
<p><u>Support materials:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Textbook, handouts, video, audio</u> - <u>Computer, Internet, Intranet</u> 	
<p><u>Rapport:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Show interest in students, respectful, encourages participation, supportive, shows enthusiasm.</u> 	
<p><u>Authenticity:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Real life application, relevance, effectiveness, practicality, linked to objectives</u> 	
<p><u>Lecturer's support:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Supportive, clear instruction, while or post feedback, good knowledge of the assessed skill or content.</u> - <u>Self confident, professional</u> 	
<p><u>The physical environment:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Layout of the room, light, ventilation, destruction (noise)</u> 	
<p><u>Other or overall observation:</u></p>	

Researcher: Hafeni Pamwenase Shikalepo Hamakali (PhD Candidate UWC)

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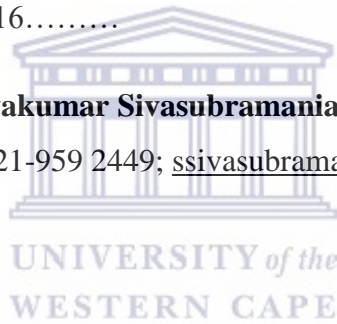
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APPENDIX 9

Lecturer Interview Guide

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Dear Lecturer,

I would like to inform you that this interview session will focus on how you assess your students in the English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course. It is intended to get more insights about the relevance and the appropriateness of assessment methods used in the course.

All the information you will give during this interview will be kept strictly confidential; and will only be used for the purpose of this research. If you do not understand any of the questions, please feel free to ask or interrupt for more precision and good understanding.

Interview Guide:

1. Have you attended any language assessment training?
2. In your view, do you think assessment is of great importance in academic writing instructions?
3. Has the training included any assessment of academic writing?
4. What is your philosophy/approach of assessment?
5. Apart from the prescribed assessments: the essay, test, and presentation, what are the other methods of assessment do you use particularly on academic writing?
6. What are the factors that influence your choice of assessment methods?
7. How do students' characteristics influence your choice of the type of assessment tools that you may use?

8. How often do you assess your students?
9. What is your take in authenticity assessment?
10. What are the available platforms for information sharing on writing assessment?
11. Where do you get your assessment tool? Are they readily available at the centre or you produce your own?
12. Any other contributions?

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APPENDIX 10

Student Focus Group Discussion Guide

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Dear Student,


I would like to inform you that this focus group discussion will centre on your experiences with the assessment methods used by your lecturer of English Academic Purposes. It is intended to get more insights about the relevance and the appropriateness of assessment methods used in the course.

All the information you will give during this interview will be kept strictly confidential; and will only be used for the purpose of this research. If you do not understand any of the questions, please feel free to ask or interrupt for more precision and good understanding.

1. How do you understand the term or concept “assessment”?
2. Is there a relationship between assessment and teaching? Is it one thing or two different things?
3. Do you like being assessed? And why?
4. In English for Academic Purposes, you are taught academic listening, speaking, reading and writing. So I am focused on academic writing. Do you feel like you are assessed enough when it comes to academic writing. Or how often are you assessed?
5. How often does the lecturer assess your writing skills?
6. Apart from the essay that specifically assess your academic writing, are there other assessments that are given to you in the course?

7. When the lecturer gives you a writing task, how do they convey the criteria that you should try to meet? How do they ensure that you are clear on what to do?
8. When lecturers assess, they use a document called a rubric. It consists of the assessment criteria and marks allocations. In your views, how helpful could it be to complete your assessments if it was provided to you in advance?
9. Do you think that what you are required to perform will be required in the real world?
10. Any other contributions?

Researcher: Hafeni Pamwenase Shikalepo Hamakali (PhD Candidate UWC)

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APPENDIX 11

Multiple Intelligence Inventory

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Dear Student,

I would like to inform you that this Multiple Intelligence Inventory will measure the type of intelligence in which each one of you may be dominant.

It is believed that if the learning tasks are presented through such intelligence, then you are likely to benefit better from the learning tasks.

The type of intelligences you possess will be compared to the types of assessment used by your lecturers, to see whether they match your type of intelligences.

The inventory is intended to get more insights about the relevance and the appropriateness of assessment methods used in the course.

All the information you will provide in this inventory will be kept strictly confidential; and will only be used for the purpose of this research.

If you do not understand any of the questions, please feel free to ask or interrupt for more precision and good understanding.

PART A: Check (✓) each statement that applies to you. Write the total checks for each section in the space provided.

Verbal-Linguistic Intelligence

TOTAL: _____

- Books are very important to me.
- I can hear words in my head before I read, speak, or write them down.
- I get more out of listening to the radio or a spoken-word cassette than I do from television or films.
- I enjoy word games like Scrabble, Anagrams, or Password.
- I enjoy entertaining myself or others with tongue twisters, nonsense rhymes, or puns.
- Other people sometimes have to stop and ask me to explain the meaning of the words I use in my writing and speaking.
- English, social studies, and history were easier for me in school than math and science.
- When I drive down a freeway, I pay more attention to the words written on billboards than to the scenery.
- My conversations includes frequent references to things that I've read or heard.
- I've written something recently that I was particularly proud of or that earned me recognition from others.

Logical-Mathematical Intelligence

TOTAL: _____

- I can easily compute numbers in my head.
- Math and/or science were among my favorite subjects in school.
- I enjoy playing games or solving brainteasers that require logical thinking.
- I like to set up little "what if" experiments (for example, "What if I double the amount of water I give to my rosebush each week?")
- My mind searches for patterns, regularities, or logical sequences in things.
- I'm interested in new developments in science.
- I believe that almost everything has a rational explanation.
- I sometimes think in clear, abstract, wordless, imageless concepts.
- I like finding logical flaws in things that people say and do at home and work.
- I feel more comfortable when something has been measured, categorized, analyzed, or quantified in some way.

Visual-Spatial Intelligence

TOTAL: _____

- I often see clear visual images when I close my eyes.
- I'm sensitive to color.
- I frequently use a camera or camcorder to record what I see around me.
- I enjoy doing jigsaw puzzles, mazes, and other visual puzzles.
- I have vivid dreams at night.
- I can generally find my way around unfamiliar territory.
- I like to draw or doodle.
- Geometry was easier for me than algebra in school.
- I can comfortably imagine how something might appear if it were looked down upon from directly above in a bird's-eye view.
- I prefer looking at reading material that is heavily illustrated.

Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence**TOTAL: _____**

- I engage in at least one sport or physical activity on a regular basis.
- I find it difficult to sit still for long periods of time
- I like working with my hands at concrete activities such as sewing, weaving,carving, carpentry, or model building.
- My best ideas often come to me when I'm out for a long walk or jog, or when I'm engaging in some other kind of physical activity.
- I often like to spend my free time outdoors.
- I frequently use hand gestures or other forms of body language when conversing with someone.
- I need to touch things in order to learn more about them.
- I enjoy daredevil amusement rides or similar thrilling physical experiences.
- I would describe myself as well coordinated.
- I need to practice a new skill rather than simply reading about it or seeing a video that describes it.

Musical Intelligence**TOTAL: _____**

- I have a pleasant singing voice.
- I can tell when a musical note is off-key.
- I frequently listen to music on radio, records, cassettes, or compact discs.
- I play a musical instrument.
- My life would be poorer if there were no music in it.
- I sometimes catch myself walking down the street with a television jingle or other tune running through my mind.
- I can easily keep time to a piece of music with a simple percussion instrument.
- I know the tunes to many different songs or musical pieces.
- If I hear a musical selection once or twice, I am usually able to sing it back fairly accurately.
- I often make tapping sounds or sing little melodies while working, studying, or learning something new.

Interpersonal Intelligence**TOTAL: _____**

- I'm the sort of person that people come to for advice and counsel at work or in my neighborhood.
- I prefer group sports like badminton, volleyball, or softball to solo sports such as swimming and jogging.
- When I have a problem, I'm more likely to seek out another person for help than attempt to work it out on my own.
- I have at least three close friends.
- I favor social pastimes such as Monopoly or bridge over individual recreations such as video games and solitaire.
- I enjoy the challenge of teaching another person, or groups of people, what I know how to do.
- I consider myself a leader (or others have called me that).
- I feel comfortable in the midst of a crowd.
- I like to get involved in social activities connected with my work, church, or community.
- I would rather spend my evenings at a lively party than stay at home alone.

Intrapersonal Intelligence**TOTAL: _____**

- ___ I regularly spend time alone meditating, reflecting, or thinking about important life questions.
- ___ I have attended counseling sessions or personal growth seminars to learn more about myself.
- ___ I am able to respond to setbacks with resilience.
- ___ I have a special hobby or interest that I keep pretty much to myself.
- ___ I have some important goals for my life that I think about on a regular basis.
- ___ I have a realistic view of my strengths and weaknesses (borne out by feedback from other sources).
- ___ I would prefer to spend a weekend alone in a cabin in the woods rather than at a fancy resort with lots of people around.
- ___ I consider myself to be strong willed or independent minded.
- ___ I keep a personal diary or journal to record the events of my inner life.
- ___ I am self-employed or have at least thought seriously about starting my own business.

Naturalist Intelligence**TOTAL: _____**

- ___ I like to spend time backpacking, hiking, or just walking in nature.
- ___ I belong to some kind of volunteer organization related to nature (e.g., Sierra Club), and I'm concerned about helping to save nature from further destruction.
- ___ I thrive on having animals around the house.
- ___ I'm involved in a hobby that involves nature in some way (e.g., bird watching).
- ___ I've enrolled in courses relating to nature at community centers or colleges (e.g., botany, zoology).
- ___ I'm quite good at telling the difference between different kinds of trees, dogs, birds, or others types of flora or fauna.
- ___ I like to read books and magazines, or watch television shows or movies that feature nature in some way.
- ___ When on vacation, I prefer to go off to a natural setting (park, campground, hiking trail) rather than to a hotel/resort or city/cultural location.
- ___ I love to visit zoos, aquariums, or other places where the natural world is studied.
- ___ I have a garden and enjoy working regularly in it

**PART B: Now create a bar graph by plotting your totals below:**

10								
9								
8								
7								
6								
5								
4								
3								
2								
1								
Intelligence	Verbal Lin- guistic	Logical Math- matical	Visual Spațial	Kines- thetic	Musical	Inter- personal	Intra- personal	Naturalist

Source: Armstrong, T. (1994). Multiple intelligence inventory. Retrieved June 6, 2016, from <http://www.drexel.edu/dclae/academicresources/mi/armstrong.asp>

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