# ACADEMIC WRITING AS SOCIAL PRACTICE: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF STUDENT WRITING IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN TANZANIA

HASHIM ISSA MOHAMED

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Linguistics in the Department of Linguistics University of the Western Cape

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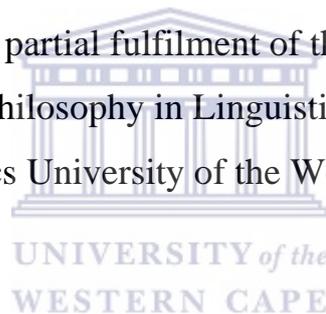
Supervisor: Prof. Felix Banda

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KEY WORDS

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ABSTRACT

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HASHIM ISSA MOHAMED

PhD thesis, Department of Linguistics, University of the Western Cape

In this thesis, I do a critical discourse analysis of students' academic second language writing at Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA). Student writing in English as a Second language (ESL) in Higher Education (HE) has excited much interest in the ESL writing research and discussion in Tanzania. The interest is motivated by frequent criticisms from examiners regarding students' literacy performance in the ESL writing in the post primary and HE where the language of instruction is English as is configured in the Tanzanian language policy.

In the thesis, I use an interdisciplinary approach constructed from the key notions of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), New Literacy Studies (NLS) and Genre Theory, first, to examine linguistic, discursive and social practices influencing student writing practices in HE. Secondly, to determine the adequacy of the academic Communication Skills (CS) course at aiding students' acquisition of the requisite literacy practices in academic writing. Third, I explore the extent to which academic second language writing is integrated into other university courses.

I consider academic writing not as discreet, independent and neutral knowledge but rather as inherently ideological and whose literacy, events, and practices are socially constituted, as configured in the literacy critical theories followed in this

study. These literacy critical theories, I argue, should be used as the backdrop against which success in student writing should be judged.

From the theories, I ague that students' unsuccessful writing results from orders of discourse whose access is restricted by its peculiar nature i.e. academic, and the medium of instruction, English, which is opaque to most students. These aspects inhibit equal access to knowledge thus leading to social inequality, which in turn enacts, produces and reproduces social relations of subordination and domination in the Tanzania social context.

At SUA specifically, students' unsuccessful writing revolves around authority and power imbalance as located in the lecturer-student socio-discursive relationship. This relationship results from first, inadequate apprenticeship of students into membership of university orders of discourse; secondly, the inadequacy of the CS course, which privileges decontextualised grammar teaching cerebrated in the autonomous model of literacy; third, the absence of support from other departments, and thus, undermining the efforts of the CS course. Other issues include, illusive control of the language of instruction by some lecturers who mentor students; and an air of mystique governing the classroom pedagogical discourse illuminated by linguistic misunderstanding and complicity in misunderstanding.

In this thesis my general recommendation is that power imbalance be addressed by dealing with the mainstay of social inequality, and that is, making sure that not only the dominant but also the non-dominant groups have privileged access to social and institution power resources. With specific reference to SUA, I recommend that first, the CS course be reconfigured as literacy practice and be taught in the individual departments throughout students' academic life, because it is the departments which dictate disciplinary requirements. Secondly, the CS course should be charged with: One, studies on classroom pedagogical practices to enhance lecturers' didactic skills; and two, studies on the broad based scientific and technical academic writing skills for both students and lecturers. Further,

lecturers should self-critique their own discourse by first admitting that they have a problem, because the way they manage (or fail) to write has an implication on the way they invite students into authorship.

Finally, there is a need to encourage critical reading among the students. Useful as handouts and compendia are if they are not judiciously managed, they are likely to stifle the very critical reading, which students so require in achieving their other academic writing objectives.

DECLARATION

I declare that *Academic Writing as Social Practice: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Student Writing in Higher Education in Tanzania* is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Hashim Issa Mohamed   May 2006

Signed.......................................

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made it possible for me to complete this thesis a little earlier than the time set for PhD programme of this kind.

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The fieldwork for this thesis was conducted at SUA from November 2004 to February 2005, then from November 2005 to February 2006. My deepest appreciation goes to all the lecturers and students of SUA who participated in my fieldwork as informants. In both phases of my fieldwork at SUA, I used to find these lecturers at the helms of their professional responsibilities, as it was at the beginnings of academic year. I cannot name anyone for ethical reasons but I am deeply indebted to these individuals for sacrificing their other duties for my work. I believe this was possible because of their compassion and understanding. The students too deserve my deepest appreciation. This was as much a learning experience for me as it was for them. The students gladly welcomed me into their world so that I could see how they feel as they grapple to comprehend the world of academia. I thank students for their courage and understanding that I was doing this research for a good cause.

Next, I wish to thank members of staff in the Linguistics Department at UWC for their friendliness and moral support, which helped to grease a lot of PhD blues I

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AD	Arusha Declaration
BSC	Basic Science Unit
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CM	Code Mixing
CS	Code Switching
CS	Communication Skills
CSU	Communication Skills Unit
DSC	Department of Social Sciences
EE	External Examiner
ESL	English as a Second Language
ESR	Education for Self-Reliance
FAVFVS	Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Science
FFNC	Faculty of Forestry and Nature Conservation
FoV	Faculty of Veterinary Medicine
FPT	Field Practical Training
HE	Higher Education
IGP	Intensive Grammar Programme
LOITASA	Language of Instruction in Tanzania and South Africa
MOI	Medium of Instruction (debate)
NFFE	National Form Four Examination
NLS	New Literacy Studies
RST	Rhetorical Structural Theory
SC	Social Sciences (Department)
SFL	Systemic Functional Linguistics
SP	Special Project
SUA	Sokoine University of Agriculture
TANU	Tanganyika National Union
UDSM	University of Dar es Salaam
URT	United Republic of Tanzania
UST	University Screening Test

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Introduction

Student writing in English as a Second language (ESL) in Higher Education (HE) in Tanzania is an area that has excited discussion in the academia in recent years. The discussion centres on the quest for a pedagogical approach to an effective ESL writing instruction for the academic discourse in HE. The discussion on this matter has often been motivated by frequent criticisms from both internal and external examiners. Often, the examiners have expressed dissatisfaction with students' literacy levels in the ESL writing in the post primary and HE where the Tanzanian language policy dictates that English is the language of instruction.

Since problems of student writing are linguistically based, the discussion on the matter has often shifted focus from issues on pedagogical approaches to issues on language of instruction. And this is the reason, which prompted what is now called the Medium of Instruction (MoI) debate in Tanzania. This debate, as shall be seen, is not only protracted, but also polarised into three opposing currents; one current radically emphasizes making Kiswahili (the national and official language in Tanzania) the only language in public domains in society including higher education and the academia. The other current takes a diglossic dimension in acknowledging the importance of both languages, that is, Swahili and English, in a society. The third current is the one, which favours a multilingual approach, acknowledging not only the importance of Kiswahili and English, but also mother tongues, especially in the lower levels of education. The discussion has however not resolved the issue of linguistic deficiency reflected in students' ESL writing neither has it resolved the issue of what language should be used at post- primary and higher education in Tanzania. My study has been inspired against this background.

1.2   Situating the Study: Thesis Development

At first, I had intended to look at students' ESL academic writing with respect to deviant language features, referred herein as deficiencies, using ESL Pedagogical theory and Error Analysis approach. The aim was to investigate these students' deviant language features and to determine whether student writing follows any defined or describable variety, which can be considered as a useful code in higher education in Tanzania. But after consulting literature on theories of 'New Literacy Studies' (NLS) (e.g. Lea and Street, 1999; Barton, 1994; Ivanic, 1998; Gee, 2000), Genre Theory (Swales, 1990; Eggins, 2004; Christie, 2005a; 2005b), and Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1995; 2001; Wodak and Meyer, 2001; van Dijk, 2001), and particularly the application of these theories in the academic writing pedagogy of higher education, I deemed it instructive to contextualise students' ESL writing into a Tanzanian social cultural context. In this case, I have worked with the notion of problematising students' ESL writing as literacy practice rather than skill- as is configured in the dominant discourse of higher education in Tanzania, as shall be seen. I envisaged that the approach would enable me to move away from focussing attention on issues of formal grammatical features and surface errors of spellings, punctuation and the like- much as such issues are important- to broader concerns on, as Ballard and Clanchy put it, "functions of and demands upon language in a particular social cultural context" (see Ballard and Clanchy in Taylor *et al*, 1988; 7). This is in view of the reason that language in the form of text is socially constituted, deconstructed, reconstructed, and produced and reproduced (cf. Fairclough, 2001; Wodak and Meyer, 2001).

As I said above, I have problematised students' ESL writing as literacy practice, and this has made it possible for me to analyse students' writing in social cultural context. Such problematisation has necessitated examining academic literacy practices through which students are expected to produce their texts, and against which students' ESL writing literacies in given disciplinary languages are usually judged. Also, the approach required examining how literacy practices as enacted and maintained in the university dominant discourse (at the level of faculties,

departments, etc) manage (or even fail) to shape student writing as literacy practice. This approach aligns well with the conceptual underpinnings of the theories (e.g. NLS, Genre, CDA) cited above, and as shall be seen, "students' writing takes place within a particular history, culture, values and practices" (cf. Lillis, 2001: 31).

1.3   Sociolinguistic Situation in Tanzania

Tanzania is on the East coast of Africa. The country has a population of 34.4 million people (URT Population and Housing Census, 2002). Sociolinguistically, Tanzania has 127 living languages (see Ethnologue, 2005). One of these languages is Kiswahili, which is spoken by over 90% of the population with varying degrees of proficiency. Whilst other local languages cater for intra-ethnic communication needs, Kiswahili is used as an official and a national language, serving the wider communicative needs of Tanzanians in daily socio-political and economic life.

Ethnographically, Kiswahili is spoken as the first language by people in the Islamic coast and those born in the urban areas, which constitute only a small proportion (i.e.10%) of Kiswahili speakers. This means that the remaining speakers use one or the other of the native languages as a mother tongue and Kiswahili as a second language, and even a 'third' language for those in the remote areas of the country. Apart from local languages and Kiswahili, Tanzania has English as an officially recognised second language, notwithstanding the fact that it (English) is the language of a minority group spoken by only 15% of the population (see Rubagumya, 1990 on language use in Tanzania).

The use of English in the wider community is limited to international relations and trade; business; tourism; mass media e.g. newspapers, Radio and TV stations; and information technologies e.g. internet services. Though these services are concentrated in the urban areas, their popularity in Tanzania is now a subject of research. However, the most important role of English in Tanzania is in education,

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where it is as a medium of instruction from post-primary school level. English is also taught as a subject at lower levels from primary three and above.

Tanzania has often been cited as a success story in having "... vigorous and far-reaching language planning" (Blommaert, 2000: 17), but realities on the ground do not convincingly support this argument, particularly in the field of education. In the education system, Rubagumya, (1990:1) correctly observes, "Tanzania's success is usually exaggerated by outsiders". Unfortunately, this exaggeration is sometimes extended to misrepresentation of facts. For example, Abbott (in Rossener and Bolitho, 1990:19) reports that, "… in Tanzania … Kiswahili has replaced English as the medium". Whilst this is true for primary school education, it has never been the case at post-primary school education. One can correctly say that both Kiswahili and English are the languages of instruction in Tanzania, but at different levels: while in primary school it is Kiswahili, at post-primary school it is English.

Communication problems, where English is used as the language of instruction have been well acknowledged, especially at secondary school level, as shall be described in due course. The concern of the current study is with examining students' ESL academic writing as discourse and as network of social practices in higher education in the Tanzania's social cultural context.

1.4   Background to the Problem
1.4.1   *English as a Medium of Instruction in Post-primary and HE*
English was introduced in Tanzania during the British colonial rule. After the First World War in 1919, the British took over Tanzania, then Tanganyika, from the Germans- the former colonial masters. When the British arrived in the territory in 1925, they not only maintained Kiswahili as a medium of instruction (in the first five years of Primary education, as was the system under the German rule), but they also made efforts to create an official standard Kiswahili as the British colonial mandate to Tanganyika (Rubagumya, 1990; Blommaert, 2004). In addition, the British introduced English as a subject from the third year of primary

school and made it the medium of instruction in the last three years of primary school and in all years of secondary school education. Thus, in these levels, English replaced Kiswahili as a medium of instruction, but it (Kiswahili) continued to be offered as a subject. Outside the education system, English assumed a new communicative role as an official language in the fields of administration, legislature, and the judiciary.

In the postcolonial period, the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) party and government leaders made efforts to promote Kiswahili in the name of liberation, nationalism, and cultural identity. These efforts were also made in the realisation that the success for the struggle for Tanganyika's independence was indebted to (the use of) Kiswahili, which then became a symbol for liberation and national unity. No wonder that the emphasis, from post independence period, has been on developing and promoting Kiswahili to cater for the wider communicative needs of the Tanzanian people. These efforts later culminated into the formation of Kiswahili Council of Tanzania, which was mainly responsible for implementing the policy of Kiswahili in the country. In recent years, the body was responsible for developing programmes for the implementation of cultural policy of 1997[1].

The language question is not unique to Tanzania, many countries, which have been colonised, have had a more or less similar experiences with respect to issues of language policy, and each government of these countries has one type of language problem or another to solve. Many governments have striven to formulate language policies in their countries in the realisation that language has far-reaching implications for national cohesion, cultural identity and economic advancement of all countries. Thus, governments try to work out the best ways in which language resources can be managed and distributed within their territories so as to attain cost-effective positive results in the process of socio-cultural and economic development of nations (cf. the debate on mother tongue education in Africa, see for example, Bamgboose, 1991; 2000; Prah, 1995; Banda, 1996). However, in these African countries, language policies and planning in the

colonial aftermath have usually been structured with a tension between retaining the colonial languages and promoting the use of local languages in all spheres including the academia.

In Tanzania, language reform was part of the implementation of the major national policy namely *Ujamaa* (African socialism), which was officially proclaimed as Tanzania's ideological doctrine under the Arusha Declaration (AD) of 1967. This policy was meant to be a blueprint for Tanzania's social, political and economic development through egalitarian principles. *Ujamaa* under AD as a "mother" policy had other "sister" policies, notably *Ujamaa Vijijini* (villagesation programme) of October 1967 (see Nyerere, 1967) as one of the implementing agents of AD, and especially of transforming Tanzania into an egalitarian society.

These political currents had had a profound impact on Tanzania's social and economic orientation in general and on language policy and planning in particular. As for the latter, it was envisioned that the success of AD would hinge on the use of the language, which is accessible to the majority of people. Kiswahili was considered the most appropriate for achieving this goal because it is a loyalty neutral, inter-ethnic language, and as opposed to English, Kiswahili is an indigenous language with a potential for unifying the population (see Paulston, 1994). Thus, the distribution of Kiswahili to the Tanzanian populace became one of the consequential ideological underpinnings of Ujamaa in the prospect of making Tanzanians live under egalitarian principles. On these grounds, the government declared Kiswahili as an official language in government offices, the judiciary, the parliament, and the mass media.

As for the education sector, Education for Self-Reliance (ESR) was introduced as the implementation strategy for the Arusha declaration. ESR was meant to replace the colonial education, which was considered elitist as it divorced the youth from the basic socialist principles. In this regard, ESR was meant to address socio-political and economic needs of Tanzanians (cf. Mwansoko cited in Neke, 2003). In achieving these goals, ESR emphasized self-reliance, social equality, and

national unity, which were the guiding principles of *Ujamaa*. Here, reforms were made "in response to a clamour of citizens for greater access to education and other social services denied them during the colonial education" (Roy-Campbell and Qorro, 1997:1). One such reform was the medium of instruction. Kiswahili was made the medium of instruction in primary school education and English continued to be offered as a subject. In secondary school, however, English continued to be the medium and Kiswahili continued to be taught as a subject. English is also compulsory in higher education as a medium of instruction, and Kiswahili is offered as a taught course, particularly at the University of Dar es salaam.

Tanzania can be said to be far ahead of many other African countries in making a bold decision in the colonial aftermath, in selecting and developing an indigenous language, Kiswahili, for certain national roles. Further, the "state's attempt towards the generalization of Swahili at almost all levels of society was, *and still is,* a huge success" (Blommaert, 2004:10) (my emphasis). However, similar success was not realised in the ideological hegemony towards language policy and planning in Tanzania. On the one hand, Kiswahili was distributed along egalitarian principles under Ujamaa policy, but this did not guarantee equality in socio-economic status. For example, though Kiswahili was to be equally distributed among the Tanzanians, differences in use and even access to the language are still frequent today. For this reason, whereas some people use highly specialized and sophisticated Kiswahili due to formal education or other social networks, other people who have had little or less formal education do not have and cannot share this 'sophisticated' variety of Kiswahili. This argument is correctly summarised by Blommaert's observation that,

> Inequality has to do with modes of language use, not with languages, …
> we need to develop an awareness that it is not necessarily the language
> you speak, but how you speak it, … It is a matter of voice, not of
> language: … this is a social problem, only partially a linguistic one."
> (1999: 11).

On the other hand, English is still privileged in the Tanzanian socio-economic domain. For example, Neke (2003) in his study, "English in Tanzania: An Anatomy of Hegemony", indicates that the Tanzanian people still view, and perceive English as, among other things, a 'Highway to success', 'Gateway to social rewards', and most importantly, as an 'empowerment language' (p.140). Such perceptions towards English are not unfounded. For example, in the professional jobs the mastery of English is still an added advantage in Tanzania. This is particularly because interviews for such jobs are usually (if not always) conducted in English, notwithstanding the fact that Kiswahili is the functional language in many work places in Tanzania. Accordingly, someone with both languages i.e. English and Swahili stands a better chance of a successful upward social mobility than someone with Kiswahili only. This also explains why Tanzanians are not yet equally privileged in all social domains, despite that the country has been independent for over forty years now.

Secondly, the national cultural identity on the basis of Kiswahili still remains a contested issue. One contested area is the origin of the Swahili language itself. Historically and "ethnographically, Kiswahili is the mother tongue of the Islamic coastal and partly urbanized group *constituting only 10% of the population"* (Blommaert, 1999: 2004), and therefore it is by no means the agent of the culture of the nation as a whole [My emphasis]. "The National culture of Tanzania is, in a sense, the sum of its regional cultures, expressed in local languages-*about 127 of them* and tied to local customs and situations" (Whiteley, 1969:101) [My emphasis] (see also Blommaert, 1999; Ethnologue, 2005 for details).

As for language in education, students' ESL academic literacies (or lack of) still continue to dominate discussions on the pedagogical practices in secondary schools and higher education in Tanzania. There is a plethora of literature documenting the problems of communication in English in Tanzania at secondary school level as is discussed below. It is instructive to mention that in the debate on language reform in Tanzania, the language policy in education has often been the

target of criticisms specifically on the critical state of English at post-primary level. In the current language reform policy in education, students undergo instruction in Kiswahili for seven years of primary education and then switch to English at secondary school. One argument is that this is a rather abrupt change of medium for students who have been exposed to Kiswahili throughout their primary school life, notwithstanding that English is taught as a subject in the last 4 years of primary school education. As Roy-Campbell and Qorro (1997:2) observe, "It was generally taken for granted that after initial education in the vernacular, the child was ready to begin education in the foreign (*not second*) language" [emphasis mine].

Other scholars such as Mlama and Matteru (1977), Lwaitama and Rubagumya (1990), and Mekacha (1997) also express similar views. These scholars propose a change of medium of instruction from the current English to Kiswahili at post-primary school level as a solution to students' literacy problem. In rationalising this, Lwaitama and Rubagumya[2] (1990) argue that
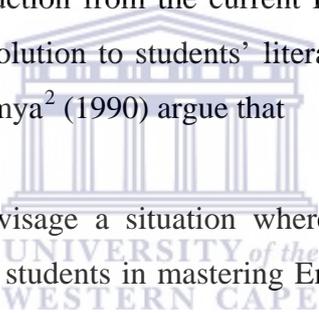
> It is difficult to envisage a situation whereby currently acknowledged inadequacies among students in mastering English language as a medium of instruction, would be eliminated in the foreseeable future. This being the case difficulties may be encountered in fulfilling the country's manpower training targets. (p. 2-3).

In the same vein the voices, which seem to emerge currently are those that favour the use of mother tongue to Kiswahili at the primary school level. This is especially for children whose first language is not Kiswahili as is the case in rural areas in Tanzania. These arguments form part of the Medium of Instruction (MoI) debate, which is referred to in the introduction of this chapter. This debate centres on three opposing currents. One party takes a rather unifocal radical view of language in education, they emphasise that Kiswahili be the only language in public domains in society including secondary and higher education. "English in this view is sometimes referred to as potentially useful foreign (not second)

language" (Blommaert, 2000:18-19). Another approach emphasises what Blommaert refers to as a "bifocal model of language usage with strong diglossic dimensions" (2000:18-19). These people acknowledge the importance of both languages in society. They propose to have Kiswahili used in a number of domains, but at the same time to have English retain its instrumental status in the secondary and higher education, and as the societal second (not foreign) language.

The third option, which has gained currency in recent years, favours a multilingual approach, which entails the use of regional language (e.g. Nyamwezi, Haya, Sukuma, etc.) especially in rural areas; a national language, i.e. Kiswahili; and an international language, such as English. Since, as Blommaert observes, these parties do not seem to agree on what language should be used in Tanzania, the outcome of the "… contradictory and conflicting tendencies structuring the debate on language policy and planning in postcolonial Tanzania is the linguistically and pedagogically absurd language situation in post-primary education" (2000:19).

In the Tanzanian classroom, considerable amount of time is wasted by students grappling with the language of instruction instead of learning their other subjects. There are two rather intriguing questions: First, why do low literacy levels in the academic writing pedagogy (as shall be discussed in coming sections) seem to be a predominant feature even at post-secondary school education? Second, why is it that Communication Skills (CS) courses, (i.e. English remedial programmes), which are offered in many universities in the country, do not seem to pay any dividends? Also, of interest is the question why Tanzanians do not seem to benefit from 7 years of Kiswahili instruction? These were the phenomena, among others, that I explored in the current study.

1.4.2 Evolution of Communication Skills Course at SUA

From the preceding discussions, it follows that at the moment of joining the university students require not only to be given the requisite linguistic tools, but also to be inducted into literate writers of the academic discourse. It is for this

reason that universities in Tanzania offer the Communication Skills course. To understand the evolution of Communication Skills course at SUA I find it informative to explain how the course was introduced at the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM). This is mainly because SUA, which is based in Morogoro Tanzania, was one of the faculties of the UDSM before it became a full-fledged university in 1984.

The Communication Skills course was introduced at the UDSM upon the establishment of the Communication Skills Unit (CSU) in 1978. The purpose of the course was, first, to teach general study skills to all undergraduate students. And second, to teach other language skills such as grammar to students who proved to be too weak in the English language to be able to follow other university courses. Thus, the unit designed an Intensive Grammar Programme (IGP) course to address students' grammar problems, and a Communication Skills (CS) course to address students' communicative problems. The two tier module of the course was designed in the realisation that students' weaknesses were (and still are) at two levels, the level of grammatical competence i.e. syntax and lexis at the clause structure level; and the level of communicative competence, i.e. at the discourse organisation level (see also Ndoloi, 1994). In order to identify students on each category, the unit has to administer the University Screening Test (UST) to all undergraduate students upon entering the university.

This arrangement was supposed to have a direct impact to SUA, since this was then the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Sciences (FAFVS) of the UDSM. But, due to logistical reasons the Communication Skills Unit was unable to run the courses in Communication Skills at the then FAFVS notwithstanding that the Unit was conducting the UST and the IGP to students in the Faculty. This arrangement continued even after the Faculty became a full-fledged university in 1984 comprising three faculties, the Faculty of Agriculture (FoA), the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (FoV), and the Faculty of Forestry and Nature Conservation (FFNC). In 1985, the Senate of SUA recommended for the establishment of a Communication Skills Unit similar to the one at the UDSM.

In 1987, SUA introduced the Communication Skills course under the Basic Sciences Unit, which was established then. The Basic Sciences Unit (BSU) was established for the purposes of offering courses on Basic Sciences to students whose other university courses demanded the commanding knowledge of Basic Science subjects. But, Communication Skills became one of the pioneering courses in the establishment of the unit. Two members of staff were initially engaged to teach Communication Skills, which used to run as a 2 week pre-session and non- examinable course.

In 1994, the FoA made Communication Skills an in-session and examinable course. This was after the realisation that in its former structure the course was not having any impact on improving students' language and communicative competence. However, students in other faculties continued to follow the course as a pre- session and non-examinable for a short while.

In 2000, the Basic Sciences Unit was elevated into the Faculty of Science and Communication Skills became one of the courses offered in the Department of Social Sciences in the Faculty. This development was soon followed by the university internal transformation process, which involved the change of the university academic system from term to semester system. The change was actualised through a review of the curricular across the university faculties to make them fit into the new semester system. Under the semester system, all the four university faculties of SUA were mandated to make Communication Skills a compulsory course, which ought to be examinable and contributing 2 credits of the 12 credits required as a minimum to be accumulated by a student in any one semester. The course was, however, to be offered to students in the first semester of their first year.

When the course was started at the UDSM there were opposing currents from within the CSU itself and from other university quarters as to how the Communication Skills course should be run. Criticisms from within have been

centred on the design of the course material and the approach the unit adopted in teaching the course. The former aspect rests on the tailoring of the course material to specific academic disciplines (where it has been argued that the materials have not been tailor made enough to specific academic disciplines). The latter aspect, on the other hand, rests on the issue of primacy between linguistic competence and communicative competence. While some staff have been arguing that linguistic competence is primary and should therefore be addressed first, others have been of the opinion that it is communicative competence that is primary and which ought to be given a priority (see Ndoloi, 1994; Rugemalira, 1990 for details).

Criticisms from other university staff centred on the impact of the course, the main argument has been that the course has failed to deliver. Understandably, this argument has been made after seeing that students' language problems have continued to blossom instead of receding. One reason for this, according to Roy-Campbell and Qorro was that the range of linguistic problems among students "were too vast to be dealt with in which students met three times a week for a total of 60 hours during the entire academic year" (1997:4).

At SUA, the Communication Skills course was introduced for the same purposes for which the course was introduced at the UDSM. Moreover, problems inherent in offering of the course are as rife at SUA as have been experienced at the UDSM. At SUA however, there has never been any criticisms from within the Department hosting the course. However, the Department is still under intense criticisms from other staff and the university as a whole for what is construed as a failure on her part to solve students' ESL academic writing deficiencies.

For one thing, the two-level aspect of students' problems has been a complex issue to address at SUA as has been at the UDSM. This is especially because the students' ESL writing literacy problem seems to oscillate between cognitive competencies (e.g. knowledge of the discipline) and linguistic competencies (knowledge of the disciplinary dialect). And as Ballard and Clanchy (in Taylor *et*

al, 1988: 8) note, "in many instances … it is very difficult to determine whether the origin of a student's illiteracy is primarily cognitive or primarily linguistic".

The Communication Skills course is primarily meant to enable a student apply the existing knowledge of English to particular skills needed for specific departments or disciplines in order to respond to specific academic communicative needs in those disciplines. But, the students' existing knowledge of English at the moment of joining the university, in most cases, is so varied and in many other cases too inadequate to have any meaningful application of such knowledge. This is despite that in the pre-university education students undergo 6 years of instruction in English (i.e. 4 and 2 years of secondary and high school education respectively). Further, English is taught as a subject from year 3 of the 7 years of primary school education.

In view of the situation explicated above, when students join the university, Communication Skills tutors are forced to assume a responsibility, which is principally that of secondary school language teachers, of giving students enough practices in formal grammatical systems and other language skills. And in view of the overlapping nature of students' ESL writing literacy problem, which oscillates between cognitive and linguistic competencies, such a problem becomes a Herculean task for these tutors to handle.

1.5 Research Problem: ESL Academic Writing Literacy in HE

In my study, I have focused attention on students' literacy in ESL writing of the academic discourse. Academic second language writing is an area in which students get engaged in a wide range of writing tasks demanding not only disciplinary knowledge (cognitive competence), but also disciplinary language (linguistic competence). In other words, the student has to express what s/he is supposed to know "the *social* culture of knowledge … in the language which *that knowledge* is maintained and expressed" (see Ballard and Clanchy in Taylor *et al*, 1988: 17) [my emphasis]. Literacy in the ESL writing of academic discourse is fundamental to students' academic survival, as it is the prime means for assessing

students' academic progress and for that matter students' literacy growth in their given disciplinary spheres. As students' ESL writing literacies (or lack of) have often been central to the discussions on this subject, I considered it vital to focus attention on the kind of literacy practices students engage in their ESL writing process and the possible explanations for these. This is expected to provide insights on the model that could be effective in the second language academic writing pedagogy of higher education in the Tanzanian social cultural context.

1.6   Aims of the study

1.6.1   General aim

The main aim of the current study was to do a critical discourse analysis of ESL writing of students at Sokoine University of Agriculture. Using CDA, NLS and Genre Theory, I intended not only to determine linguistic, discursive and social practices which influence students writing practices in higher education, but also to determine the adequacy of the academic CS course at aiding students' acquisition of the requisite literacy practices in the ESL academic writing. Also, within the interdisciplinary framework of these models, I intended to explore the extent to which academic second language writing is integrated into other university courses.

1.6.2   Specific objectives

Specifically, in this study I intended to

1. Identify discourse practices of students' ESL academic writing (with regard to discourse markers) in Tanzania's social context;
2. Describe the nature of these discourses in students' academic writing practices as networks of social practice; and
3. Describe the reasons for the predominance of these discourse practices and explain why certain 'undesirable discourse practices' are difficult to eliminate considering Tanzania's social context.

Also, with regard to intertextuality (as shall be discussed in Chapter Two), I intended to:

4. Examine the CS syllabus and course content (i.e. study material for the course); and

5. Find out from selected students and lecturers their linguistic behaviour outside the classroom, and the reasons for these.

As a result of (1)-(5) above, I intended to provide insights into factors, which either aid or hinder students learning of the requisite academic literacy and linguistic behaviour needed for ESL writing process. And, thereby, to provide pedagogical insights into matters relating to designing courses for academic ESL writing in higher education in Tanzania's social cultural context.

1.7   Assumptions

I premised my study on three theoretical assumptions:

1.7.1   Students' ESL writing in higher education in Tanzania would manifest discourse practices, which are incompatible with the literacy practices as configured in the university dominant discourses and as constructed by key notions of New Literacy Studies, Genre Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis.

1.7.2   The CS course currently followed at SUA and other specific discursive and social practices embedded within the university cultural practice do not adequately aid students to fully evolve into literate second language writers of the academic discourse at the university.

1.7.3   Basic skills acquired from the CS course are not reinforced in other university courses.

I made my first main assumption while well aware that the hypothesis of skills 'transferability' from mother tongue into ESL language is a contentious one, though still popular. In this respect, therefore I argue that writing skills in students' first language are not always automatically transferable into writing skills of students' ESL writing. There are two reasons for this, first academic second language writing constitutes particular kind of skills referred to in this thesis as literacy practices. Such practices are bound up with values and practices

of a particular social institution such as the university. Therefore, it cannot be assumed that any mother tongue skills that students might have can be transferred into various literacy practices they encounter at the university.

Second, Tanzanian college students, who can be assumed to have acquired some skills in Kiswahili during their primary education, are still said to manifest inadequate ESL writing skills (see Section 2.4). This suggests further that beyond the hypothesis of transferability of mother tongue skills into ESL writing performance, there are other factors, which are likely to impact students' ESL writing literacy in academic discourse. In my study, I wanted to isolate those factors and examine them on their own right.

1.8   Research Questions

Accordingly, this study was guided by the following research questions:

1.8.1   What are the dominant discourse practices (with regard to discourse markers) in the students' ESL writing within a given academic framework of practice that is, in a university community of practice or order of discourse?

1.8.2   How successful is the CS course in facilitating students' acquisition of requisite ESL academic writing literacies at Sokoine University of Agriculture

1.8.3   How is the C S course integrated with other university courses?

1.8.4   What academic communication support programmes are available and to what extent are they adequate in the teaching and learning of an ESL writing of the academic discourse at the university (i.e. teacher training, teaching manuals, syllabuses/course contents)?

1.9   Justification/Rationale

In this thesis, I have used an interdisciplinary approach comprising New Literacy (e.g. Lea and Street, 1998; Barton, 1994; Gee, 2000), Genre Theory (Swales, 1990; Eggins, 2004; Christie, 2005a; 2005b), and Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1995; 2001; Wodak and Meyer, 2001), which as I pointed out earlier,

view students' ESL writing as literacy practice. I envisioned that the approach would enable me to do the analysis of both student writing and discursive practices within institutional social cultural practices, and thereby establish a semiotic relationship between students' text and context in given 'orders of discourse' (see Fairclough, 1995; 2001; Wodak and Meyer, 2001). The concept, orders of discourse entails 'configurations of discursive practices which are particular to, and constitutive of different social domains' (Lillis, 2001:36). Thus, this approach was useful in this study for both linguistic and intertextual analysis of ESL writing, and hence in the understanding of the problems inherent in student writing in the Tanzanian social cultural context. I discuss the pedagogical goals for the study below.

The institutional orders of discourse I focused attention on in this study was higher education, specifically because of the following reasons. First, save for a study by Ndoloi (1994), a bulk of previous research in this area (e.g. Mlama and Matteru, 1977; Roy-Campbell and Qorro, 1997; Rubagumya, 1997; Lwaitama and Rubagumya, 1990; Qorro, 1999) dwelt on secondary school level of education. Since tertiary institutions draw their students from these same secondary schools, where problems with academic communication in the medium of English are frequent, I considered it instructive to see how this disadvantaged linguistic background impacts on students' writing literacy at the university.

Secondly, when students first join the university they face many challenges. One challenge is the struggle to master the English language and communication skills. The second challenge is the adjustment to the new culture, the university culture, to which students have to be formally inducted through lectures, tutorials, laboratory work and reading, so that they can learn how to follow lectures, to understand their study materials and to take notes (see Ballard, 1984). Literacy in ESL academic writing features prominently in the students' process of adjustment into the university culture, and thereby inevitably impacts their acquisition of academic cultural literacy.

The process of acquiring academic literacies is a complex phenomenon, first, because students from different cultural backgrounds have to conform to one university cultural literacy as well as to several other literacy cultures of individual disciplines. And second, what is construed as a university cultural literacy may, sometimes not be as clear-cut. In other words, disciplinary languages and pedagogical practices in which university cultural practices are embedded are usually not explicit and may even be understood variably among the university academics.

Pedagogically, I anticipate that the results of the current study would have strong implications geared to the improvement of the teaching and learning of the ESL academic writing process in higher education in Tanzania. In this study, I envisioned the following pedagogical goals: first, by being a diagnostic tool in understanding the classroom practices and problems inherent therein in an ESL writing of academic discourse at Sokoine University of Agriculture, and in Tanzania's social cultural context in general. Secondly, by showing how social cultural i.e. institutional practices ought to be modelled to be able to shape students into literate writers or rather to take students through the process of, to borrow Candlin and Plum's metaphor, 'disciplinary apprenticeship' (see Candlin and Plum, 1999). Lastly, by illuminating the implications of adequacies of students' ESL writing practices to the development of the nation's workforce. This is especially because English, as a linguistic resource, is a key to higher education, which, in turn, becomes a tool of individuals' social upward mobility, and an individual empowerment for functioning at local and global levels with great ease.

1.10   Scope and Limits

In the current study, I have confined myself to the data from Sokoine University of Agriculture. I envisioned that this study area would index academic literacy practices regarding student writing in universities in Tanzania, particularly because students joining universities in Tanzania come from a rather similar

social cultural and education background, and thus any one university would be able to index literacy practices of higher education in Tanzania.

Also, problems of students' ESL literacy practices are frequent in both spoken and written discourse in all domains of language use. In the current study, however I have confined myself to examining those practices pertaining to ESL academic writing. The aim was to find out the discourse practices reflected in student writing and the extent to which such practices are considered successful or unsuccessful in relation to literacy practices as configured in the academic writing pedagogy of higher education.

In the students' sample, I have included First Year and Second year students only. I wanted the First year students – who would have just joined the university - to serve as an index of how language background (of pre-university level) impact on students' ESL academic writing literacy at the university level. I wanted the Second year students – who would have finished the CS course- and would have had stayed longer at the university - to serve as an index of the adequacy of the Communication Skills Course in facilitating students' acquisition of ESL writing literacy.

In the lecturers' sample, I have confined myself to lecturers teaching courses whose evaluation system primarily involved what is called 'essayist literacy' (see Chapter Three). I envisaged that these lecturers would provide insightful responses regarding student writing as opposed to lecturers teaching courses, which 'essayist literacy' is not a common mode for evaluating students. I did not limit my sample in terms of ranks or seniority, thus using judgemental sampling I have obtained the sample lecturers from the ranks of lecturer to professors.

1.11   Methodology

1.11.1 Research Design and Methods

My study followed a qualitative research design, whose data analysis focused on the information from the following sources:

1. Documents analysis involving textual material ranging from students texts' to institutional guides on academic writing practices: I envisioned that these material would inform the study on not only the kind of discourse practices students engage in, but also the literacy practices as demanded and configured in the dominant discourse of the academic writing pedagogy of the university.

2. Key informants' interviews from lecturers. This was aimed at soliciting lecturers' views on students' ESL writing literacy practices and what were the lecturers' expectations of these student-writers.

3. Focus group discussions for lecturers, as a way of triangulation, to see whether the information gathered from individual lecturers' interviews would be reflected. Focus group discussions also involved students in a bid to validate information gathered from questionnaires.

4. Open-ended questionnaire, which was administered to students. This was intended to gather students' views in terms of their experiences with the ESL academic writing process, academic writing practice resources, and lecturers' discourse (e.g. feedback, conferencing).

5. Lastly, classroom observations. In the classroom, I intended to observe instructors as well as students' discursive practices. This was with a view to seeing not only how such discourses are constitutive of social cultural practices of a university as a community of discourse, but also how or what practices work for or against facilitating students' acquisition of ESL writing literacy practices.

My study sample comprised 80 students from stratified sampling according to the year of study and 20 lecturers (5 from the CS course and 15 from other university courses) whom I obtained using judgemental sampling basing on the courses they teach. Lecturers came from those courses in which evaluation of students' literacy practices constitute academic essay writing. Also, this judgemental sampling took account of the availability of these lecturers during the conducting of the field research.

From the above sources, I divided the data of the study into three strands: (1) textual material, (2) lecturers and students, and (3) classroom observation. I discuss the details of each strand in Chapter Four under Methodology. Suffice it to say that, in analysing data I followed the analytical framework constructed from the notions of (1) New Literacy Studies (NLS), (2) Genre Analysis, and (3) Critical Discourse Analysis models (see Chapter Three for the Analytical Framework).

1.12   Organisation of the work

Apart from the preliminary pages the main text of the work is divided into seven chapters. Here, I briefly describe the contents in each chapter and how they form the building blocks in each chapter.

In Chapter One, I introduce my study and explain the context in which my study was inspired. Then I situate the study by explaining how my thesis developed over time through consulting literature. Then, I give an account of sociolinguistic situation in Tanzania leading into the description of the profile of language of instruction in post primary and higher education. Next, I describe the evolution of Communication Skills course at SUA, which is my study area. Then, I state my research problem followed by aims, research questions, assumptions and scope and limits. Then, I briefly state the methodological approaches I followed. And lastly, I outline the organisation of my work indicating how the chapters unfold.

Chapter Two and Chapter Three are on the theoretical underpinnings and the analytical framework respectively. Information on related literature regarding operational concepts, and the theories in which the analytical approach of this study is constructed is rather extensive and would have been too bulky to be handled in one chapter, hence, Chapters Two and Three for literature review.

The literature in Chapter Two comprises explaining operational concepts namely discourse and literacy in relation to the academic cultural context. Next, I review literature on the ESL writing research in Tanzania. Then, I look at literature on

current trends in the ESL writing research on a global perspective. Lastly, related to the explanations of the operational concepts, I present key notions of the New Literacy Studies to explain 'literacy' from a critical point of view. At each stage of my literature review, I give an account of how the reviewed literature informs my study and thus contributes to the deeper understanding of the theoretical underpinning around the research problem.

As I have noted above, Chapter Three is a continuation of literature reviewed for the study. Specifically, I look at literature on the conceptual and analytical framework of the New Literacy Studies (NLS), Genre Analysis, and Critical Discourse Analysis CDA). Then, I explain the application of each component of the theory to my study. Next, I look at specific studies that have followed the key notions of discourse analysis and academic literacies, and how these studies have informed the current research.

In Chapter Four, I explain my methodology. First, I explain the sample design and the sampling techniques I have used with an appreciation of the appropriateness of such techniques for my study. Second, I describe my research instruments and the reasons for choosing them. Third, I specify how I have obtained the data- data collection procedures- for my work indicating how realities on the ground have structured and restructured my data collection process. I explain the analytical framework and procedures I have chosen for the analysis of data, and how the procedures have actually worked for my work. I conclude this chapter by discussing the limitations and or gaps, to the data.

In Chapter Five, I present the summaries of results indicating the main trends. I begin by presenting the results obtained from lecturers (interviews and focus group discussions) and students' questionnaires. Then I present results from textual material viz. institutional material (CS syllabus, and writing guides), and linguistic analysis of students' writing. On linguistic analysis of students' writing, the results I present pertain to the main trends and or patterns discovered about

discourse practices in students' ESL writing, in this case, students' use of discourse markers. Lastly, I present results from classroom observation.

Chapter Six is on the discussion of the emerging themes and conclusions. I begin this chapter by drawing and synthesising the emerging themes in chapter five. This synthesis is around the discursive and inter-textual practices comprising the results from three paradigms indicated above viz., students' questionnaires and focus group discussions together with lectures' interviews and focus group discussions, textual material, and classroom observation. In the synthesis the discussion is around three conceptual frames, first, discursive practice of both lecturers and students, and the (institutional) social practice in terms of text and context relationship. Secondly, the relationship of semiosis to other elements within the particular practices concerned, i.e. what discourse features are contained in the CS syllabus and course material, and which, in turn, might impact students' writing literacy. Third, interdiscursive analysis, that is what 'ESL Available Designs- *second language acquisition resources*' (see Kern, 2000: 177) (my emphasis) students at SUA are able or unable to draw upon in their evolution into literate writers of an ESL of academic discourse. The interdiscursive analysis is discussed within the Tanzania's social context following the conceptual framework used in the study.

Chapter Seven focuses on three dimensions, first, conclusions, which are around the paradigms noted above. The second dimension is on the implications of the study for academic writing pedagogy in Tanzania. Specifically, I look discuss the implications of the current study vis-à-vis other studies in the area. Third, I give recommendation by, first, giving general recommendations around addressing social inequality in Tanzania, and then giving specific recommendations around the issues raised in the thesis, with reference to SUA. Specifically, I suggest new pedagogical approaches towards enabling students manipulate repertoires of genres and discourse, as Titscher *et al*, (2000: 148-149) put it, "within orders of discourse for text production and interpretation". Finally, I recommend issues for further researcher on the problem and present conclusion to Chapter Seven.

1.13 Conclusion to Chapter One

In this chapter, I have explained the motivation for my study and how my thesis evolved leading into the research problem of my current work. I have provided historical background to English as a language of instruction in post primary and higher education in Tanzania. I have also described the sociolinguistic situation giving a relative position of not only English (the official medium of instruction) and Kiswahili (the official and national language) but also, to some degree, the ethnic languages in the wider Tanzanian sociolinguistic profile. Further, I have stated my research problem followed by the aims of the study. Then, I have provided the main assumptions, the premises of these assumptions, justifications, and scope and limits of the study. Next, I have explained my methodology indicating the suitability of such methodology. I have concluded the chapter by stating the organisation of my work giving an outline of how the rest of the chapters unfold. In the next chapter, I look at the literature that has guided my study.
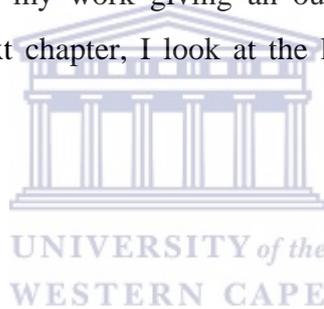
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

2.1   Introduction

I have noted in Chapter One that Chapters Two and Three are on the theoretical underpinnings and the analytical framework respectively. In this chapter, as a way of explaining operational concepts, I start with literature dealing with the terms, notably discourse and literacy in relation to the academic cultural context. Next, I review literature on ESL writing research in Tanzania, indicating contributions and the gaps of such research to academic writing pedagogy in HE in Tanzania. Then, I look at literature on current trends in an ESL writing research on a global perspective. Lastly, I present key notions of the New Literacy Studies to explain 'literacy' from a critical point of view. At each stage of my literature review, I give an account of how the reviewed literature informs my study and thus contributes to the deeper understanding of the theoretical underpinning around the research problem. In Chapter Three I discuss the conceptual framework and look at specific studies on discourse analysis and academic literacies.

2.2   The Concept of Discourse: An Overview

The definition of discourse is crucial in this thesis primarily because the term is an operational concept and key to the understanding of the analytical framework adopted in this study. This is especially because I look at student writing as discourse practice in the academic cultural context. Scholars, in both formal and critical linguistics, define discourse from various perspectives. Reviewing definitions from such diverse perspectives is not only difficult, but also outside the scope of my study. Suffice it to say that, central to these definitions, and for my purpose in this study, which owes much to critical linguistics, is the semiotic aspect projected in the notion of discourse, that is, language use in a manner that signifies "… a particular domain of social practice from a particular perspective" (see Fairclough, 1995: 14). In this case, Wodak construes discourse as

[…] a complex bundle of simultaneous and sequential interrelated linguistic acts, which manifest themselves within and across the social fields of action a thematically interrelated semiotic, oral or written tokens, very often a "texts' that belong to specific semiotic types, i.e. genres. (Wodak, 2001 in Wodak and Meyer, 2001: 66).

Van Dijk looks at discourse as "a communicative event including conversational interaction, written text, as well as associated genres, face work, typographical layout, images and other semiotic, or multimedia dimension of signification" (van Dijk cited in Wodak and Meyer, 2001: 20). One important distinction, which is made here, is that of text and discourse, in the sense that text and discourse are not exclusive of each other; as Brunner and Graefen (cited in Wodak, 1996: 14) put it, "text does not have to be written" and that "discourse does not have to be oral". According to Wodak, "the main difference lies in the 'handing down'… and in the simultaneous existence (or absence) of situational context" (1996: 14). Thus, van Dijk (cited in Wodak, 1996:14) defines discourse as a "text in context" on one side and as "a set of texts" on the other. A recent additional clarification by van Dijk is that of understanding discourse as action. Understanding "discourse" entails … "both as a specific form of language use, and as a specific form of social interaction, interpreted as a complete communicative event in social situation" (van Dijk cited in Wodak, 1994: 14).

The concept of discourse as a form of social practice is the underlining philosophy of CDA. In the perspective of CDA, discourse can only be produced and thereby understood "in the interplay of social situation, action, actor, and societal structures" in a given social context (see Wodak and Meyer, 2001: 21).

From the New Literacy Studies perspective, (see Section 2.6 below) language is an embodiment of discourse practice. The notion of discourse practice, as Lillis (2001: 34) puts it, 'offers a way of linking language with what individuals, as socially situated actors, do both at the level of context of situation and at the level of context of culture'. According to the author, this formulation offers three

interpretations, "… at the most concrete level, language as discourse practice signals that specific instances of language use-spoken and written texts - do not exist in isolation but are bound up with what people do-practices-in the material social world". Secondly, "what people do with language tends to be repeated, practised, so that particular practices, ways of doing things with texts, become part of everyday, implicit life routines both of the individual … and of social institutions" (see Lillis, 2001: 34). And the third, which is linked to literacy, the notion of practice, as borrowed from Barton and Hamilton, "offers a powerful way of conceptualising the link between the activities of reading and writing and the social structures in which they are embedded and which they help to shape" (Barton and Hamilton in Barton *et al* 2000: 7).

To understand the construction and interpretation of a specific text requires acknowledging the three ways, that is, the three notions of practice explicated above*,* in which the text "is situated in a specific context of situation, that is, we need to explore the immediate context in which an instance of language use occurs" (see Fairclough cited in Lillis, 2001: 34), or as Christie (2005a) puts it, "the particular or immediate setting in which language is used" (p.233). Christie considers choices or instances of language use associated with this context as choices in register. On the other hand, considerable attention need to be paid to "the context of culture", which broadly involves **"**considerations of institutions, social structures and ideologies *including the home and community cultural experiences*, all of which impinge on the nature of the language in use at the level of context of situation" (Fairclough cited in Lillis, 2001: 25) (my emphasis)*.* Christie considers language choices or instances of language use associated with this context as "choices with respect to overall text types or genre" (2005a: 233). The relationship between these notions is represented diagrammatically below:

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│              CONTEXT OF CULTURE                      │
│                                                     │
│          Social conditions of production            │
│   ┌───────────────────────────────────────────┐     │
│   │         CONTEXT OF SITUATION              │     │
│   │         Process of production             │     │
│   │      ┌──────────────────────┐             │     │
│   │      │        Text          │             │     │
│   │      │                      │             │     │
│   │      └──────────────────────┘             │     │
│   │                                           │     │
│   │       Process of interpretation           │     │
│   └───────────────────────────────────────────┘     │
│                                                     │
│         Social conditions of interpretation         │
│                                                     │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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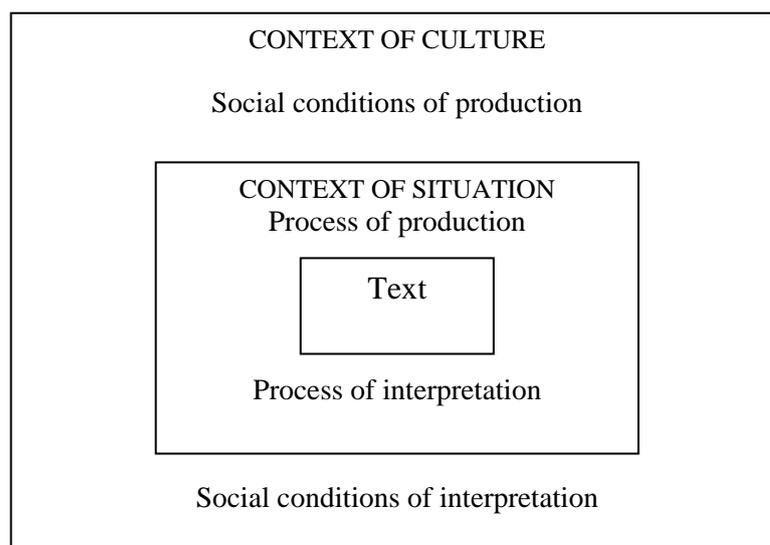
Figure 2.1: Text as Discourse Practice

Source: Fairclough, 1989: 25; Lillis, 2001: 35; Christie, 2005a; 2005b.

In the light of the discussion above, the social cultural practices and their ideologies impinge profoundly on the students' meaning making in text production. This necessitates that students' ESL writing be viewed as social practice in context. It is in this regard that I have problematised student writing not as autonomous skills in isolation, but rather as discourse practices. These practices as we have already seen are not only regulated by rules, or other formal conversions of the dominant university literacy practices and the broader social cultural practices, but also are shaped by them.

2.3   The concept of literacy: an overview

Literacy is another operational concept in this study. First, because literacy is the construct against which I have examined students' writing as literacy practices in the context of the institutional community of discourse, in this case the university, and in the domain of academic literacy. Secondly, the term is more encompassing than competence, which often carries the notion of innate human capacity of acquiring, using and understanding something such as language (cf. Chomsky, 1965).

Over and above the notion of competence, the term literacy draws upon the social context in which given competencies are acquired or evolve and displayed. This meaning of the term projects adequately the notions of the conceptual framework followed in this study. This framework is constructed from the theories of New Literacy Studies (NLS), Genre Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) models discussed in the analytical framework of this study (see Chapter Three). The framework conceptualises literacy "not in terms of *decontextualised* skills and competencies but as integral part of social events and practices" (see Maybin, 2000 in Barton *et al,* 2000: 197) (my emphasis).

2.4   ESL Writing Research in Tanzania

In Tanzania, the bulk of studies done in ESL writing have so far focused on the problems of English as a medium of instruction in secondary schools. And many (if not all) of these studies problematised students' ESL communication problems not so much as literacy problems in the ESL pedagogy, but rather as problems of English language. In other words, the focus of attention was more on language issues (Medium of Instruction) than on pedagogical issues. It would be instructive to highlight some of them.
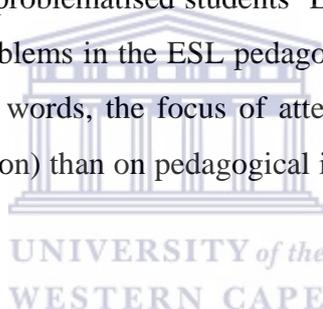
Mlama and Matteru's (1977) study was set to examine the actual situation in schools with respect to the medium of instruction and reported on the deterioration of the knowledge of English for secondary school students. They also demonstrate how students' low proficiency in English inhibited thinking in a logical manner. One reason for this phenomenon, they contend, is the inadequate knowledge of secondary school teachers of English. They conclude that English is no longer viable as a medium of instruction in secondary schools.

Mlama and Matteru's study did not go beyond secondary school education level, and it looked at students' communication problems in general, without focusing on any specific skills of students' language problems. The conclusion the authors make, i.e. 'English is not a viable medium of instruction', offers no solution in situations where the language policy remains the same, that is, where English

continues to be used as a medium of instruction in Tanzania. The current study not only picks on a particular skill, ESL academic writing, but it also situates this skill as literacy practice and examines problems inherent therein so that statements can be made regarding the pedagogical discourse and practice of academic writing in higher education in Tanzania's social context.

Roy-Campbell and Qorro's (1997) study surveyed students' reading competence in English and revealed that students' performance in reading comprehension was better for Kiswahili tests than for English tests. They consider this poor performance in reading skills as a reflection of students' low competence in English. In their study, they also note a high correlation between students' competence in English and their performance in other subjects. In that, students who performed poorly in English also underachieved in the National Form Four Examinations (NFFEs). Conversely, students who performed better in English also achieved well in the NFFEs. According to Roy-Campbell and Qorro, "Failure to achieve adequate competence in English in order to use it effectively as a medium of education appeared to result in poor performance in schools, as pupils showed little understanding of what was presented to them in their school courses" (Roy-Campbell and Qorro, 1997:3). The study, however, did not endeavour to find out whether students with more linguistic skills in Kiswahili would have performed better in their NFFEs than those with less such skills.

Roy-Campbell and Qorro's study, like the one above looked at secondary school education. However, there was a focus on a particular skill, reading. It also showed how this skill impacts on students' performance. However, in this study there was no appeal to scientific linguistic analysis in handling students' sampled data, apart from orthographic presentations of nonsensical utterances from students and teachers. The study views students' competence (or lack of) in reading not as a problem of the language pedagogy, but rather as a problem of the English language. The study projects the hypothesis that students cannot read proficiently because they are using English. The reality that students are not taught the English language properly (English being hidden knowledge to even

the teachers) is not projected with the thrust it deserves. The study is more of a political critique to language policy in Tanzania, than a linguistics study of the language problem.

The work by Rubagumya (1997) also acknowledges the existence of problems of English as a Medium of instruction[3]. The author's work focused on language discontinuation, in what can be termed as 'double language shift', and linked this to the current bizarre English situation at post primary education. The author attributes this problem to the 'discontinuation' tendency whereby students, when they join primary schools, have to shift from their native language to Kiswahili, which is a new language to them. Then, when they (students) join secondary schools they have to shift from Kiswahili to English with the inevitability of shifting back to Kiswahili medium in Primary Teacher Education Colleges for those who are to join teacher training.

Rubagumya's study infers the complexity over issues of the language of instruction in linguistically diverse societies. It is deemed undesirable to present details of this debate at this juncture, except to point out that Rubagumya's study and the ones discussed earlier, and whose gaps in linguistic analysis notwithstanding, still provide insights on aspects of language backgrounds, which explain some of the factors hindering students from accessing, as Lillis puts it, "the privileged literacy practice of the academia" (2001:13).

At the university level, where the problem of communication skills among students is a widely acknowledged phenomenon (by internal and external examiners), related literature focuses on selected items. A good example is the work of Rugemalira (in Rubagumya, 1990) which traces the evolution of Communication Skills Unit (CSU) and assesses its efficacy in addressing the language problem at the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM). In his assessment, the author contends that the CSU at the UDSM concentrates on communication competence (discourse skills) and not much is done on the grammatical competence of students. According to the author, this is a mistake since aspects of

grammar, e.g. "appropriate choice of structures and lexical items is part and parcel of the ability to communicate effectively" (p. 106). Thus, although the CSU developed courses for both aspects i.e. study skills-whose courses were developed to cater for specific faculties and grammar- whose courses were developed under Intensive Grammar Programme, they paid much attention to study skills.

Rugemalira concludes that CSU has had no significant impact on tackling language problems of university students. The author recommends a review of CSU initial objectives and restructuring the unit with a view of establishing a Centre for Teaching English as a Foreign Language (see Rugemalira in Rubagumya, 1990 for details). The author further recommends the replacement of a foreign language (English) with a local language Kiswahili as a language of instruction in Higher Education.

This study however, does not show how the efficacy (or lack of) of the CSU impacts on students ESL academic writing literacy. Furthermore, the recommendation of a change of medium of instruction raises two issues: first, it does not take into account the situation whereby language policy still remains in force, and second the assumption that language change will be a panacea to students' linguistic challenges in the academia, is a highly contestable one. The adoption of Kiswahili in secondary and higher education in Tanzania may not be as simplistic a matter as it sounds. This is particularly so if the variety of Kiswahili, to be used for such a purpose is a prestigious standard variety. In any case, this is not the variety of Kiswahili students will be possessing. Thus, students will have to be taught this variety before they can be able to use it to learn other subjects. Teachers too will need some Kiswahili in-service courses to be able to teach their subjects. It cannot be assumed that any Kiswahili speaker is qualified to use the language in the academic domain. These are, in part, the reasons, which motivated the current study into investigating ESL writing in the academic discourse of college students, in view of making statements in relation to pedagogical approaches suitable to the teaching of ESL writing in higher education.

Another study, which deserves comment, is the one by Qorro (1999). Qorro's study set to investigate the "teaching and learning of writing in English in Tanzania secondary schools in relation to the writing requirements of tertiary education" (p. 203). The author's aim here was to examine 'the kinds of skills' taught and the manner these skills are taught to students at secondary school level and the kind of writing required at tertiary level. In this study the author affirms that there is a discrepancy between the writing skills students bring into the university and the writing skills demanded by the university. She contends that what underlie the discrepancy of the writing demands between these two levels of education include, little emphasis on writing skills in both the Ordinary ('O') level and the Advanced ('A') level syllabi. Here, the author shows an example of topics allocation in the 'O' level syllabus whereby out of 64 topics across the four language components, structure has 37, reading has 14, listening has 8, and writing has only 5 topics. And that the 'A' level syllabus has 6 topics out of which writing is a minor appendage to Communication Skills, one of the major topics in the syllabus.
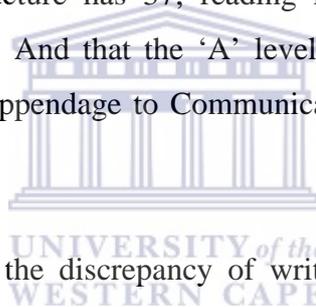
The author also attributes the discrepancy of writing skills at these education levels to teachers' poor didactic skills at secondary schools, e.g. 'teacher talk' in classrooms, the teaching of grammar tools which are removed from the students life experiences, and heavy reliance on rote learning, e.g. parrot copying of lesson notes by students.

In recommending for a change for the writing pedagogical process at secondary schools the author proposes the adoption of the approach in the LeRoy and Simpson's (1996) model (see Qorro, 1999: 243), which has six variables namely, Vision, Skills, Incentives, Resources, and Action Plan-all of which leading to Change. Vision, according to the model and or the author, relates to direction, which is usually underpinned by societal philosophy. In the case of Tanzania, the author argues, the guiding philosophy is self-reliance[4]. The Action Plan is the implementing instrument of the policy, and in the case of schools, the author

aligns Action Plan to the syllabus. The action plan then prescribes classroom practices including Skills. Incentives are aligned with 'positive benefits' realised in (or one could say, instrumental motivation for) applying writing skills, and according to the author this could be, winning a scholarship, passing an examination, gaining recognition from teachers, to mention but a few. Resources, as the name implies, include things such as time, space, requisite background knowledge, and books, just to mention a few. Lastly, a Change variable is what is realised in the interplay of the combination of the other variables explicated above.

The delineation of what each of the above variables entails is outside the scope of this study, suffice it to say that according to the model followed by the author, the absence of any one variable in the model may lead to one of the problems with missing variable in brackets as follows: Confusion (lack of Vision), Anxiety (lack of Skills), Resistance (lack of Incentives), Frustration (lack of Resources), and Treadmill (lack of Action Plan). According to Qorro, the existing gap of the writing skills between the two levels of education explained above is explicable within such missing variables as Skills, Incentives and Resources in the Tanzanian secondary schools. Therefore, teaching and learning processes of writing skills in Tanzanian secondary education are enveloped with Anxiety, which underlie lack of skills; Resistance due to lack of Incentives; and Frustration resulting from resources constraints.

From this framework the author recommends a change whose locus is in addressing the missing variables as discussed in the model. The authors' recommendations here sound more or less like routine recommendations for any study of this nature. I find such recommendations falling short of resolving the problem. However, I find it instructive to point out a few examples of the recommendations the author proposes for both levels (i.e. secondary and higher education).

In the case of secondary schools, the author's recommendations are in two paradigms viz., one is at the school level and the other is at policy-making level. At the secondary school level the author proposes writing across curriculum, which specifically involves, "An interactive-collaborative approach to the teaching learning of writing" at schools (see Qorro, 1999: 251). There is also an emphasis on involving teachers of other subjects in examining students' writing skills.

On policy issues, the author recommends that the Education and Training Policy facilitate teaching and learning of writing by matching "the policy and syllabus objectives on one hand, with classroom practice on the other" (see Qorro, 1999: 252). Furthermore, the author proposes a review of 'O' level syllabus to make it more focused on writing than on grammar teaching. The author urges the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (then Ministry of Education and Culture) to ensure that schools have adequate supply of the required resources for learning apart from issues on policy making, syllabi design, and teacher training programmes. Furthermore, the author proposes for a provision in the education policy, which would allow students to write in Kiswahili since this is the background knowledge students have.

At tertiary level Qorro recommends that institutions of higher education should introduce and sponsor writing programmes in secondary schools. She also calls for either the strengthening of the existing structures of writing skills or establishing new ones at university or faculty levels. She advises that all instructors, apart from the CS course instructors, should consider writing skills as a problem they all are responsible in eliminating. She further recommends that the study skills units should introduce an interaction and what she calls 'constructivist' approaches to teaching rather than lecturer method, referred to earlier as teacher talk.

One of the things which Qorro's study is consistent about is its approach of looking at writing skills holistically. In other words, there is virtually no mention

of any particular writing skills in the study, apart from reference to secondary school and higher education levels. But looking at the student writing problems in secondary schools and higher education one realises that writing in these levels entails not just any writing skills but a special type of writing that is academic writing. Thus, writing skills in this case involves students' ability to manipulate disciplinary language existing in the students' field of study. It is not simply a question of, for example, being able to relate ones' personal experiences such as writing how somebody spent his or her holiday last summer. The current study therefore looks at this special type of writing, academic writing, as located in the social context in which it occurs (or it ought to occur). It is due to this notion that this study approaches a problem of student writing in Tanzania from the literacy studies and critical linguistics perspectives, which problematise student writing as social practice (see Chapter Three for details).

Many recommendations in Qorro's study seem to underlie the notion that student writing is about skills provision. The author discourages the privileging of grammar teaching in secondary school, but there is no guarantee that if students were taught writing skills then they would be able to apply literacy in their different fields of study. This is because writing here would still be taught as autonomous skills and not as literacy practice as demanded by the university culture practice. These are some of the issues the current study set to address.

For example, the recommendation about strengthening the existing study skills units and even establishing new ones may not address the complex issues around the student academic writing problems at universities today. I have noted in Chapter Six that academic writing problems are entrenched in other more complex issues than just the number of study skills units any one university can have. It is about the configurations of Communication Skills course to carter for students not only from diverse backgrounds, but also from diverse disciplinary orientations.

Admittedly, the above gaps notwithstanding, Qorro's study has helped to illuminate the aspect of writing skills discrepancy at the two levels of education. The current study has gone beyond not only to situate the problem in a Tanzania's social cultural context, but also to show how students can be apprenticed into literate writers of the academic discourse at the university.

The study by Ndoloi (1994) is the only one which has addressed students' ESL writing at the university by not only drawing from the theories of discourse, but also by putting students' writing in the Tanzania's social context. Ndoloi's work 'Writing like Tanzanians at University' was set to investigate the writing of First year students at the University of Dar es Salaam. The features Ndoloi investigated in the students' writing pertain to students' voice/personae- "the images they project of themselves in texts" (1994: 3). The author's main argument is that other cultures, which students bring into the university, are equally important in a successful students' acculturation process into the university. This argument draws from Ballard and Clanchy's view pertaining to the acquisition of cultural literacy, which the authors see as an induction process, or bridging the gap between what students know i.e. what they bring into the university and the university expectations of them. Related to this is the notion of disciplinary apprenticeship discussed in Chapter Three.

In Ndoloi's work, the concern is on the appropriacy of student writing in the academic discourse community or in the disciplinary genres. The author argues,

> If we took a student's text and stripped it of all the problems relating to grammar, and surface errors, and even those related to higher order rhetorical organisations of text … still students' writing would be weak if they were composing in a manner inappropriate to the academic community or discipline they are writing in (Ndoloi, 1994: 2).

This argument aligns with Ballard and Clanchy (1988: 8) observation that,

The surface of a student's writing is often problematically related to its depths. It would be possible to help students eliminate most of the surface errors from within their writing and yet leave other vital aspects of the literacy problem virtually untouched.

Using the concept of voice/personae, Ndoloi brings aboard four writer identities of students academic writing in Tanzanian context, namely; 'The Wise One' persona, linguistically characterised by modals, and use of pronouns; 'The cry' persona, whose linguistic features are dominated by modals and passive construction; 'The Humble Student' persona, characterised by reverence to authority especially in citations; and 'The Scholar' persona, who are able to "echo or imitate academic register or lexicon", comment on their own writing style, use emphatics, or refer to sources (see Ndoloi, 1994: 285-290).

According to the author, students' writing problems hinge on being constrained by authority. In other words, the four personas identified in the study are a result of the authority imbalance. Here, students' writing oscillates between revering authority (e.g. the Humble student persona) to asserting it, (e.g. the Scholar' persona). But, these shifts between personas are rather done unwittingly. In other words, students do not know what authority they are (or should be) in command, a situation deriving from the insecurity students-writers feel with their audience, in particular tutors (see Ndoloi, 1994).

Ndoloi recommends some measures in solving students' writing problems at the university. Below, I give some of the key points. First he calls for tutors of other subjects to participate in orientating students in the academic university culture. The author cites what seems to be a common complaint at universities that tutors of other disciplines leave the burden of orientating students into academic cultural literacy to tutors of language disciplines (see Ndoloi, 1994). Qorro also reiterates this problem (see Qorro's 1999 study cited above).

Secondly, Ndoloi proposes for genre-based writing instruction at university, whereby conventions of academic writing should be made clear or rather demystified for students before they (students) are assigned writing tasks. Similarly, the author urges for what he calls genre-based feedback on writing. In other words, tutors' comments to students' writing should be "to help these students make sense of the shortcomings of their writing, so that they could produce an improved version of the same text or write a better essay next time" (Ndoloi, 1994: 312).

Admittedly, Ndoloi's work is the first of its kind, which as I said has drawn from the theories of discourse, as well as putting students' writing at the University of Dar es Salaam in social context. However, a number of observations are worth noting here; the first is about the definition of literacy itself. The author defines literacy as acculturation, closely related to the concept of disciplinary apprenticeship (see Chapter Three). Further, the author observes that a literate student is the one who has been successfully inducted into the university culture, and that, "The question of acculturation to new students must be the joint responsibility of both writing teachers and those teaching content subjects" (Ndoloi, 1994: 4). This conceptualisation of literacy aligns with the second of the three paradigms of literacy proposed by Lea and Street (in Christiansen, 2004) and cited in Chapter Three, which is that of academic socialisation, where students are acculturated into the world of academic language.

The notion of literacy as described by the author aligns more with the autonomous model of literacy, which as we shall see considers literacy as discreet skills. This conception, as I have indicated earlier, is not favoured in the tradition of New Literacy Studies neither in the tradition of Critical Discourse Analysis whose focus is on social practices of literacy- the focus, which is firmly entrenched in the ideological model of literacy.

The authority phenomenon, which the author says emanates from power imbalance between student-writers and lecturer-readers, indeed constrains student

writing. But the real tension structuring student-writers and lecturer-readers relationship is not whether or not students are allowed or not allowed to express certain voices or identities. Rather students are not made aware of the availability of such options, and neither are they, as the inevitable consequence, guided to articulate such voices or identities. This is typical of the autonomous model of literacy, which assumes that dominant formal conventions are transparent and given (and that students are supposed to know them) while in fact they are opaque, implicit and sometimes contestable.

It is this conceptualisation of literacy, which brings to bear on the recommendation the author puts forward on solving students' academic writing problems. The idea of tutors of writing and those of other subjects helping students in understanding the conventions of academic writing is a novel one. However, what and how such help should be given to students is something that is contestable in the perspective of NLS and CDA. In the first place, the students and tutors' roles in the learning process are not clearly defined here. This vagueness in relationship roles brings forth the danger of tutors assuming the role of the 'all knowing' authority and the source of knowledge. Related to this, as Johns (1997: 18) puts it, "is the danger of teaching assimilation to academic cultures and their texts, rather than critique, or promoting students' acceptance of what is considered to be the status quo".

This is counter to a socially constructed definition of literacy, which moves research of students' learning practices away from how teachers can help students to learn the literacies of the university and focus more on how students and teachers understand the literacy practices of the university (see Christiansen, *Op cit*.).

Similarly, genre-based feedback proposed by the author is a complex aspect: On the one hand, as Ndoloi's study shows, there is a complaint about tutors not giving feedback at all, apart from the indication of marks. And on the other, there are those tutors who comment things on student writing, but the problem, which is not

addressed, is the manner in which tutors' feedback is structured. Two things need to be noted; first, studies (e.g. Ballard and Clanchy in Taylor, 1988; Christiansen, 2004) show that sometimes teachers' responses to student writing are "rarely systematic, often compressed and cryptic" (Ballard and Clanchy, in Taylor, 1988: 8). This aspect brings to bear on the quality of the feedback rendered to students, in that some tutors' feedback can be more damaging than not having them at all.

Secondly, is the question of tutors reflecting on their own comments: As we shall soon see (Chapter Three), tutors and students are participants in the socio-discursive space of the academia. However, often tutors assume a privileged position in this space due to their knowledge and authority, resulting into students–tutors power imbalance inferred by Ndoloi. It is this students-tutors unequal relations which necessitates the evaluation of tutors own discursive practices if they (tutors) are to avoid abusing their empowered discourse, even though unwittingly, in the form of responses to students' writing.

The other aspect, which the author has not addressed, pertains to those lecturers who are linguistically challenged. The author does not explicitly acknowledge the existence of this phenomenon though he makes a subtle reference to it when he says,

> As writing tutors in different universities are not native, these studies are invaluable as orienting these tutors and indeed other specialised tutors into such communities (Ndoloi, 1994: 317).

Drawing from Ndoloi, ESL writing of the academic discourse is not a students' only problem. Tutors too, being non-native of the English language, have a stake in it, and indeed they too need to be 'acculturated' into the university academic writing culture.

So far, ESL academic writing research in higher education in Tanzania has always targeted students directly. But, evidence from this study suggests that lecturers too

need to pay attention to their own writing. Needless to say, Lecturers too are the product of the same widely criticised education system that students have gone through. Moreover, lecturers too have been shaped by the same social cultural backgrounds, even though these cultural backgrounds may have impacted the generations of students and lecturers differently due to differences in time. These reasons demand that lecturers' writing as social practice of the academic discourse, also be brought to scrutiny. As Leibowitz (2000 in Leibowitz and Mohamed, 2000: 17) observes, and rightly so that,

> The way lecturers write influences how they encourage (or do not encourage) students to write. The way lecturers orientate themselves towards authorship will have a direct impact on the kinds of questions they set for students and attitudes towards knowledge production they model in the classroom.

Students' ESL writing literacies derive not only from students' own backgrounds, but also from other factors external of themselves, including lecturers' discursive practices. Such practices are sometimes informed, in part, by unsuitable didactic skills, and in part, by linguistic constraints. Thus, there is need for lecturers to develop self-critique towards their own discourse. And, evaluating lecturers' language in their response to student writing is perhaps, the best starting point towards achieving this goal.

It is because of addressing these issues that the current study adopts the approach constructed from New Literacy Studies, Genre Theory, and Critical Discourse Analysis. The model constructed from these conceptual frames has been used in the current study as a backdrop of analysing not only student writing as a socially constituted practice, but also in the analysis of lecturers' own discursive practices. This approach was set to consider students not as passive recipient of 'expert knowledge and direction,' but rather as social actors or participants in a university community of discourse.

Academic writing is but only one of the essential aspects in the students' literacy growth. Literacy in academic writing also presupposes ability to read critically to access 'ESL Available Designs' (see Kern, 2000: 177), which students can draw upon in the ESL writing in the genres of academic discourse, using methods of inquiry required in the discipline students are writing in.

Showing the semiotic relationship between reading and writing, Kucer (2005) challenges the perception that reading and writing entails opposite processes. The underlying theory of this assumption (i.e. reading and writing as opposites) is presented in Figure 2.2 below.

Reading ⟵	Writing ⟶
• Decoding	• Encoding
• Passive *interaction with texts*	• Active *interaction with texts*
• Less use of cognitive resources	• More use of cognitive resources
• Meaning abstracting	• Meaning generating
• Building background knowledge	• Expressing background knowledge
• Context independent	• Context dependent
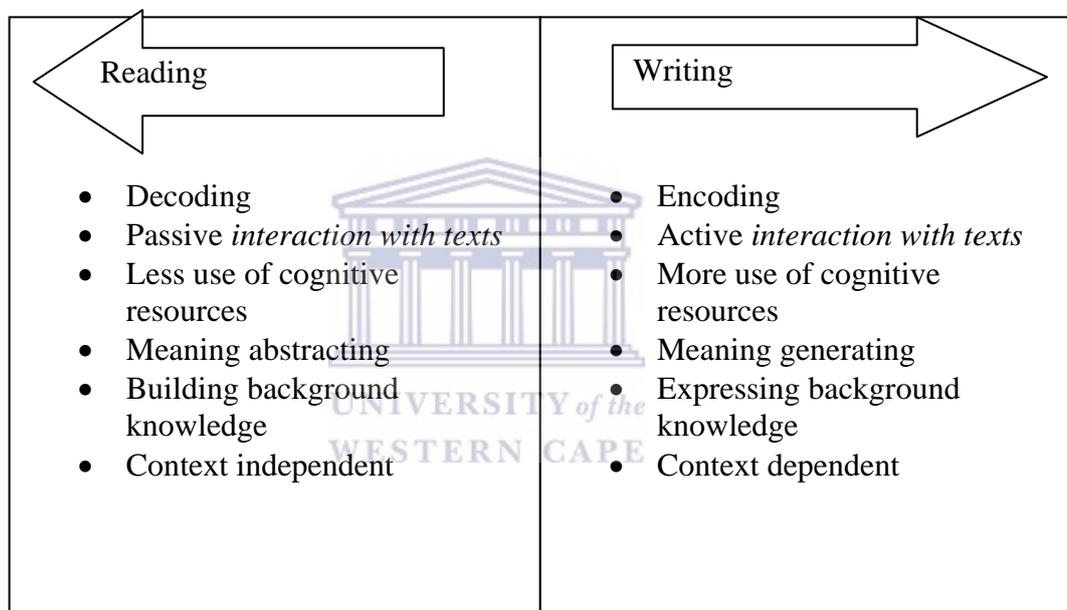
Figure 2.2   Reading and writing as opposite processes
Source: Adopted from Kucer, (2005: 191) (my italics)

Challenging the perception about reading and writing depicted in Figure 2.2 above, Kucer observes, and correctly so, that "the relationship between reading and writing is that of parallel or complementary processes", (2005: 191). "In both processes meaning is 'continually in a state of becoming'" (Langer and Flihan cited in Kucer, 2005: 191). Figure 2.3 depicts the accurate representation of the interrelationship between reading and writing.
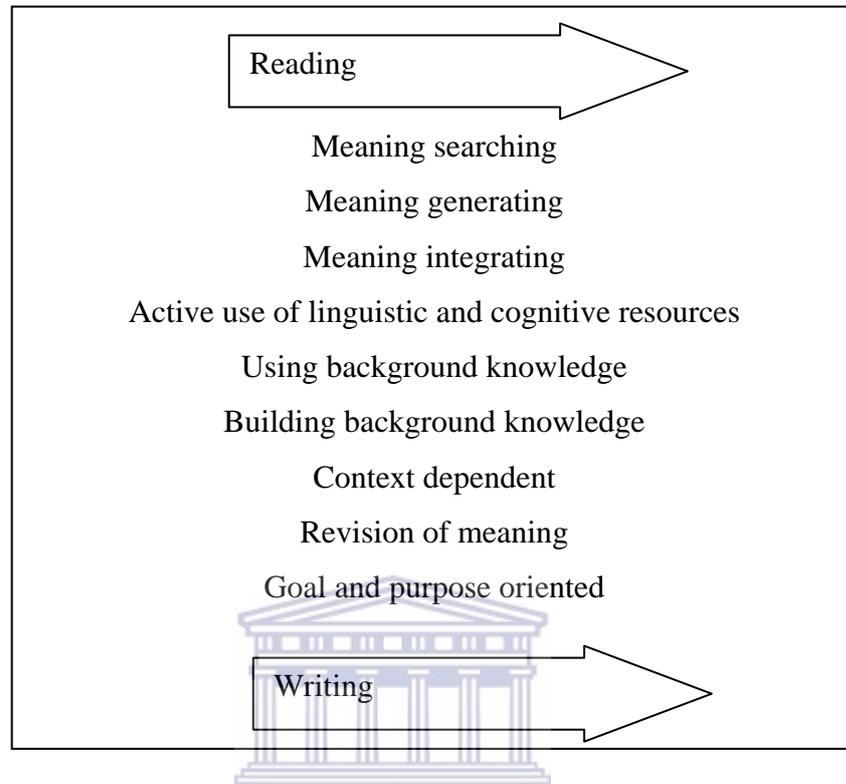
Figure 2.3   **Reading and writing as parallel processes**
Source: Adopted from Kucer (2005: 192)

The relationship between reading and writing development is intrinsic because "encounters with and learnings from reading are used to advance the writing process, and encounters with and learnings from writing are used to advance the writing process" (see Kucer and Hartse cited in Kucer, 2005: 277). Each process, according to Kucer, has a potential of impacting and spurring growth in the other.

Students therefore, need these reading skills to enable them gain confidence in the command of the disciplinary language (cf. Leibowitz and Mohamed, 2000), which carries the given disciplinary knowledge.

2.5   ESL Writing Research: A Global Perspective

Globally, studies in the ESL writing were premised on contrastive rhetoric where models of L1 have had significant influence on ESL writing instruction and the development of theory of ESL writing (Myles, 2002). In these approaches, findings of the L1 research were used to guide research in the ESL writing. Findings of studies which used models of L1 and ESL writing are summarised by Krapels (in Kroll, 1990:49-50) as follows, "A lack of competence in writing in English results more from the lack of composing competence than from the lack of linguistic competence" (e.g. Jones, 1982; Zamel, 1982; Raimes, 1985a). "Differences between L1 and ESL writers relate to composing proficiency rather than to their first language". In other words, the composing process of, "unskilled" ESL writers are similar to those of "unskilled" L1 writers and vice versa (e.g. Zamel, 1983). This, according to Krapels (in Kroll, 1990) contradicts the findings of a study by Raimes (1985a, 1985b, 1987) and Arndt (1987) who indicate that the composing process of ESL writers is somewhat different from the composing process of L1 writers. Other studies (e.g. Martin-Betancourt, 1986; Cumming, 1987) reveal a varied degree of the use of L1 when writing in the ESL. Though some studies contradict this finding, studies by Lay (1982), Burtoff (1983), and Johnson (1985) indicate that certain writing tasks, apparently those related to culture-bound topics, elicit more L1 use when writing in an ESL than other tasks (Krapels in Kroll, 1990: 49-50).

These studies guided the current research in explaining some of the phenomena that were anticipated from students' ESL writing performance. Students in the research sample certainly had acquired their own native languages before learning English. Some of the students' ESL academic writing practices were discernible in the context of the previously acquired languages, and in the Tanzanian context, this mainly refers to Kiswahili. In other words, these studies provided insights on how issues of language transfer, one of the cognitive factors, might have impacted learners' ESL writing performance.

The study of transfer involves the study of errors (negative transfer), and facilitation (positive transfer). Views on language transfer are wide and sometimes conflicting, particularly because it is difficult to establish empirically instances of transfer (whether negative or positive) in learners' language features at their developmental stage. Suffice it to say that a "writer's first language plays a complex and significant role in ESL acquisition" (see Myles, 2002:8), some explanations of the students' academic writing practices were expected to hinge on this aspect in the current study.

Elsewhere research on academic ESL writing focused on learners' variability in ESL writing performance. In other words, the studies tried to explore answers to such questions as to why some people do acquire language more successfully than others. These studies basically investigated the influence of social and cognitive factors in second language acquisition. A study by Schrader (cited in Tollefson, 1991) was among the pioneering work in this domain. Schrader's study focused on how, among other things, learners' variables such as motivation, attitudes and values affect learning. The findings in this study have shown that,
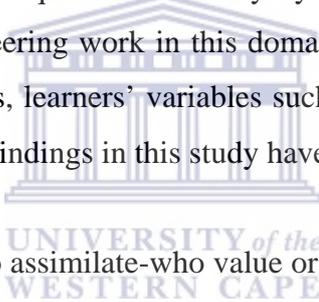
> learners who wish to assimilate-who value or identify with members of the target language community are generally more successful than learners who are more concerned about retaining their original cultural identity. They are also more successful than learners who merely wish to increase their salary or employment options (Tollefson, 1991: 22).

Further motivational research explored the role of social factors in ESL learning. One example comes from Gardner (cited in Myles, 2002:8) whose socio-educational model "is designed to account for the role of social factors in language acquisition". Gardner examined two broad types of motivational attachments: integrative and instrumental motivation. Examples of integrative motivation for language learning involve, according to Tollefson, 1991 "a feeling of personal identity tied to the target language community" (p. 30; see also Gardner in Myles, 2002). The learner learns ESL because of his desire to integrate

in the target language community. Thus, language acquisition is the means of gaining membership to the target language community (cf. Tollefson, 1991; Myles, 2002).

On the other hand, instrumental motivation for language learning "acknowledges the role that external influences and incentives play in strengthening the learner's desire to achieve" (Myles, 2002:5). Instrumentally motivated learners learn the language for a particular purpose such as passing a degree requirement or to get a better job. Since the current research also dwells on attitudes towards language, studies on social factors to language learning will be instrumental in informing the current research on how students' attitudes towards English might have impacted their ESL writing performance.

The cognitive factors, which are specified in the studies on ESL writing, are elaborated in the Anderson's model of language production (cited in Myles, 2002: 7). The model comprises three stages: "construction, in which the writer plans what he/she is going to write by brainstorming, using a mind-map or outline; transformation, in which language rules are applied to transform intended meanings into the form of the message when the writer is composing or revising; and execution, which corresponds to the physical process of producing the text". Unsuccessful ESL writing may be a result of a student failing to oscillate between these processes when they have to "actively develop the meaning they wish to express in writing" (see Myles, 2002: 7).

These studies illuminate how ESL students' texts should be approached. In other words, students' texts need to be approached not only as stretches of sentences, which comply to grammatical rules of language usage, but also as discourse i.e. "text plus the social and cognitive processes involved in its realization as an expressive or communicative act" (see Kern, 2000:19). The current study takes these aspects into consideration through the interdisciplinary analytical framework to be used in examining student writing as is described in Chapter Three.

2.6   Critical Approaches to Literacy: New Literacy Studies

The theories of New Literacy Studies (henceforth NLS) consider literacy as social practice or rather as a set of social practices, comprising such constructs as, practices, events, and text. The evolution of NLS as an area of study can be associated with a slow but steady encoding of the word literacy to such diverse fields as linguistics, sociology, psychology, sociolinguistics, anthropology, and politics (see Barton, 1994; Gee, 2000 in Barton *et al,* 2000). In its current formulation, NLS according to Street represents a new tradition whose nature of literacy focuses 'not so much on acquisition of skills, as in dominant approaches, but rather on what it means to think of literacy as a social practice' (Street, 2003: 1).

From this formulation, the ethnographic researchers of literacy have provided a powerful tool for understanding literacy as social practice by coining new terms and giving new meanings for some old ones (see Street, 2003). For example Street (cited in Street, 2003) begins with a notion of multiple literacies, which not only varies "according to time and space but also contested in relations of power" (p. 1). Street continues to make a distinction between autonomous and ideological models of literacy and finally develops a distinction between literacy events and literacy practices.

2.6.1   Autonomous Versus Ideological Models of Literacy

Literacy as configured in dominant official discourses is autonomous, that is, it "will have effects in other social and cognitive practices" (see Street 2003:1). The autonomous model of literacy stresses "skills in use of literacy in decontextualised or isolated ways, and at the expense of values and ideologies" (see Christie, 2005a: 233). In the academic writing pedagogy, this model problematises literacy teaching and learning as, "a matter of mastering certain important but essentially basic technical skills" (see Christie, 2005a: 233) such as spelling, and writing systems. This means, writing is viewed as "a technology for encoding meanings" (see Lillis, 2001: 28) and that a priority is attached to "accuracy in control of the basic resources of literacy and beyond that persons are assumed to be free to use

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literacy in ways that fit their purposes" (Christie, 2005a: 233). In other words, the model espouses the notions that literacy is simple and given.

The notion of literacy as being neutral or existing independently (i.e. not tied with any social context and its associated meanings) is central to the autonomous model and a factor for divergent perspectives between this model and the ideological model of literacy. The underlying assumption of the autonomous model, according to Street (2003. 1), is that introducing literacy to any "'illiterate' people will have the effect of enhancing their cognitive skills, improving their economic prospects, making them better citizens, regardless of the social and economic conditions that account for their 'illiteracy' in the first place". Here the cultural and ideological assumptions which underpin the autonomous model of literacy are disguised and presents literacy as neutral, universal, and transparent or given.

This is the view, which the ethnography researchers in the NLS seek to challenge, and they do this by offering an alternative, the ideological model of literacy. This model offers, as Street (2001:7) puts it, "a more culturally sensitive view of literacy practices as they vary from one context to another". Unlike the autonomous model, the ideological model "posits instead that literacy is a social practice, not simply a technical and neutral skill; that it is always embedded in socially constructed epistemological principles" (Street, 2001: 2). Such practices far from being neutral are ideological, and have different meanings for different groups of people.

> Literacy, in this sense, is always contested, both its meanings and its practices, hence particular versions of it are always "ideological", they are always rooted in a particular world-view and in a desire for that view of literacy to dominate and to marginalize others (Street, 2003: 2; see also Street, 2001: 7-8).

There are six formulations, which provide a powerful tool of constructing a heuristic instrument for understanding literacy as social practice. The formulations are summarised in Barton and Hamilton as propositions, which are discussed below.

- o *Literacy is best understood as a set of social practices; these can be inferred from events which are mediated by written texts.*
- o *There are different literacies associated with different domains of life.*
- o *Literacy practices are patterned by social institutions and power relationship, and some literacies are more dominant, visible and influential than others.*
- o *Literacy practices are purposeful and embedded in broader social goals and cultural practices.*
- o *Literacy is historically situated. And*
- o *Literacy practices change and new ones are frequently acquired through the process of informal learning and meaning making*

(Barton and Hamilton in Barton *et al,* 2000: 8; see also Barton, 1994) (italics in the original).
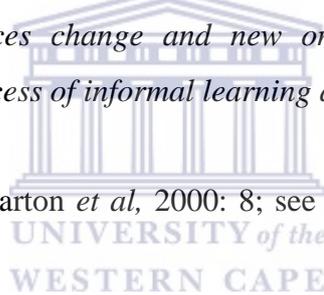
Literacy as social practice has at its core the notion of *literacy practices*, which according to Barton and Hamilton (in Barton *et al*, 2000: 7) entail "… the general cultural ways of utilising written language which people draw upon in their lives". The term is employed by Street (2003: 2) to mean "a means of focussing upon social practices and conceptions of reading and writing". Street then elaborated the term to refer to "the broader cultural conception of particular ways of thinking about and doing reading and writing in contexts" (see Street 2003: 2). Street also sees literacy practice as projected in social practices, "such as those of a particular job market or a particular educational context and the effects of learning that particular literacy will be dependent on those particular contexts" (Street, 2003:2).

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The social theory of literacy is constitutive of two other constructs, *literacy events* and *texts*. The former entails "activities which literacy has a role", and usually encompass "observable episodes which arise from practices and are shaped by them" (see Barton and Hamilton in Barton *et al*). The constructs, *practices*, *events*, and *texts* help to provide the first proposition of literacy, that is,

> *Literacy is best understood as a set of social practices; these can be inferred from events which are mediated by written texts.*

The notion of literacy events brings to bear on the fact that in different contexts or domains there are different literacies. This has two nuances, there can be, for example, borrowing from Barton and Hamilton, "practices which involve different media or symbolic systems", or "practices in different cultures and languages can be regarded as different literacies" (2000: 10). According to the authors "… literacies are coherent configurations of literacy practices; often these sets of practices are identifiable and named, as in for example, *academic literacy* or *work-place literacy* and there are associated with particular aspects of cultural life" (Barton and Hamilton in Barton *et al*, 2000: 10) (italics in the original). Usually these particular aspects of cultural life tend to be highly valued. In the current study for example, even though the learners perform poorly in English they still prefer the language as a medium of instruction because the use of English is what identifies someone as a member of the academia in the Tanzania's academic cultural context. It is from this formulation that the second proposition is constructed,

> *There are different literacies associated with different domains of life.*

It is from this construction that the current talks of academic literacy. Even in the academia, literacy can be used in more specific senses; the sense in which literacy was encoded in the current study was the one pertaining to ESL academic writing. Thus, there were two nuances within which academic literacy was encoded: First, how successfully (or unsuccessfully) students can write using the medium of

English as the second language. Secondly, using this medium how successfully (or unsuccessfully) students can articulate their thoughts while engaging in academic discourses.

The third Proposition, *Literacy practices are patterned by social institutions and power relationship, and some literacies are more dominant, visible and influential than others,* is constructed from the notion that "socially powerful institutions, such as education, tend to value and support dominant literacy practices". These practices "can be seen as part of whole discourse formations, institutionalised configurations of power and knowledge, which are embodied in social relationship. Other vernacular literacies which exist in people's everyday lives are less visible and less supported" (see Barton and Hamilton in Barton *et al,* 2000: 12).

In the case of a university, for example, dominant literacy practices, which are embedded in academic writing can be said to be the formulaic conventions, which are socially valued or privileged and upheld. One example of vernacular literacies is the individual background knowledge and experiences students bring with them into the university. Such experiences are usually ignored and often undervalued, instead of being, as Christie (2005b) puts it, 'recontextualised', that is to be encoded into the university cultural literacy. In the case of the current study, the notion of dominant versus local literacies is explicable not only in terms of practices as discussed above, but also in terms of linguistics, where English and Kiswahili reflect the tension between dominant and local literacies respectively (see also the first proposition above).

But the caveat here is that the ethnographic researchers of NLS challenge what they call 'relativism' view of literacy embodied in the autonomous model of literacy, and which has the potential of romanticising dominant literacies, though this critique should not entail that NLS is out to celebrate local literacies (see Street, 2001).

The NLS researchers premise their critique on the assumption that all literacies are inherently ideological. They emphasise that there is need to realise that on the one hand there is a danger of celebrating local literacies, which may no longer be appropriate in "a modern, indeed 'postmodern' condition where 'empowerment' requires high communicative skills including formal literacy" (Street, 2001: 12). But on the other hand romanticising dominant literacies may engender issues of access to dominant genres. In Tanzanian social context for example, skills in Kiswahili may not have a place in Higher Education where the medium of instruction is still English. At the same time English is at best a second language and at worst a foreign language to the majority of people hence those who can access 'dominant genres', that is higher education are those with sound knowledge of English. Moreover, according to Street, "rules of dominant literacy genres are frequently quite arbitrary" (2001: 13): And in the case of student writing, dominant literacy genres would entail formal language features, "such rules can be easily changed if too many people learn how to use them and thereby challenge the status quo" (Street, 2001: 13) (my emphasis). Thus, "those in power retain domination while appearing to provide access to the disempowered" (Street, 2001: 13).
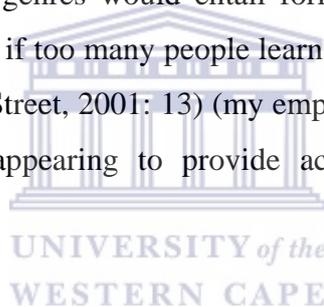
In the case of academic institutions romanticising dominant literacies in student writing would engender looking at student writing as a final product. Lecturers' primary concern would be on assessing students' grammatical accuracy and correctness instead of engaging in assisting students in the process of writing successfully in their meaning making in their various disciplines. In other words, literacy practices are considered as an end in itself, instead of a means to an end. From this realisation NLS seeks to situate, according to Barton and Hamilton's fourth proposition, that

> *Literacy practices are purposeful and embedded in broader social goals and cultural practices.*

The recognition that literacy practices are culturally situated embodies that *Literacy is historically situated.* Just like "all cultural phenomena, *which* have their roots in the past" (2000:13) (my emphasis) so is literacy as an embodiment of culture. Because literacy practices are "as fluid, dynamic and changing as the lives and societies in which they are a part, we need an historical approach for an understanding of the ideology, culture and traditions on which current practices are based" (Barton and Hamilton in Barton, 2000: 13).

In the case of academic institutions the element of the NLS historical approach is a useful tool for situating student writing in the historical context. In the current study, for example, following this approach, I was able to see how Tanzanian ideological past embodied in Ujamaa has exerted influence on both the thinking and practice of lecturers in their engagement with discourse practices around academic writing. Students, on the other hand, comprise a generation, which was less (if at all directly) affected by this ideological past. This background is a major cause of conflicting attitudes and tendencies between lecturers and students towards English in this study (see Chapter Five and Six), notwithstanding that some of the values (including Ujamaa linguistics) from lecturers (representing the older generation) are likely to be passed onto students (the younger generation).

Lastly, the formulation that, *Literacy practices change and new ones are frequently acquired through the process of informal learning and meaning making, i*s explicable within the conception that literacy practices are configurations of a learning process, and "this learning takes place in particular social context and part of this learning is the internalisation of social processes" (see Barton and Hamilton, 2000 14). That is to say, learning is constitutive of literacy practices whose continual change is dependent on the social context in which they are a part. In the case of universities, literacy practices around student writing are the material processes on which the dominant university cultural practices exert influence. Thus, we need a tool of understanding how universities within a broader social context make (or fail to make) student-writers become literate-writers. As a result of this knowledge, to figure out how social contexts

can be transformed into supportive learning environments both for the acquisition of requisite literacies and for the effective participation (by students) in the university community of practice, as is endeavoured in the current study.

The distinctive correlates between autonomous and ideological models of literacy in the context of academic writing pedagogy are represented in Table 2.1 below:

Table 2.1: Comparing a skills with a practice approach to student writing

A skills approach *embedded in the autonomous model* emphasises	A practice approach *embedded in the ideological model* emphasises
- Student writing as primarily an individual act - The individual as an autonomous, socially neutral, subject - Language as a transparent medium of communication - Literacy as autonomous and universal - The 'appropriateness' of essayist literacy in HE	- Student writing as a social act - Language as constructing meanings/identities - Literacies as numerous, varied and socially/institutionally situated - The socio-historically situated nature of essayist literacy - The privileged status of essayist literacy within academia - The contested nature of dominant academic conventions

Source: Lillis, 2001: 31 (my emphasis)

Both models are important in the academic writing pedagogy, but often one identifies with one model or the other, depending on where one puts more emphasis. In the current study, for example, I have identified myself with the approach espoused in the ideological model of literacy. That is why, as I mentioned earlier, I have problematised students' academic writing not as autonomous skills in isolation, but rather as discourse practices. This is done in the realisation that student writing occurs within the institutional social context, in

this case the university, which has dominant literacy practices that regulate and shape students' text production and reproduction.

I argue that in the academic writing pedagogy, the skills approach espoused in the autonomous literacy model can be of use for students at their pre-university education level, say from, secondary schools and below. This is because, notwithstanding the importance of practice approach even at these levels, I believe, students need to be given formal grammatical skills, and other language tools, above everything else (see also Christie, 2005b). I have two arguments here, first, since skills approach emphasises the basic language skills, then it is important to give such skills to students during their early years of language learning. Secondly, at lower levels- i.e. pre-university- students are not yet able to handle literacy in an advanced, and sometimes in an abstract manner as is configured in the practice approach.

In higher education, on the other hand, and where this study focuses attention, students ought to be mentored to put into practice the skills they already have (or are supposed to have acquired) in performing different functions as demanded by the university literacy practices. From the NLS perspective, this will be in the paradigms of context of situation. In other words, as Christie puts it, the 'pedagogical discourse' is "- one that is much more overtly (and in the case of a university fully) committed into apprenticeship to specialised areas of knowledge than is true of the early (i.e. pre-university) *pedagogical discourse"* (Christie, 2005b: 24) (my additions and emphasis).

For students who, perhaps, have not acquired those skills prior to entering the university, such students, while at university, I argue, should be able to acquire these skills through the process of reading and writing texts as literacy events. This is notwithstanding the hybridisation process, which must take place during the encounters of local literacies (from the home, the community, or earlier schooling) students bring into the university and the dominant university literacies students are supposed to conform with (see Section 2.6.1). Such hybridisation is

essential to avoid privileging the more valued university dominant literacies and ignore students' own background knowledge, and experiences they bring into the university. In the case of Tanzanian cultural context, students' background knowledge could also involve skills in Kiswahili, all of which impact profoundly in the student-writers' pathways into literate –writers in the ESL writing.

2.6.2   Student writing as literacy practice

The concept of Literacy has been further explained and applied by various scholars using the key notions discussed above, showing how the concept links directly to student writing. For example, Johns (1997: 1) defines literacy as encompassing,

> …ways of knowing particular content, languages, and practices. It refers to strategies for understanding, discussing, organising, and producing texts. In addition, it relates to the social context in which a discourse is produced and *reproduced* and the roles and communities of text readers and writers (my emphasis).

From this conception of literacy, "a literate person relates in a more sophisticated manner to some texts, roles and contexts than to others" (see Johns, 1997: 3). In other words, for a literate person the unpacking of literacy practices in the construction, and production of texts will appeal to more sophisticated modes of processing of such texts, than would otherwise be the case if the person was not literate. Johns (1997) also underscores the variability nature of individual literacies, in that "their evolution is influenced by a person's interests, cultures, languages, and experiences, and by responses of others to their texts" (p.3).

Here, John is set to describe a literacy theory that serves pedagogical purposes. Thus, he emphasises on the need to look at our own (academics) theories of academic literacy acquisition and those of our students: "the ways in which our theories take a pedagogical shape; and how we can encourage students to continue their literacy growth throughout their lives" (John, 1997: 3).

The author looks at literacy as an integration of views drawing from different theoretical views of literacy, namely, the traditional view; the learner-centred/based view; personal- expressivist view; and socioliterate view. The details of the underpinnings of these theoretical views are beyond the scope of this study. Suffice it to say that, each of these theoretical approaches defines literacy from different perspectives basing on four main paradigms: firstly, the nature of acquisition- in the sense that the theories differ in their beliefs of how literacy is acquired. Secondly, the nature of the learner and the role the leaner plays in literacy acquisition- again how the learner and the role s/he ought to play are defined variably by the theories (see Johns, 1997 for details). Third, the role of the literacy teacher, or any adult expert in the literacy acquisition- these are also looked at variably by the theories. And fourth, the nature of language and texts, whereby, whilst in the traditionalist view, the core concept, is,
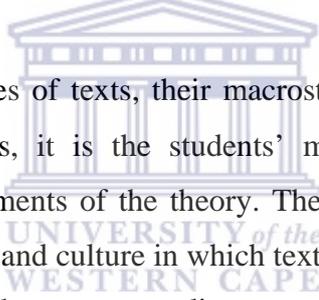
the formal properties of texts, their macrostructure and grammar. In the Learner-based views, it is the students' meaning-making process that drives the other elements of the theory. The Socioliterate theorists begin with the community and culture in which texts are read and written and the social influences of the context on discourses (Johns, 1997: 5).

In conclusion, Johns proposes the integration of literacy views, from the pedagogical point of view, and argues that, students need not conceptualise "a social construct as a rigid set of rules, but as guidelines to be negotiated within specific contexts". Thus, in reading and writing of every text as a literacy practice there is always a space for "individual interpretations; purposes, voices", and that students ought to be encouraged to "experiment within and outside, textual boundaries and conventions" (Johns, 1997: 5).

Although Johns' discussion of academic literacy primarily seeks for the appropriate pedagogical theory for developing academic literacies amongst students, he also wittingly defines and discusses academic literacy practice as

constructed from the Critical Discourse Analysis perspectives. Thus, the author's views of literacy inarguably befit the current study. One of his concluding remarks is particularly reflective of this fact.

> *there is always* the danger of teaching assimilation to academic cultures and their texts, rather than critique, or promoting students' acceptance of what is considered to be the status quo. We must help students to analyse, critique, and negotiate intelligently the texts, roles, and academic contexts in which they operate (Johns, 1997: 18) (My emphasis).

On the concept of literacy, scholars such as Ballard and Clanchy (in Taylor *et al*, 1988: 8) view a literate person as that who can display literacy behaviour. Literacy behaviour according to the authors is that "which is judged to be literate", and that these judgements "grow out of a set of cultural understanding upon which most academics would find themselves in broad agreement". It is important to note that these understandings are often dictated by social cultural and institutional practices. They are the 'deep' rules of the culture, which "shape the entire process of student writing". It is such deep rules of the culture that,

> inform the way in which the writing task is initially framed by the academic and the way in which the student's response to the task (text) is finally assessed. They define the ways in which a student's cognitive and linguistic behaviour that the assessment of his or her 'literacy' ultimately rests (Ballard and Clanchy in Taylor *et al*, 1988: 8).

In summary, 'literacy' is 'culturally shaped' or framed. But this framing is not uni-dimensional, in that, the concept of literacy comes to bear relatively on a student's orientation into the university cultural literacy. In other words, in this broad culture called the university culture there are sub-cultures in the form of individual disciplines. These disciplines have different modes of analysis, or investigation, and the languages or disciplinary dialects, which sustain them. In other words, "the language informs the knowledge; the knowledge finds its form

and meaning within the language" (Ballard and Clanchy in Taylor *et al*, 1988: 17). From Ballard and Clanchy (in Taylor, 1988: 17) the concept of literacy can be represented in Table 2.2 as follows:

Table 2.2: Literacy as Cognitive and Linguistic Competence

Literacy	
Cognitive competence: • Disciplinary knowledge • Models of analysis/ investigation	Linguistic competence: • Literacy of context (correctness, coherence, appropriateness of style, voice and other formal features). • Control of disciplinary dialect (those meanings, items and forms of language pertaining to the discipline).

This representation entails that the notion of literacy is constitutive of cognitive competence and linguistic competence. Whilst the former deals with knowledge of the discipline and of the methods of analysis or inquiry, the latter deals with knowledge of the language of the discipline, over and above, the knowledge of the general conventional features. Related to disciplinary knowledge the authors argue, and rightly so, that,

> Knowledge can only be revealed not by itself but through methods of questioning. And different disciplines are distinguished less by the uniqueness of the area of reality or experience they are out to investigate rather than by their distinct methods of investigations – their distinctive modes of analysis - learning to manipulate their appropriate mode of analysis competently is one important element in the students development of what was referred to earlier as 'literacy' in the subject (Ballard and Clanchy in Taylor *et al*, 1988: 14).

This concept of literacy builds up on the idea that (and views) student writing in academia as primarily a genre-based product- this is conjured up in the aspect of demand for distinctive methods of inquiry while students write in different disciplines. One may add that genres as part of discourse are socially constructed. These aspects of the definition are well projected in the conceptual and analytical framework followed in the current study.

As discussed above, the theories of New Literacy Studies (NLS) problematise student writing as practice which has a social aspect. The underpinnings for this problematisation, as encapsulated by Lillis, are: first, "students' writing takes place within a particular institution, which has a particular history, culture, values and practices". Secondly, "the students' academic writing constitutes a very particular kind of literacy practices *often referred to as 'essayist literacy,'* which is bound up with the workings of a particular social institution" (Lillis 2001: 31-39) (my additional emphasis).

Students' meaning making in academic writing is structured and shaped by two other constructs, viz. *voices* and *identity*. In academic writing, Bakhtin conceptualises voices as having two inferences, that is, voices as experience and voices as language. As experience, voice "refers to the configurations of life experiences any one student writer brings with her to higher education" (Bakhtin cited in Lillis, 2001: 46). Such experiences constitute an important element of scaffolding on which lecturers can provide support in mentoring students into literate writers. And as language, voice refers to the mediational means e.g. "specific wording- words, phrases-drawn from the student-writers' habits of meaning *construction* … and which they bring into academia" (Wertsch cited in Lillis, 2001: 46) (my emphasis).

As for identity, this signals the manner in which individuals assert and describe 'a sense of who they are'. Thus, "student-writers sense of personal/social identity is a significant dimension to their experience of meaning making, influencing, as it

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does what students (don't) write and (don't) wish to write in academia" (Lillis, 2001: 50). This parallels Fairclough's notion of identification, "where the production of text is also about the production–reproduction, transformation– of the self" (Lillis, 2001: 50).

2.7   Conclusion to Chapter Two

In this chapter, I have focused attention on the operational concepts and reviewed literature on ESL writing research in Tanzania as well as globally. I started by defining key terms, notably discourse and literacy and showed how they apply to my study. From this chapter it emerged that the notions 'discourse' and 'literacy' are firmly ingrained in a social context, and thus the notions are said to be best understood as a set of social practices. Then, I have reviewed literature on the ESL writing research in Tanzania. Here, I have cited various studies on student ESL problems generally and on student ESL writing in particular. In all cases, I have attempted to indicate the areas emphasised by such studies, and most importantly, the gaps for such studies, and which the current study was to set to address. Next, I looked at literature on current trends in the ESL writing research on a global perspective. Here I have shown how early ESL writing models were constructed whereby LI models were used to inform ESL research. And then, I have shown how these theories evolved to the current emphasis on studies on 'text plus the social and cognitive processes involved in its realization as an expressive or communicative act' (see Section 2.5 above).

I have explicated the concepts of discourse and literacy further in the discussion of the theories of NLS, which are central to the understanding of the analytical approach followed in the study. I have discussed the constructs embodied in these theories, notably autonomous versus ideological models of literacy with their correlates in ESL writing pedagogy, namely skills approach versus practice approach. And as I have mentioned earlier, these notions have enabled me not only to problematise students' academic writing at SUA but also to contextualise students' ESL writing practices in the Tanzania's social cultural context. In the

next chapter, I present the analytical frame of my study and cite studies, which have followed similar approach.

CHAPTER THREE

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND STUDIES ON DISCOURSE ANALYSIS AND ACADEMIC LITERACIES

3.1   Introduction

This chapter is a continuation of literature review, part of which is presented in Chapter Two. In this chapter, I specifically look at literature on the conceptual and analytical framework of the New Literacy Studies (NLS), Genre Analysis, and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the theories, which comprise an interdisciplinary approach followed in this study. Then, I explain the application of each component of the theory to my study. Next, I look at specific studies that have followed the key notions of discourse analysis and academic literacies, and how these studies have informed the current research.

3.2   Interdisciplinary Analytical Framework

As I have said earlier, I employed an interdisciplinary approach in the conceptual and analytical framework. This framework is constructed from the key notions of New Literacy Studies (which is discussed in detail in Chapter Two), Genre Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis, which are introduced in Chapter One and explicated briefly in Chapter Two. Following this approach, academic discourse is viewed as an aspect of social practice, whereby language forms an integral part of the material social process. A focus on social practice enabled me to analyse students' discourse practices in the ESL writing in the social context, in other words, "within a structured network of practices, and a domain of social action and interaction …" (see Fairclough, 2001:122).

The choice of this approach was motivated by my interest in the current study, that is, what impacts students' ESL writing, and how successfully or unsuccessfully students perform in their ESL academic writing. I judged success in view of the underlying conventions and norms or literacy practices as determined or configured in the social practice or dominant discourse of the

university as a community of practice. Thus, following this framework, I was able to examine students' discourse as a network of practices in Tanzania's social cultural context. In the next section, I review the theories of the analytical framework.

3.2.1 New Literacy Studies

The theories of New Literacy Studies as have been discussed in Chapter Two start by looking at literacy as social practice and problematise all literacies as inherently ideological. This is the tension, which is projected in the autonomous versus ideological debate around literacy (see the details of the underlying theories of NLS in Chapter Two). It needs mentioning here that NLS is, according to Gee, one of the many movements involved in what he terms 'social turn', which "reflects a shift away from a focus on individual behaviour … and individual minds towards a focus on social and cultural interaction" (Gee in Barton *et al*, 2000: 180). In the NLS tradition, literacy practices, specifically, reading and writing, "only make sense when situated in the context of and cultural … practices of which they are but a part" (see Gee in Barton *et al*, 2000: 180).

These social turn movements stemmed from different disciplines and a few of such disciplines as identified by Gee (in Barton *et al*, 2000: 180) range from sociolinguistics as in interactional sociolinguistics (e.g. Heritage, 1984; Goodwin and Heritage, 1990), ethnography of speaking (e.g. Gumperz, 1982; Hymes 1974), psychology as in discursive psychology (e.g. Edwards and Potter 1992), and sociohistorical psychology (e.g. Wertsch, 1985). Others include Linguistics as in cognitive linguistics (e.g. Lakoff and Johnson, 1980), narrative studies (e.g. Brunner, 1986; Ricoeur 1984), Sociology as in modern sociology (e.g. Beck, *et al* 1994; Giddens, 1984; 1987), and works of post-structuralist' and 'post-modernist' (e.g. Bakhtin, 1984; Fairclough, 1992; Foucault, 1973; 1977) (see Gee in Barton *et al*, 2000: 180-183 for details).

These are only a few examples of the movements, but what specifically each of these movements espouses is outside the discussion of the current study.

However, there are two things worth mentioning: First, these movements including NLS "have been used against the behaviourism of the early part of the twentieth century *and latter* the cognitive revolution of the 1960s and 1970s" (my emphasis). And the common factor between them was their privileging of the individual mind (see Gee in Barton *et al*, 2000). Whilst for cognitivism 'higher order thinking' and 'intelligence' was seen as "primarily the manipulation of information ('facts') using general ('logical') rules and principles"; for the 'social turn' movements, 'networks' are a key metaphor', as Gee observes,

> Knowledge and meaning are seen as emerging from social practices in which people, environments, tools, technologies, objects, words, acts, symbols are all linked to ('networked' with) each other and dynamically interact with and on each other (Gee in Barton *et al*, 2000: 180 184).

Secondly, these movements do not only "overlap at many points" but they also "have influenced each other in complex ways" (Gee in Barton *et al*, 2000: 183), and there are among them elements of divergence as well as convergence. These divergences or disagreements have occurred both in between and within individual movements including the NLS. For example, within the NLS, there are issues, which are questioned and even contested by the very members of the NLS tradition. Gee, for example, notes that all social turn movements including NLS, at some point in their trajectories, "came to argue that meaning and context are mutually constitutive of each other, *that is,* a word or deed takes its meaning from a context which it, in turn, helps to create, given that it has that meaning" (Gee in Barton *et al*, 2000: 190) (my emphasis). However, "in the discussions of the mutually constitutive nature of words and contexts" such movements, according to Gee, have often stopped short of including "the person as agent who utters (writes) the words with (conscious and unconscious) personal, social, cultural and political goals and purposes"(Gee in Barton *et al*, 2000: 190).

Whilst acknowledging that "the person's deeds and body are part of the situation or context", Gee argues, that "the person as an actor engaged in an effort to

achieve purposes and goals is left out as an embarrassing residue of our pre-social days" (Gee in Barton *et al*, 2000: 190). Gee cites NLS efforts of recognising "local literacies as literacy" as one configuration of this movement's enactive and recognition work, but argues furthers that, "how the elements of these configurations are to be labelled, viewed or characterised, how configurations are to be 'carved up' into actors, events, activities, practices, and Discourse, is always 'up for grabs" (see Gee in Barton *et al*, 2000: 192). In addition, Gee observes,

> Actors, events, activities, practices, and Discourse do not exist in the world *except through* active work, work that is very often unstable and contested (Gee in Barton *et al*, 2000: 92-193) (italics in the original).

Such internal disagreement or contradiction has led to the formation of what Gee refers to as "an internationally, distinctive and distinguished approach within NLS" known as The Lancaster School (see Gee in Barton *et al*, 2000; Hamilton in Barton *et al, 2000;* Jones in Barton *et al*, 2000). In The Lancaster School of NLS, for example, the focus is on local situated literacies, 'local' in the special sense of

> […] the site at which people- in tandem with words, deeds, objects, tools, symbols, settings, times, and ways of being, doing, thinking, and valuing- work out their project, as well as work on and rework the projects that flow at to them from close and far (see Gee in Barton *et al*, 2000: 194).

The NLS as one of the social turn movement is premised "around the idea that reading and writing and meanings are always situated within specific social practices within specific discourse" (Gee in Barton *et al*, 2000: 189). In the current study, NLS has enabled me to problematise students' ESL writing as discourse practice with a social aspect, the process of which has been possible through drawing from such notions as autonomous versus ideological models of literacy.

This approach has also helped me not only to contextualise student writing in the institutional social cultural context found in Tanzanian higher education, but also informed the current study on the underpinnings underlying students' meaning making in their academic writing process. This process has been possible drawing from the notions of 'context of situation' and 'context of culture' both of which profoundly impinge on how universities as social cultural structures and with particular ideologies shape (or fail to shape) student writing.

3.2.2   *Genre Analysis Theory*

Genre analysis (e.g. Swales, 1990) is another theoretical frame, which constituted the analytical approach followed in this study. Research in academic and ESL written discourse or text, as social practice is a paradigm widely contributed by the work cited above. The work in Swales' Genre Analysis model was termed, academic discourse community. Swales defines discourse community as "sociorhetorical networks that form in order to work towards sets of common goals" (Swales cited in Hinkel, 2002:17). According to Swales, one important characteristic of a discourse community is that "their established members possess familiarity with the particular genres that are used in the communicative furtherance of those set goals" (Swales cited in Hinkel, 2002:17). This is because academic discourse community is a "peculiar, socially constructed convention in itself" (Myles, 2002: 3).

Genre, according to Eggins (2004), is recognisable through its *generic identity*, that is, the way it is similar to other texts of its genre "or reminiscent of other texts circulating in the culture" (p.55). In Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) (see section 3.2.3 on critical discourse analysis for details) genre, and in particular generic identity lies in three dimensions, first, the co-occurrence of a particular contextual cluster, or its register configuration. This means that "a genre comes about as particular values for field, tenor and mode regularly co-occur and eventually become stabilised in the culture as "typical" situations" (Eggins, 2004: 58).

The second dimension is the "text's staged or schematic structure". The schematic structure refers to "the staged, step-by-step organisation of the genre" and that "each stage in the genre contributes a part of the overall meanings that must be made for the genre to be accomplished successfully" (Eggins, 2004: 59). And lastly, is the realisation pattern of the text. This refers to "the way a meaning becomes encoded or expressed in a semiotic system" (Eggins, 2004: 65).

Genre analysis of the academic discourse underscored the need for detailed examinations of "textual features that essentially played the role of road signs in the infrastructure of language in text" (Hinkel, 2002:18). This was because managing discourse analysis as a whole was found to be difficult due to vastness of discourse organisation and lexicogrammatical features. Thus, later models delved on examining selected features under discourse analysis in the academic genre, e.g. discourse markers, (Schiffrin, 1987; 1994), modal verbs (Coates, 1983; Hermeren, 1978), hedges (Holmes, 1984), and vagueness (Channell, 1994) (see also Hinkel, 2002: 18-19).

On the basis of these observations, the current research focused on one selected feature in the analysis of students' texts using Genre Analysis namely, discourse markers. This was aimed at finding out how successful or unsuccessful students perform in their ESL writing of the academic genres or discourse. Following Fairclough's (1995, 2001) approach, this discourse feature was analysed in the Tanzania's social context.

3.2.3 *Critical Discourse Analysis*
The theory of Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth CDA) owes much to the contribution from a number of scholars (e.g. van Dijk, 1977; Fairclough, 1995; 2001; Wodak and Meyer, 2001) who have a shared understanding in what critical linguistics espouses, and especially their emphasis on the social aspect of discourse. The caveat to be made here is that these scholars though have shared views in that they address similar issues, and agree on certain principles of analysing discourse they themselves have broadly differing backgrounds. For

example, while Normal Fairclough has a background of Systemic Functional Linguistics, Teun van Dijk has text linguistics and cognitive linguistics, and Ruth Wodak is in interactional studies (see also Blommaert, 2005). The details of historical origins of CDA are outside the scope of this study, suffice it to say that CDA as a critical linguistics approach emerged as a reaction against such programmes as Chomskyan (structural) linguistics, which itself came as part of a revolutionary developments at the onset of the post-Second World War.

The Chomskyan linguistics programme focused on the structure of language with the exclusion of social and cultural dimension. It was against this backdrop that CDA emerged as a 'movement of resistance' focussing attention, instead on the social aspect of language and its associated semiotic aspects. In this case, CDA has a lot in common with what Gee terms as social turn movement (see Section 3.2.1 above). It is for this reason Gee regards the works of a network of scholars such as Fairclough, 1992; Foucault, 1973; 1977; Bakhtin, 1984; and Bourdieu, 1984 as belonging to what he refers to as 'post-structuralist' and 'postmodernist' whose central attention is on the notion of discourse (Gee, 2000 in Barton *et al,* 2000).
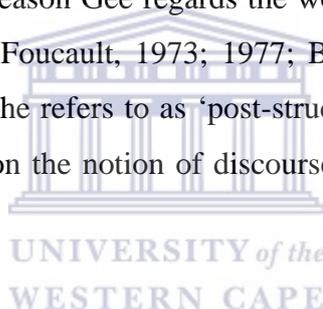
The operational assumption in CDA is that 'discourse takes place within society, and can only be understood in the interplay of social situation, action, actor and societal structures' (see Wodak and Meyer, 2001: 21).

There are three operational concepts within the CDA tradition, viz. power, history, and ideology and that discourse is construed as structured by dominance. Every discourse is historically processed and interpreted, that is, it is structured and located in time and space; and that dominant structures are legitimized by ideologies of the powerful groups (Fairclough and Kress cited in Wodak and Meyer, 2001: 2).

The basic assumptions for CDA are:
      i.   Language is a social phenomenon

ii.   Not only individuals, but also institutions and social groupings

iii.   Specific meanings and values *are* expressed in language in *a* systematic way

iv.   Texts are relevant units of language in communication, and

v.   Readers/hearers are not passive recipients in their relationship to texts (see Kress cited in Wodak and Meyer, 2001:6) (my emphasis).

Methodologically the basic claim of CDA is its interdisciplinary nature, for example, Wodak 'underscores and encourages "the use of multiple methods" in language research while emphasizing the importance of recognising the "historical and social aspects" (Dellinger, 1995:1). Here Wodak espouses a historical approach to CDA, which, deriving from socio-philosophical orientation of critical theory, attempts to integrate a large quantity of available knowledge about historical sources and the background of the social and political fields in which discursive events are embedded (see Wodak and Meyer, 2001: 64).

Van Dijk offers a "schema" of 'relations between ideology, society, cognition and discourse'. Thus, within "social structures, social interaction takes place. This social interaction is presented in the form of text/discourse, which is then cognized according to a cognitive system/memory" (van Dijk in Wodak and Meyer, 2001: 3). According to van Dijk this "system/memory" consists of short-term memory, in which '"strategic process," or decoding and interpretation takes place' (van Dijk in Wodak and Meyer, 2001: 3). Thus, for van Dijk "text linguistics and discourse take interests in texts and discourse as basic units of social practices, units larger than sentences and in text and context dependence of meanings" (see van Dijk cited in Wodak and Meyer, 2001: 7). Methodically, van Dijk seeks for diversity and multidisciplinary in CDA, in that CDA can be "conducted in and combined with any approach and sub-discipline in the humanities and the social sciences" (see van Dijk in Wodak and Meyer, 2001: 96).

However, the CDA model followed in this study owes much to Fairclough's (1995, 2001) framework. Fairclough offers a framework of analysis whose model focuses on the multifunctional linguistics theory embodied in Halliday's (1978, 1985) Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). Halliday's approach of linguistic analysis is constructed from three basic claims as regards to, the metafunctional organisation of language, the notion of language as a system, and the relationship of language or "text' and 'context' (see Christie, 2005b). The full SFL theory regarding these claims is outside the scope of this study. However, I briefly explicate the key notions embodied in these claims.

The claim regarding metafunctional organisation nature of language emerges from the proposition that, "Any language use serves simultaneously to construct some aspects of experience, to negotiate relationship and to organise the language successfully so that it realises a satisfactory message" (Christie, 2005b: 11). In the SFL theory, any language will serve these broad functions, but "so pervasive are the functions in any natural language", (Christie, 2005b: 11) that Halliday and his associates termed them 'metafunctions'. Under metafunction are three other constructs, ideational, interpersonal, and textual.

The 'ideational metafunction', according to Halliday, refers to "those aspects of grammar" directly involved in the "representation of the world and its experience". The 'interpersonal metafunction' "refers to those grammatical resources in which the relationship of interlocutors is realised, including those of mood, modality and person" (Chrisite, 2005b. 12). In other words, texts display 'interpersonal' metafunction, by virtue of producing social interactions between participants in discourse (see Titscher *et al*, 2000: 148-149). The 'textual metafunction' "refers to those aspects of grammar resources that assist in organising language as a message", profoundly involved here are "the resources of theme, information and cohesion" (see Christie, 2005b). In other words, this textual metafunction of language is realised as these aspects of grammar "unite separate components into a whole and combine this with situational contexts" (see Titscher *et al*, 2000: 49).

The second distinctive aspect in the SFL theory is the notion of language as a system. In the SFL tradition language 'is a meaning system', a system in the sense that it is "a set of options with an entry condition" (Halliday cited in Christie, 2005b: 13). Further, language can be said to be "a polysystemic in that it operates through the exercises of clusters of choices or options", (see Halliday cited in Christie, 2005b: 13). In the case of constructing an English sentence, for example, the grammar choices which need to simultaneously be made involve, theme, mood and transitivity.

The third notion embodied in the SFL is the relationship between 'text' and 'context'. These two constructs are derived from the distinction between the notions, 'context of situation' and 'context of culture' (see Fairclough, 1989). As discussed in the definition of discourse in Chapter Two, the 'context of situation' refers to "the immediate context in which an instance of language use occurs" (Christie, 2005a: 233). Christie considers, "language choices particular to any context of situation as registers" (Christie, 2005b: 21), while the 'context of culture' refers to considerations of institutions, social structures and ideologies. Christie considers language choices or instances of language use associated with this context as "choices with respect to overall text types or genre" (Christie, 2005a: 233).

SFL views any language use as influenced by ideological positions, "just as no text can be 'free' of context (register or genre), so no text is free of ideology. To use language at all is to use it to encode particular positions and values" (Eggins, 2004: 10). The identification of ideology in a text, implies that,

> as readers of texts we need to develop skills to be able to make explicit the ideological positions encoded, perhaps in order to resist or challenge them. This means we need a way of talking about how language is not just representing but actively constructing our worldview (Eggins, 2004: 11).

From SFL notions, Fairclough (1995, 2001) in the CDA approach, views language as both socially constitutive (of social identities, social relations and system of knowledge) and socially determined. Discourse Analysis, therefore, entails 'the analysis of the dialectical relationship between semiosis (including language) and other elements of social practices. These semiotic aspects of social practice are responsible for the constitution of genres and styles' (Fairclough in Wodak and Meyer, 2001:22). Fairclough's model has three dimensions; viz. orders of discourse, ideology, and hegemony (cf. CDA operational concepts mentioned above). "Orders of Discourse are configurations of discursive practices which are particular to, and constitutive of different social domains" (see Lillis, 2001:36). In other words, these are the totality of discourse types and the relationship between them. The example of institutional orders of discourse focused in this study is the university, and a particular discursive practice examined was students' ESL academic writing. This practice was examined within the context of other practices namely lectures (i.e. classroom observations), assessment of students' essays, exploration of the structuring of institutional documents, to mention a few.

Thus, within Fairclough's analytical model, I analysed language at three levels, namely, Textual level (i.e. documents review), discursive practice, and social practice. The aim was to establish the relationship between text and context, i.e. to show "how repertoires of genres and discourse are exploited *by students and lecturers* within orders of discourse for text production and interpretation" (see Titscher *et al*, 2000) (my emphasis).

Accordingly, the component of the analytical framework, which this study owes much to CDA, is schematically represented as follows:

1   Focus upon a social problem i.e. students' ESL academic writing which has a semiotic aspect, i.e. language use.

2   Identify obstacles to it being tackled, relating to discourse features (i.e. discourse markers) through analysis of:

A the network of practices it is located within i.e. what is considered to be the appropriate ESL use within the Tanzania's social context.

B the relationship of semiosis to other elements within the particular practices concerned, i.e. what language features in the CS syllabus and course material are reflected in the students' texts.

C the discourse (the semiosis) itself, i.e. students' texts:

I structural analysis: the order of discourse (academic genre);

II interdiscursive analysis, e.g. the influence of linguistic background; lecturers' discursive practices knowledge to ESL writing performance;

III linguistic and semiotic analysis, e.g. students' and lecturers discourse practices as illuminated by their values and ideologies towards academic second language writing.

3 Consider whether the social order (network of practices) in a sense 'needs' the problem. Basing on what is appropriate in Tanzania's social context, I was able to determine whether student writing follows any defined or describable variety, which can be acceptable in higher education.

4 Identify possible ways past the obstacles, i.e. suggesting practical solutions to current students' ESL academic writing literacy problems.

Reflect critically on the analysis (1-4) in Tanzania's social context (see Fairclough, 1995; 2001; Wodak and Meyer, 2001).

From the above schematic representation, the analytical frame is such that the focus is upon a social problem, which has a semiotic aspect -in the case of this study, it is students' ESL academic writing, which is the focus of attention, and whose semiotic aspect is language use. And according to Fairclough, focus on

social practice allows one "to combine the perspectives of structure and the perspectives of action" (cited in Wodak and Meyer, 2001:121). In addition,

> A practice is on the one hand a relatively permanent way of acting socially, which is defined by its position. Within a structured network of practices and a domain of social action and interaction, which both reproduces structures and has the potential to transform them (Wodak and Meyer, 2001:121).

Next in the chronology of Fairclough's schema is the identification of obstacles to it being tackled, relating to discourse features (i.e. students' discourse practices regarding discourse markers) through the analysis of the network of practices it is located within, the relationship of semiosis to other elements within the particular practices concerned, and the discourse (the semiosis) itself. Accordingly, the current study carried out the analysis of other discourse practices, which might exert influence on student ESL academic writing literacy, such as lecturers' language, the CS course, and other institutional guides on academic writing.

In the schema by Fairclough, another aspect is the identification of possible ways past the obstacles, i.e. suggesting practical solutions to current students' unsuccessful ESL academic writing. In other words, the current study has taken to propose what is considered as an ideal way in which student writing ought to be approached in the academic writing pedagogy of higher education in Tanzanian social cultural context. And lastly, reflecting critically on the analysis above (see Fairclough, 1995; 2001; Wodak and Meyer, 2001 for details) in Tanzania's social context.

New Literacy Studies, Genre Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis, as methods in critical linguistics, all aim at looking at language as discourse or social practice where text, whether written or spoken is considered as discourse- produced by "socially situated speakers and writers" (Dellinger, 1995:2). As social practice,

the focus of CDA (as is for the other approaches) transcends texts as objects of inquiry- thus such an approach requires

> […] a theorization and description of both social process and structures which give rise to the production of a text and of social process and structures within which individuals or groups as social historical subjects create meanings in their interaction with texts (Fairclough and Kress cited in Wodak and Meyer, 2001: 2).

3.3 Discourse Analysis and Academic Literacies: Specific Studies

Studies on Discourse Analysis and Academic Literacies have specifically began by putting student writing in social context where by a text is viewed as "a kind of institutional speech act, a social action with language with a particular shape and features, force, audience, and consequences" (Luke cited in Christiansen, 2004: 14). One of the literacy model studies is by Christiansen (2004) whose work is set to analyse teachers' response to students writing using Critical Discourse Analysis. Christiansen adopts the approach suggested by Lea and Street who look at literacy as constitutive of three paradigms:

> Study skills, where literacy is reduced to a set of skills that one acquires; Academic socialisation, where students are acculturated into the world of academic language; Academic literacies, which focuses on the social practices of literacy (Lea and Street cited in Christiansen, 2004: 2).

Lilies (2001: 164) encapsulates these three paradigms (with reference to the UK) mapping them into four blocks, viz., *status of HE*, *approach to student writing*, *model of language*, and *institutional goal*. Each of the blocks has two extreme ends, characteristic of autonomous and ideological models of literacy, as represented in Table 3.1 below:

Table 3.1:   Approaches to student academic writing in HE (UK)

Status within HE	Approaches to student writing	Models of language	Institutional goal
Dominant	a) Skills – teaching discrete elements of language	Emphasis (implicit) on language as transparent system, the elements of which are acquired by individuals	***HE community viewed as homogeneous. Practices oriented to the reproduction of official discourse***
	b) Creative self-expression teaching as facilitating individual expression.	Emphasis (implicit) on language/meaning as the product of individual mind.	
	c) Socialisation (1) – teaching as implicit induction into established discourse practices.	Emphasis (implicit) on language as discourse practices which learners will/must gradually come to use.	
	d) Socialisation (2) – explicit teaching of features of academic genres.	Emphasis (explicit) on language as genres which are characterised by specific clusters of linguistic features.	
	e) Academic literacies/critical language awareness – teaching?	Emphasis (explicit) on language as socially situated discourse practices	***HE community viewed as heterogeneous. Practices oriented to making visible / challenging / playing with official and unofficial discourse***
Oppositional	o Active apprenticeship o Making visible representational resources o Problematising dominant conventions		

Source: Lillis, 2001: 164 (italics/bold in the original)

In Table 3.1 above, as one moves towards one or the other end of the table's scale one becomes more identified with one or the other of the two literacy models discussed in Chapter Two. For example, as one moves towards the 'dominant' side on the top of the first column, one becomes more identified with the autonomous model of literacy, and moving on the opposite direction i.e. towards the 'oppositional' at the bottom of that column, entails identifying oneself with the ideological model of literacy. Such models are also marked by other aspects characteristic of one or the other mode of literacy as are represented in the other columns in the table.

The conceptualisation of literacy as configured in the dominant discourse of universities such as SUA in Tanzania is the notion derived from the first paradigm above, i.e. study skills. This conception of literacy as is discussed in the analysis of data (this thesis), is evident in a course like Communication Skills whose design seems to be structured with the aim of orientating students to the acquisition of a set of academic study skills. A literate student is invariably seen as a student who is linguistically competent, in the sense of the person who competently commands many aspects of literacy of context, that is; correctness, coherence, appropriateness of style, voice and other formal features.

The second paradigm, literacy as academic socialisation, is the conception of literacy which is also shared by Ballard and Clanchy who consider learning within the university as a process of gradual socialisation into a distinctive culture of knowledge. Thus, literacy must be seen in terms of the functions to which language is put in that culture, hence becoming literate should involve "becoming acculturated; learning to read and write the culture" (Ballard and Clanchy in Taylor *et al*, 1988: 14).

The three categories of literacy approaches are all essential in understanding literacy as discourse practice, but Christiansen notes that it is the third paradigm, which is socially constructed and thus aligns well with theoretical underpinning and procedures of Critical Discourse Analysis. The author emphasises that,

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A socially constructed definition of literacy moves research of students learning practices away from how teachers can help students to learn the literacies of the university and focus more on how students and teachers understand the literacy practices of the university (Lea and Street cited in Christiansen, *Op cit*.: 2).

In other words, this conceptualisation of literacy places a demand on the lecturers of language and other subjects as well as students to enter into a community of discourse in order to come to a common understanding on literacy practice as constituted by the institutional literacy culture. Such a construction of literacy practices also places a demand on lecturers to question their own discourse, which are often structured and constructed within the realms of power, dominance and ideology.

In the study by Christiansen, the author uses this concept of literacy as a backdrop of evaluating teachers' response to student writing. Here, the author underscores the need of subjecting teachers' discursive practices to scrutiny, which in his/her view will have two implications, first; writing as social practice, informs how the author talks about writing in academia and outlines the goals and methods of the course the author pursues. This according to Christiansen sets up a backdrop from which to evaluate the consistency and coherency of his/her own responses to student writing. "Second it questions how these social practices are played out in a classroom, in a student – teacher writing conferences *of* student *academic* writing" (Christiansen, 2004: 2) (my emphasis). According to the author this is an affirmation that all literacies are ideological, and for that matter they are "contested, intertextual, fragmented, and contradictory" (Christiansen, 2004:2).

The author also attests to two things: first, teachers' discursive practices in the form of responses to students' texts cannot only frame student writing, but they (teachers' responses) also do make some inscriptions of the positions and roles students and teachers should assume in an academic discourse community.

Christiansen focused on teacher language using his own responses to student writing. It is here where s/he reveals how teachers can unwittingly abuse their empowered discourse (i.e. responses) and become the representative of authoritarian institutional force, in this case the university.

Using transitivity as one of the textual features in the analysis Christiansen shows how the role of the agency shifts from the teacher to students and vice versa. Christiansen proposes, and rightly so, that students should assume the agency role the most in teachers' responses, as this will simulate students "to interrogate their own intentions and maintain ownership of their texts". The author argues further, and rightly so,

> If we allow ourselves to cut off student agency because of our obligation to protect the sanctity of core beliefs, we have only reproduced the powerful forces of discourse that may lead to subordination and manipulation. Doing so ignores the difficult worlds students are encountering as they try to negotiate the complex collision of their world with the world of academia (Christiansen, 2004: 13).

Christiansen's work is instructive in my study because it informs on how Critical Discourse Analysis approach can be used to explore the interaction between teachers' discursive practices and students' learning practices in classroom encounters through teachers' discourse.

As pointed out earlier, the focus of Christiansen study is on teacher language. The current study, however, focuses not only on what teacher says but also on how students react to teachers' discourse. One of the questions to students in my sample pertains to how the students find tutors' comments. In this case, I believe I have taken up an analysis of how students interpret tutors' responses on students' own writing.

Another work I find worth discussing here is the one by Lea and Street (1999). This work examined what the authors call underlying and implied theoretical frames about writing, which academic staff are using to inform their own practices and, in particular their advice to students about how to write in higher education in the UK. The study focused on the guidelines on writing provided for students in different fields, and staff interviews. The authors found that writing practices in HE align itself with three levels or models of practice: institutional, disciplinary, and individual. This was arrived at through "the analysis of the ways in which they are embedded in written texts and via interviews" (Lea and Street, 1999: 63). The text types concerning the writing process they included in the data ranged from 'guidelines for dissertation writing', 'advice on staff on assessing literacy', 'feedback sheet', 'student handbooks', assessment exercises', to 'rules for writers'.

As for interviews with the academic staff, when Lea and Street asked lecturers what they (lecturers) were looking for in the students' writing, they (authors) found this being expressed as a mix of disciplinary genres, individual preferences, and departmental directive. By contrasting the texts, using copies of the guidelines on writing tutors provided in different fields and disciplines during interviews, the authors revealed "both how different the *texts* are across these domains and how strongly they are rooted in implicit conceptions of what constitute writing even whilst their authors represent this as transparent and common sense" (Lea and Street, 1999: 63). The authors found these documents as basing on varied levels of thought and that "the specific expectations not only differ but may be contradictory" (Lea and Street, 1999: 63).

Furthermore, "students are seldom given support in conceptualising the epistemological frameworks within which such documents are constructed or in recognition that they consist of contestable knowledge claims rather than given truths"(Lea and Street, 1999: 64).

It was further revealed that the documents address only the presuppositions about writing embedded in the tutor's or department's field and do not address the assumptions and practices around writing that students themselves may bring with them, that is, "they do not attempt to make a bridge between where the students are coming from and what the department is setting up as 'proper' writing; rather they simply describe straight *what* such writing consists of" (Lea and Street, 1999: 64) (my emphasis).

Lea and Street's (1999) work also involved two case studies whereby two tutors were interviewed to see how they carry out their assessments of student writing. In one of the case studies, in one department it was found out that tutors, to a varying degrees, make implicit assumptions on what pertain to writing literacy in written assessment criteria for students. Requirements for students writing are drawn not only on tutors own individual understanding of disciplinary model, but also on "a broader model of student writing in this context" (p.70).

In the documents however, the authors found evidence at departmental level that indeed students are writing across genres within their courses. However, the relationship between "these genres are not unpacked'. Further, "there are no references in the documents to students' experiences of other forms of writing" (Lea and Street, 1999: 71). What this means is that students are not alerted on the existence of sub-cultures within the university neither is it made transparent to students as to what constitute literacy in distinct individual cultures.

On the same issue, other scholars notably, Ballard and Clanchy, (in Taylor, *Op cit*), note that a set of cultural understandings, which, by common agreement most academics will judge as constituting cultural behaviour "are rarely addressed directly in exchanges between academics and their students, … *though* they mediate crucially between students' own knowledge and intentions, and the knowledge and potential meanings that exists within the university" (Ballard and Clanchy in Taylor, 1988: 8) (my emphasis). The authors give an example of commenting in the margins of essays as one context "in which academics provide

advice about cultural rules and conventions by which they expect their students to behave". But, they argue that, "this type of instruction *that is teachers' responses to students writing* is rarely systematic, often compressed and cryptic" (Ballard and Clanchy in Taylor, 1988: 8) (my emphasis).

Coming back to the work by Lea and Street, in the other case study in another department, however, the authors found that the tutor was "more concerned with the varieties of practices which students encounter during their interdisciplinary studies and the background the students bring with them to the university" (p.75). The authors cited first year undergraduates' handbooks as containing guidelines, which "make clear to students from the outset that their own identities and experiences of practices are implicated in the way in which they study" (Lea and Street, 1999: 76). Moreover, considering the guidelines for students writing and inventories of 'criteria', the authors found them to "objectify and universalise the writing process so that it appears to be generic and transferable skills across different disciplines and fields" (Lea and Street, 1999: 76). To the contrary they found out that the commentaries upon such guidelines and criteria by tutors suggest that "writing as a concept and as a process is more contested than that" (Lea and Street, 1999: 76).

The authors acknowledge that students have to struggle to read off the university culture and its requirements, "to unpack the writing demands that are being made in different fields and environments in the course of their academic programmes" they contend that often,

> such texts fail to recognise the variety of literacy practices that students encounter in the course of their studies or to make explicit at what level within the university the practices – appearing as self-evidently 'common sense' underpin the writing of these documents" (see Lea and Street, 1999: 81).

On this issue Ballard and Clanchy (in Taylor *et al*, 1988:13) observe that, "few academicians who complain of students' general illiteracy *do* seem to recognise the problem for what it is- an unsteady transition between cultures"- students have to struggle with "the problem of trying to fathom *what constitute* acceptable behaviour in a new culture context where the deep rules are rarely made explicit" (my emphasis).

However, Ballard and Clanchy admit that this process may not be easy in practice, as it seems in theory, because what constitutes cultural values or academic conventions are not universally uniform, neither are they uniform "within the boundaries of the culture of knowledge shaped and sustained by Anglo-Australian university tradition" (Ballard and Clanchy in Taylor *et al*, 1988:13). This is also true with the university tradition in other regions such as East Africa, and in particular the university tradition in the Tanzania's social cultural context, within which this study was conducted. In the current study transition between cultures also involves the transition between two languages, that is, from Kiswahili into English: From the former because it is the home language of most students in Tanzania's cultural context and into the latter because it is the medium of instruction at the university, hence it is the dominant and institutionalised cultural practice.

At this juncture we have come to yet another complexity of literacy practice, the phenomenon of blurring generic boundaries discussed by Candlin and Plum (1999 in Candlin and Hyland, 1999). Candlin and Plum worked on engaging with challenges of interdiscursivity in academic writing, focusing on researchers, students and tutors. I summarise authors' views on this aspect with regards to students and tutors' discursive practices.

Speaking of students engaged in academic writing, the authors note that, "each of the constructs-texts, processes and practices – presents a complexity arising in part from epistemological and ontological distinctive disciplinary worlds of academic study" (Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 195). The fact

that students in the course of their study have to encounter and produce extremely varied nature of text types in any one programme of study "give rise to a plethora of different text types". Such a colony of texts is regularly purposively differentiated, made more or less textually distinctive, and frequently draw intertextuality on a range of text types. Agreeably, models of processing such texts will also vary as a result of distinct textual structures and design characteristics typical of such texts in different disciplines. Adding to this is the obscurity and unstated nature of the writing objectives, which as Candlin and Plum put it "extend beyond the display of disciplinary knowledge in search of some qualitative absolutes" (Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 195).

To exemplify this complexity, the authors cite a study by Spinks (1996), which indicates that 1st year students in Australian universities, though competent in descriptive writing, are said to have only vague idea on how to write analytically. But, one easily notices that the crux of the matter lies less on whether or not students can write analytically, than on the obscurity about the meanings of these academic writing criteria to students. For example, often these distinctive disciplines do not set out to clarify what 'analytical writing' might consist of

> or are content to leave it to be variously defined through some gradual, osmotic shaping of student writing performance in conformity to particular generic models whose conventions are imposed by certificating bodies and reproduced in the guise of handbooks, manuals and course guides" (Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 196).

As for the tutors, the authors noted additional complexities emanating from, first, tutors' interpretations of text, which seemed varied from one tutor to another; and second, tutors' "difficulties in determining what the writing goals of their students should be" (Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 197).

Candlin and Plum used a multi-dimensional research design, in which they came up with an integrated approach borrowing from Halliday's (1994) Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) of text analysis using techniques drawn from a model by Mann and Thomson, (1986a) and Mann *et al*, (1992), which is called Rhetorical Structure Theory (RST). They (Candlin and Plum) used this approach to analyse student writing focusing on their rhetorical structure, and linked this to "accompanying discourse analytical studies of students written texts, setting both against analysis of tutorial assessments of students written work" (Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 200). In other words the work was set to analyse students' textual production practices in juxtaposition with tutors' judgement of such texts in terms of students' demonstrable academic literacy.

The study had a diverse inventory of data ranging from ethnographic accounts – of interviews, open discussions, and focus groups involving a selection of tutors, to student-writers respondents in the disciplines concerned. The respondents had to address their views on "the nature and aims of academic literacies, the conditions surrounding the writing process, and their mutual understanding of, and their reactions to, the literacy demands posed by the institutional disciplines". Adding to the ethnographic data were in-house documents, "addressing preferred literacy practices in the discipline concerned"; out of house documents, e.g. reports on pre-school based writing practices, and examination boards; hard copy texts on a wide range of genres (see Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 201). The authors found identifiable patterns that could "demonstrate differences between coherent, well developed arguments and those that were less effective". Also, they thought of making a comparison between what they call "descriptive textual evidence" and tutors' feedback on students' written work; or the assessment of writing goals and writing instruction (tutorials); or students own perceptions of the writing requirements of different disciplines (see Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999).

The authors adopted analytical frameworks constituting the concept of generic integrity and disciplinary apprenticeship across disciplines of Psychology and

Computing and across disciplinary genres within these disciplines. The authors' reasoning here was that using Rhetorical Structural Theory (RST) analysis across these disciplines and disciplinary genres would, as they put it,

> […] facilitate closer linkages between the constructs of intertextuality and interdiscursivity, tying the text to its institutional frame … and offering a way of displaying more clearly differences in institutional norms and practices (Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 203).

I summarise Candlin and Plum's work by looking at their analysis of constructs of generic integrity and disciplinary apprenticeship within Psychology vis-à-vis the same analysis within Computing. Generic integrity, according to Bhatia (in Candlin and Hyland, 1999), reflects the form-function relationship. Bhatia further argues that the relationship between "formal and functional aspects of language use reflects, *on the one hand*, a specific cognitive structuring to the genre, *and on the other hand*, the communicative purpose(s) that genre tends to serve" (Bhatia in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 23) (my italics). Bhatia identifies three indicators of generic integrity, 'rhetorical context in which the genre is situated, the communicative purpose(s) it tends to serve, and the cognitive structure it is meant to represent' (Bhatia in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 23). Thus, Genres are also "recognisable through their emblematic status a representative of particular discourses and discourse worlds" (See Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 204).

Additionally, Candlin and Plum point out a number of criteria with regard to what genre is constitutive of, plus other formal features indicative of generic integrity. I point out some of the main criteria here. As the authors note, genres contain "textual characteristics both lexico-grammatical and discursive", and are also identified as such by "co-members of the institutions for whom they are both characteristic and useful…" (Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 204). The complexity inherent in the intertextuality nature of genres, and as have been recognised by the authors is outside the scope of this study.

Suffice it to say, and according to Candlin and Plum, "generic integrity is clearly a matter of text, of discursively mediated participant relationships and processes, and of institutional practices"; and that, "these constructs will not necessarily be in harmony" (Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 204). In other words, "Textual features held to be generically indicative by some participants may not be seen *as such* by others" (Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 205) (my emphasis). For example, from the perspective of an institutional practice, "generic conventions governing the design of institutional texts may be more or less stable or even more or less unstable depending on the 'participants' relationships", which are at "the core of institutional practices, as they are of texts" (Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 205).

When the authors used RST to analyse constructs of generic integrity in Psychology and Computing, they found Psychology as being on the threshold of generic integrity. Here, students were being provided with "models and with attendant advise on genre, subject content, style presentation, rules to be observed (in referencing and citing sources, etc)" and sanctions regarding breaches of these rules (e.g. for plagiarism), "aided by a number of discipline-specific devices which underpin the discursive practices" (see Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 206). Thus, the authors envisioned that constructs in Psychology genres would, to some extent, conform to some of Bhatia's criteria for generic integrity. Candlin and Plum's study, in line with the study by Lea and Street (1999), which is cited earlier in this section, indicates however that, whilst

> 'the teaching and discussion of structure and argument in guidelines, handbooks and tutorials present a view of shared, explicit, and thus teachable knowledge, the practice of feedback from tutors shows that in the specific instance of a student's piece of writing, these concepts are likely to be interpreted variably by markers' (Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 206).

The authors noted that markers' practices reflect the knowledge, assumptions and practices of the discipline, much of which is implicit, rather than reflecting the explicit guidelines set down in the manuals. Thus, the authors infer that whilst "the governing *participant relationship* between discipline and student is one of authority exercised in the service of disciplinary goals, students by no means necessarily accept this, or indeed even fully understand it" (Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 208) (italics in the original).

Computing, from the authors' point of view, is where generic integrity is being "tested in the full". What they first noticed was the utter absence of any of the "discipline-specific guidelines or manuals *in the sense* characteristically present in Psychology" (see Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 209) (my emphasis). Although the authors noted some indirect guidance being provided to students "through tutorial assessment of assignments" there was a noticeable lack of "any specific tutorial sessions directed at writing" (see Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 209).

The authors observe that a wide range of genres seem acceptable in Computing, and drawing on Gollin, "Students are neither rewarded nor penalised for writing in a particular genre or register" (Gollin cited in Candlin Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 209). However, both Gollin and the authors themselves admit that they see this "deviance from disciplinary generic integrity" especially less purposeful, motivated or engineered than being derived from

> *the* confusion over the nature of the communicative event itself, its purposes, and especially, over the tenor of the participant relationships between students and the audience for which they are writing (Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 210).

The authors accounted for the deviation of the Computing from the disciplinary generic integrity on the newness of Computing as a discipline. They argue that the discipline "has not yet permitted the establishing of its communicative practices".

According to the authors "These uncertainties may also reflect some fundamental division concerning the discipline's literacy goals" (Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 210). The authors contend, where models were set, they varied among tutors, and on occasion tutorial assessment comments implied that writing as a technical skill might be disengaged from writing as the expression of subject matter content.

This observation, in part, aligns well with the situation existing in SUA, when it comes to evaluating student writing. SUA is a primarily science based university, with the majority of courses oriented towards agricultural science. There are a few courses, however, with a bias in Social Science disciplines. But, the fact that the majority of courses are science based is, by and large, used by some lecturers as a convenient excuse to, drawing from Candlin and Plum's argument, disengage student writing as technical skill from student writing 'as the expression of the subject matter content'. These lecturers' argument is that, one does not need to be a good writer, technically, to be an agricultural engineer or a veterinary doctor or a food nutritionist and so on.
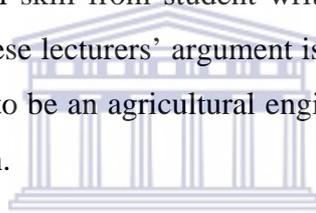
However, the reasons, which count for a discipline like Computing, do not exist in the science disciplines at SUA. This is because disciplines as the ones found at SUA have been around for a longer time than Computing, and thus, by now they have established their own communicative practices in which lecturers and students are supposed to enter in order to negotiate meanings. Further, many disciplines at SUA including some that are pure sciences based often use essayist literacy (where student writing is pivotal) in the evaluation of students' progress. Thus the argument that students at SUA need not be literate writers to be experts in their science fields does not only lack scientific grounding, but also defeats the very objective of developing competent scientists in these disciplinary fields.

The notion of disciplinary apprenticeship discussed by Candlin and Plum (in Candlin and Hyland, 1999), on the other hand, is nothing more than students' induction into their given field or area of expertise. Related to this, Lea and Street

(1999), Ballard and Clanchy (in Taylor, 1988) noted that one complexity in the students' growth into literate academic writer pertained to the transition process itself. Here, they noted an apparent lack of systematic instructional structures, which could bridge the gap between what students already know or bring into the university culture and the university expectations or assumptions pertaining to literacy criteria and against which students are usually judged.

Candlin and Plum use the notion of 'apprenticeship' linking it to other closely related notions of 'discourse communities' coined by Swales (1990), and 'community of practice' used in the works of Lave and Wenger (1991), and Scollon (1998). According to the authors both terms have an implication onto "some gradually mentored pathway to membership". It is the notion explicitly referred to by Berkenkotter and Huckin (cited in Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 212) "as a process of cognitive apprenticeship" similar to that envisaged by Lave and Wenger (cited in Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 212): That is, "a gradual induction from legitimate peripheral participation to full exercise of membership privileges, marked by an awareness of institutional socio-rhetorical practices", or "conversations of the disciplines" as referred to by Bazerman (cited in Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 212).

The issue of apprenticeship has also been addressed by other writers, for example Brown *et al* (cited in Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 214) use the term to refer to a process of 'cognitive apprenticeship' in the sense that,

> Mentors (1) 'model' by making their tacit knowledge explicit and revealing their problem-solving activities; (2) 'coach' by supporting students' attempts to perform new tasks; and then (3) 'fade' after having empowered the students to work independently.

In the Candlin and Plum's work, the authors set out to see whether such a process is actually realised in Psychology and Computing. In their concluding remarks the

authors contend that what seems to be students' induction into the cultural world of psychology through writing of their assignments is "a quite circumscribed pattern of contact, for the most part restricted to the performance of well-defined pedagogical tasks". From this arrangement the authors found little evidence "from student feedback in focus groups" to suggest that students perceive themselves as being 'apprenticed' into the discipline "as psychologists in any professional sense, even though some tutors take this perspective, and encourage students to take the risks, *which* Belcher (cited in Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 214) associates with "aspiring community participation". In their opinions Candlin and Plum saw this perspective of these tutors as an attempt "… to encourage students to identify with psychology as an intellectual community, particularly in our second-year student data, but that this goal is by no means understood as such by recipients" (Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 214 - 215).

On the observed trend, Candlin and Plum, note that undergraduate students in their sample, do not have opportunities, "both qualitatively and quantitatively, for much 'peripheral participation'" in the discourse community of psychology neither do they "enjoy enough of the 'conversations' with psychologists to acquaint them adequately with the current socio-rhetorical practices of their discipline" (Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999: 215).

The studies illuminate the challenges university academics ought to address to enable students acquire academic literacy in the ESL writing. More so, they make explicit the reality that if lecturers cannot evaluate their own discursive practices then they can unwittingly be part of the problem of students' learning processes in the ESL writing of the academic discourse. It is unfortunate that whenever studies on ESL writing of the academic literacy are conducted, it is students' language, which is usually focused. In such studies especially in Tanzania's social cultural context, lecturers have hardly become a focus of attention. Not surprisingly because lecturers are usually considered to represent an institutional (in this case university's) power structure.

The perception that lecturers are empowered individuals is also extended to communicative practices, where lies the myth that lecturers' discourse is infallible and that it is student writing, which is always corrupt and which should always be brought to scrutiny. Here the analogy of Kula cycle in Bourdieu's (1994) work "in which arm shells only circulate in one direction and necklaces in the other", encapsulates the myth on lecturers' discourse in HE in Tanzania. The analogy here is that, "fine speeches (and fine words) always go from teachers to students, while poor language (and bad jokes) always go from students to teachers" (p. 17). It is time that lecturers' too are held responsible for their own language (which may be poor) and discursive practices (which may be bad), and which bring to bear on students' ESL writing literacies (or lack of) as discussed in the coming chapters of this thesis. Further, the works reviewed in this chapter have their approaches based on the theories of New Literacy Studies, Genre Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis- the analytical framework within which the current study is based.

3.4   Conclusion to Chapter Three

In this chapter, I have dwelt on the analytical framework of the study. As I said earlier, this involved an interdisciplinary approach comprising News Literacy Studies, Genre Analysis, and Critical Discourse Analysis. I have used this interdisciplinary approach both in carrying out a linguistic analysis of student writing, and in doing the analysis of discursive practices and social practices, and then in establishing the relationship between text and (social cultural) context. In the rest of the chapter I have reviewed relevant works, which have made pertinent contribution in critical linguistics and literacy theories in particular. In the next chapter I present the methodology for my study.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

4.1   Introduction

In this chapter I explain the methodology followed in this study. First, I explain the research design, its characteristics and the appreciation of the appropriateness of such design for my study. Second, I describe the research instruments and the reasons for choosing them. Third, I specify how I obtained the data- data collection procedures- for my work indicating my plan of work and how I worked through this plan. In other words, I explain how realities on the ground structured and restructured the data collection process. Fourth, I explain the analytical framework and procedures I followed for the analysis of data, and how the procedures actually worked for the current study. I conclude the chapter by discussing the limitations and or gaps to the data.

4.2   Research Design

The current study followed a qualitative research design, based on the data collected from Sokoine University of Agriculture. A qualitative research was appropriate in the current study, as it was ethnographically based, in the sense that the research questions were structured using descriptive constructs such as, 'what are' and 'how is'. Thus, the research questions of the study (see Chapter One: Section 1.8) were fundamentally responsive to the research problem, which sought to investigate the kinds of literacy practices students engage with in their ESL academic writing and the possible explanations for these. The study, which is problematised around such a conceptual frame, involves people's construction of meanings. These meanings were easier to subject to descriptive analysis than to quantitative analysis. It is for this reason that a qualitative research design was employed.

Further the current study aligned itself with qualitative research around issues of the purpose, focus, type of data, and instrumentation in ways, which can be ascribed to the advantages of qualitative research as follows:

1. Purpose, which in this case entails understanding: The qualitative research seeks to understand people's interpretation of meanings, in the current study this characteristic was important in view of the analytical framework that was followed (drawing from NLS, Genre Theory and CDA). For example, among the issues the framework was in pursuit of were the interpretative repertoires the respondents shared about student academic writing literacy (see section 4.5 this chapter).

2. Focus, which is holistic: In the qualitative research the investigator seeks to gain a complete picture. In this case, '… a holistic description of events, procedures, and philosophies occurring in natural settings is often needed to make accurate situational decisions' (see Stainback and Stainback, 1988: 2). Such an arrangement is not convenient in a situation where selected and pre-defined variables are to be studied as in the case of quantitative research.

3. Data, which is subjective: One advantage of qualitative research is its use of 'subjective information and participant observation to describe the context, or natural setting, of the variables under consideration, as well as the interactions of the different variables in the context' (see Stainback and Stainback, 1988: 1) 'It seeks a wide understanding of the entire situation' (see Stainback and Stainback, 1988: 1) to which the current study ascribed. Participant observation for example, enabled me to get a situated understanding of classroom practices during the research, and such understanding was only logical to subject it to the descriptive analysis.

4. Instrumentation, one of the typical characteristics of qualitative research is that 'human person, *the researcher* is the primary *data* collection

instrument' (see Stainback and Stainback, 1988: 1) (my emphasis) whereas in the quantitative research mainly (though not always) inanimate instruments are engaged in data collection.

However, the qualitative research design has its own disadvantages: Firstly, its subjectivity nature of inquiry in itself is said to lead to "to difficulties in establishing the reliability and validity of the approaches and information" (Stainback and Stainback, 1988: 2). Secondly, the fact that the researcher is the primary data collection instrument, his or her induced bias may be difficult to prevent or sometimes even to detect. Thirdly, due to its comprehensive nature of the data gathering approaches demanded, qualitative research is characteristically limited in scope (see Stainback and Stainback, 1988: 2).

Notwithstanding the limitations of the qualitative research, certain research questions would still be investigated better using qualitative research than quantitative research. There are ways in which disadvantages of qualitative research could be minimised. For example, in terms of establishing reliability and validity, one way is to triangulate or cross-examine information, which entails what Denzin (1978) terms as, convergence of multiple data sources, or methodological triangulation where convergence of data is from multiple data collection sources, or investigator triangulation where multiple researchers are involved in an investigation. In the case of the current study, triangulation involved multiple data collection sources namely, textual material, students and lecturers, and classroom observation (see Section 4.3, Data Collection techniques this chapter).

In terms of preventing researcher bias, this was minimised by the researcher being a good listener. Good listening pertains the lowest degree of involvement, with only recording the subject(s)' responses objectively and accurately. These were the objectives, methodologically that is, which the current study sought to achieve.

In terms of limited scope of the sample, usually small samples that have shared characteristics are prone to be more representative than the ones, which are heterogeneous in character. In the case of the current study, SUA conveniently represents higher education in Tanzania, since it is a university, which operates in the same socio cultural conditions within which other universities in Tanzania find themselves. Further, all universities in Tanzania get their students from the same sources i.e. secondary schools and or colleges, and from outside this formal system as in mature age entry students[5]. Also, students as well as lecturers largely come from the same social cultural background, which is constitutive of what can conveniently be called a Tanzanian culture, individual experiences notwithstanding. Thus, the limited scope of a sample of such 'homogeneity' can be regarded to be at the threshold of being representative (also see Section 4.4 on Sample Design and Sampling Techniques).

4.3   Types of Data

The data collection focused on information from: Textual material, ranging from students' texts, CS course outline to institutional guides on academic writing practices. I envisioned that the analysis of these material would inform the study on not only the kind of discourse practices students engage in, but also on the literacy practices as demanded and configured in the dominant discourse of the academic writing pedagogy of the university.

Another source of information was key informants' interviews for lecturers. This was aimed at soliciting lecturers' views on students' ESL writing literacy practices and the lecturers' expectations of these student-writers. Interviews enabled me to get more insights into how lecturers construct meanings around the issues mentioned above. I envisioned that such information would not have been easily obtained in such an instrument as questionnaire, which required more time, commitment and space. These variables would have been difficult to control in a situation such as SUA where lecturers are usually pressed with loads of other commitments.

Also, I employed focus group discussions for lecturers as a way of triangulation to see whether the information gathered from individual lecturers' interviews would be reflected here. I audio recorded interviews and focus group discussions using digital voice recorder. The recoding simplified the process of data transcription as well as interpretation.

On the part of students, apart from their written texts, I conducted focus group discussions and administered questionnaires to them. As for the questionnaires students were given discussions questions, which they (students) filled in individually. Using questionnaire, as it turned out, I was able to get first, students' views towards teaching and learning practices of ESL academic writing, and second students' feelings on their different individual backgrounds and experiences in meaning making process. This would not have come out in the conclusions made in focus group discussions alone. Here, students would have been deprived of that space of expressing their personal perceptions of ESL academic writing process, academic writing practice resources, and lecturers' discourse (e.g. feedback and or conferencing).

Lastly, I collected data from classroom observations. In the classroom, I intended to observe instructors as well as students' discursive practices. In other words, I intended to get a situated understanding of pedagogical discourse practices. This was with a view of seeing not only how such discourses are constitutive of social cultural practices of a university as a community of discourse, but also how or what practices work for or against facilitating students' acquisition of ESL writing literacy practices in their disciplinary genres.

Before the data collection exercise at SUA, I did a pilot study at Mzumbe University in the month of December 2004 to test the instruments to be used for data collection. At Mzumbe I sought permission to interview lecturers and distribute questionnaires to students. Here, I conducted interviews and focus group discussions to lecturers teaching CS course and those teaching other university courses. In both cases interviews were conducted in the offices of the

individual lecturers concerned. I audio recorded the interviews and focus group discussions upon getting the lecturers' consent. I chose to pre-test my instruments at Mzumbe University, which is a different university from SUA to avoid pre-emptying the opinions of the would-be potential respondents at SUA. This pre-testing exercise at Mzumbe University enabled me to improve upon my data collection instruments, especially in suggesting additional research questions and refining the existing ones.

4.4   Sample Design and Sampling Techniques

My study sample comprised 80 students and 20 lecturers (i.e. 5 from the CS course and 15 from other university courses). Except for the students' sample, I obtained lecturers using judgemental sampling basing on the courses they teach, in this case, lecturers involved came from those courses whose evaluation of students' literacy practices constitute academic essay writing. The judgemental sampling was also based on the availability of such lecturers on campus during the conducting of the field research.

The students' sample came from stratified sampling according to their year of study. In this case, the sample involved 40 students in the 1st year and 40 students in the 2nd year. Students from each year were picked randomly as follows: first year students came from the Departments of Agriculture Education and Extension, Agriculture Economics and Agribusiness, Food Science and Human Nutrition, Soil Science (from the Faculty of Agriculture); and Biotechnology and Laboratory Sciences (from the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine).

Second year students came from the departments of Wildlife Management (from the Faculty of Forestry and Nature Conservation); Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness; Soil Science, and Animal Science (from the Faculty of Agriculture); and Environmental Sciences and Management (which is housed in the Faculty of science).

The linguistics analysis of texts involved 40 students from the second year only. I envisioned that it is in the second year where the apprenticeship process of students into literate writers in the academic disciplinary genres would be more projected than would have been the case in the first year. And because the intention was not to make a comparative analysis of the literacy levels between the two classes (i.e. 1st and 2nd years) thus 1st year texts were not used. However, the 40 1st year students were included in the study sample to take part in the focus group discussions and the filling of questionnaires.

Essays from forty 2nd year students were adequate sample for linguistics analysis of texts to be able to indicate the pattern of language use in terms of written discourse practice. Such kind of an analysis makes large samples both difficult and undesirable, especially in cases, as this one, where the object was to dig deep into the problem and establish gravity.

I have included first year students for two reasons: First, they (1st year students) would just have joined the university at the time of the study. Thus, I wanted them to serve as an index of seeing how language background (of pre-university level) impact on students' ESL academic writing literacy at the university level. Secondly, at the time of the research these students would have been doing the Communication Skills course. Thus, I envisioned that I would have had an opportunity to observe classroom discourse to see instructional approaches used during the teaching of the course. In other words I wanted to see (esp. through classroom observations) how the apprenticeship process sets off at the university.

I have included second year students in the sample on the basis that these students would have had enough exposure to ESL academic writing process due to their longer stay at the university. Thus, I would be able to determine how unsuccessful or unsuccessful they have been apprenticed into the literate writers of the academic disciplinary genres against the writing requirements as demanded by the dominant university discourse practices. Moreover, second year students would have just completed their Communication Skills course at the time of the research,

thus they, to some extent, served as an index of the adequacy of Communication Skills course in developing students' literacy in the ESL academic writing at Sokoine University of Agriculture.

4.5 Data sources and collection techniques

In view of the preceding discussion the sources of data for my study were divided into four strands: textual material, lecturers, students, and classroom observation. I discuss the details of each strand below.

4.5.1 Textual material

In the textual material, as I have indicated in Chapter One I employed documentary analysis whose array of text types was divided into the following categories:

4.5.1.1 Students' texts

These came from the sampled 40 students in the second year only. The texts involved essays from examinations and assignments collected from two subjects offered across disciplines, that is, Development Studies, Agriculture Marketing, and Sociology. The sample students here came from BSc Agronomy, BSc Animal Science, BSc Horticulture, and BSc Agriculture Education and Extension. I chose the above subjects because students' evaluation on these subjects is usually done through essay questions. In other words, literacy practices in these programmes are embodied in what Lillis refers to as 'essayist literacy', which she says 'constitutes a very particular kind of literacy practice bound with the workings of a particular social institution' (2001: 39).

4.5.1.2 In-house institutional guides on academic writing practices

This was the category of text, which seemed to be largely inadequate at SUA. I managed to get guides on discipline specific generic writing in two Departments, and staff guides on assessing academic literacy practices, (assessment criteria documents for staff and students), of one Faculty, and examiners' evaluation

reports (i.e. comments on students' academic literacy practices) of one department.

4.5.1.3 Out-of-house documents

In this category, I obtained Documents of statements of Language policy and language planning.

4.5.1.4 Communication Skills syllabus and course material

I obtained these documents from the Department of Social Sciences, which is mandated to offer the CS course at the university.

4.5.2   Lecturers: Interviews

Lecturers constitute another strand of the data sources. The information solicited from lecturers based on key informants' interviews and focus group discussions. The concept of key informant does not refer to any established criteria except that since I could not interview everybody, these few selected lecturers acted as key informants in this study.
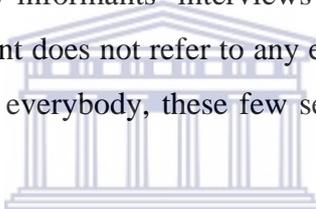
I managed to interview a total of 20 selected lecturers, from January through February 2005. Among them were professors, senior lecturers, and lecturers. There was no separate set of questions for Heads of Departments as envisioned earlier because such an endeavour would require paying attention onto the administrative aspects, and this was not relevant to the current study. Thus I interviewed the Heads not in their capacity as Heads, but rather in their capacity as lecturers in the rank of either professor or senior lecturer. All interviews took place in the interviewee's offices. I recorded the interviews using digital voice recorder. Almost all respondents consented to be recorded. The voice recorder being a pencil-like instrument did not create any trappings to the interview process; hence it did not cause any interruptions. The interviews questions for all the sampled lecturers, regardless of their ranks, focused on the following thematic areas:

4.5.2.1 Students' ESL academic writing practices

Here, respondents answered questions ranging from their views on students'
competencies in ESL academic writing, to their judgement criteria of these
competencies from students. Further, lecturers answered questions on the way in
which they address problems of students' academic writing practices, as well as
the monitoring of students' progress in academic writing practice.

4.5.2.2 Lecturers' discursive practices and student writing

Under this theme lecturers answered questions on their responses to student
writing and the type of things they usually comment on. Also, they (lecturers)
answered questions pertaining to assessment guidelines (departmental or
otherwise) of students' academic writing, and lastly how best they (lecturers)
could contribute to the efforts of improving students' academic writing skills.

4.5.2.3 Supportive structures for student ESL academic writing

Respondents answered questions on students' note taking practices during
lectures, and on efforts the university, faculty, or individual departments were
making in helping students acquire academic literacies in ESL. Further, there was
a focus on how the academic communication course is integrated into other
university taught courses. Lecturers also answered questions on students'
linguistic behaviour outside the classroom, and their (lecturers') perceptions on
using the English language as a medium of instruction at the universities in a
Tanzanian social cultural context.

4.5.3   Lecturers: focus group discussions

I conducted two focus group discussions. The first group involved all lectures
teaching the academic Communication Skills course. The second group involved
lecturers teaching other university courses. The group discussions in each were
conducted in the office of the Deputy Dean of the Faculty of science on the 17th
and 21st of February 2005 respectively. Upon securing respondents' consent, I
recorded these conversations directly into my laptop using digital voice recorder
as a microphone. Again, the recoding equipment did not create any trappings in

the discussions. In both cases, the group answered questions on the same thematic areas as the ones provided to key informants' interviews above (see the attached interview questions for both categories). Focus group discussions provided a detailed reflection on the issues, which were raised from individual lecturers' interviews. As I said earlier, I have used focus group discussions mainly for triangulation purposes.

4.5.4   Students: Questionnaires

I employed questionnaires, which were given to 80 students as indicated in the sample. Also in the follow up data collection I managed to conduct focus group discussions with first year students. The areas focused using the two research tools are explained below.

4.5.4.1 Interdisciplinary practices of academic writing

On this theme, students answered questions on whether or not they notice any differences when they write essays in different disciplines. By these types of questions I intended to find out whether or not students could figure out the differences in the writing demands across disciplines regarding the required generic language specific to the disciplines concerned. I intended to use these results as the indexes of students' familiarity (or lack of) of the writing demands existing in different disciplines. This aspect also helped in judging how successful (or unsuccessful) students have been mentored into literate writers of the academic disciplinary genres.

The same aspect also applied to note taking from lectures. Finally, under this theme, students answered questions on the usefulness or otherwise of note- taking practices at improving their academic writing skills.

4.5.4.2 Lecturers' feedback as inputs to learning

Students answered questions on lecturers' comments or feedback to their (students') writing. The questions focused on, firstly, how common or uncommon the practice of lecturers' feedback was to students' writing. Secondly, how useful

lecturers' comments are with regards to improving students' academic writing skills. I have included this section to help me to counter check lecturers' claim on giving feedback to students and the type of feedback lecturers claim to be giving to students.

4.5.4.3 Supportive structures to student's ESL academic writing

On this aspect, students answered questions on how Communication Skills course has helped them at improving their ESL writing of the academic discourse. Additionally, the way in which individual departments, faculties or the university in general are supportive at improving students' ESL writing of the academic discourse. Students also answered questions on the available language resources and other support materials for learning Communications Skills course generally and for improving academic ESL writing in particular at the university. Furthermore, questions focussed on how students interact using the English language on campus outside the classroom. By these question types, I intended to see how students' linguistics behaviour and experiences might influence their performance in the ESL academic writing. Lastly, on this aspect students answered questions on their views about language of instruction at the university. Here, I wanted to find out the attitudes and values students attach to English in their academic development, and also the ideological underpinnings for such values and attitudes.

4.5.5   Students: Focus Group Discussions

I conducted 5 focus group discussions of 8 members per group from a total of 40 first year students. These focus discussions were conducted with the assistance from two research assistants. The group discussions were conducted on the 10th of November 2005 in the Lecture Theatre (SLT 6) during the normal lectures, which lasted for 2 hours. In the focus groups two activities were involved, each of which taking approximately one hour: individual group discussions and plenary session as follows: I gave students discussion questions in their groups. Then, I requested them to go through the questions together while noting down the observations from members in their groups. Each group was asked to nominate a chairperson

and a secretary to facilitate group discussions and to take note of the conversations respectively.

At the end of the first hour, one member from each group presented their findings to the rest of the groups, after which presenters invited questions or further comments. However, discussions in the subsequent presentations focused only on those aspects not covered by the discussions in the preceding presentations in order to avoid repetition.

Students' plenary discussions and a few of individual group discussions were digitally recorded using digital voice recorder. I had already alerted students on recording their voices and had secured their consent. The recoding equipment did not create any trappings in either the individual group discussions or the plenary sessions, because it is a small pencil-like instrument. Its miniature size therefore, helped to reduce distractions and interruptions.

In the group discussions, students answered questions on the same thematic areas as the ones provided in the questionnaires above (see the attached questionnaire). Focus group discussions provided a detailed reflection on the issues, which were raised from individual students' questionnaires. And, as is the case with lecturers' data, I have used focus group discussions with the students mainly for triangulation purposes.

4.6   Data processing: Transcription

I mentioned earlier that I audio recorded interviews and focus groups, which I conducted to lecturers. I transcribed these recordings, and encoded them into Microsoft word. In the transcription, I did not employ complex or detail transcription notation as would have otherwise been demanded by Conversational Analysis studies. Thus, such notation, which indicates, for example, the rise or fall of intonation or time taken for someone to respond or numbering of sentences were all excluded.

The omission does not mean that such rhetorical effects are of no relevance to discourse analysis, rather as Antaki *et al* (2005: 8) notes, sometimes, "what to put in a transcript and how to notate it are far from easy questions". And the inclusion of detailed notation in itself does not constitute discourse analysis, much as such notations are desirable. Similarly the sparing use of notation does not mean that analysis cannot be possible or justifiable. Further, the decision on what notation to include in a transcript is largely determined by the type of analysis one performs on a text. In the current study for example, complex transcription notations were unnecessary (if not undesirable) as my purpose was generally anchored on how respondents construct meanings around the notions of literacy and student writing, the dominant literacy and discourse practices, and how students are shaped (or fail to be shaped) by them. Though the collection of data comprised interviews, among other research tools, the interpretation of such data did not require dense conversational notation.

In the transcript of the current study therefore, I have transcribed the data using the normal text format employing the basic notation to indicate rhetorical effects, such as hesitation, repetitions, and paralinguistic features such as laughing. Further, in indicating these features, again I did not follow the conventions reservedly for Conversional Analysis as developed by conversational analysts such as Gail Jefferson (see Antaki, *et al* 2005).

For the purpose of this study therefore, I used dashes to indicate hesitations, and doted lines to indicate sudden change of topics or when speakers attempted to reword their phrases (when this happens in the middle of a sentence). Where an overlap was concerned, for example, two speakers speaking at the same time, I put a double slash at the beginning of each speaker's utterance. And, I indicated laughing by enclosing the word 'laugh' in brackets whenever such phenomenon occurs. Numbering of sentences was not desirable in this case as the interest was in seeing the discursive themes that emerged from the interviews, focus groups discussions, and questions and not in how individual sentences were structured.

The interviews and the discussions were all conducted in English given that English is the official medium of communication in higher learning in Tanzania. There were however instances where respondents occasionally switched to Kiswahili. In such instances, I have provided the English translation. The language switch of this kind helped to index some of the assumptions I have made in the current study. The issues indexed include general scepticism, especially by lecturers, about using English outside academics, ideologies underpinning values and attitudes respondents attach to language use, and language constraints on the part of respondents' discourse practices (see Chapter Five and Six). For example, there was one instance, during my interviews, where a lecturer almost throughout the session responded to my questions in Kiswahili except towards the very end of the interview that was when he switched to English. The interview pattern, which emerged in this particular case, could be termed as 'bilingual interaction' that comprised 'Kiswahili responses to English questions'.

In the second stage, I prepared another set of transcriptions, which involved summaries of the main points from each interview and focus group discussion. I did this because in some cases respondents had either repeated points or had gone round before coming to the point. In other cases respondents had digressed to other issues, which were not all that relevant to the topics of the discussions. In either case I ended up with a very long transcript for each interview and a discussion. Thus, making summaries from these discussions simplified the analysis of the data especially because they enabled me to categorise the main arguments into discursive themes or interpretative repertoires. Methodologically this was possible through profiling arguments from speakers who seemingly shared patterns of understanding or interpretation of some of the aspects in similar categories as I have noted above.

The summaries however, comprised the respondents' original statements, which in some cases have been edited for comprehension. And the interpretation of all respondents' views was not in any way done outside the relevant contexts within which such views were provided. In other words, the analysis also considered the

contexts in which speakers' responses were given, that is the original transcribed texts. The excerpts I present in this study come from these summaries.

As a way of indicating an overview of issues drawn from lecturers and students for all the discursive themes focused on the study, I have created two matrices: The first matrix is on lecturers' responses on interviews and focus group discussions, which is attached as Appendix 1. The second matrix is on students' responses on questionnaire, and group discussions, which is attached as Appendix 2 in the study. I present the issues that emerged from these strands of data source in Chapter Five, and its analysis in Chapter Six.

4.7   Data Presentation and Analysis Procedure

In this study, I have divided the sources of data into three strands: Students and lecturers, textual material, and classroom observations. I have presented the data from lecturers (interviews and focus group discussions) and students (questionnaire and focus group discussions) according to thematic areas (see Chapter Five). To begin with, the questions I used in the data collection instruments from lecturers and students were themselves categorised thematically. In each theme, the excerpts of summary statements from respondents' answers have been provided as supporting details of speakers' own views on the issues that have been raised in the study. These themes were the ones, in which data coding and finally its analysis were based.

I have put the data on textual material into three categories, departmental guides, CS syllabus and teaching manuals, and students' texts. Departmental guides represented institutional efforts in assisting students in their ESL writing process. The CS course syllabus and the teaching manuals were analysed in terms of assessing the adequacy of CS course in helping students' ESL academic writing process. Students' texts were analysed in terms of investigating patterns in students' discourse practice. Specifically how students organise topics, and use hedging devices and whether that is done in the manner that is acceptable in the academic genres within which students were writing.

The analysis of data followed the interdisciplinary approach adopted in the study (see Chapter Three). Procedurally, as I have noted above, I have profiled speakers' responses into discursive themes, such themes formed sections, which were then introduced by subheadings in Chapter Five Six, the presentation of results, which are discussed in Chapter Six. Such sections open up by a background discussion of the discursive theme or the interpretative repertoire, then specific quotations from speakers' responses were presented to authenticate arguments in such themes. After presentations of such texts, the analysis then focused on the respondents' views on issues raised concerning student writing at SUA. The aim was, among others, to find out how respondents interpret various concepts pertaining to literacy and student writing. Also, how they define participants' relationship, and how they identify roles in which different participants play in different orders of discourse available in a university community of practice.

Where speakers' views, thoughts or opinions were provided, these were accounted for in terms of the context in which they were given. This account entailed, for example giving the historical or cultural context, which seemed to have exerted influence on the speakers' line of thinking and arguing.

4.8   Conceptual and Analytical Framework

The New Literacy Studies, Genre Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis formed an interdisciplinary analytical framework, which was followed in the current study (see Chapter Three). New Literacy Studies, Genre Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis, as methods in critical linguistic, all aim at looking at language as discourse or social practice where text, whether written or spoken is considered as discourse- produced by, borrowing from Dellinger, 'socially situated speakers and writers' (1995:2) (see Chapter Three for details). In view of this approach, academic discourse is viewed as an aspect of social practice, whereby language forms an integral part of the material social process. A focus on social practice enabled me to analyse student writing as discourse practices in

social context, in other words, "within a structured network of practices, and a domain of social action and interaction … ''(see Fairclough, 2001:122).

The choice of this approach was motivated by my interest in the current study, which was in how students write successfully or unsuccessfully in their ESL academic writing. I judged success in view of the underlying conventions and norms or literacy practices as determined or configured in the social practice or dominant discourse of the university as a community of practice. Thus, following this framework, I was able to examine students' discourse as a network of practices in Tanzania's social cultural context. The interdisciplinary model followed in this study is represented diagrammatically in figure 4.1 below.

NLS	STUDENT WRITING:	CDA
▪ Student writing is literacy through the constructs of practice, event, and text. ▪ Text is shaped and regulated by the hybridisation between dominant literacies and the students' home and community literacies.	A social act of inducting student-writers into literate-writers **G E N R E**	▪ Discourse (written or spoken) is social practice. ▪ Student writing is socially constituted. ▪ Social process and structures of text production ▪ Student text is ideological ▪ Social process and structures that individuals / groups create meanings while interacting with

▪ Student writing is the process of learning the conventions of discourse communities
▪ Students are apprentices to these discourse communities.

Figure 4.1: Interdisciplinary Analytical Approach to Student Writing as Social Practice in Higher Education

Source: My own analysis of literature on theories from CDA, Genre and NLS

As indicated in the diagram, CDA, Genre Theory, and NLS all contribute to student writing as a social process of inducting student-writers into literate-writers. The three theories play a complementary role into this induction process. Thus, CDA problematises discourse (written or spoken) as social practice - student writing is socially constituted and ideological. It also looks at social process and structures of text production and social process and structures within which individuals or groups create meanings in their interaction with texts (see also Chapter Three). The NLS on the other hand does not only view student writing as practice it also problematises student writing as ideological, shaped and regulated by the tension between contested dominant literacies (which are valued) and the students' home and community literacies (which are often ignored). And lastly, Genre theory maintains that student writing entails learning discourse communities to which students are apprentices.

This induction process exerts pressure on the academic writing pedagogy of higher education to offer writing instruction courses, in terms of both context of situation', i.e. at the level of disciplinary genres available in the universities discourse communities and in terms of 'context of culture' i.e. at the level of students' backgrounds and experiences in a broader social and cultural context of the students' home or the community.

4.9   Limitations of the Study

In this study I was constrained with unforeseen events particularly students' class boycott in the month of January 2004. This occurrence caused constraints in time because I had intended to spend four months in the field. These months would have effectively been spent in data collection. At the end of the third month due to students' boycott the university halted academic activities for undergraduate students. This affected data collection exercise as no classes were going on and I had intended to do class observation. Thus, I had to reschedule classroom observation for another time, and thus necessitated a follow up data collection exercise in November 2005 through January 2006.

4.10   Conclusion to Chapter Four

In this chapter I have explained my methodology. I have begun by explaining the research design and the data collection techniques. I have explained why qualitative research design was appropriate for the current study. Further, I have explicated the characteristics of qualitative research design, and shown how the current study has aligned itself with this research design. Next, I have described my sample and sampling techniques. In this case, I have said that for students I have used stratified sampling, involving 1st and 2nd years, and then systematic random sampling in getting students in each year. For the lecturers I have used judgemental sampling, depending on their availability. I have also indicated the strands of my data sources, namely, textual material, students and lecturers, and classroom observation.

Further, I have provided my research instruments and an appreciation of the appropriateness of such techniques for my study. In this case, I have listed key informants' interviews and focus group discussions for lecturers, questionnaire and focus group discussions for students, and documentary analysis. I have also provided the reasons for choosing them. Then, I have specified how I have obtained the data- data collection procedures. In other words, how each of these instruments was administered and explaining how realities on the ground structured and restructured my data collection process. Such realities, for example, included the administration of questionnaires and focus group discussions to students, thematic structuring of interview schedule and focus group discussion questions to lecturers, together with questions for the students' questionnaire. All these steps were aimed at simplifying both the data collection procedures and the data analysis process.

Lastly, I have explained the analytical framework and procedures I have chosen for the analysis of data, and how the procedures have actually worked for my work. I have concluded this chapter by discussing the limitations and or gaps to the data. In Chapter Five I present my findings, which will be followed by the discussion of results in Chapter Six.

CHAPTER FIVE

EMERGING THEMES AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

5.1   Introduction

In this chapter, I present the results and discuss the main trends. I begin by presenting the results obtained from lecturers' interviews and focus group discussions, then from students' questionnaires and focus group discussions. Next, I present results from textual material, viz. institutional material (CS syllabus and writing guides), and linguistic analysis of students' writing. The results, in this case, regard to the patterns about students' discourse practices in ESL writing, specifically, students' use of discourse markers. Lastly, I present results from classroom observation to see lecturers and students discursive practices in the classroom pedagogy. I discuss these results in Chapter Six.

5.2   Data collected

As I have mentioned earlier, the sources of data for this study were divided into four strands, lecturers, students, and textual material comprising the CS course, university, and classroom observation. In the following section I present the types of data I gathered from all these strands of data sources**.** I begin by presenting the data from lecturers.

5.2.1   Lecturers: Interview and focus group discussions

Lecturers' interviews and focus groups constituted one category of data source. As I mentioned earlier, I profiled questions for the interview and focus groups according to discursive themes. Thus, from this category of data source, I present the findings in seven thematic areas as follows.

5.2.1.1 Students' ESL academic writing literacy

The first question to lecturers focused on their judgement of students' literacy levels in academic writing. In here lecturers responded to the question 'What do you make of students' competence in academic writing practices at the

university?' Lecturers acknowledged the existence of students' unsuccessful writing problem in the ESL of the academic discourse at SUA. These were some of the responses,

> I would say … there's a problem…I would say eighty percent or even ninety percent of students have very low competence in writing in English (Interview)

> Well, there are mixed students. The majority- I would say, they have poor writing skills (Interview).

> Personally, I think, whether I should call it competence or whatever, is-is very low nowadays- I've noted this gradual or constant decline in terms of language skills. That's- that's my impression (Interview).

These responses suggest that students' ESL academic writing does not meet the expectations of literacy practices as is demanded by the university cultural literacy. These findings affirm my earlier assumption that Students' ESL writing in higher education in Tanzania would manifest discourse practices, which are in contrast with literacy practices as configured in the dominant discourse of academic writing pedagogy of higher education. Lecturers also pointed out ways, in which they would usually judge students' literacy levels as this lecturer indicates in the following excerpt,

> Of course when you give them, for example, homework, and also special project, where you know they have to…write a project proposal, may be to analyse what the problem is, ah- provide its justification, and later on, after they have collected the data on synthesising issues, that's where you can notice that they are poorly equipped with writing skills (Interview).

Furthermore, lecturers frequently pointed out surface errors of grammar, tenses, and vocabulary as criteria in judging students' unsuccessful ESL academic

writing. Other criteria that lecturers pointed out included failure to write or organise work, failure to ask and answer questions in class, and duplication of lecture notes in written tasks. These 'criteria' were also reiterated in focus group discussions, with additions such as failure to describe or explain symbols and formulae in science subjects.

The causes of students' ESL unsuccessful writing in academic genres as pointed out by lecturers are summarised below:

i.   English language not being given its due attention on campus,
ii.   Students coming from non-English speaking home environment,
iii.   Students using Kiswahili even in academic matters,
iv.   Some lecturers code switch between English and Kiswahili or ethnic languages during consultation with students, and
v.   Some lecturers being linguistically constrained, hence influencing students negatively (see Appendix 1 on summary of lecturers' interview).

The first point centres on linguistic behaviours embodied within the linguistic practices on campus. Lecturers admitted that generally students and lecturers alike become uneasy using English outside academic domains. This is what also engenders code switching between English and Kiswahili or ethnic languages when lecturers and students are engaged in a communicative practice outside classroom (e.g. lecturer-student consultations) (see iv above). It is interesting to note that this observation is in conflict with students' own assessment of language use on campus as shall be seen later. Students claim that they use English in all communication at the university campus, while evidence from this study indicate that students linguistic practice on campus entail code mixing and code switching between English and Kiswahili sometimes even in the classrooms. Interestingly, similar phenomenon was noted even among lecturers during classroom observation. I discuss the underpinnings and pedagogical implication of this phenomenon under the discussion of results in Chapter Six.

As for point (ii) above, students coming from non-English speaking backgrounds, this is unequivocal within the Tanzania's social cultural context. Despite that English is the official second language, Kiswahili is still a predominant language, and exerts influence even in the academic domains. It simply underscores the notion that students come from home and social backgrounds in which there is little or no opportunities for acquiring requisite linguistic resource in English, which is not only socially valued, but is also the dominant discourse in the institutional cultural practice of a university. This is reflected in point (iii) above, 'Students using Kiswahili even in academic matters', as well as in number (iv). That some lecturers are linguistically challenged is a notion, which is not well acknowledged in the ESL writing research in Tanzania. This signals the general ambivalence in addressing issues pertaining to lecturers' discourse in higher education in Tanzania. I explicate the reasons for the mystique underlying lecturers' discourse in the discussion of results in Chapter Six.

5.2.1.2 How lecturers address students' ESL writing problems

In finding out the ways in which lecturers address students ESL academic writing deficiencies, I intended to identify lecturers' discursive practices, which impact on students' acquisition of requisite literacy practices either negatively or positively. In this case, I worked with the assumption that a lecturer being a powerful participant in the discourse practices of higher education, makes it possible that some of his/her specific discursive practices may work, borrowing from Lillis (*Op cit*.: 13), '… against facilitating *students'* access to the privileged literacy practice of the academia' (my emphasis) in the Tanzanian social cultural context. The following are examples of specific lecturers' responses on this aspect,

> Yah! At an individual level one- one would say there's very little that I do personally because really what you are doing is that you are actually allocated to teach a class, and the only kind of influence that you have is when you mark the papers. But, really the marking and saying here you have made a mistake does not really improve; because you are teaching a technical subject and language is just a major problem to that (Interview).

I assist them to- I mean I put a lot of my red ink (laugh) to try to show them everywhere I see that this is not right, this is how- this is not how this should read. I will always either circle it and say- tell this person to rephrase or paraphrase to- to make it look better … (Interview).

When I started, say 15 or 12, 15 years ago when I had a lot of time I used to sit with my students, whether writing special projects or masters' dissertations. I would sit with them, and actually we would formulate exemplary statements to show this is the way to think, this is the way to write, now go forward. … Ah may be recently, I don't have much time to- to do that (Interview).

The discussion of emerging themes is done in Chapter Six, but suffice it to say that these responses suggest that lecturers' discursive practices are influenced by how they interpret student writing and play their mentoring role. The first excerpt is prototypical of lecturers who do not see student academic writing as part of their primary responsibility. He sees teaching as an independent entity separate from students' apprenticeship and separate from language use because language is not a concern of those teaching technical subjects. In the second excerpt the lecturer puts effort in assisting students to write. But, we see that the student is assumed to be a passive recipient here, where he/she is simply told what or how to write without necessarily making sense of why she/he should write in the way proposed by the lecturer. In the third excerpt, we see a lecturer who takes apprenticing a student as his primary responsibility, but is constrained by other factors including time, and in most cases class sizes. All these paradigms not only epitomise the challenges of lecturers' engagement with student writing, but also underlie the underpinnings structuring lecturers' pedagogical practices in the socio-discursive space of an ESL academic writing classroom.

5.2.1.3 Monitoring students' progress in ESL academic writing

In monitoring progress, I set out to examine how lecturers engage themselves in students' ESL writing process. Responses from interview and focus group discussions all signal that no mechanism is in place in terms of monitoring students progress whether at departmental or faculty level. In other words, monitoring progress is entirely the preference of individual lecturers. As these lecturers' responses reflect,

> In the department is that this department has no policy. There's no policy for the department, there's no policy for the university. So, as an instructor you really do the things you want to do. There's no guidance (Interview).

And doing the things one wants is what this lecturer explained below,

> Yes, I wanted to see how it goes! But, indeed there are other methods that we do apply in the written course assessments where we now can, now we can assess the students how they write, how do they- *write* when *they are* independently challenged how do they think and write, how do they express themselves (Interview) (My emphasis).

5.2.1.4 Students' note taking practices

Lecturers had divided opinion with regards to students' taking notes during lectures. While some lecturers reported to be encouraging students to take notes others admitted to be dissuading students from taking notes during lectures. They argue that note taking makes students have a divided attention and thus miss out in lecturers. For example, this lecturer said,

> In all my-especially 1st year, I just tell them listen, don't write-write minimally, because 1st year I always give them notes. So I want them to listen and try to follow and ask. But of course they keep writing, they write, they write' (Interview).

Further, these lecturers also argue that due to shortage or lack of reference materials they give students lecture notes as handouts or compendia, and thus, they encourage students to listen (i.e. not to take notes). It also became apparent that some lecturers were not quite sure as to what is the best practice with regards to students' participation during lectures. I discuss lecturers' responses and within the context of students' own responses in this aspect under the analysis of results in Chapter Six.

5.2.1.5 Lecturers' feedback to students' writing

Feedback to students' ESL writing was an important index of lecturers' overall contribution to mentoring students' into literate writers. In both interviews and focus group discussions, lecturers acknowledged giving feedback to students. And lecturers indicated that this feedback involved commenting on their texts and sometimes talking to students about their writing. On the whole, the issues lecturers pointed out under this aspect can be summarised thus,
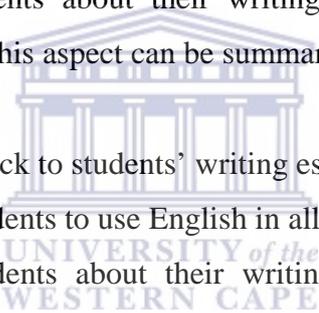
i.   Providing feedback to students' writing especially in long assignments.
ii.   Encouraging students to use English in all communication.
iii. Counselling students about their writing e.g. telling them how to organise work.
iv.   Giving them model answers.

(See Appendix I: Lecturers' Interviews)

As mentioned above lecturers acknowledged providing feedback to students' writing, however, it became apparent that this process was usually possible when long assignments were involved as indicated in point (i) above. In the context of SUA, such long assignments usually comprise Field Practical Training (FPT) reports and Special Projects (SPs). In the FPT, first and second year students in their second semester get attached to work stations, usually in the public or private organisations. In this exercise students are assigned supervisors for both field training and writing of technical reports.

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Special Projects involve mini research that students carry out for a longer period on any topics of their choice. Such mini research also entails writing of a technical report under lecturers' supervision. These are the best opportunities that students get in benefiting from lecturers' input in their (students') writing process as this lecturer alluded,

> I would say in normal courses I don't do much, yah- because of having too many scripts and so forth. But, for the special projects students- because now they are few, … I assist them to - I mean I put a lot of my red ink (laugh) to try to show them everywhere I see that this is not right, this is how- this is not how this should read. I will always either circle it and say- tell this person to rephrase or paraphrase to - to make it look better- (Interview)

All the other aspects (ii) to (iv) mentioned above normally take place within the context of these long assignments. At times lecturers happen to give elaborate feedback to students' writing in other classroom assignments, but this is not a common practice given the large class sizes individual lecturers normally handle. The issue of feedback lies, not so much on whether lecturers can or cannot give feedback, rather it lies on the ideological frame, which underlies the construction of such feedback. In other words, feedback to student writing is often constructed within the framework of social discursive relationship between lecturers and students, which is often structured around power imbalance. Accordingly, such feedback has contestable messages and questionable quality both of which work against facilitating students' apprenticeship process.

Another important element here was the type of feedback lecturers rendered to students. The lecturers' responses indicated that such feedback was mainly on corrections of surface structural and grammatical errors as this lecturer admits,

> The commonest problem I- I encounter is something very basic, even get- getting the tenses right … or some basic grammar. You read a

sentence…you find it awkward. Sometimes I read it and I don't understand I just put several question marks just to alert this person that I'm not really getting what you want me to- to get from this. (Interview)

The implication of this type of feedback is discussed in Chapter Six. It is worth noting here that lecturers' responses on feedback tallied with students' comments on feedback (see Section 5.2.2.2 below).

5.2.1.6 Involvement of other lecturers in student writing

The issue of the involvement of other lecturers (other than those in the CS course) in addressing students' ESL academic writing literacy was one with several projections. First, I intended to find out what lecturers were doing, specific to aiding students in their academic writing. Second, I intended to see how basic skills acquired in the CS course were re-emphasised (or not re-emphasised) in other courses. I envisioned that this aspect would be indicative of the extent to which the CS course was integrated in other university courses. And third, by this aspect, I intended to validate what lecturers claimed to be doing (or not doing) (see feedback to students' writing above) with regards to aiding students in their ESL academic writing process.

Lecturers' involvement was the aspect where respondents gave conflicting opinions in several ways: Firstly there were lecturers who claim to be helping students in their academic writing. In this category, some lecturers claimed to be assisting students in academic writing, but they believed that this was not their responsibility. Others claimed to be helping students in writing, because they believed this was their responsibility. Another category was lecturers who admitted not to be assisting students. Some of these lecturers attributed this to time constraints, but others postulated that students' academic writing was outside their job responsibilities. Responses from lecturers' interviews and focus group discussion below encapsulate this tension.

But if you look at it logically, I mean if every instructor struggled to do something in that line, for sure some improvement- even if it's small it would, but in …in practice many people are not going to take up that. Many people think it's not their responsibility. We think that the Communication Skills would do that, it's their responsibility, these things we are supposed to teach them principles, *m*any of us we don't have that skill either (Interview).

Of course you can- you can comment- you can put comments may be tighten your language your-language is loose or may be certain-maybe they wrote - okay this sort of thing. But – ah – I-I don't think I take any effort, actually. It's different actually from someone teaching a course like Communication Skills, actually you are – it's you-want to see whether they communicate (Interview).

For me actually I'm afraid that I don't take any steps to help these students. If I'm marking or maybe I'm just going through SPs, papers I see the- maybe some grammatical errors in the text or sometimes just spelling mistakes, what I do- just correct for them. But, there's no other way for me to start helping him for improvement because I think I'm not supposed to do that there other people who are supposed to do that (Focus group).

Interestingly, however, when such lecturers were asked further how they were engaged with students in other university courses, it became apparent that all lecturers including those who denied responsibility were indeed assisting students in their ESL academic writing. The only difference was that while some lecturers were consciously committed to the practice others were doing it unwittingly. I discuss the pedagogical implication of this trend in the analysis of the results.

5.2.1.7 The CS course and students' academic writing literacy

The adequacy of the CS course to improving students' academic writing was another discursive theme I focused attention on in the current study. On this

aspect lectures' responses from both interviews and focus group discussions are summarised below,

i.   The course is not tailor-made to address specific needs of individual departments.
ii.   Basic skills acquired from the course are not re-emphasised in other university courses.
iii. The course is offered to students with mixed language abilities.
iv.   The course is evaluated unfairly by looking at the errors students make instead of the skills students acquire.

Source: Lecturers' interviews; Focus group discussions.

I find it instructive to encapsulate point number one above using this extract from one of the CS lecturers during focus group discussion,
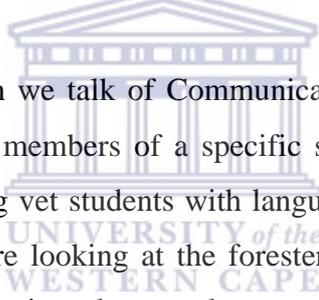
> And secondly, when we talk of Communication Skills morally we teach students to become members of a specific speech community. If you're Vet you're preparing vet students with language skills appropriate for vet community. If you're looking at the foresters or Forestry students we're preparing them to get into the speech community for the Forestry people. We're not doing that just teaching (them) ah- general Communication Skills. So, its impact is not as one would like to see (Focus group).

As recourse for this pedagogical problem, this lecturer suggested the following,

> If you're teaching, let's say vet students, first of all you've to study their texts, their books and all that - and see what's the appropriate language apart from the general structure of the grammar or and all that. … What language, what words are frequently used in different degree programmes and how should you shape your degree ah your course to suit such students (Focus group).

This extract captures several overlapping nuances with regards to the adequacy of the CS course. The issues here revolve around, the content of the course, approach, and language, all put together with the aim of reflecting the discipline in which the students pursue the writing course. In other words, the lecturer espouses for the genre approach (see Chapter Three) in the teaching of the CS course at SUA. This argument, as shall be seen, aligns well to the notions of the NLS and CDA. But in the context of SUA, the genre approach demands first of all the redefinition of students' academic writing.

I find other responses from lecturers, that is, from number (ii) to (iv) as summarised above as crucial in the discussion of not only how the course should be offered, but also how it (the course) should be assessed for its adequacy. I expound these aspects in the discussion of the results in Chapter Six.

5.2.1.8 Lecturers' perceptions on the language of instruction at SUA

The aspect of language of instruction was intended to seek lecturers' views on what they considered to be the better option as a language of instruction in higher education in Tanzania given the current students' literacy practices in ESL of the academic writing. The lecturers' responses from both interviews and focus group discussions are summarised below:

  i. English should be the sole language of instruction, from primary one.
  ii. Shifting to Swahili will not be to the best interest of the students many of whom Swahili may not be their L1.
  iii. Students will think in English as long as it is provided to them.
  iv. More languages such as Arabic and French need to be added to the linguistic repertoire of Tanzanian education system.
  v. People are keen to have their children educated in English hence there is a demand for the language.
  vi. Language policy should take into consideration what people want in terms of language of instruction.

Source: Lecturers' interviews; Focus group discussions.

Both in the interviews and focus group discussions, lecturers consistently maintained that English should be the medium of instruction at university. This recommendation however is not in conformity with either students or lecturers linguistic practices. There was one voice in the focus group discussions, which called for the use of either English throughout or Kiswahili throughout and English becomes a taught language. This voice is reminiscent of the MoI debate discussed in Chapter One. Statements (v) and (vi) reverberate lecturers' perception (and of many Tanzanians) about English as a language of empowerment in modern Tanzania. I discuss the implications of these tendencies and contradictions in Chapter Six, discussion of results.

5.2.2   *Students: Questionnaire and focus group discussions*

Students' questionnaire and focus group discussions were a component of the data source strand, which I juxtaposed with lecturers' interviews and focus group discussions. As I mentioned earlier, the students' sample came from the first and second years of study (but see also Chapter Four for students sampling). The thematic areas covered in the open-ended questionnaire were the same for both years. This was aimed at consistence, and particularly at finding out how students from different academic levels reacted to the same aspects of ESL writing literacy. The general trend here was that students in both 1st and 2nd year consistently provided similar responses in filling in the questionnaire. However, as for the focus group discussions, I included follow up questions in some thematic areas in addition to the questions included in the open-ended questionnaire. I present the finding for this part of the strand below.

5.2.2.1 Students' views on ESL academic writing across disciplines

The theme on ESL academic writing practices across disciplines was intended to get students' comments on their own performance when writing in ESL in different disciplinary discourses. One purpose for this aspect was to see students' familiarity with regard to the different writing demands embodied in different

disciplines. I intended this to be indicative of how successful or otherwise students are inducted into the generic apprenticeship at SUA.

The findings from this aspect showed a divided opinion from students in both 1st and 2nd year. On the one hand there were students who said they could not notice the difference in (or were not familiar with) writing demands across disciplines. On the other hand, there were students who said they could notice the difference in (or were familiar with) the writing demand across disciplines. I had assumed that students in the 2nd year would be more likely to be familiar with the writing demands of the university disciplines than those in the 1st year of study. This is in view of the reasons I provided earlier that 2nd year students have stayed longer at the university than those in the 1st year. But this assumption was not supported by my findings. I explicate the reasons for the results in the analysis of the results in Chapter Six.

5.2.2.2 Lecturers' comments to students' academic writing

The thematic area on lecturers' feedback as input to learning was included mainly for triangulation purposes. This was meant to counter-check lecturers' claims about their own discourse to students' writing. Students here acknowledged that lecturers do provide feedback to their writing, but alluded that feedback is a more common practice with lecturers in the CS course than it is with lecturers in other university courses.

This aspect underscores the ambivalence, which lingers among lecturers of other courses regarding their involvement in the students' ESL writing. The situation becomes even more complex when some lecturers revert to escapism by disclaiming responsibility for students' unsuccessful ESL writing (see section 5.2.1.5 under lecturers' feedback to student writing). This is more likely to make students disillusioned since they (students) need assistance in the first place. Further, they (students) indicated that lecturers' feedback was useful to them because, from the summary of students' questionnaire, feedback provides

'corrections, clarifications on some matters', and 'counselling students on academic writing matters' (Students' questionnaire; Focus Group discussions).

In terms of frequently commented problems, students mentioned surface errors of grammar, spellings, connectors, paragraphing i.e. organisation of topics, and referencing. Here, students' responses allied with lecturers' responses on the kind of problems that are frequently commented on.

5.2.2.3 Students' note taking practices

Students provided differing responses in connection to note taking. Whilst some students reported to be taking notes all the time, others were not as consistent with the practice. All students interviewed indicated that note taking practice is a valuable exercise to them, for example one student said she understands more reading her own notes than she does when she reads lecturers' handouts. I summarise students' reasons with respect to the value of note taking as follows,
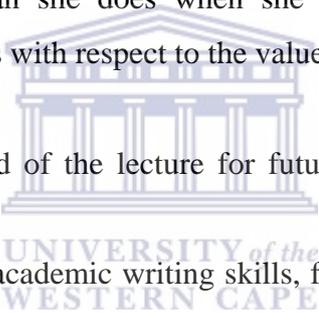
i. Keeping a record of the lecture for future reference- aid revision of lessons.
ii. Improving ESL academic writing skills, for example summarising and organising points, and learning new vocabulary.
iii. Aid in following the lesson during the lecture.
iv. Note taking is one of the ways in which students can participate fully in the classroom.
   Source: Students' questionnaire; Focus Group discussions.

These responses contradicted the views of some of the lecturers who argue that note taking makes students have a divided attention and thus miss out in lecturers. Students who lacked consistence in note taking practice indicated that much as they would have liked to be taking notes they were hampered by other constraints, which can be summarised thus,

i. Some lecturers' speaking speed, - especially when these lecturers simply read out their lecture notes in class.

ii. Audibility problems in big lecture halls especially where large class sizes are involved.

iii. Some students do not always take notes in every lecture because some lecturers give notes in advance.

Source: Students' questionnaire; Focus Group discussions.

It can be noted here that, apart from being dissuaded by lecturers, additional constraints in students' note taking include, coping with lecturers' speed, which relates to lecturers' didactic skills, and audibility problems. I discuss the implication of note taking exercise in ESL academic writing pedagogy under the discussion of results in Chapter Six.

5.2.2.4 University support structures to students' ESL writing

Students' comments on the university support mechanism to improving students' ESL academic writing mainly focused on what the CS course is doing (or not doing) at SUA. Thus, students' comments are summarised below,

i. The only support comes from the CS course.

ii. Some support comes from individual lecturers in the CS course and lecturers in other Departments- especially those who take the trouble of counselling students on writing.

iii. No support from the university as a whole.

iv. No follow up activities after the completion of the CS course.

v. A compendium for Communication and Study Skills.

Source: Students' Questionnaire; Focus Group discussions.

From these comments it became apparent that the CS course is the only university structure, which caters for students' ESL academic literacy demands. And beyond that, it is the preference of individual lecturers to partake the responsibility of assisting students in meeting their ESL academic writing demands. This means, as

shall be discussed later, effectively apart from the CS course, faculties and many other departments do not aid the learning of ESL writing of the academic discourse in specific disciplines, neither do they reinforce the basic study skills students acquire from a course like Communication Skills.

5.2.2.5 Students' linguistic behaviour in and out of the classroom

The question on students' linguistic behaviour on campus elicited conflicting responses from students from both questionnaires and focus group discussions and across the two years. Below is the summary of the responses on this aspect,

  i. English is used in class and outside classrooms, e.g. in the cafeterias, discussion in the rooms.
  ii. Kiswahili is used the most on campus outside classrooms reasons:
      a. Students who speak English outside classroom experience difficulties from colleagues who insist on using Kiswahili.
      b. Students feel more at ease using Kiswahili.

Source: Students' questionnaire; Focus group discussions.

Under this aspect, there were two follow up questions, which were meant to find out first, whether or not students are comfortable in using English in academics and, second, what constraints have kept them from improving their English language skills. The former was intended to validate students' claim in statement (i) above. The assumption here was that if students used English everywhere then there could be some motivation behind their use of the language. Surprising however, students were not in agreement on whether or not they feel comfortable. Some students said they were, others disagreed. The most interesting aspect, which emerged from the students' focus group discussions, was the students' assertion that they use English not because they are comfortable, but because they are forced by the system. This aspect has a glaring connection to the aspect of what is considered as valued and dominant discourse at the university as espoused in the NLS studies (cf. Barton and Hamilton in Barton *et al,* 2000; Street, 2003; Lillis, 2001) (see Chapter Six for details). Students consider university as a system

which has it own institutional core beliefs and valued practices, where individuals especially students have no freedom of choice of what they want to do or do not want to do. I discuss the implication of this aspect in Chapter Six.

On the aspect of constraints in improving ESL writing, students consistently pointed out disadvantaged backgrounds, limited interest in learning the language amongst students, and the influence of Kiswahili as a national language. I discuss these aspects in Chapter Six. Suffice it to say that, the disadvantaged backgrounds phenomenon points back to issues on pedagogical approaches in lower levels, and poor home backgrounds in terms of linguistic resources. The issue of limited interest in learning ESL writing literacy links to two other aspects: First, is the lack of impetus in apprenticing students in schools, hence students get disillusioned because much as they struggle to acquire the language skills they mostly end up getting nowhere. The second aspect points to the reality that English is not a functional language in the wider communicative purposes in Tanzania's social context especially given that Kiswahili is a shared linguistic code nationwide. In other words, although English is used as a language of instruction from post primary education and above, outside academics English is just an added advantage, and not absolutely essential for survival in Tanzania.

5.2.2.6 Students' perceptions on the language of instruction in HE

Students' comments on the aspect of the language of instruction at universities in Tanzania tallied with the lecturers' views. Below is the summary of the students' responses on this aspect,

i. English be the major language of instruction
ii. We want to be able to communicate worldwide
iii. Universities admit foreigners
iv. Learning resources are mostly available in English
v. It (English) is an international language

From Students' questionnaires; Focus Group discussions

5.2.3   Textual Material: Communication Skills course at SUA

Textual material comprises: Students' texts, and institutional documents, notably the CS course outline and course materials, departmental guides and evaluation reports. I begin by presenting the findings from the CS course outline and course material.

The Communication Skills course is the only framework within which students at SUA are provided with ESL writing skills, among other things. The course is housed in the Department of Social Sciences (see Chapter One for the establishment of the course at SUA). The course is offered in semester one (which usually lasts for 15 weeks) of the first year. It is a 2 credits course with 45 lecture hours and 30 seminar hours. These are equivalent or divided into 3 lectures and 2 seminars per week. The syllabus and the course material are delineated below.

5.2.3.1 Communication Skills syllabus

According to the course outline the general aim of the course is "to equip students with skills for study, communication and information gathering" (see Appendix 5).
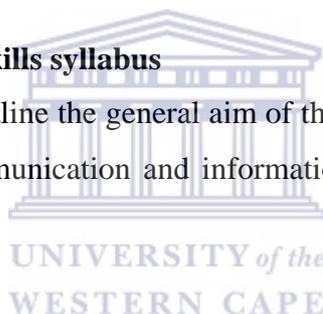
From the general aim, the course is offered on the assumption that students already have some knowledge of English. This is for the simple reason that English is the medium of instruction in Tanzania from Secondary school education and above (see Chapter One on Linguistics situation in Tanzania). Thus, from the general aim in the course outline, the course is designed to meet the following objectives:

    i.   To improve students' English language abilities to a level, which can enable them "follow" university studies with great ease;

    ii.   To improve students' communication skills and equip them with study skills, which they require to cope with advanced academic communication in their specialised subject areas at the university;

iii. To equip students with sets of conventions and strategies they require for both written and oral presentation; which students ought to master in order to communicate effectively;

iv. To improve students' grammatical competence.
Source: Communication Skills Course Outline (see Appendix 5).

The mode of teaching and learning as described in the course outline are supposed to comprise lectures and seminars (see Contact hours above). Lastly, the course content has two parts, Part A and Part B: Part A comprises Study Skills, which consist of seven topics. The first three topics involve techniques namely, Listening and Basic note taking, Reading, and Writing. The other topics are: Text and text development, Referencing in written texts, Public speaking, and Information literacy skills (see Appendix 5 for detailed descriptions of the topics).

Part B comprises Grammar component: There are no elements of grammar identified, except the general description of the component of the course,

In the course of teaching study skills, students' grammar (English language proficiency) will be enhanced through exercises on study skills' (see CS course outline).

5.2.3.2 Course material

The course material for the CS course at SUA comprises a compendium entitled 'Improve Your Communication: A Compendium for Communication and Study Skills'. This compendium was produced from lecture notes and has been revised twice since its first production in 1997. The compendium, which serves both as a teachers' manual and a students' workbook, comprises a detailed description of the contents reflected in the course outline. The analysis of the CS course content is outside the scope of the current study. Suffice it to say that the course material is organised into fourteen chapters with a total of 66 topics. This gives a picture of

the amount of work that goes into teaching the course in 15 weeks. Two issues are worth explicating here: One, 66 topics by any standards are too many in just 15 weeks; two, the department inevitably have to include many topics to cover a wide range of aspects, which students require for their academic communication. The latter is also an indicative of the enormity of the students' academic communication problem in general and their ESL academic writing deficiencies in particular.

I have noted in Chapter One (Section 1.4.2 Evolution of CS course at SUA) that though the CS course was primarily aimed at teaching Study Skills, it has all along been a two-tier course, which has also included the grammar component. The grammar part of the course was included in the realisation of the vast linguistic deficiencies many students usually have upon joining the university. Thus, the Social Sciences Department has had no choice, except to take up upon themselves the responsibility of providing basic language tools to such students. I discuss the pedagogical implication of the CS course configurations with regard to ESL academic writing literacy in Chapter Six.
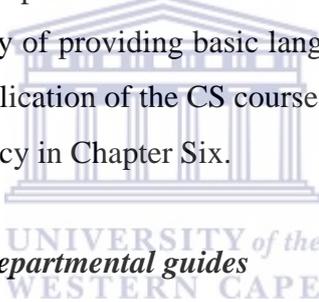
5.2.4   Textual material: Departmental guides

I have noted in Chapter Four that this was the category of text, which seemed to be largely inadequate at SUA. I have managed to get one university wide guide for preparing dissertation / thesis and other publications. I have also obtained one faculty guide for field practical training, and staff guides on assessing academic literacy practices (assessment criteria documents for staff and students) of one Faculty, and examiners' evaluation reports (i.e. comments on students' academic literacy practices) of one department. I present these types of textual material below.

5.2.4.1 Technical report writing manuals

The university wide guide for preparing dissertation / thesis and other publications is in the form of a manual and comprises what can be termed as formal presentation features. These features appear as headings in the Table of Contents

of the manual, and are explained in fairly detail in the manual. The faculty guide for field practical training is also in the form of a manual, but focusing on how students should conduct the field practical, including the logistical aspects e.g. accommodation, transport and supervision. In essence the two manuals are meant to enable students produce a written text, either for assessment as in the case of the Field Practical Training Guide (FPT) or for assessment and a possibility of publication as for the Guideline for Preparing Dissertations / Thesis and other Publications.

One aspect noted here is that in either manual, students' guidance to writing is approached rather differently: Different from each of the manual and different from how guidance to academic writing process is configured in the academic writing pedagogy. For example, I have said above, the manual on preparing dissertation / thesis presents a set of formal presentation features, in other words, the mechanics of academic reports such as, presentation of footnotes, tables, illustrations, citations, list of references, just to mention a few. These mechanics do not and cannot apprentice students into literate-writers. I discuss this aspect in Chapter Six on discussion of the results.
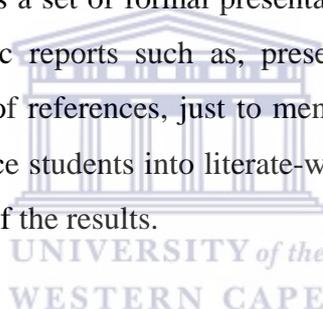
The FPT guide, on the other hand, mainly dwells on the practicalities of the students' work in the field. There are some references made to writing in the manual, but where such references are made they are inconsistent and inadequate in coverage. In this manual, for example, guidelines for writing reports are introduced in page 7, and briefly discussed in page 8 under the headings, the General Report and the Technical Report. Here an attempt is made to show how the two types of reports should be written by students: Whilst under the General Report, a list is drawn to show students what comprise a general report, nothing is said to show what constitute a technical report. Further, this manual contains the evaluation forms for the Training Field Officer and for the university academic staff as appendices A and B respectively. It is in form B for the university academic staff where the contents of technical reports are listed. I discuss the

implications of using these manuals for the academic writing pedagogy in Chapter Six.

5.2.4.2 External Examiner's Report

The External Examiners' (henceforth EE) report (i.e. comments on students' academic literacy practices) of one department is another textual material I present here. The EE's report was obtained from the Social Sciences (SC) Department and it concerns the evaluation of students' performance of the Communication Skills course. The practice at SUA is such that when the EE's report is released, the Departments, which offer the evaluated courses, would convene and discuss the reports. I present the excerpt from the EE report below.

> While students performed slightly better in the section on grammar and discourse style… their grammar in the writing section was extremely weak. This may be attributed to the kind of grammar they study at secondary school level. At secondary school level *students study grammar in isolation, in the form of structure; while the functional grammar that they are required to use at tertiary level, mostly through writing is rarely practised*. This is the area where first year tertiary students are weak. My recommendation here would be to give students more writing practice in Communication Skills courses, where possible, in subject specialist courses. Alternatively, assignments could be set by subject specialist Professors/Lecturers and marked jointly by staff from both sides: subject specialist staff for content, and communication skills staff for language. (The EE report is attached as appendix 3) (my italics).

The EE report was commented on by the Department offering the CS course, thus, below is the excerpt on the Departments' reaction to the EE report:

> The EE has appreciated the seriousness in students' English language deficiency. The EE has also alluded to the fact that the problem is too big for one Department to solve. In this vein a university-wide approach needs

to be sought to deal with the existing language problem at SUA. … We, therefore, recommend that subject specialists be requested to:

a. Pay attention to, and assess language component when marking students' assignments;

b. Encourage and guide students to use appropriate English during seminar presentations, tutorials, and consultations;

c. Discourage students to code-mix and code-switch languages (i.e. Kiswahili-English or vice versa) during classroom sessions or while engaged in other academic activities outside the classroom.

(Social Sciences Departmental comments on EE's Report - Communication Skills Examination –July 2001-SUA)   (The SC Department's report is attached as Appendix 4).

These documents helped to index student writing at SUA in two ways: First, that literacy problem is frequent in student writing, and thus, this underlined the lecturers' views, which acknowledged the prevalence of the problem. Secondly, the problem is well documented in the university records, so are the suggestions in tackling the problem such as the ones coming from the Social Sciences Department, which hosts the CS course. These are good enough reasons for a university to have worked out a lasting solution to students' literacy problem in academic writing. Now that this is not happening at SUA is one of those intriguing phenomena, which are focused on in the discussion of results in Chapter Six.

5.2.5   *Textual material: Students' text for discourse markers*
The aim of this paradigm of the research method is to have a holistic look at the kinds of discourse markers students use the most in their writing and the type of functions students perform by using these markers vis-à-vis the prototypical functions of these markers as demanded in the English academic text. There are two caveats in this endeavour, first neither the exploration of these discourse features nor their functions are by any means exhaustive. The intention here is just

to highlight how students manipulate their repertoires of these features in their writing. Secondly, the construct 'discourse markers' is approached from several perspectives in accordance to the various meanings attached to the word discourse. For example, from a conversational analysis point of view (see Schiffrin, 1994) discourse markers are considered as "sequentially depended elements, which brackets units of talk" (1994: 31). This definition of discourse markers has bypassed the sentence. According to Schiffrin markers are independent of sentence structure. The author gives an example of markers such as "y' know", "I mean", "oh", "like", which she says "can occur quite freely within a sentence at locations which are very difficult to define syntactically" (Schiffrin, 1994: 32). This means that while all the markers have a role as discourse markers, they may not necessarily have a role in sentence grammar. In other words, markers such as 'oh', and 'well,' a marker of information management, and a marker of response respectively (see Schiffrin, 1994) have a role as discourse markers (e.g. they have idea structure, textual meaning, and interactional effect), but do not have a parallel role in sentence grammar (as in syntax, semantics, pragmatics) as is the case for conjunctive markers such as, 'and', 'but' (see Schiffrin, 1994).
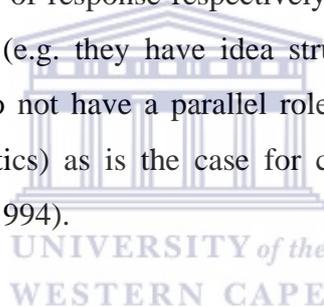
For the purposes of the discussion in this thesis therefore, the discourse markers that I consider are those, which have a role in sentence grammar because I explore these markers within the context of student academic writing. In this context I look at discourse markers as lexicon prototypical in organising written texts (see Santiago, 2004). This organisation is achieved by showing how the student writer intends the 'basic message that follows to relate to the prior discourse' (see Santiago, 2004: 1). One major purpose of these discourses is obviously to 'create cohesion and coherence in a given text by establishing a relationship between the various ideas that are expressed within the text" (Santiago, 2004: 1).

This relationship of ideas is what Martin and Rose (2003) term as logical relations. According to the authors there are four general kinds of logical relations in English discourse, each of which relating to conjunction type shown

in brackets as follows. Adding figures together (addition); comparing them (comparison); sequencing them in time (time); and explaining their causes, purpose or conditions (consequence). Each of these logical relations are realised by the basic options or conjunctions falling under each respective conjunction type indicated in brackets.

For each logical relation there exists more than one meaning in which such relation can be realised by its repertoire of options of conjunctions. For example, the logical relation of addition can either be realised by conjunctions of addition (e.g. and, besides, in addition) or alternation (e.g. or, if not-then, alternatively). And that of comparison can either be realised by conjunctions of similarity (e.g. like, as if, similarly) or contrast (e.g. but, whereas, on the other hand). The logical relation of time can be realised by conjunctions of succession, which are in two categories i.e. those conjunctions which allow to run the succession in time forward 'from the first events to the last' (e.g. then, after, subsequently) and those conjunctions which allow 'to run the succession in time backwards' (e.g. before, previously) (see Martin and Rose, 2003: 116). Also, time can be realised by conjunctions of simultaneity (e.g. while, meanwhile, at the same time).

The logical relation of consequence can be realised by conjunctions of cause (e.g. so, because, since, therefore); means (e.g. by, thus, by this means); purpose, which has conjunctions of desirable outcomes (e.g. so as, in order to) and those with undesirable outcomes (e.g. lest, for fear of). Also consequence can be realised by conjunctions of condition, which are divided into conjunctions that set 'condition under which an event may happen (e.g. if, provided that) or 'closing off the possibility of an event happening (e.g. unless) (see Martin and Rose, 2003: 113-119).

Logical relations, meanings and the range of basic options for conjunctions are shown in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1:   Basic options for conjunctions

Logical relation	Meaning	Examples (not exhaustive)
Addition	Addition	And, besides, in addition
	Alternation	Or, if not-then, alternation
Comparison	Similarity	Like, as if, similarly
	Contrast	But, whereas, *while*, on the other hand
Time	Successive	Then, after, subsequently; before, previously
	Simultaneous	*While*, meanwhile, at the same time
Consequence	Cause	So, because, since, therefore
	Means	By, thus, by this means
	Purpose	So as, in order to; lest, for fear of
	Condition	If, provided that; unless

Source: Martin and Rose (2003: 119) (my italics)

Before continuing further it is instructive to note that first, according to Schiffrin discourse markers can "connect utterances on either a single plane or across different planes" (1994: 57). This means that the role of conjunctions is not just to connect activities i.e. organising experience as sequence of events, but also to organise discourse whose units are referred to as arguments in Martin and Rose, (2003. 120).

Secondly, a single marker or conjunction[6] can be used to organise sequence of events in more than one logical relation. In the above list for example, conjunction 'while' can be used to realise contrast in the relation of comparison or simultaneous in the relation of time as shown above.

Martin and Rose classify conjunction further into two types, internal conjunctions i.e. those "items used to link logical steps internal to the text itself" (2003: 120) and external conjunctions i.e. those items "linking events in the world beyond the

text itself" (2003: 120). Both types of conjunctions fall under the same logical relations presented above. I regard the first type of conjunctions as 'punctuation' discourse markers because they involve showing what the speaker or the writer is doing with the text itself. This involves things such as developing a list (e.g. further, furthermore, etc); ordering items (e.g. first, secondly, third, etc); concluding (e.g. thus, hence, accordingly, etc.) just to mention a few examples.

The detailed discussion of the distinction between internal and external conjunction types as well as their logical relation types is outside the scope of this thesis. For the purposes of analysis, however I present a summary of conjunction resources in terms of the type of logical relations, and the type of expectancy they realise for both external and internal conjunctions in Table 5.2.

The criteria in Table 5.2 help to illuminate the prototypical functions of various markers in a text. For the purpose of this thesis, I have looked at conjunctions in students' texts in terms of the emerging patterns of students' use of these conjunctions vis-à-vis the prototypical functions of these markers as established here.
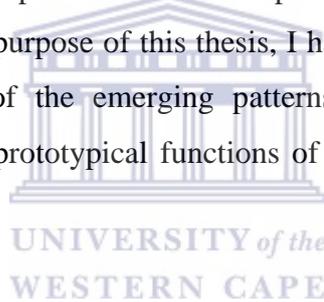
In this section, I present the emerging patterns regarding students' use of discourse markers referred here as conjunctions. I have classified these patterns into themes where I give a brief description together with examples from students' text.

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Table 5. 2: Conjunction resources

External conjunctions				Internal conjunctions			
Addition	Additive	Add	And, besides, both … and	**Add**	Develop	Additive	Further, furthermore, moreover, in addition, as well as, besides additionally.
		Subtract	nor, neither… nor			Alternative	Alternatively
	Alternative		or, either or, if not-then		Staging	Framing	Now, well, alright, okay
Comparison	Similar		Like, as if			Sidetracking	Anyway, anyhow, incidentally, by the way
	Different	Opposite	Whereas, while	**Comparison**	Similar	Compare	Similarly, again
		Replacing	Instead of, in place of, rather than			Rework	That is, i.e., for example, for instance, e.g., in general, in particular, in short
		Excepting	Except that, other than, apart from			Adjust	In fact, indeed, at least
Time	Successive	Sometime	After, since, now that; before		Different	Contrast	Rather, by contrast
		Immediate	Once, as soon as, until			Retract	On the other hand, conversely
	Simultaneous		As, while, when	**Time**	Successive	Ordering	First, secondly, third, next, previously
Cause		Expectant	Because, so, therefore			Terminating	Finally, lastly
		Concessive	Although, even though, but, however		Simultaneous.	Adjacent	At the same time
Means		Expectant	By, thus			Interrupted	Still
		Concessive	Even by, but	**Consequence**	Concluding	Conclude	Thus, hence, accordingly, in conclusion, consequently
Condition	Open	Expectant	If, then, provided that, as long as,			Justify	After all
		Concessive	Even if, even then		Countering	Dismiss	Anyway, anyhow, in any case, at any rate

	Closed		Unless			Concede	Admittedly, of course, needless to say
Purpose	Desire	Expectant	So that, in order to, in case			Unexpected	Nevertheless, nonetheless, still
		Concessive	Even so, without				
	Fear		Lest, for fear of				

Adopted from Martin & Rose (2003: 133-134

For a start, the general observations on students' use of conjunctions are as follows. From the texts surveyed, the overwhelming tendency is that students use external conjunctions and make very little use of internal conjunctions. Evidence of students' use of internal conjunctions is found with conjunctions for reworking, (e.g., for example, e.g., that is), conjunctions for concluding (e.g. thus, hence), and in very few cases conjunctions for ordering (e.g. first, secondly, third). What these results show is that students (in using external conjunctions) become more preoccupied with overall discourse organisation and pay little attention in orientating their readers by telling or showing them what they (students) are doing with their texts. In other words students fail to take their readers through the logical steps in which they (students) sequence or chain their events (i.e. this is what internal conjunctions help writers to do) (cf. Martin and Rose, 2003).

Secondly, in relation to the first observation, the overall students' repertoire of discourse markers in terms of both external and internal conjunctions is far limited than the available conjunctions resources. Table 5.3 below provides the conjunctions resources (in bold and italics), which were accessed by students in their essays. The repertoire of students' conjunctions in Table 5.3 is shown vis-à-vis a range of other available conjunctions (in plain), which were virtually inaccessible by students.

From Table 5.3, the following logical relations that are realisable by internal conjunctions did not feature in the students' repertoire of conjunctions viz., conjunctions for developing and staging under *addition*; conjunctions for

compare, adjust, contrast, and retract under *comparison*; conjunctions for terminating, and those for simultaneous under *time*; and some conjunctions for concluding, justifying and countering under *consequence*.

Table 5.3: Conjunctions resources accessed by students (in italics) vis-à-vis other available options (in plain)

External conjunctions				Internal conjunctions			
Add ition	Addit ive	Add	*And*, besides, both … and	**Add**	Develop	Additive	Further, furthermore, moreover, in addition, as well as, besides additionally.
		Subtrac t	nor, neither… nor			Alternati ve	Alternatively
	Alter nativ e		or, either or, if not-then		Staging	Framing	Now, well, alright, okay
Com paris on	Simil ar		*Like*, as if			Sidetrack ing	Anyway, anyhow, incidentally, by the way
	Diffe rent	Opposi te	Whereas, while	**Comp arison**	Similar	Compare	Similarly, again
		Replaci ng	*Instead of*, in place of, rather than			Rework	*That is*, i.e., *for example*, for instance, *e.g.*, in general, in particular, in short
		Excepti ng	Except that, other than, apart from			Adjust	In fact, indeed, at least
Time	Succ essiv e	Someti me	After, *since*, now that; *before*		Different	Contrast	Rather, by contrast
		Immed iate	Once, as soon as, *until*			Retract	On the other hand, conversely
	Simu ltane ous		As, *while*, *when*	**Time**	Successi ve	Ordering	*First, secondly, third*, next, previously
Caus e		Expect ant	***Because, so, therefore***			Terminat ing	Finally, lastly
		Conces sive	Although, even though, *but, however*		Simultan eous.	Adjacent	At the same time

Mea ns		Expect ant	*By*, thus			Interrupt ed	Still
		Conces sive	Even by, but	**Conse quenc e**	Concludi ng	Conclude	*Thus, hence*, accordingly, in conclusion, consequently
Con ditio n	Open	Expect ant	*If*, then, provided that, as long as,			Justify	After all
		Conces sive	Even if, even then		Counteri ng	Dismiss	Anyway, anyhow, in any case, at any rate
	Close d		Unless			Concede	Admittedly, of course, needless to say
Purp ose	Desir e	Expect ant	*So that, in order to*, in case			Unexpect ed	Nevertheless, nonetheless, still
		Conces sive	Even so, without				
	Fear		Lest, for fear of				

(cf. also Martin & Rose, 2003)

Turning now to the emerging patterns of students' use of conjunctions, the patterns noted include, omission of conjunctions, mismatch between conjunctions and realisation functions, repetitive use of conjunctions, and redundant conjunctions.

5.2.5.1 Omission of conjunctions

Omission of conjunctions involves a situation where students did not provide conjunctions to certain logical relations, which required explicit realisation items. In cases where realisation items were not provided, sequencing of ideas in the texts did not seem logically performed. From the survey of students' texts, this type of omissions of conjunctions seem to result from students' tendency of writing their texts in note form instead of essay form as is required by literacy practice of essay writing. Students' unsuccessful attempt to write texts in essay form is indicative of the reality that students merely reproduce lecture notes as they write their essays. Since lecture notes are usually in note form, so are the students' 'essays', hence the absence of conjunctions at the clause structure and discourse organisation level. The extract of the student's text below is an example

of the phenomenon explained here (i.e. the manner in which some students write their 'essays').

St. text   The agricultural marketing deserves a separate treatment from marketing of manufactured goods in the following ways.

1. Due to the nature of commodities used in the marketing.

   (i) Agriculture marketing deals with commodities, which are in high risk of spoilage.

   (ii) The functions of agriculture marketing depend on the performance at other sectors example transporters, bankers and advertisers.

   (iii) Agriculture commodities takes long time to be produced *hence* to capture the market it can need more time …

(Source: Student's text)

St. text   The study of agriculture marketing deserves a separate treatment from marketing of manufactured goods due to the following reasons:

- In developing countries agricultural activities comprise many famer which are scattered and exceeding independent production and consumption decision.

- Due to central role of agriculture in developing countries, agriculture production is subjected to numerous policy distortion

- The structure of costs and funding of agricultural activities depends sustainably on the performance of other sectors such as communication, roads …

(Source: Student's text)

The two extracts above come from two different student writers. Interesting both texts begin with opening statements, which look similar. This is indicative of students' reproduction of lecture notes. In the first extract the only conjunctions used are 'and' and 'hence', and in the second extract 'and' is the only conjunction

used (i.e. for what is reproduced here in both cases). But, instead of an essay form, both texts are in the note form. One could argue that students chose numbering and bulleting to list the points they seem to indicate in the opening statements. But, the students here could do more than just numbering statements whose logical relationships and sequencing are not made explicit. This tendency reflects and affirms my earlier observation (see Chapter Two) that the questioning practice of some lecturers could indeed encourage students to write essays around lecture notes. Students find that they have no allowance of bringing in some additional material from their own critical reading and thinking. In this case, students miss an opportunity of using language with confidence, and to articulate their voices and express their identities (cf. Fairclough, 1995; Lillis, 2001; Leibowitz, 2000).

Another aspect worth mentioning here is that other student writers produced essays on the same question topic. But, it is interesting that both essay texts and note form texts by students seem to have received equal treatment from the markers. There is no written feedback from the markers to indicate which format was appropriate and which one was not. This aspect goes back to the 'ethics' of feedback in the process of mentoring students into literate writers. In this particular case, students of the above texts will have no compelling reason to write essays in a different (appropriate) format next time as their first (failed) attempt to do so did not elicit any correctional response.

5.2.5.2 Mismatching conjunctions with realisation functions

Mismatch occurs when a particular conjunction is used to realise inappropriate logical relations. This phenomenon is evident in the students' texts with the use of conjunctions 'until', 'when', and even 'and' as shown in the extracts from students' texts below.

St. text   Agriculture marketing is the performance of all business activities
            (marketing function), which involves the transfer of agriculture

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production (product production) **until** the same good is in the hands of ultimate consumer.

(Source: Student's text)

The word 'until' is among the least used conjunction is the students' repertoire of conjunctions shown above. In the table of conjunction resources 'until' is usually used realise logical relation of time in succession. Interestingly, except in a very few cases, in all other cases in the students' texts, the conjunction 'until' is used to mean 'up to the point in place', the function which is suitable for other category of words called place adverbials (details of this category of words is outside the scope of this thesis).

St. text   In Agriculture marketing there is a problem of free rider. This is so *when* it requires each member of a certain cooperative group to sacrifice for the entire benefit of the whole group *when* the benefits are to be equally shared by al members of the group regardless of their participants.
(Source: Student's text)

The word 'when' in the table of conjunction resources realises logical relation of time particularly in simultaneous sequencing of events. In the student's text above, 'when' in each case is used to realise logical relation of cause, the function, which can suitably be realised by conjunction 'because'. *This is so **when** (because) it requires each member of a certain cooperative group to sacrifice.*

St. text   Family is the first agent of socialization ***and*** it differ from the school and mass media as family deals with individual from birth
(Source: Student's text)

St. text.   Children find friends of their age group to whom they can share example childish ideas, play together ***and*** get more time to understand about outside world (out of the family).

The conjunction 'and' in the students' texts above realises the relation of cause/result instead of addition, which is the prototypical use of 'and'. It is worth noting also here that 'and' is one of the most commonly used conjunctions in written discourse.

Students' use of some of the conjunctions as we have seen above is therefore incompatible with the realisation functions of these conjunctions in English discourse.

5.2.5.3 Repetitive use of conjunctions

Overuse of the same type of conjunctions either in realising/organising the same type of logical relation or across several logical relations. In this case individual students tend to prefer particular types of conjunctions to others available in the same slot of logical relation. Repetitive use of conjunctions in this way is evident with words such as, 'and', 'by', 'because', 'so that' and '*also*' (last conjunct not appearing in the Table 5.2). And for the internal conjunctions words like 'e.g.', 'for example', 'hence' and 'thus' have been extensively used. Students' texts, which indicate the repetitive use of conjunctions in this way, (and other aspects presented in this section), are provided as Appendix 8(a-g).

5.2.5.4 Redundancy use of conjunctions

As the term implies redundant conjunctions are those, which have been used in places that either did not require any realisation item or more than one realisation items have been employed.

St text: ***But*** in Africa especially Tanzania is growing slowly due to …. That children are asset, so … young one are used up to nursing the young one many women are not employed so that take of their children. ***Therefore*** children sending to school at age of 5 years majority – rural people

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St. text: ***Thus by*** these military governments democracy become much hindered.
             (Source: Student's text)

Here students would still have started their text with the clause without a conjunction. Implications of these results are discussed in Chapter Six.

5.2.6   *Classroom observation*

I noted earlier that I had conducted classroom observation during a follow up data collection in November 2005. In the classroom, I intended to observe instructors as well as students' discursive practices. This was with a view of seeing not only how such discourses are constitutive of social cultural practices of a university as a community of discourse, but also how or what practices work for or against facilitating students' acquisition of ESL writing literacy practices.

The classroom observation comprised of five sessions, three were for the CS course and the other two were for other university courses. In all these cases I sought the consent of the lecturers concerned in order to allow me to attend their classes. In many cases these lecturers informed their students, days in advance of my visiting these classes. In the classrooms, often lecturers introduced me to the students and explained the reasons for my attending their classes. One of the major reasons provided to students was that I was just interested in seeing classroom communication because I was a lecturer in Communication Studies at the university. This was done as a way of reassuring students that my presence in these classrooms was not something to worry about. In all the classes I observed, students didn't seem to be bothered by my presence in any way, especially when they realised that I was also a member of the university academic staff. Upon gaining consent from the lecturers I recorded all the lecture sessions I attended using a pencil-like digital voice album. I present the results beginning with the observations for the CS course.

5.2.6.1 Session one: Communication Skills course

The first observation for the CS course took place on the 8th of November 2005 in the Lecture Theatre Four (SLT 4). This was a 2-hour session and comprised a combined class of four programmes namely, BSc Food Science, BSc Forestry, BSc Home Economics, and BSc Wildlife. It is worth noting that the four degree programmes involved here meant that there were four groups with four different disciplinary requirements put in one classroom. This underscores some of the challenges facing the CS course delivery.

In the introduction of the lecture the lecturer made an announcement, which is worth reproducing here,

> Now you have done the exam, you have written the letters, what ah the Head of Department decided to do was that for the- for - after every two weeks we shall talk about grammar. Because he's concerned about your-the way you have written your assignment- and the way you have written your assignment (Classroom Observation, November, 2005) (Repetition in the original).

Then the lecturer went on introducing the topic,

> So, today we are going to talk about the grammar aspect, which is important in understanding vocabulary (inaudible). Last time when we were here we talked about the – the subject and the verb, today -we are only going to talk about the verb phrase-the verb phrase, and … (pause) (Classroom Observation, November, 2005)

From the introduction to the lecture, it became apparent that the lecture's topic was on grammatical aspect(s). And from what the lecturer promised at the beginning of the lecture, students were going to learn the verb phrase. However, apart from the verb phrase there were many other grammatical aspects, such as

noun classes (especially the distinction between plural and singular nouns and pronouns), the active and passive voice, which featured in the discussion as the lecture progressed.

The impression projected during this lecture regarding the discursive practices of both lecturers and students helped to illuminate the underpinnings of academic writing pedagogy in universities in Tanzania's social context. To begin with, it was glaring that this particular lecture was structured around looking at literacy as skills, hence the teaching of grammatical aspects. It is also interesting to note how the lecturer prepares the ground for the lesson, especially by declaring that the teaching of grammar was a departmental directive, sanctioned by the Head of Department (see the first extract in this section above).

In terms of the structure of the lesson, the lecture began with the main verb phrase as the main topic. As a way of introducing the topic, the lecturer used question prompts to try to explain what the verb phrase is and its functions. The discussion around this topic was punctuated by examples of simple clause structures. As I noted earlier there were what can be considered as digressions or relapses into other grammatical aspects such as noun classes and passive active voices, to mention but a few, during the course of the lecture. The lecture was throughout punctuated by lecturers' questions (to students), many of which were for rhetorical purposes such as emphasising points. In cases where the lecturer actually sought students' responses to these questions, students, at a number of times, produced chorus responses. At other times students seemed uncertain of the answers hence they either responded in inaudible mumblings or remained silent upon which the lecturer often provided the answers to his own questions. For this reason, the lecturer, in a number of occasions, interjected and addressed the class, often commenting on their inactive participation in the classroom discourse. I reproduce some of the lecturer's comments below:

Lecturer: Now, I want someone to put the first sentence in what … in reported s peech *Haya*! Okay! (Pause) Anybody who can volunteer?

Students: (Silence)

Lecturer: Okay, someone volunteer! *Inua mkono*! [Raise your hand!] *Kila mtu hajui mlikuwa mnaandika nini secondary school?* [No body seems to know, what were you writing in secondary schools?] *Haya semeni mlikuwa mnaandika nini secondary school!* [Okay tell us what were you writing in secondary school?] Say - write what you used to write in secondary school. Now, if I tell you to put that one in past tense what do you do? (Pause).

Students: (silence)

Lecturer: It seems nobody knows! Do you mean all of you doesn't- don't –don't know?

Lecturer: Are we-are we working the same- bus all of us here*?*

Students (Chorus) Yes!

Lecturer: Do you know what we are doing?

Students (Chorus) Yes!

Lecturer: People at the back do you know what we are doing?

Students: (Hardly audible) No!

Lecturer: No! Why don't you ask? (Pause).

Lecturer: My friends at the back you are discussing among yourselves! (Pause) …

this is what you write.

Students: (Laugh)

Lecturer: You are laughing now but when it comes to writing the essay individually you are going to write 'water was putted in …', because you are trying to make it what …! In this one, you said there is no agent! But there is someone who makes water flows! Is it what gravity or what? (Pause).

(Classroom Observation, November, 2005)

I have extracted the utterances above at various points of the lecturers and students' classroom discourse, but only focussing on lecturers' comments on students' classroom participation. I discuss these comments in Chapter Six. In

summing up, there were certain aspects worth emphasising that featured prominently in this particular lecture: On the one hand, there was the lecturer's discourse, which was characterised by frequent rhetorical questions, (i.e. not meant for soliciting answers from students), and the use of Kiswahili in some places especially when making comments (see examples in the lecturers' comments above). On the other hand, there was the students' discourse, which was characterised by chorus response to lecturer's questions, inaudible mumbling voices in answering questions, and students' maintaining silence to some (in this case many) of the lecturer's questions. The implication of these phenomena in the ESL writing pedagogy in higher education is discussed in Chapter Six. In the following section I present the results of classroom observation for lecture two.

5.2.6.2 Session two: Communication Skills course

I observed lecture two on the 11th November 2005 (Small Lecture Theatre SLT 3). This was a 2-hour lecture session and comprised the combined classes of 4 programmes namely, BSc Agronomy, BSC Animal Science, BSc Laboratory Science, and BSc Aquaculture. Again it can be noted here that four groups from four different disciplinary requirements were put in one classroom.

Just like the lecture I attended earlier, this lecture too was on grammatical aspect, but this time the lecture topic was the article. The lecture session began with the explanation of articles i.e. what they constitute and their types, that is, indefinite and definite articles. Then as the lecture progressed there was a discussion on the uses of the articles, indicating indefinite and definite distinction, number involving nouns e.g. countable versus uncountable nouns.

The lecturer in this session followed a different approach in his delivery, which was predominantly teacher talk with minimal use of visual; and in this case it was a chalkboard. The examples and exercises were often provided through dictation, a good example is the following extract where the lecturer at one point was giving an exercise to students,

Now before we go on doing a discussion on this, I want you to- I want you to ah put down you know in your exercise books this small exercise and I would like you to do it in pairs, ah in pairs you can sit two together and then you can discuss where to put a definite article and where to put let's say an- an indefinite article. Now I start now reading, I start reading the exercise … (Classroom observation, November, 2005).

Noticeably in this lecture was the limited opportunities given to students to participate in the classroom discourse. The lecturer took complete control of the socio discursive space of a classroom where he was the principal player and at some points the lecturer seemed as if he was narrating a story where students' responsibility was just to listen. I discuss the implications of the lecturers' pedagogical practices in Chapter Six.

5.2.6.3 Session three: Communication Skills course
The third lecture I observed comprised the same group of students I observed on the 8th of November and was on the CS course. I conducted this observation on the 18th of November 2005 in Lecture Theatre four (SLT 4). This was also a 2-hour session.

This lecture was pretty much a continuation of the lecture I attended previously with this group of students although there were other lectures of the same course, which came in between and for which I did not attend. Here too, the topic was on grammatical aspect, but this time the focus was on pronouns. The lecture started with the introduction of the pronouns, and almost immediately, followed a discussion of other associated aspects such as possessive case, singular/plural form of pronouns. Then the lecture progressed with the discussion of other types of pronouns (i.e. relative pronouns), uses of pronouns especially how pronouns represent the nouns they stand for. Here again there was special reference to number and gender.

In this session the lecturer's discourse and the students' discourse were characterised by the same features noted in the previous lecture. A few differences were however noted here. The first difference pertained to the use of visual media, whereas the chalkboard was the main visual aid in the previous lecture, in this lecture there were transparencies in addition to the chalkboard. The second aspect relates to the type of comments in the lecturer's discourse. Of course these comments were all different from the ones made previously. I reproduce extracts of these comments below, in some cases the context of such comments is also indicated,

Lecturer: (Cracks a joke) *Someone is here with his body and spirit is roaming about* … (a joke continues).

Students: (Laugh)

Lecturer: Now compare this one, these sentences, the other one, 'Massanja is one of the clerks who work very late' and compare 'Massanja is the only one of the clerks who works very late (pause).

Students: (Silence)

Lecturer: [Addressing the class] *Use your head to think about it. You know you are supposed to think. You are supposed to think-you are supposed to think (inaudible). Problem you people don't –you don't think because you don't like to think!* (Pause)

Lecturer: (Continues): Now usage of the pronoun, [Addressing the class] *although of course-I am not giving you the chance you don't ask questions so I keep on going on. Whether you understand or don't understand I don't know. I'm not an angel, I'm not malaika Gabriel* …When you find this one there you know that the noun should be what …

Students: (Chorus) Plural!

Lecturer: Plural! *Simple rule! Very simple! Simple for me difficult for you* (Pause) (Cracks a joke).

Students: (Silence)

Lecturer: *That's why you don't listen and you don't understand*! (Pause). I have a

table for you. For those ones who want to cram tables. There is a table there, personal pronouns, subject and object form (reads from the board), so 'I', when it comes as an object it's 'me'; 'he', 'him'; 'she', 'her'; 'we', 'us'; 'they', 'them'; 'who', 'whom' (Pause). ….

(Classroom Observation, November, 2005).

I have presented lecturer's comments here to illuminate lecturers' verbal feedback to students. In other words these comments were indexical of how lecturers evaluate their own students. I also intended to see how these verbal comments compared with the lecturers' written feedback to students' writing presented in Section 5.2.1 of this chapter and discussed in Chapter Six. In the referred section of this chapter, for example, I noted that feedback to students' ESL writing was an important index of lecturers' overall contribution to mentoring students' into literate writers.

In relation to lecturers' written feedback, in Chapter Six I discuss how such feedback defines lecturers and students' relationship in the socio-discursive space they occupy in their academic discourse community. Similarly, I discuss the lecturers' verbal comments (as the ones reproduced above) in the classroom discourse along the perspectives similar to those under written feedback for students writing. In the next section I present the results for classroom observations for lecture four.

5.2.6.4 Session four: Other university course (Materials Science for Food Technologists)

The classroom observation on other university courses was done on the 15th of Feb 2006 in Lecture Theatre 3 (LT 3) to 1st year students of BSc Food Science. The name of the subject was Materials Science for Food Technologists with the subject code FT 104.

Structurally, this lecture began with the revision of the previous topic, and proceeded into the topic of the day. On the whole, the lecturer was in control or

rather dominated the classroom discourse. There are however, a few aspects worth mentioning which featured in the lecturers and the students' discursive practices of the classroom discourse. First, there were a few occasions when the lecturer invited questions from students, but such invitations were in many cases greeted with silence from students as shown in the excerpt below:

Lecturer: Any question with regards to cast iron as we just said about?
Students: (Silence).
Lecturer: Does this mean that everything is making at least some sense?
Students: (Few voices) Yes!
Lecturer: Okay if everything is making sense here then we can move one step further and start worrying about steels. We spend a substantial amount of time talking steels. To begin with, why are we talking of steels and not steel?
Students: (Silence).
Lecturer: Definitely you figure out the difference! We talk of steels and not steel. Is there any good reason?
Students: (Silence)
Lecturer: (Long pause) I want to hear it from you. Just give your opinion what you think we refer to this class of material with an 's' that we're- we're talking of multiple- why is that so?
Students: (Silence).
Lecturer: (Pause) Well, to answer that question it has-presently in the market place we have slightly over 200 types of steel or steels that are regularly available in the market. And that by itself makes steel a very unique material that we presently have … That is the reason we talk of steels because there are several types of steel and you can literally get a steel that will suit the job you want …
(Classroom Observation, February, 2006).

In the excerpt above, the lecturer invites questions from students as a way of checking students' understanding of that section of the lecture. The lecturer's

invitation was greeted with silence from the students. Here the lecturer assumed that by keeping silent the students have understood whatever was said in the lecture. Hence, '*Okay if everything is making sense here then we can move one step further and start worrying about steels*'. It is interesting to note here that the lecturer's assumption about students' participation in the lecture is almost immediately proved wrong when he (the lecturer) poses a follow-up question. *We spend a substantial amount of time talking steels. To begin with, why are we talking of steels and not steel?* Once again, the students maintained silence in which case the lecturer went on answering his own question (see end of the excerpt above). I discuss the implication of this aspect in Chapter Six.

I need to point out here that students were most of the time seen following compendia comprising lecture notes during the lecture, hence there was little note taking. Since students were in possession of ready made lecture notes in their compendia they seemed busy comparing lecture notes with the points made during the lecture. Interestingly, even on occasions where the lecturer alerted students to take note of some points, only a few students seemed to heed to lecturer's 'warnings'.
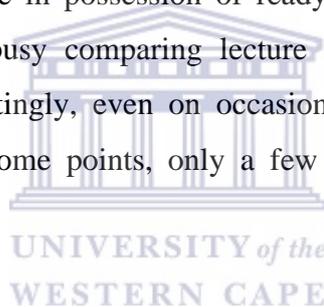
I need to mention here that this was a class whose lecturer was one of my respondents in the key informants' interviews I conducted in January and February 2005 during my first round of data collection exercise. During those interviews, on the aspect of students' note taking practices I did ask this lecturer for his views on note taking; the following was part of that conversation:

Researcher: How do you make of students' note taking practices during your lectures?

Respondent: Here I think- I think may be I have a big weakness myself I must admit in this regard because for all of my courses I give them my compendium- my- my notes. It saves me a lot of time …and efforts. …But, I have learnt that it's counterproductive in some aspects because a

number of them tend to be too lazy. They know they have everything
already at hand and they just start kind of sleeping in class.

(Classroom Observation, November, 2005).

The classroom observation of the lecture only confirmed the worries of this
lecturer that many students tend to be less active in the participation of classroom
discourse practices. Clearly, when students take their own notes they have a
control of what to note down and how they want the notes to be organised (vis-à-
vis the organisation prescribed by the lecturer) and how they want the notes to be
understood. As I noted above, in this particular lecture students were preoccupied
cross-checking their lecture notes in their compendiums instead of effectively
participating in the classroom discourse.

5.2.6.5 Session five: Other university course: (Programme Planning and Evaluation)

Session five of classroom observation was done on the 27th of February 2006 to
second year students in BSc in Agriculture education and extension. The name of
the course was Programme Planning and Evaluation (EE 205). This was supposed
to be a 2-hour session, but lasted for only 1- hour as the lecturer had an
emergency to attend in the hour that was to follow.

In terms of the general classroom discourse patterns there are only slight
differences from the previous lecture sessions. The lecturer introduced the lesson
by revising the previous topics and then embarked on the topic of the day. This
lecture like the previously observed lectures was predominantly a lecturer
dominated talk, or to borrow Bourdieu *et al* (1994) metaphor, a 'professorial
monologue' where the teaching and the learning experience assumed a
unidirectional approach. The lecturer delivered the lesson to his obediently silent
'interlocutors'. In a few occasions he invited questions from students who, in
many occasions, kept silent. In this session, as with the previous ones, students'
understanding was that lecture notes were going to be provided by the lecturer. At
some point the lecturer made a solemn promise to students that notes would be

made available to them so they need not bother jolt down anything. I discuss the implication of these practices in Chapter Six.

5.3   Conclusion to Chapter Five

In this chapter I have presented the findings of the study. These findings are in three strands namely, students and lecturers, textual material, and classroom observation. I have begun by presenting data on students and lecturers, and which profiled into thematic areas. These themes have been constructed using information from lecturers' interviews and focus group discussions, and students' questionnaire and focus group discussion. Next I presented data on textual material. The data presented here focused on the CS course, the university academic writing guides and External Examinations reports. From the CS course, I have shown how the course is configured through looking at the objectives of the course as stated in the syllabus, and the course material.

In the case of academic writing guides, I presented data on technical report writing manuals comprising, the university wide guide for preparing dissertation / thesis and other publications, and the Field Practical Training manual. In this section I pointed out features of each manual giving brief comments on the implications of such manuals in the academic writing pedagogy.

Lastly, in this chapter I have presented findings from classroom observations. I have begun by presenting findings from the CS classrooms. I have presented three sessions of this course since it is central in the apprenticing students into literate writers and the only framework available for that purpose at the university. Then I presented results from classroom observations of other two university courses.

In the next chapter, Chapter Six, I discuss these findings indicating the implications of these emerging themes in the academic writing pedagogy in higher education.

CHAPTER SIX

STUDENT WRITING AS SOCIAL PRACTICE AT SUA AND TANZANIA'S SOCIAL CONTEXT: THE PROBLEM, ISSUES, AND DISCUSSION

6.1   Introduction

In this chapter I discuss the results by focusing on the emerging themes and locate them in the analytical frame followed in the study. Then I explain the implications of such discursive themes in the ESL academic writing pedagogy in higher education in Tanzania.

I have noted in Chapter One that the theoretical underpinnings of this study were premised on two assumptions: First, that Students' ESL writing in higher education in Tanzania would manifest discourse practices, which are considered incompatible with the literacy practices as configured in the university dominant discourses. Secondly, that the CS course currently followed at SUA as well as other specific discursive and social practices embedded within the university cultural practice do not adequately aid students to fully evolve into literate second language writers of academic discourse at the university.

The results presented in Chapter Five, among other things, have glaringly affirmed these theoretical assumptions. The results have profiled the existing students' repertoire of literacy practices at SUA as unsuccessful, in that such repertoire do not meet the writing demands of the various generic disciplines. Further, the CS course, the only structural framework for students' apprenticeship into literate-writers, as well as other discursive and social cultural practices structuring student writing at the university, have not been able to successfully transform student-writer into literate-writers.

The discussion in this chapter has therefore been pivoted around these theoretical underpinnings. Situating my discussion around these constructs has enabled me to

address the research questions of the study, which sought to explore: i) the students' repertoire of literacy practices in their ESL academic writing, ii) the adequacy of the CS course in aiding students' ESL writing, iii) the integration of the CS course in other university courses, and iv) the availability and adequacy of other academic communication support programmes (apart from the CS course) in the teaching and learning of the ESL writing of the academic discourse at the university.

Furthermore, the discussion in this chapter is located within nine thematic areas, and which unfold as the chapter progresses. This chapter, therefore, opens with a discussion that profiles student writing at SUA with a view of providing a heuristic tool for understanding the problem around student writing in higher education in the Tanzania's social cultural context.

6.2   Student writing at SUA: The nature of the problem

From the evidence of this study (see Chapter Five) the interpretation of student writing at SUA revolves around skills. Thus, responding to the causes of students' unsuccessful academic writing literacy, lecturers pointed out errors of surface grammar, tenses, and vocabulary. The lecturers' responses indicate that the conceptualisation of academic writing literacy at SUA does not transcend grammatical accuracy or correctness at sentence or discourse structure levels. From the discussion of NLS theories in Chapter Two and Three, this conceptualisation is typical of the autonomous model of literacy, which regards student writing as constitutive of independent skills, decontextualised from the social cultural context and not rooted in particular values and ideologies (cf. Christie, 2005a; Street, 2003). In the academic writing pedagogy this model considers literacy teaching and learning as not transcending mastery of, according to Lillis (2001: 28) "certain important but essentially basic technical skills". As we have seen the priority here is attached to "accuracy in control of the basic resources of literacy", which may range from grammar, spelling, punctuation, and the like, and beyond that students are expected to be able to use literacy in their different orders of discourse found at the university (cf. also Christie, 2005a: 233).

The autonomous perspective of literacy is not favoured in the current study on grounds that there would be no guarantee that if all the errors, which relate to grammar, tenses, punctuation or vocabulary were addressed, then students would be able to write successfully in their disciplinary genres. In other words, students would not necessarily be able, for example, to argue a point, or to analyse a concept, in say, Agriculture Marketing, Agricultural Extension, or Development Studies using methods of analysis or investigation as are required in those disciplines[7] (see also Ballard and Clanchy, 1988; Ndoloi, 1994). That is to say, a literate writer is the one who learns to manipulate distinctive modes of analysis competently in different disciplines (see Candlin and Plum, 1999). And this paradigm demands more than just knowing how to construct a grammatically flawless sentence. It demands considering students' academic writing as constitutive not of discrete skills but rather of "very particular kind of literacy practices which is bound up with the workings of a particular social institution" (See Lillis, 2001: 39). In this case, student writing ought to be considered as firmly entrenched in the disciplines within which students are writing. This notion of student writing is the one espoused in the ideological model of literacy, which is followed in this study. In this model, all literacies far from being independent, neutral, or given, are ideological, that is, "they are always rooted in a particular world-view and in a desire for that view of literacy to dominate and to marginalize others". Literacy in this sense is "always contested both in its meanings and practices" (see Street, 2003: 2; 2001: 7-8) (see also Chapter Two). Ideological model of literacy is situated in the interdisciplinary approach, which as I have noted, is constructed in the notions of CDA, Genre Theory, and the NLS.

In the SUA's social context, the conceptualisation of student writing as autonomous skills is evident in the Communication Skills course whose design is packaged in the inventory of formal language features, and a set of few academic conventions, referred to as academic study skills (see the course content, Appendix 5). The course objectives have four projections, which can be summarised thus:

i) To improve students' English language abilities,

ii) To improve students' communication skills,

iii) To equip students with sets of conventions and strategies for written and oral presentation, and

iv) To improve students' grammatical competence.

From these objectives it is evident that there is a privileging of grammatical accuracy and correctness in manipulating skills. It is assumed that if students are equipped with grammatical tools and language skills they will be able to use these skills in the ESL academic writing in the disciplinary genres that are available in the students' various departments. This projection is pivotal in the autonomous model of literacy, which is referred to above.

I have discussed in detail the profiling of the CS course structure and its implication in the academic writing pedagogy at SUA in Section 6.7 of this chapter under adequacy of the CS course at SUA. Suffice it to say that the topics and the descriptions of the course content all work towards skills provision. From the manner in which the content is structured, students are provided with the formal grammatical and language features not only as isolated blocks, but also in such a way that they (the features) are decontextualised from the disciplines within which students are supposed to write (cf. Lillis, 2001). This is what was encapsulated by one of the lecturers (see the data presentation in Chapter Five) during the interview

When we talk of Communication Skills morally we teach students to become members of a specific speech community. … We're not doing that just teaching (them) ah- general Communication Skills (Interview).

On the other hand, the discrete configuration of the study skills in the CS course is conspicuous in the treatment of the supposedly related topics within student writing framework. For example, one other skill, which could complement writing

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in this course, is critical reading. Critical reading demands, as Eggins puts it, "to develop skills to be able to make explicit the ideological positions encoded, perhaps in order to resist or challenge them". This entails developing skills of "talking about how language is not just representing but actively constructing our worldview" (2004: 11).

In the CS course content the teaching of reading is based upon the teaching of techniques e.g. skimming, scanning, and study reading. Further, students are oriented into being able to recognise formal language features of texts generally. For example, according to the description of the topics around Reading, students need to be able to recognise general and specific information, topic sentences and supporting details, sentence links, summaries of texts, to mention a few (see Course outline Appendix 5). Thus, in this context, students do not seem to get requisite orientation in interacting with texts and reflect on what they have read in any critical manner.

Thus, at best students, in the case of SUA, seem to be exposed more to the 'theories' of text presentation than to the practices of reflective reading. This arrangement is unlikely to apprentice students into the culture of critical reading. I discuss further the stifling of critical reading at SUA and its implication in the academic writing pedagogical in Section 6.4 under note taking practice.

At this juncture, I argue that a student can never be assumed to have acquired academic writing literacy by simply mastering grammatical features and other language skills. The teaching of grammar and other language tools – though essential – cannot induct the student-writer into the literate-writer of the academic discourse. At the university level, more efforts should be exerted in apprenticing students into successful literate-writers in their disciplines within which they write. I argued in Chapter Two that at the university level students ought to be mentored to put into practice the skills they already have (or are supposed to have acquired) in performing different functions in the university order of discourse. From the NLS perspective, this will be in the paradigms of context of situation. In

other words, as Christie puts it, the 'pedagogical discourse' is "- one that is much more overtly (and in the case of a university fully) committed into apprenticeship to specialised areas of knowledge than is true of the early (i.e. pre-university) *pedagogical discourse"* (see Christie, 2005b: 24) (my additions and emphasis).

I have also argued that students who, perhaps, have not acquired those skills prior to entering the university, such students should be able to acquire these skills through literacy events of reading and writing of academic texts.

6.3   Lecturers' engagement with student writing

From the data presented in Chapter Five, lecturers' engagement with students' academic writing is located within two aspects: Firstly, it is located within the lecturers' individual commitment (in assisting students), which also encompasses monitoring of students' progress in their writing endeavour. Secondly, it is located within the lecturers' responsibility in students' academic writing, which also entails feedback to student writing. I discuss feedback to student writing in Section 6.4 below under socio-discursive space of students and lecturers at SUA.

But first, in the context of SUA, lecturers' engagement with students' academic writing is structured with tensions in both of the above paradigms: One tension hinges on the ambivalence as to what should be done, and who should do what. This tension becomes difficult to resolve in a situation where some lecturers revert to what I consider as 'escapism' by disclaiming responsibility for students' ESL writing. This aspect became glaringly conspicuous when lecturers, during interviews, admitted not to be paying attention to the language aspect when marking students' essays in what some lecturers construed as 'not their responsibility',

> Many people think it's not their responsibility. We think that the Communication Skills would do that. It's their responsibility (Lecturers' Interview).

This argument itself reflects the extent to which lecturers are oblivious of the symbiotic relationship between meaning and the language, which carries that meaning. In other words, meaning or the subject matter to which lecturers focus attention in dealing with students' writing cannot exist independently from the language in which those issues are expressed (cf. Eggins, 2004; Christie, 2005b).

I have pointed out earlier, that lecturers are a product of the same education system, which is much blamed for linguistic deficiencies and other problems on academic literacy in the higher education pedagogy. Lecturers need to appreciate the reality that the experiences students bring with them into the university are varied. And to some degree, in the case of Tanzania's situation, such experiences are closely associated with the linguistically disadvantaged background that students are exposed to. I have noted in Chapter One that students' knowledge of English at the moment of joining the university, in most cases, is varied and in many other cases too inadequate to make them able to participate actively in the communicative practices of the academic discourse.

In the meaning making through academic writing, the student-writer draws upon and "responds to voices as language and experience, from different domains of her socio-cultural life world" (Lillis, 2001: 47). Thus, it is upon lecturers to redefine their theories about student writing so as to construct a heuristic method for understanding what student-writers go through as they grapple with constructing meaning in academic writing. In this way, lecturers may not unwittingly become part of the obstacles in students' academic literacy growth, as they currently seem to be.

Students need to evolve into literate academic writers to be able to participate effectively into the communicative practices of the university community of discourse. This evolution is influenced not only by 'a person's interests', but also by "cultures, languages, and experiences, *and more importantly* by response of others to their texts" (see Johns, 1997) (my emphasis). In the student's evolution process lie the twin constructs of 'generic integrity' and 'disciplinary

apprenticeship' discussed in Chapter Three. In the schema by Brown *et al* (cited in Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999; see also Chapter Three), students at the university are inducted into literate writers in their individual disciplines through apprenticeship process. In this process lecturers are considered as mentors who (1) 'model' by making their tacit knowledge explicit and revealing their problem-solving activities; (2) 'coach' by supporting students' attempts to perform new tasks; and then (3) 'fade' after having empowered the students to work independently.

Thus, lecturers who disclaim responsibility in student writing fail to articulate their primary function of mentoring students into the world of literacy practices of the academia. Any attempts to ignore student writing is tantamount to disengaging students' knowledge of the subject matter from the knowledge of the (disciplinary) language within which they are supposed to write. And from the academic writing pedagogical point of view, such attempts undermine even the little efforts the CS course manages to make to provide the basic skills to students.

The relationship between student-writers and lecturer-readers, in meaning making should hinge not on the lecturer "evaluating the students text as a final product, rather *it should hinge* on the tutor engaging in *the students'* construction of text as meaning making in progress" (see Lillis, 2001: 44) (my emphasis).

In the next section I discuss how student- writers and lecturer-readers relationship is constructed in SUA social cultural context under lecturers' feedback to students' writing. This relationship as I have noted above is more of a hindrance than an aid to students' apprenticeship into literate writers of the available disciplinary genres in higher education.

6.4   Socio-discursive space inhabited by student-writers and lecturer-readers at SUA

Feedback to students' writing is an area where lecturers' discursive practices in the student-writers and lecturer-readers' relationship conspicuously work against

facilitating students' meaning making process in academic writing at SUA. There are two issues around feedback worth considering, the manner in which feedback is constructed and the type of feedback rendered to students. To understand the nature of response to student writing at SUA it is instructive to understand the nature of student-lecturer relationship at SUA. From the tradition of NLS (see Street, 1995, 2003; Barton, 1994; Gee, 2000 in Barton *et al,* 2000) and CDA (Fairclough, 1995, 2001; Wodak and Meyer, 2001) theories, power imbalance in the student-writers and lecturer-readers' relationship is most glaringly expressed at SUA. Lecturers' position of power results from their access to institutional power resources (cf. also van Dijk 1993), which in this case involve, position-as lecturers; knowledge of the discourse genres - because of their membership of the academic community; and in the case of SUA and Tanzania's social context, the knowledge of English including familiarity of the formal academic conventions. These are the resources, which posit lecturers in the privileged and dominant position in the socio-discursive event of a classroom discourse. It is this privileged position in the socio-discursive event, which lecturers capitalise on in constructing and sustaining their dominant discourse in a communicative practice with students.
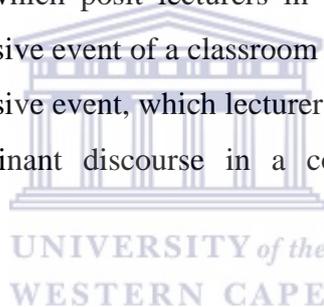
The two extracts below are from lecturers' interviews and focus group discussions respectively. The extracts are characteristic of discourse construction indexing power and authority vested in lecturers by the university. It also indexes how lecturers make use of their power to exercise dominance when responding to students' writing as this lecturer acknowledges,

> No marks! And others who write poorly I just write very poor communication skills or I normally cross until I get their paper (torn into) pieces like this! So, probably, this might remind them (Interview).

Reporting on what lecturers comment on students' writing another lecturer says,

"… of course if the structures are- I mean the grammar, the language is not good I normally sort of indicate that *your language is appalling* here!" (Focus Group Discussion) (my italics).

In the first extract, for example the lecturer made no attempt to conceal his indignation with students' ESL 'unsuccessful' writing. The difference between this extract and the second one only pertains to the construction, while in the first extract the abuse of power is constructed through a physical action, 'I normally cross until I get their paper (torn into) pieces like this**!'** in the second extract it is constructed in the discourse itself**, '…** your language is appalling'.

As for the type of feedback rendered to students, the caveat to be made is that not all feedback qualifies to transform students into literate academic writers. Admittedly, when one looks at students' texts, the overwhelming experience is the array of linguistic errors, which characterize such texts. From the observation by Bourdieu *et al,* "Every academic has experienced the difficulty of marking the mass of mediocre and middling scripts which offer no purchase for clear judgement …" (1994: 15). Students' linguistic deficiencies have often been a prime focus of lecturers' feedback at SUA, but this may not be beneficial to students.

The issue of what type of feedback should be rendered to students has conflicting arguments. For example, Robb, *et al* (cited in Myles) argue that attention to detailed feedback on sentence structural and grammar level may be a waste of lecturers' effort as 'improvement can be gained by practice alone' (2002: 14). However, it is also argued that if students' linguistics errors are not pointed out such errors may be 'fossilised', that is, ingrained in the students' discourse repertoire (see Myles 2002).

Considering the arguments for and against attention to linguistic errors on feedback, a conclusion from Rodby (cited in Myles 2002*)* seems plausible that if the "focus on error becomes the totality of the *lecturers* response, then language,

discourse and text are equated with structure" (p. 14) (my addition). According to the author, the reduction of language, discourse and text into structure is problematic because it is assumed that the lecturer "has the authority to change the student's text and correct it" (Rodby cited in Myles 2002: 14). This means that the lecturers' preoccupation with error identification sends a negative signal to students that unless they (students) conform to the dominant discourse in writing, the lecturer will not take cognizant of experiences students are trying to communicate through language. To the contrary, I argue that feedback provided should motivate students to make modifications competently and with confidence. This includes for example, expressing their voices both as experience and as language and asserting their own identities (cf. Bakhtin cited in Lillis, 2001; Wertsch cited in Myles, 2002).

Equally important, lecturers' response to student writing should also take into account the semiotic relationship between what students produce in their discourse and other elements within a particular practice. For example, from this study it has become apparent that much of students' discourse is a reflection of lecturers' own discourse. This means student's written text is the product of interdiscursivity in the network of practices (including lecturers' discursive practices) within which student writing is located. Attesting to this point one lecturer said,

> Really, really what our students write, sometimes note-taking et cetera is what also the lecturers also present! (Interview)

But, when engaging with student writing, lecturers over invest effort in expressing indignation to aiding students in constructing meanings in particular orders of discourse. This tension seems to result from lecturers' hesitation (if not a failure) to invite students into a community of discourse to work into a common understanding of literacy practices and particularly the construction, production and reproduction of academic texts. And borrowing from the construct by Lea and Street (cited in Christiansen, 2004.: 2; see also Chapter 3) I argue that "a socially

constructed definition of literacy *should* move research of student learning practices away from *how teachers can help students* to learn the literacies of the university and focus more on *how students and teachers understand* the literacy practices of the university" (first italics mine, others italics in the original).

Thus, in the SUA social context, '… greater opportunities for dialogue between tutors and students, as real participants in the construction and interpretation of texts, …' (see Lillis, 2001: 132) need to be activated and nurtured in assisting students to acquire requisite literacy practices of academic writing. This will increase students' participation in the institutional order of discourse of higher education. Students themselves, when commenting about the lecturers' feedback, indicated the need for dialogue when they mentioned 'counselling on academic writing matters' as being useful. One other area where students' academic writing demands are misinterpreted is note taking. This is the aspect to which I now turn my attention.

6.5   Students' note taking: A misused 'practice opportunity' for academic writing

I have situated note taking as a 'practice opportunity' for academic writing literacy. In the presentation of data in Chapter Five, I indicated that note taking practice is structured with the tension between, on one the hand, whether or not students should take notes during lectures. On the other, how best, where required, students should be engaged in note taking practice. In either case, lecturers do not seem to agree as to what really should be the classroom practice regarding note taking. The view held by many lecturers however, was that note taking makes students have a divided attention, resulting into students missing points of the lectures, as this lecturer cited earlier says,

> In all my-especially 1st year, I just tell them listen, don't write-write minimally, because 1st year I always give them notes. So I want them to listen and try to follow and ask. But of course they keep writing, they write, they write' (Interview).

However, students do not share the lecturers' postulation on note taking practice. For example, in the questionnaire students indicated that note taking practice is a valuable exercise, and as one student said, 'I understand more reading my own notes than I do reading lecturers' handouts' (Questionnaire). This is in addition to other benefits note taking offers to students as summarised from students' own questionnaires, such as, keeping a record of a lecture for future reference- i.e. aid revision of lessons, improve ESL academic writing skills such as summarising and organising points, and learning new vocabulary, and lastly aiding in following the lesson during the lecture (see Chapter Five, Section 5.2.2.3 on students' note taking practices).

Thus, lecturers who dissuade students from taking notes do so on seemingly two incorrect assumptions: First, that students will follow the lectures and ask questions - which do not seem to happen according to the observation in the lecturer's interview above. I also noted this phenomenon during classroom observation where it is the lecturers' voice, which predominates and takes control of, often, the silent classrooms. The second assumption is that students actually want to read lecturers' notes - while in fact they seem to be able to decode their own discourse more readily than the lecturers' discourse in constructing meanings during lectures. For these students note taking is an opportunity for practising some literacy skills from listening, interpreting to encoding lecture notes in their own language.

Interestingly, lecturers consider students, especially first year students as not capable of writing their own notes as this lecture's excerpt below illustrates,

> 3rd year they take notes, 3rd year I give them … (inaudible) … -actually I don't even have notes. … I encourage them to take notes. I give them chapters in books ….I expect them to write at least. But 1st year- I just consider them like 1st year, that's, their first course in extension! So, I really look at them as 1st year … (Interview).

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The lecturer's argument here is however contestable in two respects: First note taking is exhaustively taught to first year students in the CS course on the assumption that they (students) will need to take notes from both reading library texts and from attending lecturers. Secondly, students cannot be expected to write their own notes in the third year while they have not been introduced into the practice of note taking in their early years of study at the university. That note taking is discouraged in some lecture sessions affirms the assumption that basic skills students acquire from the CS course are not reinforced (if not undermined) in other university courses.

Furthermore, lecturers' view that students do not need to take notes in class fails not only to take cognizant of students' learning experiences during lectures, but it also fails to recognise how such experiences might impact on students' meaning making process in ESL academic writing. Students are not given the opportunity to express their views about how they feel when engaging with learning practices generally. It is lecturers who determine what is best for students. It is from this perspective that the NLS (see Gee in Burton, 2000; Lillies, 2001) and CDA (see Fairclough, 2001) theories espouse for questioning some of the valued and dominant practices in higher education. For example, I find the alternative to note taking, (i.e. handouts and compendia) which lecturers provide to students, more damaging than aiding students in their journey to literacy growth. For one thing, literacy growth in ESL writing presupposes not only the ability to write, but also to read critically. But, dominant literacy practices at SUA create an environment, which potentially disengage students from this critical reading. The culture of critical reading is stifled by the provision of these study material comprising exclusively summaries of lecture notes, as these lecturers admit,

> I think may be I have a big weakness myself I must admit in this regard because for all of my courses I give them my compendium- my- my notes. It saves me a lot of time …and efforts. …But, I have learnt that it's

counterproductive in some aspects because a number of them tend to be too lazy. They know they have everything already at hand … (Interview).

I provide handouts, but the problem of providing handouts is that many students skip classes… yah most of time well, they just copy the slides. But, sometimes I give them the slides to photocopy (Interview).

Lecturers often pointed out scarcity of study materials in postulating for offering handouts and compendia. I argue that these study material - welcome as they are - can potentially stifle the culture of critical reading in two ways; firstly, being such ready made material students find that accessing other information resources around the subject is a waste of time, because, 'They know they have everything already at hand….' (See respondent's excerpt above).

Secondly, the authoritative nature embodied in the construction, production and presentation of such materials (as absolute reality) encourage students to believe that handouts and compendia are the only relevant source of information around the given subject. Thus, students are denied opportunities to develop critical voices; but it is these critical voices that enable students to gain confidence in the command of the disciplinary language (see also Leibowitz and Mohamed, 2000), which carries the given disciplinary knowledge.

This problem is further compounded by the questioning practices of some of the lecturers, who usually set questions around lecture notes with no allowance for students to bring in some additional material when writing essay questions. The tension structuring note taking practice at SUA is best encapsulated in Lillis' observation that,

The socio-discursive space, which is inhabited by student-writers and tutors is fundamentally monologic, i.e. it is the tutor's voice that predominates, determining what the task is and how it should be done,

without negotiating the nature of the expectations surrounding this task through dialogue with the student-writer (Lillis, 2001: 75).

The predominance of tutors' voice in a communicative practice of higher education is constructed around authority vested on the tutors, whom I preferably call lecturers in this thesis. What we see here are the ideological effects of power and dominance in Tanzania's higher education. Privileged access to discourse and communication is one of the social resources on which power is based (cf. van Dijk, 1993). The students-lecturers relationship is indexical of the potency in which this power and dominance construct and reconstruct themselves hence resulting to inequality. In this case, lecturers as the dominant group fail to see that students (the dominated) are their own products and that they (lecturers) like their students are also the product of inequalities of Tanzania's social cultural context, which is itself at the mercy of global/ international capital (cf. Fairclough, 1995, 2002; van Dijk, 1993).

6.6   Lecturers' discourse as object of inquiry in student writing

The ESL writing research in higher education in Tanzania has so far been constructed under two underpinnings: First, student writing is a problem located around skills rather than literacy practice in the academic writing pedagogy. The implication of this is that teaching and learning becomes a matter of, as Pardoe puts it,

> *replacing* the students' existing repertoire of literacy practices rather than *refining* and *adding* to these. And it does so even when the students' existing practices are clearly central to their sense of identity, and to their successful functioning in other contexts (Pardoe, in Barton and Hamilton, 2000: 151) (italics in the original).

Secondly, student unsuccessful writing is considered as a result of students' own 'failed attempts to access dominant standard form' (see also Pardoe, in Barton and Hamilton 2000: 150). On the basis of this second underpinning, the ESL writing

research in Tanzania has all along used the student as an object of inquiry directly, leaving the lecturer in the peripheral discussion. In other words, lecturers have usually been receiving marginal attention in the student's ESL writing deficiency, as this has usually been considered a students' problem only. Both of these perspectives have made inroads in the understanding of the student-writers' experiences into their pathways to literate writers of the academic discourse in the Tanzania's social cultural context.

Students' ESL writing literacies derive not only from students' own backgrounds but also from lecturers' discursive practices. Such practices are sometimes informed, in part, by unsuitable didactic skills, and in part, by lecturers' own discourse practices, which are sometimes structured by not only linguistic constraints, but also attitudes and ideologies towards the use of English as a Second Language in some semiotic aspects. It is from this perspective that I argue for lecturers to critique their own practices, including their own writing, as a first step into appreciating students' problem in their meaning making process. It cannot be assumed that lecturers' discourse practices are inherently correct or infallible. In so doing, we may have failed to see the links or the relationship between what students produce (students' practices) and that from which students draw upon in their meaning making, that is the dominant practices, or "the available accounts of what they should be doing … the examples available to them and … linguistic forms that are regarded 'correct' and successful elsewhere" (see also Pardoe in Barton and Hamilton 2000: 163).

This means that one reason for student unsuccessful writing has to do with these examples and linguistic forms, which are made available to students by lecturers. This is where Leibowitz's (2000) observation becomes fundamentally relevant that the 'way lecturers write' or "orient themselves towards authorship (will) have a direct impact on the kinds of questions they set for students and attitudes towards knowledge production they model in the classroom" (p. 17) (my brackets).

In the Tanzania's social cultural context, lecturers use the English language with varying degrees of proficiency (see also Rubagumya, 1990 on Language use in Tanzania). There are two reasons for this: First, English is a second and even a third language to some lecturers. Secondly, some lecturers especially those in the new generation are the product of the same social cultural, and in particular, educational background, which is much blamed for the pedagogical problems widely reported in the ESL writing research in Tanzania.

Thus, admittedly one obstacle in engaging with students' ESL writing in Tanzania is that some of these lecturers (who are supposed to mentor students in their writing process) are themselves linguistically challenged. Information from lecturers' interviews attested to this,

> […] it might be like a political recommendation that the department should really be insisting in trying to say skills of – technical writing, academic writing- scholarly writing should be part of the instructors, but then some of us should also be taught, because we don't know. But worse still even those who know we have to change our mind-set and say that it's our problem too. (Interview)

The respondent here alluded to the notion that some lecturers do not engage with students' ESL academic writing process didactically partly because of the inadequate linguistic knowledge and partly because of the lack of the will to do so. However, linguistic constraint for some of the lecturers was a frequently acknowledged phenomenon during the interviews as this lecturer reported,

> Well, we take students who are not all that good, and then when they meet staff who are not equally good in language skills what do you expect? (Interview)

From these observations, it became apparent that there is a need on the part of lecturers to also scrutinise their own language before bringing students' language

to the rigours of the same scrutiny. As far as linguistics constraints are concerned, it does not matter where such problems emanate, in other words, either way whether from students or lecturers the pedagogical goals of knowledge transfer is bound to suffer. Undoubtedly, universities have always been keen on the lecturers' competence with the subject matter upon recruitment. Similar considerations on the control of the language, within which meanings of the subject matter are conveyed, should be made as a matter of urgency upon recruitment of lecturers.

But, one obstacle to be overcome here is for the universities and the lecturers alike to take upon themselves the challenge of speaking openly about the problem. So far complacency on the matter seem to have structured ESL writing research in higher education in Tanzania, despite the repeated inferences on the problem as this one alluded to by Ndoloi,

> As writing tutors in different universities are not native, these studies are invaluable as orienting these tutors and indeed other specialised tutors into such communities (Ndoloi, 1994: 317).
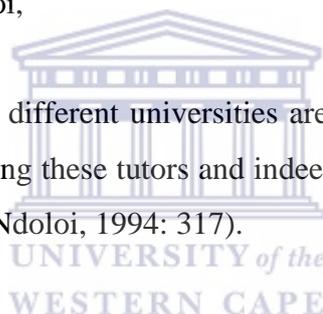
From Ndoloi, ESL academic writing is a problem of tutors too, being non-native of English. And that the 'acculturation' process into the university academic writing culture that the ESL writing research espouses for students should also involve tutors. My argument here is that it is time that ESL writing research in Tanzania focused on lecturers' discourse directly instead of simply passing comments for such discourse within the ESL writing research framework, which primarily target students.

Moreover, within the Tanzania's social cultural context the best starting point in the lecturers' self-critique is to acknowledge that there is a problem. Currently it seems a taboo for a senior member of academic staff to admit that he or she needs help. This explains why efficiency monitoring systems on academic staff

performance based on requirements of each department is a notion, which has never been conceived in many academic departments in universities in Tanzania.

6.7 Attitudes structuring English language use in HE in Tanzania's social context

From the notions of CDA (Wodak and Meyer, 2001; Fairclough, 1995; 2001) and NLS (see Barton and Hamilton, 2000; Street, 2001) people's ways of doing things (i.e. literacy practices) are usually shaped by socially valued ideologies and beliefs. These ideologies not only influence people's attitudes towards particular practices, but they also configure their thinking about such practices. Issues on what structure lecturers and students' attitudes towards the English language use in Tanzania are explainable within the ideological formations around power and dominance.

We have seen that in the Fairclough's model, CDA has three dimensions, orders of discourse, ideology, and hegemony. It is within the framework of ideology and hegemony where the concepts of power and dominance are located. Understanding the nature of social power and dominance is 'one crucial presupposition of adequate critical discourse analysis. *From here it is easy to begin formulating* ideas about how discourse contributes to their reproduction' (van Dijk, 1993: 254) (my emphasis). It is also pertinent to point out that social power, which is the subject of CDA is based on "privileged access to socially valued resources, such as wealth, income, position, status, … group membership, education or knowledge" (see van Dijk, 1993: 254).

According to van Dijk power involves control by one group over another. 'Such control may pertain to *action* and *cognition*', but in the modern world, and often "more effective power is mostly cognitive, and enacted by persuasion, dissimulation or manipulation, *among other strategies* to change the minds of others in one's own interest" (1993: 254) (first two italics in the original).

If the minds of the dominated can be influenced in such a way that they accept dominance, and act in the interest of the powerful out of their own free will, *then that entails* hegemony (Gramsci, Hall *et al* cited in van Dijk. 1993: 255) (my italics).

According to Herman and Chomsky (cited in van Dijk 1993) "one major function of dominant discourse is precisely to manufacture such consensus, acceptance and legitimacy of dominance" (p. 255). As we shall see, Tanzania for many years had been under Ujamaa policy whereby, using Lillis's phrase, the "institutionalised configurations of power and knowledge" (2001: 12) engendered distribution of Kiswahili in all social and government institutions, including primary and secondary school. But, years of Ujamaa and 'Swahilisation' project, have note successfully dismantled the hegemonic influence of English in Tanzania. Below, I explicate the effects of this ideological formation structuring lecturers and students' attitudes towards English in higher education in Tanzania's social context.

6.7.1 *Attitudes structuring lecturers' use of English*

The aspect of attitude towards the English language use in the Tanzanian social context is a complex one. Commenting on their own linguistic practices, lecturers interviewed indicated that they become hesitant in using English outside the framework of formal academic situations on campus. They argue that such linguistic behaviour would project them as 'intellectually arrogant'. This means lecturers, somehow, feel compelled to abide by some 'societal norms', which consider the English language as only appropriate in strictly formal academic discourses. The language may be used in other situations, but this is likely to cause disapproval from other members of the discursive event even though such members may as well be versed in the language.

The lecturers' perception towards the English language, which reflects the society's viewpoint in general, is not out of context, it is historically located. The Tanzanian official ideology is no longer Ujamaa (African Socialism) of Nyerere's

era (see Nyerere, 1967, see also Chapter One). But, Ujamaa as an ideology has left a heavy imprint in people's mind-set. One of the ideological underpinnings of Ujamaa was the distribution of Kiswahili to the Tanzanian people in the prospect of making them live under the egalitarian principles. From then on, the use of Kiswahili has usually been widely considered as a way in which people can identify themselves with these ideological frames and the cultural identity of the Tanzanian society (see also Chapter Five) as this lecturer underscores,

> Whenever we meet now as Tanzanians everywhere in the world we communicate in Swahili. As I say, once you know this person is from Tanzania we communicate in Swahili, which is very good! Imagine you meet in a strange country - strange land, and then you speak in *foreign language* again, come on! Are you really from *the same place*? Don't you have a *mother tongue* or whatever? (Interview) (my emphasis).

From the interview response it can be noted that the lecturer stresses that in the new dispensation in post Ujamaa era, the tendency which has gained currency is that of using Swahili to articulate other sociological dimensions such as claiming identity for Tanzanians. Interestingly, the speaker is also conspicuously supportive of this additional use of Swahili, 'once you know this person is from Tanzania we communicate in Swahili, which is very good!'

It is also interesting to note how the speaker subtly uses words in this statement, 'Imagine you meet in a strange country - strange land, and then you speak in *foreign language* again, come on! Are you really from *the same place*? Don't you have a *mother tongue* or *whatever*?' The speaker replaces 'English language' with 'foreign language', Tanzania with 'the same place', and Swahili with 'mother tongue'. The speaker attempts to show that it is not characteristic of a Tanzanian cultural practice among Tanzanians to use English instead of Kiswahili even outside their own country.

Within the context of this argument the speaker here is making two assumptions: First, Kiswahili is the mother tongue of all Tanzanians. Secondly, in subsequent to the first assumption, truly Tanzanians are the ones who speak Kiswahili. These assumptions, as it can be noted do not seem to be supported by any ethnographic evidence. What emerges here is the reiteration of the common assumptions held by some (in this case many) Tanzanians and especially scholars in the pro Kiswahili debate, that, first, Kiswahili is the mother tongue of all Tanzanians, and secondly, Kiswahili is the marker of the Tanzanian cultural identity. In the Tanzanian ethnographic context, these assumptions are both contestable (see Chapter One for details). And thus, the reason why such assumptions still remain popular can only be explicable from the context of Tanzanian history and especially her ideological past discussed above.

From this ideological past, the use of English in the wider communication in Tanzania is still, to date, associated with hegemonic colonial legacy, as is encapsulated by this lecturer,
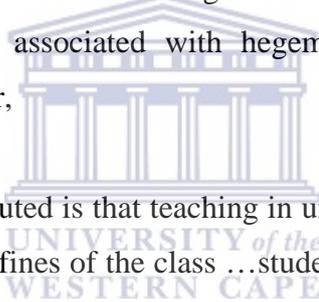
> What has been instituted is that teaching in universities is done in English, is it? Within the confines of the class …students are allowed or when they go to their supervisors or instructors they are allowed actually to… speak English, is it? But, then when they are outside and among themselves … can they as well be (laugh). … That's why I'm saying it is about a policy of communication. Because one would say why - why this is a country that we want to encourage Kiswahili and you are encouraging English! It's a colonial kind of a hangover! (Interview)

The speaker emphasises the notion that the place of English in the Tanzania's social context should naturally be the classroom, 'Within the confines of the class…' To this lecturer, this is what seems to be the interpretation of the medium of instruction, the 'institutionalisation' of language for teaching purposes only. The use of such a language in the broader communication outside the classroom is not necessary, neither is it desirable. 'Because one would say why - why this is a

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country that we want to encourage Kiswahili and you are encouraging English! It's a colonial kind of a hangover' (see extract above).

From this point of view, using English outside academics or where it is not absolutely necessary in Tanzania has become a symbol of imperialist hegemony of the erstwhile colonial powers in as much as a symbol of distasteful sophistication and of intellectual arrogance which once characterised a learned person in Tanzania. And since, from a social cultural point of view, arrogance and undue sophistication are socially objectionable, using English outside academic contexts is also considered as socially objectionable as it typifies these socially loathsome attributes.

Notwithstanding that English is the language of instruction in post-primary and higher education in Tanzania, the linguistic profile in these levels seem to be rather diglossic regulated by some other social unwritten rules or 'etiquettes' which seem to dictate that English (even in academics) should be used when necessary and Swahili should be used in all communication. One respondent to the interview attested to this recent pattern of language use in the academia in Tanzania by saying,

> I don't know, it's in our thinking that L1 … should be used all the time and L2 should be used when necessary, but in Kenya is completely the other way round (Interview).

This thinking impinges on the students' ESL writing literacy, as English is not given enough attention into students' discourse to be able to function effectively as a medium of instruction. It can thus be deduced that the history of, to borrow a metaphor from Blommaert, (2001), 'Ujamaa linguistics' continues to exert influence on language use in higher education in Tanzania's social cultural context.

An interesting phenomenon here is that lecturers, and students alike, overwhelmingly maintained that English should continue to be the language of instruction at the universities in Tanzania. The lecturers' position on this matter seems to be in contrast not only with their perceived discomfort towards the English language use, but it is also in contrast with their own linguistic practices on campus. The lecturers' linguistic practices on campus are also paradoxical in two nuanced ways: First, during interviews they (lecturers) accused students of Code Mixing (CM) and Code Switching (CS) during classroom discourse practices. But, CM and CS phenomena were also noted among lecturers during classroom observation. In such cases code switching, especially into Kiswahili often involved non-essential discourses, e.g. jokes; (see Chapter Five) but all the same, lecturers were performing exactly that for which they blamed students of doing. In other words, lecturers fail to see the point that students' linguistics behaviour is indeed a reflection of lecturers' own discursive practices.

Secondly, because lecturers believe that using CM and CS is against the institutional cultural practice, which privileges English (as dominant literacy), they allow neither themselves, nor students to exercise their full potential in employing CM and CS between Kiswahili and English as a useful strategy in academic literacy mediation in the university orders of discourse. Thus, in the current practice CM and CS are considered as a hindrance instead of a useful tool in student writing practice. In other words, lecturers are more concerned with, as Christiansen (2004: 13) puts it, "*their* obligation to protect the sanctity of core beliefs" (p. 13) (my emphasis) even when such core values impinges negatively on the student meaning making process. As a result lecturers "have only reproduced the powerful sources of discourses that may lead to subordination and manipulation". And according to Christiansen this "ignores the difficult worlds students are encountering as they try to negotiate the complex collision of their world and the world of academia" (2004: 13).

6.7.2 *Attitudes structuring students' use of English*

The exploration of students' linguistic behaviour revealed an interesting phenomenon. Commenting on their linguistic practices, students claimed to be using English even outside the classrooms on the university campus. As I indicated in the summary of results in Chapter Five, the students' own assessment of their linguistic practices on campus was disputed by lecturers. Lecturers argue that students' interaction, among themselves outside and sometimes even inside the classrooms, is predominantly in Kiswahili. English is used only where and when necessary. This phenomenon was also noted during classroom observation whereby students used code mixing and code switching between English and Kiswahili when they were involved in small group discussions.

Thus from the evidence of this study students claim is in contrast with their actual linguistic practices both in the classrooms and outside on the university campus. In fact attempts by some students to communicate with their cohorts outside classroom have been hampered by the responses they get from their peers. An excerpt from a student's open-ended questionnaire below indicates this phenomenon:
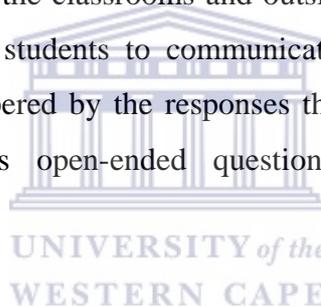
Researcher: Where do you usually interact using the English language on Campus outside the classroom?

Respondent: Oh! This is terrible!

I usually try to communicate with my colleagues in English, but I experience difficulties because many students respond to me in Kiswahili (Students' questionnaire) (This excerpt has been edited).

This is the reason for the argument that students over-reported their claim of the use of English on Campus. Students' high judgement of their language ability was considered by lecturers as unfortunate and a further hindrance to students' learning of ESL academic writing.

In order to understand the ideology underlying the students' contradictory claim it is instructive to reiterate the underlying values and ideological formation structuring Tanzania's social cultural context. CDA (see Fairclough, 1995, 2001; Wodak and Meyer, 2001) and NLS (see Street, 2001; Lillis, 2001) provide a tool of understanding this ideological formation. I have noted in Chapter Three that from an ideological point of view, literacy as social practice is always "embedded in socially constructed epistemological principles" (Street, 2001: 7). Such practices are "patterned by social institutions and power relationship, and some literacies are more dominant, visible and influential than others" (see Barton and Hamilton, 2000:8).

Dominant literacy practices in the Tanzanian social context transcend individual genres (i.e. academic genre versus other genres) in one language, to include genres across languages notably, English versus Kiswahili. As I said earlier, Kiswahili is the language of the wider communicative needs of the Tanzanian people. But in Tanzania English is at best a second and at worst a foreign language to the majority of Tanzanians. Hence, as I have noted in Chapter Two, those who can access 'dominant genres', that is higher education are those with sound knowledge of English. And since according to Street, "rules of dominant literacy genres are frequently quite arbitrary… *and in the case of student writing dominant literacy genres would entail formal language features, such rules* can be easily changed if too many people learn how to use them and thereby challenge the status quo" (2001: 13) (my emphasis). Thus, "those in power retain domination while appearing to provide access to the disempowered" (Street, 2001: 13).

Students' frequent claims about the use of English in all communication on campus, is not so much an indication of students' actual linguistic practices or abilities. Neither is it an indication of their belief in what they actually can or cannot do, rather it is a result of hegemonic influence of English. Students do not realise that their insisting on English actually deny them access to knowledge. This is because students are the product of social cultural make up of Tanzania

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whereby English hegemony has exerted profound influence on the people. For that matter unequal access to knowledge through the hidden medium of English is considered natural, and so is social inequality. In this way students fail to question the legitimacy of continuing using English in higher education.

English hegemony in Tanzania correlates Gees's metaphor of the "master myth" (cited in Kucer, 2005), which represents favoured views of reality of a culture or social group. According to the author, at times "master myth of the dominant group within a society may reflect and enforce values that are complicit with the oppression of nonmainstream groups" (p. 222). And since schools, in this case, are considered the prime 'culprits' for reflecting the values of the dominant groups, literacy instruction in school usually reflect these values. Thus, according to Kucer,

> Becoming literate, therefore, often requires taking on the master myths of those in control. For children from nondominant groups, this may actually require the acceptance of beliefs and practices that are, in fact, used to subjugate them (2005: 222).
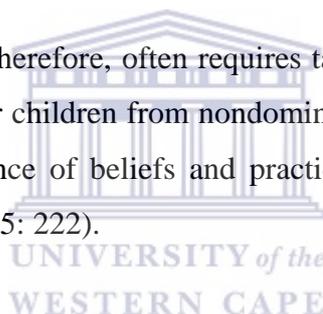
The 'master myth' is what account for students' contradictory claim about their ability on English. This 'master myth' also explains why over forty years of independence and in spite of massive campaigns of Kiswahili distribution, which started soon after independence, English is still the medium of instruction in Tanzania

.

Thus the issue of academic literacy in Tanzania's context revolves around unequal access to dominant and opaque medium of instruction and orders of discourse. If students cannot access language it means that they cannot access knowledge itself. And access to (or lack of) social resources, such as education and knowledge is what produces social relations of inequality. As a result of this social inequality the status quo, that is, the production and reproduction of the dominant and the dominated groups is sustained (cf. Fairclough 1995, van Dijk, 1993).

But it does not necessarily follow that if students were taught in Kiswahili, things would be any better. Even if Kiswahili were the medium of instruction up to university, the issue of power and dominance would still occur because of academic orders of discourse and institutionalised language use. Not everybody would access these institutional power resources. Kiswahili, which students would have been acquiring in the home and in pre-university schooling, would still be different from the one accepted at the university and dominated by lecturers. Students would still have to be taught academic Kiswahili, which would have been privileged literacy in the university orders of discourse. I find it instructive, at this juncture, to reiterate Blommaert's observation that, 'Inequality has to do with models of language use, not with language' thus, there is a 'need to develop an awareness that it is not necessarily the language you speak, but how you speak it, … it is a matter of voice, not of language (1999: 11). It is for this same reason that even after years of instruction in Kiswahili in primary school students fail to translate their Kiswahili skills into academic writing in English. In primary schools education is supposedly provided in academic Kiswahili, which offers no guarantee that it is the variety students are indeed accessing in those levels given the Tanzania's social cultural context.

From the above discussion, when students join the university they experience two equally complex and demanding situations. On the one hand, students have to struggle to read off the university culture and its requirements, (opaque orders of discourse) and as Lea and Street put it "to unpack the writing demands that are being made in different fields and environments in the course of their academic programmes" (1999: 81), and on the other hand, they have to struggle to acquire requisite knowledge of English because this is the dominant literacy practice as patterned by social institution, in this case the university. Pedagogically this means that whatever repertoires of literacy practices students have are likely to be ignored or rather replaced instead of being added to or refined (cf. Pardoe, 2000).

We have seen that some of students' existing repertoires of home and community literacy practices they (students) bring into the university are skills in Kiswahili. Clearly, such practices can crucially impact students' growth into literate writers, and as such cannot be ignored. And as Pardoe puts it, some of ''the students' existing practices" can be "central to their sense of identity, and to their successful functioning in other contexts" (Pardoe, 2000: 13). For this reason 'considerable attention *need* to be paid to the context of culture', which broadly involves "considerations of institutions, social structures and ideologies' *including the home and community cultural experiences*, all of which impinge on the nature of the language in use at the level of context of situation" (see Fairclough cited in Lillis, 2001: 25; see also Chapter Two) (my emphasis).

Another reason for the students' claim revolves around their wish to claim membership of the academic orders of discourse, which is another dominant and valued resource in the institutional setting. Students know that their control of language within their disciplines and outside is unsuccessful, and they admitted this during focus group discussions and in the individual questionnaires. The claim students were making on their linguistic practices, contradictory as it was, it was consistent with what the society would expect of them. Students know that university orders of discourse are often inaccessible due to their opaque nature. But they (students) also know too well that any signals of ignorance of these valued practices are often reproved. As a result, students go a long way to make contradictory claims so as to conform to the society's expectation of them. In other words, students are haunted by the logic that any admissions of linguistic misunderstanding either in the lecture or elsewhere on campus may question their very integrity as university students.

Lecturers made an interesting claim that students process their thoughts in Swahili language whose grammar they (students) use to package English words and phrases in their ESL writing process. But on the other hand, these lecturers still believe that students have the potential to think in any language, which is available to them. The reason that students think in Kiswahili is because the

English language has never been provided to them or rather students have never successfully been inducted into the disciplinary genre and the language within which they can think and write.

The 'language of thinking' argument has often been exploited by some scholars in the MoI debate to argue for Kiswahili on one hand, and English on the other, as the sole language of instruction in higher education in Tanzania (see Chapter One for details). And to a large extent, the argument has made people oblivious of the ideological issues, which impact students' literacy performance in the Tanzania's social context. But, from this study it is evident that students' ESL writing literacy problems have more to do with ideological issues than they have with language issues as I have discussed above.

Ideological issues are entrenched in the manner in which students' writing is constructed within the SUA social cultural context (i.e. academic writing as individual skills as opposed to academic writing as social practice). Ideological issues are also embodied in the manner in which student-writers and lecturer-readers relationship is constructed in the socio-discursive space, which both students and lecturers inhabit in the academic writing practice at the university. Such relations are based on power and dominance due to unequal access to institutional power resources. It is these ideological issues, which have profoundly impacted on students' unsuccessful ESL writing of the academic discourse. During the interviews, lecturers indicated that the situation at the university is such that students know neither academic English nor academic Kiswahili. This means they (students) cannot translate one language into another in any meaningful sense of the word. One reason for this is that the underlined tension between English and Kiswahili as dominant versus local literacies respectively has not been usefully exploited to hybridise the two in the student meaning making process around academic writing.

Thus, the apprenticing of students into literacy practice of the academic discourse in the Tanzania's social context demands careful attention into not only the order

of discourse in academic genres, but also the order of discourse between Kiswahili and English. It is unfortunate that in the MOI debate in Tanzania the opposing currents are preoccupied with, to use a metaphor by Street (2003: 4), "a single essentialized version" of one or the other language in this apprenticeship process instead of focusing on these ideological issues.

From the point of view of literacy pedagogy of multilingual approach, "there cannot be one set of standards or skills that constitutes the ends of literacy learning" (Cope and Kalantzis, 2000: 6). For that matter, students need to be provided with not just one set, but with several cultural and linguistic standards. Teachers' role is to arbitrate this cultural and linguistic diversity as "classroom resource just as powerful as it is a social resource in the formation of new civic spaces and new notions of citizenship" (see Cope and Kalantzis, 2000: 6). In the view of the authors,
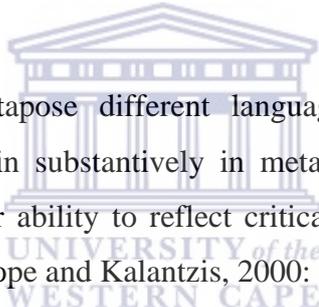
> When learners juxtapose different languages, discourses, styles, and approaches they gain substantively in metacognitive and metalinguistic abilities and in their ability to reflect critically on complex systems and their interactions (Cope and Kalantzis, 2000: 15).

From this standpoint the role of states is not to require one culture and linguistic standard instead "states must be strong as neutral arbiter of difference. And so must be schools, university and literacy pedagogy" (see Cope and Kalantzis, 2000: 5).

In the context of SUA, as is the case in many other universities in Tanzania, the Communication Skills course is the only structural framework within which the apprenticing of students into successful student-writers ought to take place. How the Communication Skills course is able or unable to partake in this responsibility at SUA is the aspect I now turn attention to in the next section.

6.8   Adequacy of Communication Skills course at SUA

The Communication Skills course at SUA and in other universities in Tanzania, as I have said, is the framework within which the apprenticing of students into literate writers ought to take place. In the case of SUA this generic apprenticeship process is fundamentally constrained in a number of ways as discussed below.

6.8.1   Configuration of the CS course

The CS course is such that literacy in the course outline is configured as autonomous skills; I have discussed this phenomenon in detail in section 6.1. Suffice it to say that in such configuration the CS course contents have no bearing on the demands of the individual disciplines in which the students are writing, as this lecturer cited earlier reported.

> When we talk of Communication Skills morally we teach students to become members of a specific speech community…. We're not doing that just teaching (them) ah- general Communication Skills (Focus group).

But this phenomenon engenders another complex question: How can a Communication Skills course be able to address the writing demands of students from as diverse disciplinary orientations as the ones found in SUA? Any framework to be constructed for this purpose will put further demands on two aspects: First, to have specialised writing instruction in classroom discourse. The second is to have instructors with enough background to teach a specialised scientific academic writing class. The first aspect requires that the instructors in the CS course in collaboration with individual departments develop writing instruction courses, which address the writing demands of the courses in the Departments concerned. The second aspect in the framework requires that instructors with background of both the specialised disciplinary knowledge and the scientific academic writing language be involved in the teaching of these courses.

The above arrangement is, so far, the most ideal but the one, which poses a bigger challenge for the CS course in its current framework at SUA. In other words, the arrangement demands that other academic Departments enlist their support and work alongside instructors in the CS course; such a framework has its own constraints to overcome. Notably, it entails motivating other Departments to realise that students' ESL academic writing is their responsibility too. Currently, the 'us' versus 'them' mentality continues to structure the discussions on student writing at SUA. 'Us' being other departments and 'them' being the Social Science Department, which houses the CS course. In the absence of a dialogue between the CS course instructors and the instructors in other academic Departments in the process of mentoring students in generic apprenticeship, the CS course is unlikely to have any significant impact on students' academic writing process.

6.8.2 Academic writing course instructors

In order to have instructors with background of both the specialised disciplinary knowledge and the scientific academic writing language, further training in scientific academic writing for the staff (especially of other university courses) should become one of SUA's top priorities. Although the question of staff training in universities in Tanzania impinges on the resources, which are often constrained, the bigger challenge appears to be motivating such staff into realising that they too need to take up in-service training courses in scientific academic writing.

From the preceding discussion there are two false assumptions among lecturers of other university courses on this matter: First, that student writing is not one of the lecturers' academic concerns (see 'us' versus 'them' phenomenon discussed above); and secondly, the assumption that they (lecturers) have no problem at all in ESL writing of academic discourse. I have already noted that complacency on the matter has been reigning supreme in ESL writing research in higher education in Tanzania despite the repeated appeals on the critical state of affairs at this level. Further, these assumptions have not only been structuring the student writing research in Tanzania, but they have also been negatively impacting on the delivery

of academic communication skills course in higher education in Tanzania. This is because whatever basic skills students acquire from the CS course are not reinforced in other university courses, as students themselves admitted in students' questionnaires, 'No follow up activities after the completion of the CS course' (see Chapter Five, Section 5.2.2.4 on university support to students' ESL writing).

6.8.3   Course load and duration

Course duration is a further challenge facing the CS course. For example, the course outline comprises 7 broad topics (see Appendix 5), but whose descriptions in the course book (see Mafu *et al,* 2004) amount to 66 topics. It is a miracle that all this content can be covered in a span of one semester i.e. 15 weeks available for teaching the course. I am sure this is not what has been happening, drawing from my own experiences as a lecturer of the CS course at SUA: First, this is unusually extensive coverage for the time available. And secondly, it cannot be assumed that academic writing literacy is a one off process, where once students are drilled to write in 15 weeks then they will be able to use these skills in their disciplinary genres. For example, a student who joins a Bachelor's Degree of Science in Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness at SUA, will do the following related but technically distinct courses: Introductory Agricultural Economics, in the first year; Agricultural Marketing, in the second year; and Agricultural Finance and Credit Management, in the third year (Sokoine University of Agriculture, Prospectus, 2005/2006). Such courses require orientation into academic writing literacy in each of these years and not in a span of 15 weeks! It is therefore apparent that students' apprenticeship into literate-writers ought to be an on going process spanning all of students' academic life. This is not practical in a situation where linguistics knowledge is compartmentalised into topics to be drilled to students in a given number of hours per week.

Heavy load is another challenge to the CS course instruction, especially given that there are a few members of staff teaching the course. As one member in the discussion group admitted,

> Well, as my colleague has said one biggest *problem* I've faced is the sheer size of class. … So, whereas one would very much- would like to, to give, to assist students in terms of academic writing by giving secondary, many secondary, many exercises, ah the sheer size is, is ah big *problem* (Focus Group) (may emphasis).

Further challenge is the current arrangement whereby the CS course draws students not only from a wide variety of disciplines, but also from varied backgrounds in one classroom. As a result of this phenomenon, it appears that the course somehow carters for everybody, but satisfies none. Lecturers' observations during focus group discussions also attested to this reality,

> And the other thing is, remember we teach these students in groups so we mix students of different abilities. …. Because you don't have kinds of cohorts whereby you say these are weak students, these are the … say ah the average students, and these are the good students, and these are the best. As a result I can read from the faces of those good students that sometimes when you are dealing with certain elements they just get bored (Focus Group).

Mixing students from different disciplines can be best dealt with using the framework suggested above, i.e. developing disciplinary CS courses. But, the aspect of different abilities points back to the issues projected in the notions of the NLS (see Bakhtin in Lillis, 2001: 46) and CDA (see Lillis, 2000: 50) theories, that is, though students are socially shaped they are individuals with different experiences and backgrounds. It is for this reason that students' meaning making around academic writing is structured by such constructs as voices and identity discussed in Chapter Two. For example, in Chapter Two we have seen that voice,

as experience, to borrow from Bakhtin's construct, is "… the configurations of life experiences any one student writer brings with her to higher education" (cited in Lillis 2001; 46). And clearly different individuals cannot have exactly the same life experiences.

On the same token identity signals the manner in which individuals assert and describe 'a sense of who they are'. Thus, different individuals are bound to assert their sense of who they are differently. And to reiterate the argument made in Chapter Two, "student-writers sense of personal/social identity is a significant dimension to their experience of meaning making, influencing, as it does what students (don't) write and (don't) wish to write in academia" (see Lillis, 2001: 50). This conceptualisation is well projected in the Fairclough's notion on identification, 'where the production of text is also about the production – reproduction, transformation – of the self' (see Lillis, 2001: 50; see also Chapter Two).

This complex bundle of individual voices and identities structuring and shaping students' background experiences impact profoundly the students' pathways to literate writers. Encapsulating this construct Bourdieu, *et al* observe that,

> Performance on every test of intellectual skills which requires the decipherment or manipulation of complex linguistic structures depends on an apprenticeship in language which is unequally complex, according to family background (1994: 21).

Further, "… what we inherit from our social origins is not only a language, but inseparably- a relationship to language and specifically to the value of language" (see Bourdieu, *et al,* 1994). Unarguably therefore, some background experiences can conveniently classify some students as linguistically disadvantaged because "… a child spent in a world in which words tended to become the reality of things prepared him *more* to enter an intellectual world founded on the same principle *than the child from a different family setting*" (see Bourdieu, *et al,* 1994: 21) (My

addition). And therefore, in the Tanzanian social context the linguistically privileged home background or social origins is not limited to requisite resources in English language only but it also implies a sound knowledge even in Kiswahili. For example, the argument from Bourdieu *et al* is that, "The attitude to language cultivated in upper-class homes bears a close affinity to an education which demands a generalised 'verbalisation' of experience" (1994: 21) this means a close affinity to an education or order of discourse which demands a more subtle manipulation of language in meaning making. Accordingly, when such students are mixed with others who come from a relatively underprivileged linguistic background (in the sense explained here) there are dangers that the writing demands of either group are unlikely to be met.

From the above discussions, the CS course at SUA has been unable to address students' demands in terms of not only 'context of situation', that is, at the level of disciplinary genres, but also in terms of 'context of culture', that is, at the level of broader students' cultural backgrounds and home or community experiences. Such a constraint however, is not unique to the CS course at SUA. Other universities in Tanzania experience similar constraints with their CS courses. Commenting on the CS course at the university of Dar es Salaam, Ndoloi alludes to the same phenomenon when he says, writing programmes 'have been the responsibility of' Communication Skills Units, which are "either autonomous or sections of Language Departments". And because of "the large number of students and their different requirements, these courses have been crash programmes involving issues of grammar, listening, speaking, and short paragraphs writing compressed into a few weeks" (1994: 298-299). Ndoloi, notes further that

> Even when these courses run along other specialized courses, they have followed a standard syllabus and the uniqueness of the students who join have been ignored; either they have been overlooked or the pressures facing the tutors have been either too much and they only have had to make do with what has been possible (Ndoloi, 1994: 299-300).

Ndoloi attributes the quandary of the CS course at the university to the tendency of following the western models of syllabus, which are often not appropriate to the Tanzanian cultural situation. This means that lecturers and students in universities engage with academic literacies, which according to Street are global, distant, or not 'self-invented'. This argument can be correlated with Street's elaboration on seemingly the tension of the interaction between local and global literacies. The argument does not in any way espouse for what Street terms, 'romanticising of local literacies'. According to Street (2003) "distant literacies come to local context with their force and meaning intact" (p. 4), and that "local people more often take hold of the new practices and adapt them to local circumstances". The outcome of these "local - global encounters around literacy is always a new hybrid rather than a single essentialized version of either" (Street, 2003: 4).

In the case of universities in Tanzania, CS courses seem to have been privileging the dominant or this 'global' writing instruction instead of hybridising global and local literacies to be able to address students' ESL writing demands in the Tanzania's social cultural context.

The parallel of this is the encounter between local literacies acquired from home or community environment, or pre-university schooling that students bring into the universities and the university dominant literacies. The hybridisation of such literacies is essential especially in situations where the local literacies students bring to the university are incompatible with the universities' dominant literacies, or as it were, where students' perceptions on their ESL writing skills are incompatible with their actual ESL writing skills. And as Street observes, in 'a modern, indeed "postmodern" condition', some local literacies may no longer be appropriate where "empowerment requires high communicative skills including formal literacy" (2001: 12).

This formulation can also be extended into the English versus Kiswahili debate in Tanzania, in that on the one hand English in Tanzania can conveniently be considered as the language of empowerment because it is the medium of instruction (see Chapter One) and thus guarantees access to higher education itself. But, on the other hand it is Kiswahili, which students possess and bring with them to the university. Since Kiswahili and code switching are not usually allowed, students are denied their full repertoire to access knowledge, which in this case is hidden in the language of higher education. What we see here is two-layered opacity to knowledge in higher education in Tanzania's social context. First, the opaque orders of discourse, because they belong to a special genre, the academic genres, and secondly the opaque medium of instruction, English, which is at best a second language, and at worst a foreign language to most Tanzanians.

In this case therefore, Kiswahili could crucially be a mediation strategy in the provision of knowledge, which is sometimes not accessible through the opaque medium of English. The caveat here is that not any Kiswahili (as students' local literacies) can be suitable for academic purposes. If Kiswahili is to be used in academic discourse then students as well as lecturers need to be taught academic Kiswahili required for high communicative skills.

Hybridisation of local and global literacies discussed above have some things in common with a multiliteracies dimension proposed by the group known as the New London Group[8]. The mission of this group was to come up with literacy pedagogy, which will address students' needs in three 'rapidly changing realms' namely, working lives, public lives (citizenship) and personal lives (lifeworlds). Their main argument here is that "When technologies of meaning are changing so rapidly, there cannot be one set of standards or skills that constitute the ends of literacy learning, however taught" (See Cope and Kalantzis, 2000: 6). The views of this group is that the view of substituting one language with another, or according to Street (2003) "a single essentialized version" (p. 4) of one or the other language is 'reductionist' because "one limited understanding of literacy is substituted with another" (Cope and Kalantzis, 2000). In the Tanzania's context,

this description fits the language of instruction debate referred in Chapter One. In the multilingual literacy approach, students need to be provided with not just one set rather several cultural and linguistic standards. In the Tanzania's social context this entails Kiswahili, English, and any other language(s) as it deems appropriate. And as we saw above, learners gain "substantively in metacognitive and metalinguistic abilities and in their ability to reflect critically on complex systems and their interactions" (see Cope and Kalantzis, 2000: 15) when they "juxtapose different languages, discourses, styles, and approaches" (Cope and Kalantzis, 2000: 15).

The tensions structuring students' ESL academic writing pedagogy at SUA and in Tanzanian social context generally is diagrammatically represented in Figure 6.1. From this figure there are four constructs - viz., conceptualisation, responsibility, practice opportunities, and ESL writing - which surround the interpretation of student writing in Tanzanian universities. However, it is the first three constructs which directly influence academic writing pedagogical practices at universities, and which have often been central to the tensions between the CS course and other departments around student writing.
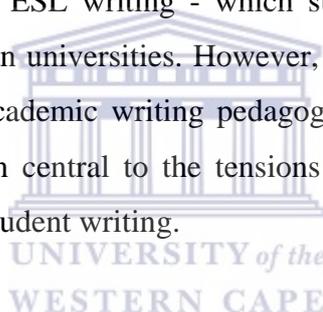
The dominant discourses in the CS course and in other departments operate in opposition. This explains the existing weak-working relation between the two sides as is signposted by the dotted lines. It needs mentioning however, that the two academic domains hold a similar view on one construct that is conceptualisation of student writing. Both domains view student writing as a problem around skills as opposed to a problem around literacy. The implication of this conceptualisation in the universities writing pedagogy is to have the grammatical features and study skills offered to students, not only as autonomous, but also as decontextualised from the context of culture (social cultural practices) and from the context of situation (disciplinary genres) within which student writing has to take place.

In the model in Figure 6.1 below, there is also a problematisation of ESL writing research with regards to object of inquiry. The contestation here surrounds the underpinning within which ESL writing research is structured in Tanzania. The dominant underpinning is the one that projects student writing as the problem of students only. Such a view implicates negatively in the ESL academic writing pedagogical practices especially where lecturers' discourses, which are neither scrutinised nor critiqued, continue to dominate communicative practices in the university community of discourses.

Figure 6.1:   The Tensions Structuring Students' Academic Writing Pedagogy in HE in Tanzania

6.9 Configuration of dominant literacy practices at SUA

From the results in Chapter Five, it is apparent that the CS course is the only meaningful supportive structure for student writing at SUA. I have discussed the CS course in section 6.7. I explore the configuration of the dominant university literacy practices within the framework of university, faculty and or departmental guides / policies, aimed at facilitating ESL writing of the academic discourse. My theoretical assumption on examining the university documents was to see how these documents index the university dominant literacy practices, against which students' success in academic writing could be measured. From the data presentation in Chapter Five, this domain involved technical report writing manuals and External Examiners' reports as discussed below.

6.9.1 University guides for student writing

These particular guides refer to such writing practices as theses, dissertations, and technical reports. Though these writing practices are often reserved for students in advanced levels at the university, I found it important to comment on them as they have pedagogical implications even for students in the lower levels, as is the case for 1st and 2nd year students.
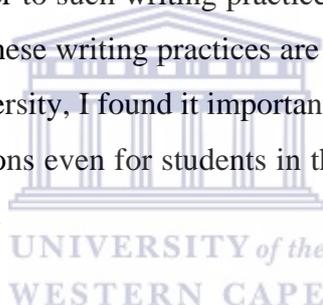
From the data in Chapter Five, there were two writing guides under this category: one was on preparing dissertations and theses, and the other was on writing field practical technical report. One aspect noted here is that in either manual, students' guidance to writing is approached rather differently: Different from each of the manual and different from how guidance to academic writing process is configured in the academic writing pedagogy.

To begin with the university-wide guide is titled 'Guidelines for Preparing Dissertations Thesis and other Publications'. From this title, one gathers that the manual seeks to offer guidance to students or staff who engage in writing for publication. The word 'writing' is excluded from the title, this has not been done by mistake, but because no guidance on writing of these academic genres is offered in the manual. Hence, the title 'Guidance for Preparing' and not

'Guidance for Writing' was chosen. The manual contents in this case can conveniently be called a list of formal presentational features of a text supposedly belonging to the three academic genres mentioned. This list is what makes the main headings accompanied with four appendices in the Table of Contents (2002, p. iii).

I have noted in Chapter Five that the Field Practical Training guide, on the other hand, mainly dwells on the practicalities of the students' work in the field. There are some references made to writing in the manual, but where such references are made they are cryptic and inadequate in coverage.

One emerging issue here is that in these manuals a student writer is not guided in the writing process itself in either writing a field technical report or dissertation and a thesis for reasons I have explicated.

In their present format there are two dangers embodied in such manuals: one danger is that much as these formal features and guidelines are required, those who happen to master them may believe that they know how to write. Another danger is that these formal features and guidelines are represented as if all of them can be applied in all disciplines regardless, in exactly the same way. For example, we have seen that (see Candlin and Plum 1999 in Candlin and Hyland, 1999) academic genres tend to differ in different academic disciplines. And this difference is recognisable or reflected through the generic integrity of the genres of its kind. Thus, students engaged in academic writing, have to encounter and produce extremely varied nature of text types in any one programme of study giving rise to 'a plethora of different text types'. And that such a colony of texts is regularly purposively differentiated, made more or less textually distinctive, and frequently draw intertextuality on a range of text-types. Therefore, models of processing such texts are bound to vary as a result of distinct textual structures and design characteristics typical of such texts in different disciplines. A guide for academic writing pedagogy should therefore be keen to these distinctive design characteristics embodied in individual disciplines.

6.9.2   *University examination reports*

I have pointed out in Chapter Five that two issues have been noted in the report by the External Examiner (EE) and in the report by the Department of Social Sciences on the examination evaluation of Communication Skills course: First, the indexing of literacy problems in student writing at SUA, and secondly, the documentation of the problem around student writing in the university records. For example, it was in this report that,

> While students performed slightly better in the section on grammar and discourse style… their grammar in the writing section was extremely weak (see Chapter Five on EE Report).

This observation therefore underlined the extent of the problem noted by lecturers during interviews and focus group discussions. Thus, one can argue that students' pre university knowledge and experiences (local literacies they bring to the university) are not compatible with the dominant literacies demanded at the university.

Another aspect worth discussing is how the External Examiner portrays the source of the problem around literacy in student academic writing. According to the EE's report, this responsibility rests squarely on the students. The examiner indicates this by portraying students as the agents in the two contexts of practice, as is in this excerpt of the EE report,

> This may be attributed to the kind of grammar they (*students*) study at secondary school level. At secondary school level *students study grammar in isolation*, in the form of structure; while *the functional grammar that they are required to use at tertiary level, mostly through writing is rarely practised* (EE Report) [my emphasis].

In the first instance (see italics) the author says, 'At secondary school level *students study grammar in isolation*', which implies that the problem is around

'students using the grammar in isolation' and not around 'students being taught the grammar in isolation'. But, logically it is the latter and not the former, which should be held responsible for the student unsuccessful writing in secondary schools in Tanzania.

The Examiner also emphasises the 'burden of responsibility' for student academic writing deficiencies even at the university level onto the students themselves, *the functional grammar that they (students) are required to use at tertiary level, mostly through writing is rarely practised.* There is a however a slight modification here in that the sentence is in the passive form. In this case, using van Dijk's (1993) expression, the author has left implicit or understated the "responsible agency of powerful social actor in the events represented in the text" (p. 253). One can correctly guess as to who is supposed to practise students' functional grammar at the university. But, again the author subtly exonerates secondary school and universities from students' writing problems, which means once again the responsibility is squarely placed on the students themselves.

The author of the report has been able to vindicate schools and universities by using transitivity, which in the CDA and the NLS theories revolve around shifting roles of participants in the discourse (see Fairclough, 2001; Wodak and Meyer, 2001 for details). This dimension of the analysis was not focused in the current study. However, I have highlighted it because it is associated with other issues I have raised previously. For example, the aspect of focusing on students also emphasises the point made earlier in the discussion that student writing in Tanzania's social cultural context is viewed as students' problem only. That student unsuccessful writing is a result of students' own 'failed attempts to access dominant standard form' (cf. Pardoe, 2000: 150). This configuration has also impinged on the ESL writing research in Tanzania whereby the objects of inquiry in such research have primarily been students.

In giving the recommendations however, the EE's report seems to be reconfiguring the earlier notion by indicating who should be responsible for mentoring students into literate-writers, as in this excerpt of the report,

> My recommendation here would be to give students more writing practice in Communication Skills courses, where possible, in subject specialist courses. Alternatively, assignments could be set by subject specialist … and marked jointly by staff from both sides. Alternatively, assignments could be set by subject specialist Professors/Lecturers and marked jointly by staff from both sides: subject specialist staff for content, and communication skills staff for language (see EE Report, Appendix 3).

The Department of Social Sciences (DSC), on the other hand, seems to agree with the EE's report to the extent of the existence of the problem, but not with the cause of the problem. The Department indicates explicitly who is responsible for this by making the subject specialists, and the university play the agent role in the problem (see Chapter Five for details). However, the departmental recommendations below raise issues worth commenting on,

> We, therefore, recommend that subject specialists be requested to:
> d. Pay attention to, and assess language component when marking students' assignments;
> e. Encourage and guide students to use *appropriate English* during seminar presentations, tutorials, and consultations; (my emphasis);
> f. Discourage students to code-mix and code-switch languages (i.e. Kiswahili-English or vice versa) during classroom sessions or while engaged in other academic activities outside the classroom (see DSC Report Appendix 4). (Cf. the discussion on attitudes structuring students' English language use, this chapter).

The department's understanding of appropriate English is not explained here. But from the discussion at the opening of this chapter, it is apparent that *appropriate*

English according to the Department's point of view entails grammatical accuracy and correctness of language features. Departmental understanding of literacy as I have said earlier is biased towards considering literacy as autonomous skills, which students acquire in isolation of the fields of study in their (students') departments. This interpretation is reflected not only in the structuring of the CS itself but also in the pedagogical practices, which as we have seen, privileges grammar teaching.

The issue of code mixing and code switching between English and Kiswahili in a higher learning classroom in the Tanzanian context received detailed attention in Section 6.6.2 of this chapter. Suffice it to say that the Departmental view in this issue projects the dominant university cultural values, which consider CM and CS in the classroom as against the established university cultural code. We have seen that such ideologies take no cognisance of the reality that unfamiliarity of the code often underlies communication breakdown amongst students in higher learning classrooms in Tanzania. And borrowing from Bourdieu's *et al,*
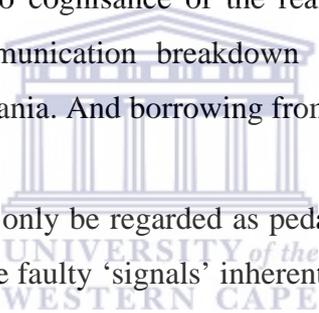
> Communication can only be regarded as pedagogical when every effort is made to eliminate the faulty 'signals' inherent in an incomplete knowledge of the code and to transmit the code in the most effective way (1994: 4).

And in the higher education classroom in Tanzanian social context, the efforts to 'eliminate the faulty signals' may warrant employing CM and CS as a useful mediation strategy.

One other thing about the Departmental recommendations is on the emphasis given around the involvement of subject specialists in student writing. All the three propositions in the recommendation are directed to subject specialists. Such an emphasis underlines the tension that exists between subject specialists and the CS course lecturers around student writing. As I have noted from lecturers' interviews that some lecturers in specialist subjects do not consider student

writing as their responsibility (see Section 6.3 above). This seems to be another backdrop against which these recommendations were made.

6.10 Pedagogical discourse and academic writing literacy

The data on pedagogical discourse was obtained through classroom observation. The intention of observing classes was to see instructors as well as students' discursive practices with a view of determining not only how such discourses are constitutive of social cultural practices of a university as a community of discourse, but also how or what practices work for or against facilitating students' acquisition of ESL writing literacy.

In the presentation of the results, the classroom observation constituted two categories, the first was classroom sessions for Communication Skills course, which amounted to three sessions; and the second was classroom sessions for other university courses. The sessions for other university courses were two namely, Materials Science for Food technologists (FT 104), and Programme Planning and Evaluation (EE 205). These two courses are offered in the Department of Food Science and the Department of Agriculture Education and Extension respectively. I discuss the results beginning with highlighting classroom observation for the Communication Skills course, and then proceed with a discussion of the common features of classroom discourse across courses as have been observed in the study and the manner in which such features are likely to impact students' growth into literate writers.

6.10.1 Whose learning objectives

From the three classroom observations for the Communication Skills (CS) course the lesson topics were all on grammatical aspects. I noted in Chapter Five that all the three lectures for the CS course were structured around considering literacy as skills. The tension between literacy as skills versus literacy as practice is embodied in the tension between autonomous versus ideological models of literacy respectively, and which is discussed in detail in Chapter Two. And because of the centrality of the concepts, autonomous and ideological models of

literacy in the NLS tradition, (see, Street, 2003; Christie, 2005a; Lillis, 2001) the constructs have been referred in the preceding chapters so often that I need not reiterate them here. Suffice it to say that the classroom discourses for all the three observed lessons for the CS course have consistently helped to illuminate the underpinning structuring student writing pedagogy in higher education in Tanzania. This underpinning can unarguably be profiled with the autonomous model of literacy, in which the students' learning of academic writing literacy privileges the grammar teaching.

There is one other aspect worth noting. In all the CS sessions the lecturers echoed the 'caveat' given in the course book that the grammar topics listed under this course were just revision topics (see also Mafu *et al, 2004*.: 148). Despite being revision topics, it became apparent from this study that it was the lecturers who decide which topics to revise. For example, the following introduction to the lecture in one of the CS course session is reminiscent of the ethos involved in who decides, why and what grammatical aspects are to be delivered to students,

Lecturer: … what ah the Head of Department decided to do was that for the - for – after every two weeks we shall talk about grammar. Because he's concerned about your-the way you have written your assignment - and the way you have written your assignment (Classroom observation, November 2005) (Repetition in the original).

Clearly, students here are not invited to suggest which topics they have not understood and which ones they would wish (or not wish) to revise. If these are revision topics it is only logical that students may surely not need to revise everything. But if everything needs to be revised then not everything warrants exactly the same explicative details. The dangers are that such pedagogical engagements may not necessarily be addressing anyone in particular especially in situations where students of mixed abilities and varying linguistic backgrounds are involved as is the case with university classrooms in Tanzania. Paradoxically,

the predominance of mixed abilities classes is a phenomenon widely acknowledged by lecturers themselves,

> […] we teach these students in groups so we mix students of different abilities. …As a result I can read from the faces of those good students that sometimes when you are dealing with certain elements they just get bored (Focus Group, see also Section 6.8 above).

The reason that this reality is not taken into consideration in the CS course instruction are embedded in the constraints explained in Section 6.8 on the adequacy of CS course.

6.10.2 Lecturer as dominant voice in students' learning

The classroom discourse practices of the three CS sessions and those of the other university courses converged in both the lecturers' instructional approaches and their (lecturers') discursive practices. Looking at these aspects holistically there emerged several issues that highlight pedagogical discourse practices underlying student writing in Tanzania. Thus, it is instructive at this juncture to look at all the observed classroom sessions across the university courses. Firstly, pedagogical discourse in all the sessions was predominantly teacher talk or from Bourdieu's *et al* (1994) metaphor, 'professorial monologue' which is characteristic of delivery of lectures in universities. Here the lecturer takes the rostrum and uses optimally his privilege of speaking "… and the implied privilege of controlling the speech of others" (see Bourdieu's *et al*, 1994: 13).

In the case of the sessions I observed, there were occasions where lecturers invited students to participate in the classroom discourse. But this was, in many cases, only occasional and in other cases very rarely and it occurred especially in situations where lecturers wanted to cross check students' understanding or to invite students to seek clarification on issues covered in the lecture. In both cases students' response was largely minimal. This phenomenon illuminated the complexity of classroom discourse often resulting from the interplay of the twin

constructs, which Bourdieu *et al* correctly termed as, 'linguistic misunderstanding' and 'complicity in misunderstanding' which traditionally engulf pedagogical communication in higher education in Tanzania.

Bourdieu *et al* describe linguistic misunderstanding as a situation where university students fail "to cope with the technical and scholastic demands made on their use of language as students" (1994: 4). For example, in all the five classroom sessions I attended lecturers' questions to students were often greeted with either silence or, better still, inaudible mumblings or, at best, a few isolated voices, which very often sounded uncertain. This phenomenon underlies one of the most popular complaints from among the lecturers at SUA that students do not participate in the classroom discourse as actively as they should.

Lecturers have often attributed students' minimal participation in classroom discourse to students' inadequate control of the linguistic and cultural code of the university community of practice. But in view of the findings of this study, lecturers' argument for students' reduced interactive response in the classroom discourse may not be the only (or even the main) argument, and thus it is contestable. As I have indicated above (see, lecturer's discourse) claims around student writing in Tanzania's social context are often made outside the context of lecturers' own discursive practices. There is no appeal to self-critique to see how much of students' literacy practice is indeed reflective of lecturers' own pedagogical practices. During classroom observations for this study there were instances, for example, where lecturers' questions to students were rather obscure, in that what exactly the lecturers wanted students to do or say was not absolutely clear.

In addition to the linguistic misunderstanding in the classroom discourse is the phenomenon of 'complicity in misunderstanding,' referred to above (see Bourdieu *et al,* 1994) which can conveniently be related to (and explain) some of the aspects observed in the classroom, as illustrated in the extract below,

Lecturer: Any question with regards to cast iron as we just said about?

Students: (Silence).

Lecturer: Does this mean that everything is making at least some sense?

Students: (Few voices) Yes!

Lecturer: Okay if everything is making sense here then we can move one step further and start worrying about steels. We spend a substantial amount of time talking steels. To begin with, why are we talking of steels and not steel?

Students: (Silence).

(Classroom Observation, February 2006).

In the excerpt above, the lecturer invites questions from students as a way of checking students' understanding of that section of the lecture. The lecturer's invitation was first greeted with silence from the students. But when the lecturer asked students whether everything was understood, the reply was affirmative. But the lecturer's follow-up question did not only prove that the lecturer's assumption on students' understanding was incorrect, but also indicated that students were actually reluctant to admit that they did not understand. This is where complicity comes in. Indeed the lecturer knew that students were possibly not following his arguments in the lecture, and that is one reason for him to pose the question. *Does this mean that everything is making at least some sense?* This is one type of common rhetorical questions in classroom discourse from among the lecturers. A few other examples as extracted from a classroom discourse are illustrated below,

Lecturer: You only mention the item on which the action was what … was performed! *Is that clear*?

Students: (Silence)

Lecturer: Are we-are we working the same- bus all of us here*?*

Students (Chorus) Yes!

Lecturer: Do you know what we are doing?

Students (Chorus) Yes!

(Classroom Observation, November, 2005).

When a lecturer asks the students 'Is that clear?' as is the case with the above question, it "rules out any question it might be clear" (see Bourdieu *et al,* 1994*:* 11) although often the correct assumption is that *it is not clear.* The lecturer knows this, but s/he would normally continue with the lecture nonchalantly, perhaps to conform to what one can call, the university culture of mystery, which privileges, according to Bourdieu *et al* (1994: 14) "… the marvels of professional language" that gives little room for 'methodical and explicit presentations'. Students also know that it is not clear, but the reason that they refrain from interrupting their lecturer is because of resorting to, using Bourdieu *et al* metaphor, the "'rhetoric of despair' in that,

> If students would not even dream of interrupting a professorial monologue which they do not understand, this is because the part of them that obeys the logic of the situation reminds them that if they do not understand, then they should not be present (Bourdieu *et al*, 1994: 17*).*

In this way lecturers and students enter into the relationship of complicity of misunderstanding.
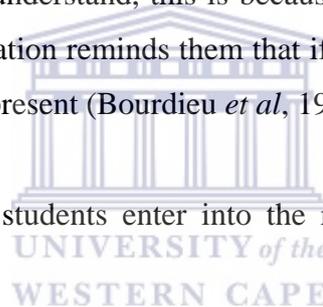
6.10.3 *Verbal feedback in the classroom*

I noted earlier in this chapter (see Section 6.4) that lecturers' feedback to student writing is an area where lecturers' discursive practices in the student-writers and lecturer-readers' relationship glaringly work against aiding students' meaning making process in academic writing at SUA. This phenomenon became evident through interviews, which helped to demonstrate the manner in which lecturers used or rather abused authority and empowered discourse when responding to students' writing in the form of feedback. What was observed in the classroom concerning lecturers' verbal comments reconfirmed the observations made on the nature of lecturers' feedback on the part of students' writing. It is worth reproducing some of the comments here for discussion purposes.

Lecturer: (Cracks a joke) *Someone is here with his body and spirit is roaming about*. (Cracking a joke)

Students: (Laugh)

Lecturer: Now usage of the pronoun, [Addressing the class] *although of course-I am not giving you the chance you don't ask questions so I keep on going on. Whether you understand or don't understand I don't know. I'm not an angel I'm not malaika Gabriel* … When you find this one there you know that the noun should be what …

Students: (Chorus) Plural!

Lecturer: Plural! *Simple rule! Very simple! Simple for me, difficult for you!* (Pause) (Cracks a joke).

Students: (Silence)

Lecturer: *That's why you don't listen and you don't understand*! (Pause). I have a table for you. For those ones who want to cram tables. There is a table there, personal pronouns, subject and object form (reads from the board), so 'I', when it comes an object it's 'me'; 'he', 'him'; 'she', 'her'; 'we', 'us'; 'they', 'them'; 'who', 'whom' (Pause). ….
(Classroom observation, November, 2005)
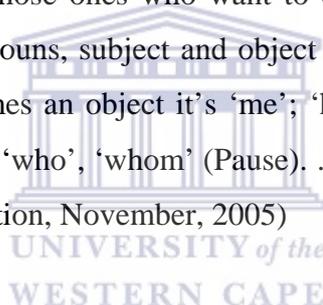
I indicated in Chapter Five that these comments highlight some of the issues I noted earlier on the lecturers-students relationship in the social discursive space of the reader- writer or the modeller- learner. I have noted that such relationship is often constructed on power imbalance. The knowledge of the subject matter and the authority vested on the lecturer by the university to control a socio-discursive space of a classroom puts lecturers in a powerful position in this relationship. But it is this empowered discourse that lecturers exploit to perpetuate the relationship of the powerful and the dominated in the community of discourse with students as indexed in one of the lecturers' comments (in italics) above.

6.10.4   Discourse practices in students' texts: discourse markers
From the survey of students' text, we have seen that students have limited access to conjunction resources to realise various logical relations in their essays. This

constraint is even worse with internal conjunctions (i.e. discourse markers 'used to link logical steps internal to the text itself') than it is with the external conjunctions (i.e. those markers 'linking events in the world beyond the text itself') (See Martin and Rose, 2003: 120). In Chapter Five, we have seen for example, that students could not use certain conjunctions to realise certain logical relations. This is the case with conjunctions for developing and staging under *addition*; conjunctions for compare, adjust, contrast, and retract under *comparison*; conjunctions for terminating, and those for simultaneous under *time*; and some conjunctions for concluding, justifying and countering under *consequence*. As I have said earlier students' constraint in accessing internal conjunctions make them (students) fail to orient their readers through staged logical steps in sequencing their events in the text (cf. also Martin and Rose, 2003).

Further, the emerging patterns of students' use of conjunctions include, omission of conjunctions, mismatch between conjunctions and realisation functions, repetitive use of conjunctions, and redundancy use of conjunctions. All these patterns show that students' literacy performance on discourse markers is not compatible with literacy practice required in English academic text on the use of conjunctions.

I also need to reiterate that students' understanding of academic essay writing seem wanting. This is evident where students write their texts in note form as in these examples (also presented in Chapter in Chapter Five).

St. text The agricultural marketing deserves a separate treatment from marketing of manufactured goods in the following ways.
Due to the nature of commodities used in the marketing.
(iv) Agriculture marketing deals with commodities, which are in high risk of spoilage.

(v) The functions of agriculture marketing depend on the performance at other sectors example transporters, bankers and advertisers.

(vi) Agriculture commodities takes long time to be produced *hence* to capture the market it can need more time …

(Source: Student's text)

St. text   The study of agriculture marketing deserves a separate treatment from marketing of manufactured goods due to the following reasons:

- In developing countries agricultural activities comprise many famer which are scattered and exceeding independent production and consumption decision.

- Due to central role of agriculture in developing countries, agriculture production is subjected to numerous policy distortion

- The structure of costs and funding of agricultural activities depends sustainably on the performance of other sectors such as communication, roads …

(Source: Students' text)

It might seem that, in these texts, student writers intended to present points only in their texts. But, two things need to be born in mind: First, students here could do more that just numbering statements whose logical relationships and sequencing, in this case, are not even made explicit. Secondly, the opening statements of both writers look similar. This is indicative of the reality that student writers, in their texts, are doing nothing more than simply reproducing lecture notes. I have noted earlier that students' writing 'style' is a consequence of questioning practice (of some lecturers), which seems to encourage students to respond to essay questions around lecture notes. Because of this, students have no allowance of bringing in some additional material from their own critical reading and thinking. As a result,

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they (students) fail to use language with confidence to articulate their voices and express their identities (cf. Fairclough, 1995; Lillis, 2001; Leibowitz, 2000).

Relating to the above aspect is the issue of feedback to essays. I have noted earlier that on the same question topic, markers gave equal treatment to both note form texts and essay type texts of student writers. Thus, standards for essay writing are not made explicit. Students who produced note form texts for evaluation have no compelling reason to write essays in a different (appropriate) format next time as their first (failed) attempt to do so did not elicit any correctional response.

In view of the above, there is a mismatch between students' literacy practice around discourse markers and the literacy practice of discourse markers found in the English academic text. Further, this mismatch jeopardises students' essayist literacy acquisition and performance in general. We have seen that essay is a privileged form of literacy at the university, and. "Like all texts, there are specific characteristics that this type of discourse must fulfil and display" (See Kucer, 2005: 209). In university essayist based literacy, meanings are constructed in a direct, explicit and unambiguous manner "as if there is no shared knowledge between reader and writer" (Kucer, 2005: 209). But this is not what is happening with the students' texts surveyed.

The results on students' use of discourse markers affirm the issue of orders of discourse I have so often referred to in this thesis. Students do not seem to perform particular forms and functions of academic essay literacy, as these are hidden in the opaque medium of instruction, i.e. English. This notion revolves back to the issue of access to such literacy, which as I have said is unequal given the Tanzania's social cultural context.

6.11   Conclusion to Chapter Six

In this chapter I have dealt with the discussion of results. I have organised the chapter into ten sections according to the emerging themes from the findings

presented in Chapter Five. The chapter opens with a discussion of the nature of the problem around student unsuccessful writing at SUA. Within this framework I have noted a number of aspects central to student unsuccessful writing namely, lecturers' engagement in the apprenticeship process of student writers- which I reported as not aiding students through their mentoring process; students and lecturers social discursive relationship, which I said is regulated by power imbalance, and that lecturers abused their empowered discourse in their communicative practice with students.

The other aspects around student unsuccessful writing, and which I have dealt with in the chapter include lecturers approach to students' note taking. The notion of students' note taking is not clear-cut given the teaching and learning environment at SUA. However I have argued that lecturers should consider note taking as a learning strategy, but which ought to be used judicious in order not to stifle other learning objectives.

In the chapter, I have also discussed the notion of lecturers' discourse as object of inquiry in the ESL writing research in Tanzania. This is in the view that most research done so far have targeted students directly leaving lecturers unscathed, although they may be playing a bigger role in the student unsuccessful writing problem. The section, which followed in this chapter examined attitudes underpinning lecturers and students use of English. In this section I have discussed the issues underlying conflicting tendencies between students and lecturers discourse practices on campus.

Adequacy of CS course is a phenomenon, which received detailed discussion in the chapter particularly because it directly addresses one of the research questions in the current study. In this section I have looked at the configuration of the course and discussed its implications in the higher education writing pedagogy. I focused attention to the adequacy of the CS course by also linking it to the university support for student writing at SUA. I noted here that the existing guides to academic writing at the university project an illusive picture of academic

writing hence they (the guides) cannot be useful material for supporting the process of mentoring students into literate writers.

Lastly in this chapter is a discussion on the pedagogical practices I noted during classroom observation. Key issues in this section include linguistic misunderstanding and complicity of misunderstanding, which characterise classroom discourse in Tanzanian social setting; and how these two constructs, among others, impact on the apprenticing of student writers.

From the discussions above, there are pedagogical implications, which link symbiotically to suggestions of the new pedagogical approaches towards enabling students manipulate repertoires of genres and discourse "within orders of discourse for text production and interpretation" (see Titscher *et al*, 2000: 148-149). In Chapter Seven I give conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY FOR ACADEMIC WRITING PEDAGOGY IN TANZANIA, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I give conclusions and recommendations. First, I give conclusions on what emerged from the thematic areas discussed in Chapter Six. I have situated my conclusions around attitudes and ideological formation of Tanzania's social context where power and dominance structure social relations. Accordingly, my conclusions centre on the profile of student writing, the lecturer-student socio-discursive relationship, the Communication Skills Course, and the lecturers' control of the language of instruction. Further, I look at classroom pedagogical approaches, the university support structure for academic writing pedagogy, and the language skills and academic literacy in the Tanzanian social context. I conclude the section by looking at the attitudes underpinning language use in higher education in Tanzania. All these aspects, as I have said, are looked within the realms of social relations of dominance as are manufactured and legitimatised by dominant university discourses.

In the second section of this chapter, I present the implications of the current study on other ESL academic literacy research in Tanzania. The third section is on recommendations of the ways in which social inequality in school-based literacy can be addressed in Tanzania generally. This is followed by specific recommendations on ways in which student writing problem can be addressed in the higher academic writing pedagogy with specific reference to SUA. I conclude the chapter by recommending areas for further research.

7.2   Conclusions

7.2.1   Student writing

From the findings and the discussion, student writing at SUA can be profiled as unsuccessful. Students' unsuccessful writing revolves not so much around being unable to write in English (i.e. manipulation of grammatical skills), but rather being unable to write in the academic discourse as demanded by the different disciplinary requirements. This is in view of considering literacy not as discrete skills, but as social practice, and as configured in the literacy theories, which also revolve around the politics of power and dominance. These configurations should be used as the backdrop against which success in student writing should be judged in the academic writing pedagogy in higher education in Tanzania. This is as long as student writing is considered as firmly entrenched in the disciplines within which students are writing, and for which it really is. It cannot be assumed that knowing how to construct a grammatically flawless sentence, would necessarily make a student able to function within the realms of a particular discipline, in say, arguing a point, explaining a concept or using methods of investigation in accordance to the discourse practices demanded in those disciplines.

In the case of Tanzanian social context, if accuracy in the control of grammatical tools was enough then students would have, to a certain degree, been able to use literacy in various disciplinary spheres when entering higher education in Tanzania. The fact that this is not happening is because the question of accuracy or correctness in formal grammatical features does not seem to be at the core of student unsuccessful writing problem in higher education. Language tools are provided to students for many years beginning from primary school where English is taught as subject from primary 3 and in secondary and high school, where students are instructed in English for a total of 6 years. But students still seem unable to demonstrate these skills because of the ideological underpinnings regulating access to knowledge, and which, as we have seen, treat some literacies as given, known or transparent, while they are in fact opaque (cf. van Dijk 1993). This explains why after many years of English instruction students still have difficulties in accessing the language.

At the university level students have to face double obstacles regarding accessing knowledge. First, they have to face opaque orders of discourse, which belong to a special genre, the academic genres. Secondly, they have to face opaque medium of instruction, English, which, as I said, is at best a second language, and even a third language to many Tanzanians. Since Kiswahili and code switching are not usually allowed, students are denied their full potential to access knowledge, which in this case is hidden in the language of higher education. Thus, students' unsuccessful writing is traceable within these ideologies and social conditions embodied in higher education in Tanzania's social cultural context. Such conditions "facilitate the enactment of dominance and hence contributing to its reproduction" (see van Dijk, 1993: 255).

7.2.2   Lecturer-student socio-discursive relationship

I have noted that the relationship between the student-writer and the lecturer-reader, which is that of an apprentice and a mentor respectively, is structured around authority and power imbalance. Lectures' position of power results from their privileged access to institutional power resources (cf. also van Dijk 1993) namely, status as lecturers; knowledge of the discourse genres, and knowledge of English- the medium of instruction which is, at worst, opaque knowledge to most students.   It is this privileged position in the socio- discursive event, which lecturers capitalise on in constructing and sustaining their dominant discourse in a communicative practice with students. In this case therefore, lecturers become part of not only social-cultural make up of Tanzania, but also of student writing problem.

Lecturers however, fail to see themselves as part of the problem of student writing, in that they (lecturers) too are the product of this social cultural make up. Often lecturers do not look at students' unsuccessful writing, for what it is, a stage in their meaning making.   As a result, they (lecturers) waste valuable time to express indignation to an extent of making students sometimes appear unworthy of these lecturers' effort.

Another argument is around the interdiscursive dimensions, which situate the lecturer-mentor and the student- apprentice relationship at SUA. There are three such dimensions. First is lecturers' interpretation of students' academic writing. In this case, the lecturers' understanding of student writing is that of skills, as opposed to practice. As a result, the academic writing pedagogy in higher education is structured, as we have seen, around the provision of skills (i.e. strategies of manipulating grammatical rules) as discrete items and often decontextualised from a student's academic cultural context.

The second dimension is on lecturers' aid to students in the form of feedback to student writing (i.e. both written and verbal feedback), which I have characterised as inconsistent and often mystifying. I have noted that students have to encounter and produce extremely varied text types in any one programme of study at the university, and this gives rise to a colony of text types. Models of processing such texts also vary due to the distinctive nature of textual structures and design characteristics typical of such texts in different disciplines (cf. Candlin and Plum in Candlin and Hyland, 1999). But such designs are usually obscure. Furthermore, the writing objectives and the meaning of academic writing criteria do not seem to be provided to students, as we have seen with discourse markers in Chapter Five. And where such criteria are provided they are not presented explicitly to students instead they (criteria) are treated as transparent or given. In other words, students are expected to know such criteria and apply them in their disciplines during academic writing events. What we see here therefore is the autonomous model of literacy reigning supreme in the workings of institutional order of discourse (cf. Lillis, 2001).

The third dimension revolves around classroom discourse practices. Classroom discourse at SUA, which is characteristic of classroom discourse in Tanzania's higher education, is predominantly teacher talk or what Bourdieu *et al* (1994) refer to as 'professorial monologue'. Here the teaching and learning is unidirectional, the lecturer assumes the role of the 'all knowing' authority and the

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source of knowledge. The lecturer, because of his privileged access to institutional power resources, takes the rostrum and uses optimally his privilege of speaking including the implied privilege vested on him by the institutional orders of discourse (i.e. the university) of controlling the speech of students who, in this case, become silent participants.

Drawing from the notions of CDA (Wodak and Meyer, 2001; Fairclough, 1995; 2001) and NLS (see Barton and Hamilton, 2000; Street, 2001), it can be concluded that the real tension between the lecturer-mentor and the student-apprentice in Tanzanian social context hinges on two things. The first is the lecturers-students' relations of dominance for which the former do not realise that they help to perpetuate. Secondly, the lecturers' lack of clear judgement in how to invite students into a community of discourse to work into a common understanding of literacy practices and particularly into the construction, production and reproduction of academic texts. Thus, at SUA and the Tanzania's social context in general real opportunities for dialogue between lecturers and students, as real participants in the construction and interpretation of texts do not seem to exist.
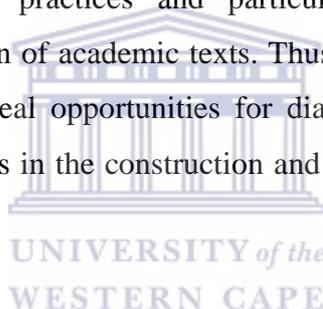
7.2.3   Communication Skills course

The Communication Skills course was started at SUA, as in many other universities in Tanzania, as part of the efforts of higher learning institutions in Tanzania to address students' academic communication problems (which seem frequent) and particularly the academic writing. But the pedagogical goals of starting the CS course at SUA (as is the case in many other universities in Tanzania) have not been achieved. This is due to the array of difficulties as summarised in the sub sections below.

7.2.3.1 Course content

In this study the CS course at SUA has been profiled as inadequate in apprenticing students into literate writers of academic discourse. There is a mosaic of complications around the course in its current structure as summarised in the

coming sections. But for a start, the configuration of the course content bears no regard to the demands of the individual disciplines in which the students are writing. This also applies to the teaching of the course, where students from different disciplines or degree programmes receive course instruction in one lecture or seminar room. This anomaly results directly from the overall interpretation to which universities such as SUA accord the Communication Skills course and particularly to student writing. At SUA the CS course primarily focuses on skills provision, but as I have noted above such an arrangement has made inroads in the teaching of academic writing at the university. This is because not only are these skills decontextualised from academic cultural contexts but there is also a privileging of grammar teaching. The CS course has become more or less an extension of a secondary or high school English language course. Here students are provided with grammatical tools instead of the requisite literacies to communicate effectively in different contexts and disciplines. Even the inclusion of grammar component does not take into account the needs of students and the level these grammar skills should be provided to students.

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7.2.3.2 Course duration

Limited duration is another drawback for the course, especially considering the unusually extended course coverage (itself indicative of the enormity of the student writing problem) vis-à-vis the time available (i.e. 15 weeks). This is again a result of a misplaced assumption that academic literacy practice is a 'one-off' process, where once students are drilled to write in 15 weeks then they will be able to use these skills in their disciplinary genres.

In addition to the array of constraints noted above is the question of large class sizes, which the CS lecturers have to handle. The fact that students from different degree programmes are mixed in one lecture room implies that at any one time the CS course lecturer is faced with a challenge of dealing with a crowd. The classrooms of mixed students impact negatively on the pedagogical approaches as they pose a greater challenge to CS course lecturers. The lecturers find the teaching of particular skills required by students in different contexts and

disciplines unworkable. Hence, they (lecturers) resort to teaching of general grammar instead. For this reason, even the use of professorial monologue noted above is, in part, dictated by this kind of teaching and learning situation.

In view of the above, therefore the CS course at SUA has been unable to address students' demands in terms of not only 'context of situation', i.e. at the level of disciplines, but also in terms of 'context of culture' i.e. at the level of broader students' cultural backgrounds and home or community experiences. Considerations on context of situation and context of culture are both essential. We have seen that context of situation involves the immediate context in which an instance of language use occurs or the particular or immediate setting in which language is used (cf. Lillis, 2001: 34; Christie, 2005a). At SUA, this consideration is what can make a text written in say, Agriculture Economics and Agribusiness not only suitable in that discipline, but also different from the one written in say, Forestry and Nature Conservation. One reason is because choices or instances of language use associated with context of situation, as we have seen, are also considered as choices in register (see Christie, 2005a).

Context of culture, as we have seen, involves institutions, social structures and ideologies' including the home and community cultural experiences (see Fairclough cited in Lillis, 2001). At the university, consideration on this context can make it possible to 'recontextualise' students' vernacular literacies or background knowledge and experiences into the university cultural literacy (cf. Christie, 2005b). In the case of SUA and Tanzania's social context in general encoding students' home and community literacies into university literacy can enable them (students) acquire formal literacy not only in English, but also in Kiswahili. This is because Kiswahili is part of students' vernacular literacies they bring into the university.

7.2.3.3 Integration of the course into other university subjects
The integration of the CS course into other university courses hinges around the support other lecturers provide in mentoring students through their pathways into

literate writers. At SUA this aspect is still illusive; for one thing there is an incorrect assumption that lecturers of other subjects have no stake in the mentoring process. To such lecturers, student writing as technical skill is disengaged from student writing as the expression of subject matter. They argue that in a university like SUA one does not need to be a good writer, technically, to be a Forester or a Veterinary doctor or a Food Scientist, etc. Surely, this argument itself indicates the extent to which lecturers are oblivious of the semiotic relationship between subject matter content and the language through which that content is expressed in the student meaning making process. The implication here is that even the basic skills students acquire in the CS course are not re-emphasised in other university courses.

7.2.4 *Lecturers' control of the language of instruction*

Lecturers' discourse is located within the aspect of the linguistics constraints, which characterise discourse practices of some of the university academic staff. This matter has not received the attention it deserves in the ESL writing research in Tanzania, particularly due to the assumption that lecturers' discourse is inherently correct or infallible and therefore it does need any scrutiny. In this case, there is a failure on the part of the lecturers to realise that there is a connection between what students produce (students' discourse practices) and that from which students draw upon in the meaning making process. In other words, there is an interdiscursive relationship here in that what students at SUA are able or unable to do depends on, as Kern (2000: 177) puts it, the 'ESL Available Designs' that is academic writing discursive practices from lecturers as mentors.

I have noted further that ESL academic writing research in higher education in Tanzania has always used students as subjects of inquiry. Lecturers often received peripheral attention in such research. But, the reality is that whatever lecturers manage (or fail) to do impacts profoundly on their important role of mentoring student writers. One challenge here is on the lecturers themselves, who refrain from admitting openly that they have a problem. What lecturers forget is that they (lecturers) too, especially the new generation, are the products of the same social

cultural, and in particular, educational background, which is much blamed for the pedagogical problems widely reported in the ESL writing research in Tanzania. Thus, the ESL academic writing research in the Tanzania's social context demands an equal focus between lecturers and students whereby the lecturers can critique their own discourse.

7.2.5   *Classroom pedagogical approaches*

There are two paradigms constituting classroom pedagogical approaches, university culture of mystery, and lecturers' response to student writing as explained below.

7.2.5.1 University culture of mystery

University culture of mystery pertains to the manner some lecturers use language to mystify that which should otherwise be explicit knowledge in their delivery of lectures. I have indicated that lecturers believe they belong to a special class of people whose mandate, among other things, is to preserve the university culture of mystery (i.e. university core beliefs) through linguistic absolutes. One paradigm where this phenomenon is reflected in the classroom pedagogy is the teaching practice itself. In the teaching process, the lecturers' role in the lecture hall is to deliver a lecture to seemingly silent students. Such a role, it appears, is best played if the lecturer assumes a complete dominance of the classroom, which is often the case because it is the lecturer who decides on the topic, controls the context of lecture delivery, and regulates participation in the classroom discourse. Any kind of uninvited or unregulated involvement by students, even if it involves asking questions for clarification, is considered as an interruption, which is not to be encouraged. This tendency, often disillusion students who soon realise that probing lecturers during lectures may question their own credibility as students. Hence, in their communicative practice of the socio-discursive space of a classroom, lecturers and students enter into an agreement under the twin framework of linguistic misunderstandings and complicity in misunderstandings (cf. Bourdieu *et al,* 1994).

7.2.5.2 Feedback to student writing

Feedback to student writing is a paradigm centring on the lecturers' mentoring role of student writers. It was noted that often lecturers get overwhelmed with the difficult experience of marking students' texts due to the array of linguistic errors, which usually form part of students' textual features. Students' unsuccessful writing often makes lecturers oblivious of other things, which students perform in their use of language. It appears that lecturers consider students' unsuccessful writing as a failure, on the part of students, to conform to the standard forms of the university discourse, instead of a learning stage in the students' meaning making process. This is grounded, as alluded earlier, on the wrong assumption that literacy is given and students need to know and use it in their academic writing practice.

I have discussed the contentious nature of the issue of deciding the type of feedback that can be rendered to students. Some scholars (e.g. Robb, *et al* cited in Myles, 2002), as we have seen, argue that attention to detailed feedback on sentence structural and grammar level may be a waste of lecturers' effort. But others (see Myles, 2002) argue that if students' linguistics errors are not pointed out such errors may be 'fossilised', that is, ingrained in the students' discourse repertoire. In this debate I argue in line with Rodby's (cited in Myles 2002*)* observation that if the linguistic errors become the totality of the lecturers' response, then language, discourse and text are reduced into structure. And this is problematic because the lecturer has no authority of changing the student's text and or correcting it (see Myles, 202). I argue further that feedback provided should motivate students to make modifications competently and with confidence including expressing their voices both as experience and as language and asserting their own identities (cf. Bakhtin cited in Lillis, 2001: 46; Wertsch cited in Myles, 2002).

We have also seen that lecturers' response to student writing has some semiotic aspects attached to it, first it makes some inscriptions of the positions and roles students and lecturers should assume in an academic discourse community. In

such inscriptions it is the lecturer who often assumes the role of the agency who, as the all powerful and knowledgeable, is supposed to tell students what to do without necessarily letting them make sense of why they have to do or write in the manner suggested. Such feedback, for instance, does not state explicitly what the lecturers' writing goals are. In other words, lecturers, through feedback, do not invite students to understand the literary practice of the university as per the socially constructed definition of literacy instead they (lecturers) focus on how they want students to learn literacy of the university. As a result, agency role in such feedback serves to exercise and reproduce dominance (cf. van Dijk, 1993).

I have noted further that feedback to student writing is, in the first place, constructed within the realms of power and authority. Often lecturers, however unwittingly (and sometimes in their efforts to uphold the university core beliefs), enact and sustain the relationship of domination through response to student writing.

7.2.6   *University support structure for academic writing pedagogy*

University support has been situated in the institutional guides for student academic writing. I have indicated that in the case of SUA, academic writing pedagogy is an area where students have the least support from other university structural frameworks apart from the CS course. There are hardly any manuals either at the departmental or faculty levels to aid the mentoring process of students in their pathways to academic writing. I have noted earlier that since the CS course has specifically been given all the responsibility for student academic writing, other departments use this as a convenient excuse to disclaim responsibility of even addressing specific requirements of student writing embodied in their different departments or disciplinary genres.

At the university level, on the other hand, the available guides on academic writing project an illusive picture of what student writing as literacy practice should entail. The existing academic writing manuals focus on issues far removed from the students' writing demands in their different departments.

7.2.7   Underpinnings structuring language use in HE in Tanzania

English is the language of instruction in post-primary and higher education in Tanzania, but the linguistic profile in these levels seem to be diglossic regulated by socially valued ideologies**.** We have seen that the underlying ideology in the Tanzania's social cultural formation is based on power and dominance. Discourse and even knowledge itself are not ideologically free, in that they are embodied in social relations with hegemonic influence. Dominant discourse therefore serves to enact, and legitimise dominance. In this case the social order, especially the relations of inequality are ignored, or instead of being contested they (relations of inequality) are made to appear 'natural' (cf. van Dijk, 1993).

This ideological frame underpins lecturers and students' attitudes towards their discourse practices, as well as exerting influence on their (lecturers and students') configurations about such practices. Furthermore, such ideologies also underlie the conflicting attitudes and practices between students and lecturers towards English. I summarise the effects of these underpinnings in the sections below.

7.2.7.1 English and Kiswahili in HE classroom in Tanzania

I have noted that students in higher learning in Tanzania have to engage in double struggle in their acquisition of academic writing literacy: First, they have to read off the university culture in unpacking the writing demands made in different disciplines, and secondly, they have to acquire requisite knowledge of English (i.e. English is the dominant language of literacy, as patterned by the social institution, the university). Students are, however, constrained in a number of ways in achieving these pedagogical goals in higher education in the Tanzanian social context: One difficulty is that the university orders of discourse and the medium of instruction are both opaque knowledge. This is for the reasons that the former belongs to a particular genre, academic genre, and the latter is a second, and even a foreign language for most Tanzanian students. But the discourse practice embodied in higher education pedagogy in Tanzania is such that both of

the above types of knowledge are treated as transparent, and that students are expected to apply them freely in their different disciplines.

Another obstacle results from institutionalised sanctions against using code mixing (CM) and code switching (CS) between Kiswahili and English for pedagogical purposes. In the Tanzania's higher education classroom, a lecturer as a 'modeller' does not consider CM and CS as a useful mediation strategy in academic literacy classroom. This results from what seems to be, as we have seen, the lecturer's 'obligation to protect the sanctity of core beliefs', which are firmly grounded on (and are configured in) the dominant university practices that perceive CM and CS as against, morally speaking, the academic cultural practice. And this goes a long way, using Christiansen's metaphor "… to ignore difficult worlds students are encountering as they try to negotiate the complex collision of their world and the world of academia" (2004: 13).

Reiterating my earlier argument, since Kiswahili and code switching are not usually allowed, students are denied access to knowledge itself, which in this case is hidden in the opaque language of instruction. It is this unequal access to institutional resources of power between lecturers who have privileged access and students who have less privileged access that "facilitate the enactment of dominance and hence contributing to its reproduction" (see van Dijk, 1993: 255).

7.2.7.2 Students' claim on the control of language of instruction

I have noted further that the student's journey into a literate writer in the Tanzania social context is also constrained by two realities, one is that his home or community environment, and or the pre-university schooling the student brings into the university is often incompatible with the demands embodied in the university dominant academic cultural practices. The second reality is what appears to be the lecturers' failure to understand students' unsuccessful writing problem for what it is, and that is a stage in the students' meaning making process.

We have seen that despite their unsuccessful academic writing skills students still claim to possess adequate control of English language in academic genres. The claim by the students, I have argued, is a result of hegemonic influence of English. Students do not realise that insisting on English medium of instruction actually disadvantages them as such a demand denies them access to knowledge. Students in this case are a product of the Tanzania's social cultural formation, whereby hegemonic influence of English is deeply ingrained. Here, unequal access to knowledge through the hidden medium of English is considered natural. Consequentially, students fail to question the legitimacy of continuing using English in higher education in Tanzania. Students here are effectively taking on the master myths of the dominant group, which "reflect and enforce values that are complicit with the oppression of nonmainstream groups" (see Kucer, 2005: 222).

Further, it is this ideological and hegemonic framework of English in higher education, which underlies students' incorrect assumption that any admissions of linguistic misunderstanding will question their own integrity as university students.
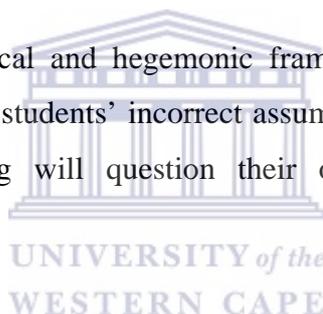
7.2.7.3 Language skills and academic literacy in the Tanzania's social cultural context

Finally, I have noted that, lecturers and students' attitudes towards English, as a medium of instruction have several implications: First, both English and Kiswahili have special roles in the Tanzanian social context. I don't envisage a situation where one language will dominate or replace the other in their respective domains of use. For example, in what is termed 'post modern' era, empowerment, at global and even at local levels requires, as we have seen, high communicative skills involving, as it were, formal literacy. In this case, Tanzanians still need English to access this formal education in as long as English continues to be the medium of instruction in higher levels of education. English also becomes an added advantage for those aspiring to access this formal literacy outside Tanzania where Kiswahili is not used.

Similarly, skills in Kiswahili are a useful resource to formal literacy in the Tanzania's social context. For that matter the linguistically privileged home or social origin is not limited to requisite resources in English only, but it also extends to requisite resources in Kiswahili as well. Reiterating my earlier argument, a child who was brought up in "a world in which words tended to become the reality of things *is more prepared* to enter an intellectual world founded on the same principle *than is the child from a different family setting*" (see Bourdieu *et al*, 1994: 21) (My addition).

7.3 Implications of the current study for other studies on ESL writing in Tanzania

Studies on ESL writing in Tanzania cited in Chapter Two (e.g. Ndoloi, 1994; Mlama and Matteru, 1977; Roy-Campbell and Qorro, 1997; Rubagumya, 1997; Lwaitama and Rubagumya, 1990; Qorro, 1999) problematise student unsuccessful writing as students' failure to conform to dominant standard forms. In all these studies students consistently continue to be the object of inquiry on the assumption that students' unsuccessful writing is students' only problem. Interestingly, in some instances the manner in which ESL writing research discourse is constructed helps to illuminate the researchers' assumption on students' burden of responsibility to the problem.

But findings from this study have shown that the problem of student unsuccessful writing in Tanzania is located within the ideological undercurrent embodied in issues such as orders of discourse and the medium of instruction. Both of these are presented to students as transparent knowledge. But as I have said earlier, university orders of discourse is opaque, which in the case of Tanzania social context, is also hidden in the opaque medium of instruction, English. Apart from this, power and dominance underlie the relationship of a lecturer-modeller and a student-apprentice. This social relation inhibits the lecturer from entering into a dialogue in the communicative practice with the student.

Next, the earlier studies on ESL writing in Tanzania regard knowledge as neutral, in that students can, for example, access academic writing, just as any other form of literacy, freely and apply it for their study purposes (cf. autonomous model of literacy; Street, 1995; 2001). But we have seen that knowledge is inherently ideological, and thus socially constituted. We have also seen that academic writing is part of the privileged university literacy, thus like any other privileged literacy, it is part of the institutional power resources. Because such resource accords power and dominance to those who can access it, i.e. the dominant groups e.g. lecturers; such dominant groups often use this privilege to regulate access for others, i.e. students. Lecturers play this regulatory role unwittingly by protecting the sanctity of university core beliefs about literacy performance. What we see here is that lecturers, notwithstanding their obligation to protect university literacy standards, have, as Christiansen (2004: 13) puts it, 'only reproduced the powerful forces of discourse that may lead to subordination and manipulation'. In this case therefore, lecturers often become unwitting cog in the enactment and sustenance of relations of dominance and hence forming part of student academic writing problem in the Tanzania's social context.
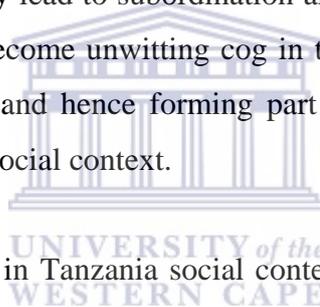
Another ideological aspect in Tanzania social context has to do with hegemonic influence of English as a language of instruction. The study by Qorro (cited in Chapter Two) reports that students rating of their proficiency as "good" and "adequate" implies that 'students are not likely to make an effort to improve it since they believe that they have no writing problems'. Qorro adds that, "students beliefs need to be changed if they are to make effort to improve their writing proficiency…" (Qorro, 1999: 222).

According to Qorro, students' high rating of themselves is indicative of students' belief that they have adequate control of English. The current study has shown however, that Students' claim on their control of the language of instruction is a result of English hegemony, which has profound influence on the Tanzania's social make up. Students know that they have no control of English, but what they

do not know is that their insistence on using English as a language of instruction disadvantages them.

Students in this case operate on the assumption that admission of linguistic misunderstanding will question their integrity as students. As a result, they (students) seem to join in the reproduction of power and dominance instead of questioning its legitimacy. Students fail to question why in the first place they should continue using English, which effectively disadvantages them. What needs to be changed therefore is not students' belief, which in any case is not genuine; rather it is the social make up of Tanzania, which considers opaque orders of discourse and hidden medium of instruction as natural and therefore legitimate.

As I said earlier, English hegemony in Tanzania is about the "master myth of the dominant group within a society which reflects and enforces values that are complicit with the oppression of nonmainstream groups" (cf. Kucer, 2005: 222). And since schools, in this case, are considered the prime 'culprits' for reflecting the values of the dominant groups, literacy instruction in school usually reflect these values.
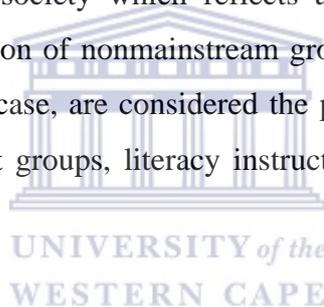
This 'master myth' does not only explain students' contradictory claim, it also explains why English is still the medium of instruction in Tanzania over forty years after the country's independence and despite the massive campaigns of Kiswahili distribution soon after independence.

Rubagumya's (1997) study, which advanced the 'discontinuation' hypothesis, (see Chapter Two) serves as (and provides) further evidence of ideological undercurrents around academic literacy issues in Tanzania. The author here reports that students in primary school shift from their native language to Kiswahili, a new language to them. Then they shift to English when joining secondary school with the inevitability of shifting back to Kiswahili medium in Primary Teacher Education Colleges, for those who are to join teacher training. In his study, Rubagumya implies that students fail to access school literacy

adequately because of, among other things, the discontinuation phenomenon, which is ironically allowed in the Tanzania language policy.

However, we have seen that a long period of time elapses during which students receive instruction in one of the languages, that is, before students have to shift from one language into another e.g. Kiswahili into English. In this case, students have 7 years of instruction in Kiswahili in primary education and 6 years of instruction in English in secondary school. But apart from the fact that students experience disruption due to these shifts, Rubagumya's study could not explain why after a long period of instruction in either of the languages, students are still unable to use either of the languages successfully for their study purposes.

In fact the time students receive instruction in either of the languages is enough for them to stabilise therefore, the discontinuation tendency does not seem to be at the core of the problem. In other words, whether or not students shift languages may not contribute to their unsuccessful linguistic and academic literacy performance.
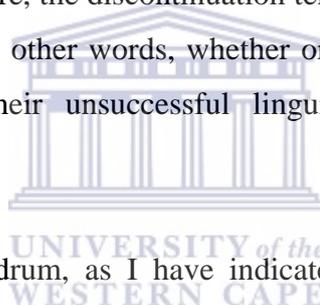
The answer to this conundrum, as I have indicated, lies within the orders of discourse, under CDA framework. There are two dimensions to the problem. First, Rubagumya's discontinuation hypothesis illuminates the reality that, in the lower levels, students are disadvantaged with the mismatch between the form and function of literacy performed in the home, including language use, and form and function of literacy practices found in the classroom setting. Most students, especially in the rural areas, to use Kucer's expressions, "are initiated into the schooling experience without some knowledge of *school* literacy" (2005: 211) (my emphasis).

In the case of Tanzania, socio-economic differences also account for variations in ways in which people interact with various forms, functions and use of literacy (cf. Kucer, 2005). Tanzania, as with any other developing country in Africa, is caught up in the web of global capital, which manufactures social inequality. In

such a country, the socio-economic divide is what usually configures the social structure. Such a divide is usually imbedded in such tensions as rural versus urban, high or middle versus low income earners, and so on. The social dichotomy around dominant and nondominant groups also results from such tensions. And in the Tanzanian social cultural context, social inequality becomes a variable in school literacy initiation of a Tanzanian child.

> As cultural sites of literacy activity, schools have specific rules or norms for how *and which* language is to be used and how texts are to be formed. These rules and forms may affirm, build on, and extend the way in which language is used in the child's home; may require adaptation in language rules and forms; or may directly contradict home language patterns (Heath, Scollon and Scollon cited in Kucer, 2005: 209).

In other words, a child who comes from a home or a community where literacy use and practice (i.e. facilitated with access to books, library facilities, etc.) conform to literacy use and practice found in school, such a child can be said to have been "socialized at home to interact with language *and literacy* in a manner that parallel that of formal schooling instruction" (Kucer, 2005: 211) (my emphasis). For this child school literacy simply "affirm, build on, and extend the way in which language is used in the child's home". On the other hand, the child from a home or community setting where access to school literacy resources are virtually non-existent, such a child's literacy form and use at school "may directly contradict home language patterns" (see Kucer, 2005: 211). So, literacy use of such a child at school may require either a drastic adaptation or unlearning home literacy altogether.

> And because of the power and dominance of the schools in regard to literacy learning, the discourse practice of the classroom often come to be viewed as the norm. Alternate practices are conceived as deviant as well as deficient in nature (Kucer, 2005. 211).

At this juncture it is essential for lecturers to take into account consideration on the context of culture by recontextualising students' vernacular literacies or home and community literacy forms and practice into the university cultural literacy (cf. Christie, 2005b; Kucer, 2005).

The second dimension to students' literacy problem relates to the orders of discourse used i.e. the academic discourse, which is an embodiment of school literacy. Such discourse, being of a particular type, is entrenched in the workings of particular institutions. Thus, as I have noted above, not everybody can have a privileged access, however taught. This argument may also be true of mother tongue education system in Tanzania. Because the language variety or dialects to be used in such education would likely be the prestigious one, this variety would not be what students possess in their home literacy. Neither would it be the one the students would access easily given the Tanzania's social cultural formation and power relations discussed above.

For this reason, the proposed change of the medium of instruction from English to Kiswahili suggested in most studies on ESL writing in Tanzania may not necessarily be a panacea to academic literacy problems. Even if Kiswahili were the only MOI up to the university, the issue of power and dominance would still occur because of orders of discourse and institutionalised language use. The Kiswahili people use outside the classroom will always be different from the one accepted in the academia and dominated by lecturers. Academic Kiswahili will still have to be taught by lecturers hence hidden orders of discourse in Kiswahili.

In any case the view of substituting one language with another takes a rather 'reductionistic' approach where 'one limited understanding of literary is substituted for another' (cf. Cope and Kalantzis, 2000: 6). As the authors observe, and rightly so, "there cannot be one set of standards or skills that constitutes the ends of literacy learning". Accordingly, students need to be provided with not just one set, rather several cultural and linguistic standards. As I have noted earlier, in the Tanzania's social context this entails Kiswahili, English, and any other

language(s) as it deems appropriate. This is because "when learners juxtapose different languages, discourses, styles, and approaches" they can have substantive 'metacognitive and metalinguistic' benefits. Further, "their ability to reflect critically on complex systems and their interactions", can also be boosted tremendously (see Cope and Kalantzis, 2000: 15).

7.4   Recommendations

From the discussion, social inequality, which produces relations of power and dominance, is the mainstay of Tanzania's problems around academic based literacy. My recommendations therefore are built around challenging the discursive strategies, which legitimatise or neutralise the social order, in particular the relations of inequality in Tanzania's social context. I begin by giving general recommendations around addressing social inequality in Tanzania, and then proceed to specific recommendations around the issues raised in the thesis with reference to SUA.

7.4.1   Social inequality in school based literacy in Tanzania

Social inequality in academic based literacy in the case of Tanzania entails a gap between those who have a privileged access to school literacy (e.g. books, etc.) in the home and community environment and those whose home and community environment cannot provide school literacy. One way of addressing this situation, therefore, is to empower poor communities in making sure that first school literacy resources are made available in the child's home or community environment. Secondly, that teachers need to be more sensitive to the forms and functions of home literacy of students. In other words, pre-school or pre-university literacy, including linguistic skills students bring into the classroom should not be treated as inferior, as is currently the case. Rather, teachers should consider students' pre-school or pre-university literacies as an effective resource than a hindrance for learning school or university literacy. It is unfortunate that teachers do not usually consider students' home literacy as literacy at all. As a

result, instead of building on what students already know, teachers dismantle everything and attempt to build a complete new set of literacies.

Further, syllabus designs need to reflect the social economic tensions so that teachers or university academics and students become aware and work together towards understanding school literacy. In this way all the players in the social discourse of literacy practice, and especially teachers, can address the tension around social inequality while planning classroom lessons.

In relation to school versus home literacies, is the issue of ideology and especially hegemonic influence of English. English hegemony need to be challenged lest students continue to be denied access to knowledge hidden in the opaque medium of instruction. In any case, the multilingual literacies approach to literacy learning should be considered as an effective alternative approach to single standards of culture and literacy i.e. English only, or Kiswahili or mother tongue only, the notion, which is sometimes cerebrated in the MOI debate in Tanzania.

7.4.2   Specific recommendations

I have noted that at SUA the CS course is the only framework, which is expected to provide students with requisite skills in academic writing. Thus, it is instructive to begin with the CS course. I have also noted that despite the two-tier programmes of the course (i.e. grammar and study skills) both the course content and the course material are removed from the technical concerns of the different disciplines found in individual departments. Then the question posed here is how a Communication Skills course can address the writing demands of students from as diverse disciplinary orientations as the ones found in SUA? I present the following recommendations to address this and other questions, which guided this study.

7.4.2.1 Integration of the CS course into other university courses

First, the process of apprenticing students into literate writers in their disciplinary spheres is a huge and unworkable responsibility for only one course or

department. For that matter, it should not be a responsibility of the CS course alone. Communication skills should be taught in the individual departments because this is where the departmental disciplinary requirements are dictated. Thus, academic writing in the individual departments will be able to apprentice students into literate writers in accordance with these disciplinary requirements. This framework will address two of the problems identified in the current arrangement of the course: One, the problem of mixing students from varied disciplines in one classroom; students will now be assisted in their own departments. Two, the problem of large class sizes: If students are attended to in their departments, lecturers dealing with technical writing instruction will no longer have to worry about dealing with a crowd in any one lecture.

The challenge envisaged in this framework rests on its prerequisite for instructors with background of both the specialised disciplinary knowledge and the scientific academic writing language to be involved in the teaching of these courses. But in the departments, the instructors have background in the specialised disciplinary knowledge only. There are two practical solutions to this constraint: First, the instructors in the CS course, with the help from the departments, will have to be involved in developing disciplinary academic writing courses for the individual departments. Secondly, academic staff in individual departments should be provided with in-service training on scientific academic writing instruction to be able to perform their important duty of mentoring students into literate writers in their disciplines.

7.4.2.2 Role of the Communication Skills course

The CS course should be involved with courses on the methods of teaching aimed at enhancing lecturers' didactic skills. This is where the in-service course for instructors on scientific academic writing instruction should also be offered. I have indicated in Chapter Six that traditionally SUA and other universities in Tanzania give primacy to lecturers' mastery of the subject matter over their (lecturers') control of the language upon recruitment of new academic staff. This underlies a situation whereby some lecturers, who command control of their

subject matter, seem to experience difficulties in the language of instruction. Therefore, the CS course needs to be restructured to address these technical demands of the university academics.

The CS course should also be restructured to be able to address the broad based communicative learning needs of both students and lecturers especially in all the aspects of scientific and technical academic writing. In this case the Department of Social Science which houses the CS course should also be assigned the responsibility of developing academic writing instruction manuals meant for both general and specific academic writing purposes at the university. As I noted earlier the available guides on academic writing portray an illusive picture of what academic writing or rather student writing as literacy practice entails.

The recommended framework for the CS course will address academic writing at SUA as literacy practice for both students and lecturers as follows: On the part of students, academic writing instruction will take into account their individual experiences and backgrounds, because then they will not be in a mixed group classroom, as is currently the case. The Department housing the CS course should offer students assistance on a particular aspect around special individual difficulty. This is because, as we have seen, students' meaning making process is structured by voices and identity, which are shaped by varied social backgrounds and life experiences of individual student writers. On the part of lecturers, the course will be used as a backdrop against which to evaluate their own discourse, and especially their own writing practices.

7.4.2.3 Course duration

Another constraint identified in the existing CS course was its short duration where an extensive amount of work is to be done in just one semester of 15 weeks. I have noted that it is incorrect to assume that academic writing is a one-off process. Students cannot be drilled to write in 15 weeks, and then be expected to apply skills in their different disciplines, or use methods of analysis as are required in those disciplines. This is not practical in a situation where linguistic

knowledge is compartmentalised into topics to be drilled in a given number of hours per week. Students encounter a colony of different text types each year in their study programme. Accordingly, students' apprenticeship into literate-writers should be a continuous process throughout their university study. Pedagogically this implies that the academic writing instruction should be given to students from the time they first join the university all through to the time they finish university education.

7.4.2.4 Pedagogical discourses: Classroom linguistic practices at SUA

Pedagogical discourse concerns lecturers' discourse practices in the classroom, which as I have noted cannot be assumed to be inherently correct, and for which they are not. Lecturers need to self-critique their own discourse because they are, in the first place, the ones who dominate classroom discourse. Thus, the way they perform their own writing have an implication on the way they would invite students into authorship. And the best starting point in this self-critique is to admit that they have a problem. The CS course therefore, will be a convenient available framework for addressing lecturers' individual writing requirements of the technical academic discourse.

I have indicated earlier that academic environment in higher learning in Tanzania social setting is diglossic in nature. But this is what underlies the conflicting values and ideologies between students and lecturers around discourse practices. This is especially so because English strives to maintain its 'rightful' place in the classroom as a language of instruction, as sanctioned by the institutional education policy; and Kiswahili continues to enjoy its popularity as the language, which both students and lecturers can use to articulate their experiences including their intellectual thoughts in the real sense of the word.

In such a situation, I recommend that lecturers should reconsider their perceptions about the use of code mixing and code switching in the classroom instruction. As I said earlier, CM and CS can still be a useful strategy in academic literacy mediation in the university orders of discourse. Currently, in the Tanzania's

higher education classroom, using Kiswahili in an English medium classroom, even in a slip of tongue, is considered as a contravention of institutional standards. This notion however seem to deny students access to knowledge itself i.e. dominant literacies.

Evidence from this study, however, shows that CM and CS still occur in some classrooms, but this is usually unplanned and unsystematic because it is done secretly by individual lecturers especially in non-essential communicative discourse such as cracking jokes, where the switch is usually from English into Kiswahili.

Thus, CM and CS in situations like this cannot serve any useful academic purposes. It is for this reason that I recommend lecturers to reconsider their perceptions about CM and CS and perhaps monitor their occurrence as a useful tool for teaching and learning process. In other words CM and CS should be used systematically especially in cases where partial or total communication breakdown is envisaged. Also, if CM and CS are used in a systematic planned manner it is more likely going to help students acquire formal literacy in both English and Kiswahili as they (students) move up the academic ladder.

Further, multingual literacy approach is another option for higher education pedagogy in Tanzania. Here, students are provided not with just one, but several cultural and linguistic standards, which in the Tanzania's social context, may entail using Kiswahili, English, and any other language as it deems fit.

7.4.2.5 Pedagogical discourses: Teaching of scientific academic writing as literacy practice

The teaching of scientific academic writing as literacy event should be embodied within the framework of academic cultural practices by considering the following: Teaching as mentoring process; feedback to student writing- as a way of inviting student writer into an understanding of literacy practice; and critical reading-as way of enabling students to make sense of who they are. The last aspect centres

on developing reading culture amongst students as a way of guiding them through the process of expressing their voices and articulating their identities.

(i)   Teaching as a mentoring process

A classroom is a socio-discursive space where students and lecturers ought to work together towards a common understanding of literacy practices including the construction, production and reproduction of academic texts. This project calls for a genuine commitment on the part of the lecturer to invite students as participants into university community of discourse. In the classroom practices this means the lecturer should make deliberate effort to present lessons explicitly and methodically. Lecturers need to get out of the marvels of their linguistic obscurity and come to grips with the reality that students have been shaped by cultural and social origin different from that of the university. In such a situation apprenticeship process requires, first, hybridisation between students' pre-university knowledge and the knowledge, which is demanded of them by the university, and secondly the provision of several cultural and linguistic standards. These are likely to be effective classroom resources for cognitive and additive linguistic abilities to students. It is for this reason I recommend that lecturers redefine their theories about student writing so as to construct a heuristic tool for understanding what student- writers go through as they grapple with constructing meaning in academic writing.

(ii)   Feedback to student writing

Lecturers' approach to feedback to student writing is an area, which needs a careful re-evaluation. In the first place the issue of lecturers' response to student writing is a complex one, for that matter not all feedback qualifies to successfully apprentice students into literate writers. It is imperative that lecturers consider feedback as one way of encouraging students not only to modify their writing, but also to embark on analytical thinking leading to better writing practice.

But the pedagogical goal of instruction and response cannot be achieved if linguistic errors take preference in the lecturer response: Because this will mean

admonishing students for not conforming to the target language or, for that matter, standard norms as demanded by the institutional cultural practice. Written feedback should recognise the significant role a student plays in the academic discourse practice. One way this can be done is by constructing feedback in the manner that shows the student not only what should be the appropriate way of writing but also why the lecturer believes that a particular way of writing is appropriate in a given disciplinary genre. Secondly, the construction of feedback also needs to be sensitive to the aspect of transitivity, whereby the students should assume the agency role the most. This arrangement will motivate students in articulating their own identities and maintain ownership of their texts in academic writing.

(iii)   Critical reading

Critical reading, as we have seen, has a special semiotic relationship with academic writing. Students need to develop skills to see how language is used as a discursive strategy in legitimatising ideological viewpoints. There are two areas where critical reading needs to be addressed in the Tanzanian social context. The first is on the handling of lecture handouts and compendia to students. Students should always be encouraged to write their own notes either from the lectures or from reading texts. This will create a motivation for them to read widely and critically. This is especially true if students will have to make sense of what they are reading. This practice will help students avoid reproducing lecture notes in writing essays as was indicated in the students' use of discourse markers in Chapter Five. Giving lecture handouts for students should be done in cases where sources of such information may either be difficult or inaccessible to students.

Secondly, it is understood that lecture handouts and compendia usually comprise summary information, mainly from several sources. But such summaries are usually presented with a particular viewpoint: The viewpoint held by the lecturer. If students have to rely on the lecture notes, either in the form of handouts or compendia only, then such students will also have to conform to whatever worldview the lecturer holds and presents to them. In other words, students will

have no room to get exposed to other possible explanations around a particular aspect. If lecturers allowed this to happen then they would have stifled the critical voices, which students so require in order to not only be able to express a sense of who they are, but also to gain confidence in the command of the disciplinary language and to be able to say what they want (and don't want) to say in their writing. Again, if lecturers allowed this to happen then they would have only reproduced dominant discourse for subordination and manipulation.

7.5 Recommendations for further research

In the ESL writing pedagogy in HE in Tanzania I recommend that further investigation be directed to, first, the lecturers' discourse practices in the classroom, and secondly, the manner in which multilingual literacies can be put in practice in the Tanzania education system.

7.6 Conclusion to Chapter Seven

In this chapter I have presented conclusions and made recommendations for the appropriate pedagogical approaches in dealing with higher education academic writing. I have begun by drawing conclusions on looking at student academic writing at SUA, which on the whole was profiled as unsuccessful. I have then explicated the reasons for this profiling, which are around, lecturer-student socio-discursive relationship-which is bound up on social relations of power and dominance; the configuration of the CS course- which privileges decontextualised grammar teaching; and lecturers' control of the language of instruction- which is characterised by linguistics constraints.

In profiling student writing, the other reasons I presented include classroom pedagogical approaches, which include the university cultural of mystery-centring on the linguistic marvels of the lecturers' discourse and feedback to student writing-which I have noted to be inconsistent and hidden. The other aspects in the conclusions include the university support structure for academic writing pedagogy, which in this case is virtually non-existent apart from the CS course. Lastly, under the conclusion section I have looked at the underpinnings

structuring language use in higher education in Tanzania, under which we have seen the diglossic interplay between English and Kiswahili in the higher education classroom, students' contradictory claim on the control of English, and language skills and academic literacy in the Tanzanian social context.

In section two of this chapter I have looked at the implications of the current study for other ESL academic writing research in Tanzania. On focus here was mainly the ideological issues revolving around the politics of power and dominance, embodied in students' use and performance of academic literacy. Earlier studies on ESL academic literacy, therefore, are insensitive of these ideological issues, as explained in the literacy critical theories followed in this study. In the third section of this chapter I have focused on the recommendations for the appropriate course of action for dealing with higher education writing pedagogy. I have begun by giving general recommendation on how to address unequal access to dominant school literacy, which produces social inequality. Then I have given specific recommendations beginning with the CS Course, in terms of integration into other university courses. Here, I have said the course be offered in the individual academic departments to address disciplinary concerns of the students' study programmes. Then I focused on the new responsibilities in which the course can shoulder. Here, I have explained how the CS course will serve the university better if it is charged with classroom pedagogical studies and general communicative studies, where lecturers and students could get help on didactic skills and academic writing literacy respectively.

I have then recommended for the ideal duration for the CS course, which I have said should encompass all of the students' schooling life at the university. Next I have recommended on issues pertaining to language of instruction and how linguistically challenged lecturers could address their linguistic constraints. Then, I have focused attention on the teaching of scientific academic writing as literacy practice, under which I have looked at three paradigms namely, Teaching as a mentoring process, feedback to student writing and critical reading.

NOTES

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[1] Available online at, http://www.tanzania.go.tz/educationf.html

[2] See also Rubagumya's study (2003) titled, 'English Primary Schools in Tanzania: A New Linguistic Market in Education?' in LOITASA. Here, the author takes the Kiswahili versus English debate to Primary Schools and espouses for Kiswahili in all primary schools, including those schools classified as English medium, most of which, incidentally, are privately owned in Tanzania.

[3] See also Rubagumya's study of 2003, which still considers students' literacy problems as problems of language literacy in English and believes that the adoption of Kiswahili as the MoI will reverse the process.

[4] This philosophy is discussed in Chapter One in this thesis under Education for Self-Reliance. In Chapter One, I have noted that ESR was one of the progeny of Ujamaa policy (African Socialism) under Arusha Declaration (AD) of 1967.

[5] Mature Age entry students are comparable to what Lillis (2001) calls 'non-traditional' students who gain access to higher education through non -traditional channels of secondary school, or college certification in the UK. In the case of Tanzania's situation this group of students comprises those who gain access to higher education through either qualifying examinations in what is called Mature Age Entry Examination or students with what is called equivalent entry qualifications; these are usually Diploma holders.

[6] Discourse markers and conjunctions are used interchangeably in this thesis.

[7] These are courses offered at SUA, and are usually evaluated through what has been referred to as 'essayist literacy' in Chapter Two.

[8] This group, comprising renowned university academics and other experts, was involved in language research issues. The members met for a week long in New London with a mission of considering literacy pedagogy, so as to address students' needs in three 'rapidly changing realms' viz., working lives, public lives (citizenship) and personal lives (lifeworlds). Their main argument here is that 'When technologies of meaning are changing so rapidly, there cannot be one set of standards or skills that constitute the ends of literacy learning, hence the concept of multiliteracies (cf. Cope and Kalantzis, 2000: 6).

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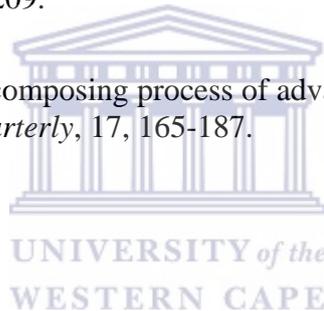
APPENDIX 1

Summary of Findings From Lecturers: Interviews and Focus Group Discussions

S/N	Topic/Question	Summary Responses: Lecturers' Interviews		Summary of Responses: Focus Group Discussions Years
A	**Students' Academic literacy in ESL Writing Practices**			
1	*Students' academic L2 writing practices across disciplines*	Generally Poor Very poor		Generally poor Very poor
2	*Problem areas / indicators of Students' unsuccessful ESL writing*	✓ Surface errors e.g. Vocabulary, grammar, Tenses, ✓ Failure to ask & answer questions in class ✓ Failure to write or organise work ✓ Duplication of lecture notes in written tasks ✓ Repetition of same phrases or words in writing		✓ R ✓ R ✓ Students failure to sustain conversation with lecturers in English i.e. they resort to Kiswahili ✓ Failure to describe or explain symbols and formulae in science subjects ✓ Students use the grammar of Kiswahili in their writing, i.e. L1 interference
3	*Possible causes of students' writing problems*	✓ English language not given its due attention ✓ Students coming from non English speaking home environment ✓ Students using Kiswahili even in academic matters ✓ Some lecturers code switch between English and Kiswahili or ethnic languages during consultation with students ✓ Some lecturers are linguistically challenged, hence influence students negatively		✓ Some students believe they have no language problems ✓ R ✓ R ✓ No clear policy on language use on campus ✓ R ✓ Some lecturers do not encourage students to use English on campus ✓ R ✓ No sanctions for sanctions for students to function in English on campus ✓ Large class sizes

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4	*Ways in which these problems are addressed*	✓ Providing feedback to students' writing especially in long assignments ✓ Encouraging students to use the English language in all communication ✓ Counselling students about their writing e.g. telling them how to organise work ✓ Giving them model answers		✓ R ✓ R ✓ R ✓ R
5	*Ways in which students' L2 writing progress is monitored*	✓ Through lecturers' guidance to writing the SPs ✓ No mechanism of monitoring progress in other assignments		✓ R ✓ R
B	*Lecturers' Discursive Practices and Students Academic Literacy in ESL Writing*			
6	*Lecturers' comments to students' writing*	✓ Provided to students- on students' texts (see 4 above)		✓ R
7	*Frequently commented problems*	✓ Violation of the rules of the English Grammar, e.g. incomplete sentences ✓ Other surface errors of grammar-see question 2 above ✓ Organisation of topics		✓ R ✓ R ✓ R ✓ Subject/verb agreement
8	*Evaluation of the language aspect in students' writing*	✓ Language aspect weighted – and penalise poor linguistic skills ✓ Language aspect not weighted but linguistically good students rewarded		✓ Language aspect weighted ✓ Language aspect not weighted
9	*The role of other lecturers to improving students' academic literacy in an ESL*	✓ Other lecturers have no role in students' ESL writing ✓ Other lecturers have a role in students' ESL writing-see question 4 above		✓ Other lecturers have no role in students' ESL writing ✓ Other lecturers have a role in students' ESL writing

10	*[The CS course and students' academic illiteracy]*			✓ The course is not tailor made to address specific needs of individual departments ✓ Basic skills acquired from the course are not re-emphasised in other university courses ✓ The course is offered to students with mixed language abilities ✓ The course is evaluated unfairly by looking at the errors students make instead of the skills students acquire
C	**Supportive Structures to Students' ESL Academic Writing**			
11	*Students' note taking practices*	✓ I encouraged students to take notes ✓ I encourage students to listen (i.e. not to take notes)- students get lecture notes in handouts/compendia		✓ R ✓ Students don't take notes o Students encounter note taking for the first time at the university (*cf.* 'disciplinary apprenticeship')
12	*University's support mechanism to students' L2 writing*	✓ No support from the university as a whole ✓ University community does not have the right attitude towards using English ✓ Other university staff don't feel responsible for students' ESL writing		✓ R ✓ R ✓ R o The need for excellence in English is not emphasised
13	*Students' linguistic behaviour on campus outside the classroom*	✓ Students use Kiswahili the most outside classrooms- the mind set is that Swahili should be used all the time and English should be used when necessary ✓ Students who speak English outside the academic domains are ridiculed by colleagues- e.g. they are given nick-names,		✓ R ✓ R ✓ Students feel more at ease using Kiswahili

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		e.g. 'oreal' meaning 'black white men'		
14	*[Lecturers' linguistic practices when addressing students]*	✓ I use English only in class ✓ I use English only even outside classroom ✓ I use English but sometimes Swahili outside classroom o I mix languages when students seek clarification on academic matters o I feel students can comprehend better using the language which they know o I mix languages in the offices, which are a more relaxed atmosphere		
15	*The language of instruction at universities in Tanzania*	✓ English be the sole language of instruction o Shifting to Swahili will not be to the best interest of the students many of whom Swahili many not be their L1 o Indeed, we should switch to English from primary one o Students will think in English as long as it is provided to them o More languages such as Arabic and French need to be added to the linguistic repertoire of Tanzanian education system		✓ Either English throughout or Kiswahili throughout and English becomes a taught language ✓ English be the sole language of instruction o People are keen to have their children educated in English, hence there is a demand for the language o Language policy should take into consideration what people want in terms of language of instruction

R= repeated response

Source: Research data: Lecturers' questionnaire and focus group discussions

APPENDIX 2

Summary of Findings from Students' Questionnaire and Focus Group Discussions

S/N	Topic/Question	Summary Responses: Questionnaires: 1st Years		Summary of Responses: Questionnaires: 2nd Years	Summary of Responses: Focus Group Discussions
A	**Students Academic L2 Writing Practices Across Disciplines**				
1	*Students' academic L2 writing practices across disciplines*	❖ Same way, same principles across disciplines ❖ Not in the same way, principles across disciplines o Different subjects have different writing demands		❖ Same way, same principles across disciplines ❖ Not in the same way, principles across disciplines o Methods of dealing with issues are different in different disciplines	❖ R ❖ R o R
B	**Lecturers' Feedback as Inputs to Learning**				
2	*Lecturers' comments to students' writing*	❖ Provided to students- on students' texts esp. by lecturers in SC course ❖ Not provided to students		❖ Provided to students- on students' texts *esp. by lecturers in SC course* ❖ Not provided to students	❖ Provided by some lecturers ❖ R
3	*Frequently commented problems*	❖ Surface errors of grammar, spellings, connectors ❖ Paragraphing- Organisation of topics, ❖ Referencing		❖ R ❖ R ❖ R	❖ R ❖ R
4	*Evaluation of the language aspect in students' writing*	❖ Yes ❖ No		❖ Yes ❖ No	❖ Yes, but in all subjects ❖ R

5	*Usefulness of lecturers' comments in aiding learning*	❖ Provide corrections, clarifications on some matters ❖ Counselling students on academic writing matters		❖ R ❖ R	❖ R ❖ R
C	**Supportive Structures to Students' ESL Academic Writing**				
6	*Students' note taking practices*	❖ Take notes o I understand more reading my own notes than I do reading lecturers' handouts ❖ Don't take notes- sometimes- limiting factors: o Some lecturers' speaking speed - esp. when lecturers simply read out their lecture notes in class o Audibility problems in big lecture halls esp. where large class sizes are involved		❖ R o Aid in following the lesson during the lecture ❖ R - o R	❖ R o R ❖ R o No some lecturers discourage the practice
7	*The value of note taking in learning*	❖ Keeping a record of the lecture for future reference- aid revision of lessons ❖ Improve L2 academic writing skills e.g. summarise & organise points, learning new vocabulary		❖ R ❖ R	❖ R ❖ For additional points, elaborations not found in handouts ❖ R
8	*The CS course and students'*	❖ Aid in the acquisition of some basic		❖ R	❖ R

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	academic L2 writing skills	skills- e.g. take notes, organise work in writing		❖ A compendium for CS and handouts
9	*University's support mechanism to students' L2 writing*	❖ Support from CS course ❖ Individual lecturers in SC other Departs- esp. those who take the trouble of counselling students on writing. ❖ But, no support from the university as a whole o No follow up activities after the completion CS course i.e. Basic skills acquired from the course are not re-emphasised in other university courses	❖ R ❖ R ❖ R o R	❖ R ❖ R ❖
10	*Students' linguistic behaviour on campus outside the classroom*	❖ English is used in class and outside classrooms, e.g. in the cafeterias, discussion in the rooms ❖ Kiswahili is used the most on campus outside classrooms	❖ R ❖ R o Students who speak English outside classroom experience difficulties from colleagues who insist in using Kiswahili o Students feel more at ease using Kiswahili	❖ R ❖ Students are forced by the system to use English ❖ We don't use Swahili in the classroom ❖ We use English everywhere ❖ R
11	*The language of instruction at universities in Tanzania*	❖ English be the major language of instruction o We want to be able to communicate worldwide o Universities admit foreigners o Learning resources are mostly	❖ R o R o R	❖ R o It is an international language o Learning resources are

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		available in English	o R	mostly available in English.

R= repeated response

Source: Research data: Students' questionnaire and focus group discussions

UNIVERSITY OF DAR ES SALAAM
FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES & LINGUISTICS
(Incorporating the Communication Skills Unit)
P.O. BOX 35040 – DAR ES SALAAM – TANZANIA

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

Direct Line: 2410749
General Line: 2410500/8 Ext. 2042
Fax No. 2410395
Telegram: UNIVERSITY
DAR ES SALAAM

21st May, 2002

Prof. P. Msolla,
Deputy Vice Chancellor,
Sokoine University of Agriculture

u. f. s. Prof. R. L. Kurwijila,
Dean, Faculty of Science
Sokoinie University of Agriculture

RE: EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT ON COMMUNICATION SKILLS EXAMINATIONS – JULY 2001

It is with pleasure that I submit to you this report on my mission to your University as External Examiner in Communications Skills. I had the opportunity to see the draft examination questions for moderation. The following papers were submitted for moderation, and later for external examining:

1. AE 1.3
2. BS 1.2
3. EE 1.2
4. SC 1.1

General Comments

The papers were well set and they did cover all aspects of the course outline. The questions were either objective or required students to do a limited amount of self-expression. The skills tested comprised: reading comprehension, note-taking, grammar, and writing. Students' overall performance was just fair, with the majority of students only passing marginally in the examination. Had it not been for the coursework marks that were high, it would have been difficult for the majority of students to get a pass mark. Marking was fair and consistent across the papers. No marks were adjusted except a few cases that resulted form incorrect addition.

Comments on specific skills tested
1. Reading Comprehension and Note-taking

Students did comparatively well in these two areas. The section carried 20 points, and the majority of students scored between 13 - 16 points. In papers where the section carried 35 points, the majority scored between 22–28 points. Within this section students did better in reading comprehension than in note taking.

2. Grammar and discourse style

Performance in this section, which carried 20 points, was fair with a large number of students falling within the 9 – 12 band and in some few cases the 13 –16 band.

3. Writing

In general students' written expression was on the whole not good. When converted to 20 points (for comparison with the other areas tested) the majority of students fell either within the 5 – 8 band or the 9 – 12 band. Looking at randomly selected scripts a good number of answers revealed that students have not mastered the basic tools of language such as grammar, spelling, tenses, subject-verb agreement, and fluency in self-expression. Some students' scripts contained good ideas, which were somewhat, scattered rather unsystematically and not well expressed, while other scripts were difficult to follow.

While students performed slightly better in the section on grammar and discourse style (2 above), their grammar in the writing section was extremely weak. This may be attributed to the kind of grammar they study at secondary school level. At secondary school level students study grammar in isolation, in the form of structure; while the functional grammar that they are required to use at tertiary level, mostly through writing is rarely practiced. This is the area where first year tertiary students are weak. My recommendation here would be to give students more writing practice in Communication Skills courses,

and where possible, in subject specialist courses. Alternatively, assignments could be set by subject specialist Professors/Lecturers and marked jointly by staff from both sides: subject specialist staff for content, and communications skills staff for language.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Sokoine University for having invited me to serve as External Examiner. Through you, Sir, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the warm welcome extended to me during my stay in Morogoro by the Dean of the Science Faculty, Prof. Kurwijila, and the Acting Coordinator of Communication Skills Unit Mr. Hashim. I sincerely apologize for any inconvenience the delayed reporting will have caused.

Yours sincerely,

HEAD
DEPT. OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES & LINGUISTICS
UNIVERSITY OF DAR ES SALAAM

Dr. Martha A. S. Qorro
Head, Department of Foreign Languages and Linguistics

c.c.   Co-ordinator,
        Communication Skills

SOKOINE UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE
FACULTY OF SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

External Examiner's report on Communication Skills
June 2001 University Examinations

Examiner' comments	Department's reactions	Faculty's reactions	
1. Papers were well set covering all aspects of the course	Concur, and will uphold.	Keep it up	
2. Reading Comprehension & Note Taking: Students did comparatively well in this section.	Concur, and will improve teaching in both reading comprehension and note taking.	Concur	
3. Grammar and discourse: Performance was fair.	Concur, and will improve teaching in this aspect.	Concur	
4. Writing: Generally, students' written expression was not good, their grammar in the writing section was extremely weak, which could be due to fragmented instruction in grammar at secondary school level. Recommended: i. More practice in written assignments in Comm. Skills course. ii. Subject specialists set assignments and marked jointly by subject instructors and Comm. Skills instructors.	Concur, this is a big problem, the department will do everything possible to arrest the situation. (i) Concur, this is the case currently, but we will enhance practices in writing. (ii) Concur, but its practicability is questionable, considering the heavy teaching load Comn. Skills instructors already	Agree	

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	shoulder in the department. We, however, request the UGSC/Senate to float the idea to the subject specialists.
5.	Concur
	General observations: Generally, the EE has appreciated the seriousness in students' English language deficiency. The EE has also alluded to the fact that the problem is too big for one department to solve. In this same vein, a university-wide approach needs to be sought to deal with the existing language problem at SUA. (See EE's recommendation 4(ii) above). We, therefore, recommend that subject specialists... be requested to: a) Pay additional attention to, and assess language component when marking students' assignments; b) Encourage and guide students to use appropriate English during seminar presentations, tutorials, and consultations; c) Discourage students to code-mix and code-switch languages (i.e. Kiswahili-English or vice versa) during classroom sessions or while engaged in other academic activities outside the classroom.

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SOKOINE UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE
FACULTY OF SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

SC 100 COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Adequate communication ability is a key to success in all academic fields, business profession, personal development, and in many other aspects in the modern world.

As a student you need communication skills the most because you will spend a big amount of your time in academic communication, which include: listening to lecturers and taking notes, intensive/extensive academic reading, extensive academic writing, e.g. academic essays, examinations and other assignments, research proposals, experiments and research reports. Also as a student, you will need better communication skills because you will be involved in oral presentation activities such as seminars and discussions, paper presentations, plenary public speaking, etc. All of these activities are fundamental to your academic survival here at the university. Therefore, you are required to master special strategies on written and spoken communication to enable you to cope with the intricacies of the advanced studies in your specialised subjects.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The broad aim of this course, therefore, is to equip students with skills for study, communication, and information gathering.

SC 100 Communication Skills, has therefore, essentially been designed to meet the following specific objectives:

1. To improve students' English language abilities to a level, which can enable them "follow" university studies with great ease;

2. To improve students' communication skills and equip them with study skills, which they require to cope with advanced academic communication in their specialised subject areas at the university;

3. To equip students with sets of conventions and strategies they require for both written presentation and oral presentation, which students ought to master in order to communicate effectively;

4. To improve students' grammatical competence.

MODE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Students in this course will, essentially learn through a mixture of lectures and seminars, with no defined line between the two. In each topic students will be exposed to tasks, which will be appropriate to the application of particular skills required for academic communication. Where possible, examples in this course will be drawn from students' disciplines of specialization.

This is a 2 credits course of 45 hours Lectures and 30 hours Seminars.
Pre-requisite: None.

COURSE CONTENTS
PART A
Listening techniques and basic note taking: Sectioning in speech and writing, organisation and layout of notes, and brevity. Identifying and distinguishing between main and subordinate points in a lecture, and recognising signals in spoken texts.

Reading techniques: Sources of information, marching purposes of reading with strategy: skimming and scanning, detailed reading, comprehension, and study reading (SQ 3R & PQRST), recognising general and specific information. Recognising topic sentences and supporting materials. Recognising sentence links, summaries of text and interpreting figures and tabulated information.

Writing techniques: Interpreting questions, planning essays and other texts, thought reduction, and developing ideas. Organising information; paragraph structure, presenting information, dictionary reference and vocabulary building, orthographic conventions. Sentence construction, connection, signalling and chaining in written texts; Use of pronominal forms, passives, and diction.

Text types and development: Essays: argumentative, descriptive, etc. Reports: experiments, project, research, etc.; Term papers. Supporting details in text development: Use of examples, cause and effect propositions, etc.

Referencing in written texts: Acknowledging sources; using others' materials and making citations; compiling a list of references.

Public speaking: Methods of oral presentations. Techniques: Preparation (material, audience and the presenter); presentation (use of appropriate language signals, appropriate vocabulary and register); use of audio-visual media, etc.

Information literacy skills: The University Library and other sources of information. Information search skills: Bibliographic search, introduction to various databases, literature evaluation; citation methods, and bibliographic writing. Electronic sources of information, search and retrieval.

Seminars: Will include students' presentations on selected topics and make plenary discussions on speaking, listening and note taking, reading, writing, and information gathering.

PART B: GRAMMAR: GRAMMAR ELEMENTS WILL BE TAUGHT ALONGSIDE STUDY SKILLS i.e. In the course of teaching study skills, students' grammar (English language proficiency) will be enhanced through exercises on study skills.

Assessment: Continuous Assessment (40%); End of Semester Examination (60%)
PEER EVALUATION: AS A WAY OF IMPROVING TEACHING SKILLS AMONG MEMBERS OF STAFF TEACHING THE COURSE, PEER EVALUATION SHALL BE INTRODUCED. IN THIS APPROACH, ONCE IN A WHILE, COLLEAGUES WHO TEACH SC 100 WILL AUDIT THE TEACHING OF THEIR COLLEAGUE AND ASSESS HIM ACCORDINGLY SO AS TO IMPROVE DELIVERY OF THE SUBJECT.

Name of Instructors: Dr. S.T.A. Mafu, Dr. S.M. Neke

APPENDIX 6

Academic Writing Pedagogy in Higher Education in Tanzania

Interview schedule and discussion questions for Lecturers

The main aim of the current study is to determine first, linguistic and social practices, which influence students writing performance in higher education, secondly, the adequacy of the university efforts (e.g. academic Communication Skills course) at improving students' academic second language writing skills, and lastly, how CS course is integrated in other university courses.

In order to achieve this aim it will be highly appreciated if you could respond to the following sets of questions. Each set dwells on one thematic area.

1.0   **Students' Academic literacy performance in L2 Writing Practices**

   1.1   What do you make of students' performance in academic writing at the university?

   1.2   How would you judge successful or unsuccessful writing among students?

   1.3   How do you address problems of students' academic writing practices?

   1.4   Are the measures (to students' problems in academic writing practices) your own preference or a departmental policy?

   1.5   How do you monitor students' progress in academic writing practice?

   1.6   How do you make of students' note taking practices during your lectures?

2.0   Feedback to Students' Writing

   2.2   Do you comment anything and what are the main problem areas you usually find yourself commenting on when assessing students' written works?

   2.3   Do you include and give weight to language aspect in marking students' written works?

   2.4   Do you have any departmental policy guidelines pertaining to the assessment of students' academic written tasks?

3.0 Supportive structure to student writing

3.1 How best would lecturers other than those teaching SC 100 Communication Skills course be involved in the efforts of improving students' academic writing skills?

3.2 What can you say about university/ faculty/ departmental support for English language generally and for academic writing in particular, apart from the offering of SC 100 Communication Skills course?

3.3 Why do you think language problems in academic writing are still frequent among students at SUA despite the offering of SC 100 Communication Skills Course?

4.0 Linguistics behaviour

4.1 Where and how do you usually use English on Campus?

4.2 Where and how do you usually find students interacting using the English language outside the classroom on the campus?

4.3 What do you make of using the English language as a medium of instruction at the universities in a Tanzanian social cultural context where Kiswahili is highly influential (to the majority of Tanzanians) even in the thinking process itself?

Thank you very much for your time

Academic Writing Pedagogy in Higher Education in Tanzania

Questionnaire and discussion questions for Students

The main aim of the current study is to gather information from students regarding their experiences around academic writing at the university. It is anticipated that the results of the current study will be instrumental at improving the teaching and learning of the academic writing in higher education in Tanzania.

In order to achieve this aim it will be highly appreciated if you could answer the following sets of questions. Each set dwells on one thematic area.

1.0 Students Academic ESL Writing Practices Across Disciplines

1.1. Do you feel that you have to write essays in the same or different ways in all the subjects?

1.2. Do you usually take notes in every lecture? Why or why not?

1.3. Do you feel that you have to take notes in the same or different ways in lectures of different subjects?

1.4. How useful are note-taking practices to you?

    1.4.1. In your learning process generally?

    1.4.2. At improving your academic writing skills in particular?

2.0. Lecturers' Feedback as Inputs to Learning

2.1. What do lecturers usually comment on when assessing your written assignments?

2.2. Do lecturers include language aspect in the assessment of your written work?

2.3. How useful are lecturers' comments at improving your academic writing skills?

3.0. Supportive Structures to Students' ESL Academic Writing

3.1 How has SC 100 Communication Skills course helped you at improving your academic writing skills?

3.2 What language support resources does your department, faculty, or university in general provide:

    3.2.1   To improve your English language generally?

    3.2.2   To improve your academic writing skills in particular?

4.0.   **Values and Attitudes towards English**

4.1 How would you use English on campus?

    4.1.1   Inside the classroom?

    4.1.2   Outside the classroom?

4.2 How would you use Swahili/mother tongue on campus?

    4.2.1   Inside the classroom?

    4.2.2   Outside the classroom?

4.3 How comfortable are you using English in academics?

4.4 What constraints (if any) have kept you back from improving your English language skills?

4.5 In case of language problems, how might the situation change for the better for you?

4.6 What do you make of using the English language as a medium of instruction at the university in the Tanzanian context?
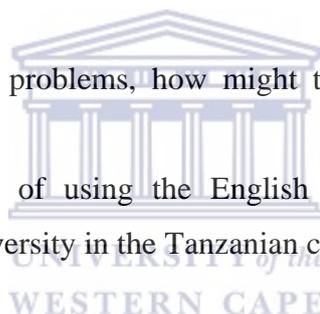
Thank you very much for your time

APPENDIX 8(a)

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Question No. 1

(a) Agricultural marketing is the performance of all
business activities involved to move goods and services

(a) Agricultural marketing is the performance
of all business activities (marketing functions)
involved in flow of goods and services from the
point of initial agricultural production until
the same goods are in the hand of ultimate
consumer.

The study of agricultural marketing deserves
a separate treatment from marketing of manufactured
goods due to the following reasons:

(i) Agriculture in developing countries comprise:

• In developing countries agricultural activities comprise
many farmer which are scattered and exceeding indep-
endent production and consumption decision.

• Due to central role of agriculture in developing
countries, agricultural production is subjected to numerous
policy distortation.

• The structure of cost and functions of agricultural
activities depends sustainably on the performance of
other sectors such communication, road etc

• Agricultural activities depends to a greater extent on
the weather and biological pattern of reproduction.
When the consumer behaviour change, farmers may
react by producing more or less or by breeding
more animal or few, but the success of these
activities is dependent on either the weather
who good or not that, presence of diseases or not

• Farmer are price takers this is due to the
reason that farmers are numerous scattered and
sometimes ignorant which frustrate any attempt
to join them to act jointly.

• Time lag. The agricultural products take long
for the product to be realized. Through waiting
the consumers behaviour may changes.

• Cost-Price squeeze problem. The cost of production
tends to be close to the cost farm price.

Ag. 21770.
q Ag. MCT. AEA 282
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Question no. ....

1) Role of marketing.

- Facilitating to move goods from area with excess supply to the area of deficit (demand). Thus, physical handling of agricultural products. This is very important because it bring the products to area where they are needed, thus increasing utility of those products in that area.

- Add value to agricultural products. Marketing through its functions of storage, transport, processing and trading. It add value to products thus utility. The utility generated are form, space, time and ownership. These utility generated facilitate the exchanges at high price due to the utility added, and this gained income is used to other ~~forms of~~ sectors of economy.

- The growing number of people in urban and rural areas, the look at marketing functions such as transport, processing and trading as source of employment. Thus many people get employed where they gain money which they use to improve their livelihood.

- In developing market, ~~the~~ investment is made on ~~infrastructure~~ infrastructure such examination of road networks and this in turn benefit other sector of economy, at the same time reduce the cost of marketing.

- The improvement made on transportation and other forms of infrastructures, encourage the specialization and commercialization. Since many farmer will be able to get information, inputs and other necessary related to their activities.

- Gross Domestic Products. The agricultural marketing contribute to the increase of GDP almost over 40% GDP to from agricultures.

- Also, national income increased by exporting the products to other countries where these countries exported, the payment especially taxes goes to the economy.

(18)

APPENDIX 8(b)

AEE 21922

Question........4.

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The discussion on the functions of education Systems in Society:

Education is a process of aquiring knowledge, experience, skills through the interaction between the individual and the enviroment in which he lives.

Education is a Continuous process from the day one is born to the day dies. 2

Education is achieved by learning and learning is a process of transforming our experience unto knowledge for action.

The education systems are the facilitators of learning within the Society through Social Institutions. These institutions are:-

-Family
-School
-Religion   2
- Goverment
- Economy

There are three types of education which are Informal education
      Formal   education
      Non-formal education.

The functions of the Social institutions:
① Family:- It is the primary Source of education where by children are being handled accordingly from the day they are born.

-Family is the place where Socialization of an individual is initiated and to a greater extent where human being developed to who will be in the future.

- In the family is where sex roles are being insisted and Cultural aspects are being built in the child's mind from early childhood to adult-hood state. One is being shaped to behave according to the beliefs, Norms and Attitudes partaining in the Social System. 2

(2) School:- This is another social institution which is involved in socializing children from the age of starting schooling from nursery schools to secondary schools.

The school seems to take over the family socialization duties because of the early age of the schooling (nursery schools and day care centres). Parents do not have time to be with their children as most of the time of their life children are at school with their pear groups and their teachers.

Also the aspect of parents being employed in government duties, they are having no time of being with their children and most of the duties at home are done by houseboys or housegirls. Thus children lack the opportunity of being prepared for future life activities as a boy or a girl, as brother or sister, or as future father or future mother.

(3) Religion:- Is tool of reinforcing the Ritual aspects and shape the society in Spiritual life by specifying the Sacred issues.

(4) Government:- Is concerned with the maintainance of rules and Laws in the society in order to descipline and promote accountability in different aspects of the country.

(5) Economy:- Responsible for proper distribution and allocation of resources eg. Labour force, Land tenure and other Social services

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APPENDIX 8(c)

Question...... 1.

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(a) Agricultural marketing is all the activities which are undertaken when the produce move/transferred from agricultural production to the ultimate consumer in the same forms.

- The study of Agriculture marketing deserves a separate treatment from marketing of manufactured goods due to the following reasons:

- Time lag - Almost all the agricultural product needs long time to reach the selling stage from when their produced. ie they have to under go a long chain until they reach an ultimate end consumer.

- Perishability nature of the agricultural product make it possible to study the agricultural marketing separately since they need more post-harvest treatment to them in a good quality as required by the consumer

- Form utility - Some of the agricultural product needs to be changed in form so as to appeal the consumers satisfaction which he/she wants.

- Time utility - Some of the agricultural produce have to be stored for later consumption when at that time the condition doesn't allow the production of such a products.

- However during the processing of marketing agricultural marketing many middlemen and facilitating agents are involved in the transferring of the product from the production area to the final user. hence needs a separate treatment from marketing manufactured goods

Question.... 1. Ag. MKT AEA 202

(b). Marketing is the condition of satisfying needs to the customer by bringing product to them in the form and time as they want.

However development of marketing goes hand in hand with the development of the economy of the society.

At the beginning when the economy of the society is not very high the marketing is also very low; but since the society develop, from the agrarian economy where people produce for self-sufficient, to industrial economy there is production of surplus of which have to be sold to satisfy other needs

In the long run 'specialization is established where by people produce more of what they need in their and then base for trade has to be made of which lead to development of the marketing and economy of such a society

- After development of the marketing so many people are involved in the process then it provide employment to many people hence increase their economy as individuals

- When marketing of the produce expand beyond borders it contribute much on the GDP of the country hence increase the economy of the country as well.

-- When marketing has gone to such extent economic development of such a society has developed depending on the level of production they have reached and the volume of surplus they are selling in and outside their country hence marketing development go together and economic development.

AG-MICT   A EA 2021

(a) Agricultural marketing is the proc-
ers and buyers involved in the
satisfying human needs by
bringing to them proper goods
and services in proper time and
in the way they want them.

The agricultural marketing deserves
a separate treatment from
marketing of manufactured goods
in the following ways:

1. Due to nature of commodities
   used in the marketing.
   (i) Agriculture marketing deals with
   commodities which are in highly
   risk of spoilage.

   (ii) The function of agriculture
   marketing depends on the
   performance of other sectors
   example transporters, bankers
   and advertisers.

   (iii) Agriculture commodities takes
   long time to be produced hence
   to capture the market it
   can need more time.

   (iv) Agricultural commodities its
   production depends on the weather
   Hence there is uncertainties
   in the production.

   (v) Agricultural commodities
   production in the developing
   countries are made more
   fragmented. They produce
   the individual basis.

Hence the above criterias makes the marketing of Agricultural commodities to deserves as separate treatment.

b   The roles of marketing in the economy are:

1. Marketing involves various activities which is done when goods are moving from producer to the ultimate consumers, In between there various creation of employment. Many people are employed as managers, Sellers and middleman.

2. Marketing also contribute hardly in the community transformation from one stage to another. This is achieved through market intelligence by which market information and dissiminated to the community.

3. Marketing processess contribute to the nation to get the foreign currency (foreign exchange) marketing enable to get money for other countries by selling to them goods and services.

4. Marketing facilitate the increase of the Gross domestic product of a nation. Because marketing is functioning many means of community are

. The functions of education systems in society. A
Case study of Tanzania.

Education can be looked upon the overall ways
of life from the day we are born to the day we are.
Therefore education is a broad terminology which
can be categorized into three parts:

(a) Formal Education

(b) Non-formal Education

(c) Informal Education   2

Formal Education is the one which is structural,
systematic and hierarchical. It is mostly provided
in schools. It has chronological orders of schooling.
eg. STD I - VII, Form I - IV and Form V - VI
etc.

Non-Formal Education is that form of education
which is also structured, but is given to the targeted
people eg. Adult Learning programmes, Farmers
Extension Programmes. etc.

Informal Education is that Form of education
which is not structured but it is always found
in everyday life, it is through encounters of people
that one can achieve informal education
. It is the form of education which prolong for
a long time ie it doesn't end when compared to   2
other forms of education.

Therefore functions of education can be outlined
here through the following criteria:

(a) Social / Cultural
(b) Economical
(c) Political

SOCIAL / CULTURAL

• Education provide Capacity for change, this is true in the sence that, eg. Tanzania is one of the poor Countries in the world. Then, when there is adoption of new technology which exist in the world, Tanzania will only benefit if only it has people who are educated who can take through that new technology and use it for production. That's why education facilitate easier the adoption of new technology

• Education also help in the issue of socialisation. As we have said before socialisation can be facilitated by schools (Formal Education) or Family (informal groups). Both family and schools are Educational institutions which provide socialisation practice to the new members of the society so that the can Conform to the Culture Values and beliefs of the society Concern. eg. In Tanzania most of the parents due to the global world of today they send their children to schools while they are still very young therefore school take the mandate of socialising these children and family play just a little part.

• Education also assist in minimizing the gap between those who have educated and those who have not educated. This is mostly done by implementation of different educational programmes eg. Adult Learning programmes or Illiteracy learning programme. Tanzania also in previous days has established/launched a policy of " Education for all"

• Education also aids one to achieve personality in a society, this helps one to feel confident and be sure or cultivate the culture on this mind that people are happy with his achievement in education. and also it makes people to rely on presenting problems for obtaining solution to that particular person (Educated person)
• Education prepares students to acquire different societal Roles in future.

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Those who have a sign of supernature power disseminate that knowledge to their follower or supporter. It can be magic power e.g beliefs, customs, culture e.g for the case of Mwana Ibarri - Mirugun or "Kifimbo". or can be in Spiritual power e.g Ribwitele etc.

The power of supernature now decrease as the level of knowledge increases and the decline of the number of people who refuse to follow.

(iii) Rationalism approach-

This is the type of knowledge in which some acquire through logic by using a common sense Example when you switch on the light from the room. You can judge why the light is on what is caused the light to be on and if not on why is not lighting by using a common sense.

b) Superiority of empiricism:

Empiricism is superior then non- Scientific approach because the knowledge can be obtained not by believing only but by evidence. The knowledge also can be described, explained, stored, preserved, used later, improved and other people can be use it for more development. Other factors make Empiricism to be superior are:

a) Scientific knowledge can be replicated. The knowledge obtained from one locality can be also obtained from other locality if the same procedures will be used.

b) It can be used to Share experiend: Experience can be shared because the knowledge can be improved, critised, stored for late use.

c) Objectively not Subjectively - The knowledge obtained through objectively. That is what researcher observe and not what researcher will observe or imagin.

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a) Empiricism is the scientific approach in which individual acquire knowledge through evidence which is by senses. E.g by sighting, hearing, smelling, touching and sounding. In this knowledge acquisition there are some equipment assist in it E.g in sighting (eye), can be assisted by using lences or binocular. Or in the thermometer can be help in the sighting proc.

In Empiricism approach the knowledge can be acquired by using sensing sergery and should have an evidence which can occur in scientific way. The knowledge can be stored, preserved, critisised or even improved by other researchers if possible. There are the knowledge can be repeated and revised. Not confined to the people who have it or originate from them.

Knowledge acquired through reasoning and logic, evidence by using the sense and by scientific way.

Other approaches to knowledge acquisition are non-scientific approach. These approaches the knowledge acquired just by believing, no evidences, and to verify and cannot be repeated. Just confined to those who whose having that knowledge.

Examples of non-scientific knowledge acquisition approaches are:

i) Authoritarian approach.
In this approach, individual acquire knowledge from the people who considered to have in the society. Example influencial people in the society, oracle people and chiefs people, rainmakers, foretellers, gods etc.

ii) Mysticism - In this approach, individual acquire knowledge th   301   per nature power.

APPENDIX 8(g)

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Question...... EXT. EE 202

Q2   The family:

This is the primary institutional Unit of Socialization, it is responsible on Shaping the family members on how to observe the beliefs, values, norms, and behaviour.

As Socialization defined as a life long process, this Unit is an important especially for children as their Starting point to Socialization process.

The family is responsible for resplacement of new members in the Society through reproduction, also the family is responsible to take care of children and prepare them for their coming adult stage.

It is also the family through Socialization which is required to lead the new members to religious aspects especially the children, also to give the child security and Support, provision of food to ensure their normal growth.

On its parts, the family is required to make sure that the new members are all aware on Fork ways and mores.

As the Culture can be transmitted, learned or acquired its the responsibility of the family to make sure that all the new members are equiped with what is the Culture of the particular Society.

The School.

This is the Secondary Unit of Socilization as after the family time of handling Children the other place to go for socialization is to school.

At school, teachers are special Trained how to teach these new members of the Society.

In Europe, the School takes the first priority than the family because they are taking part about 100%. This is because of lowering age of going to school, Employment of the parents which lead them to leave their children to the child care and nursary school from the morning to evening.

So the School has a very big relative influence on Socilization as children are being taught according to their Culture.

It is the School which is responsible to prepare the

Children for higher studies, taking into account of the global aspects, at the school is the place where they learn different languages, local and international languages.

School teachers are learned how to transfer/transmit the culture to their new members according to their age and level of education their supposed to learn.

The mass media.
This takes the third position on socialization mainly for children. This means that before a child grow up enough to know how to use the mass media, socialization must start at family level, then the school up to the mass media.

The mass media includes television, radio, internets, and recorded information like video cassettes.

On watching TV and listening to radios, many important things about culture can be learned by all the new members, people can learn and change from their informal ways of life to formal one.

This type of socialization unit nowadays takes a large influence to several societies and it is contributing to changes of many cultures and acquire the new or foreign cultures. It is through the mass media that societies may change from their good cultures and acquire bad cultures, this means that through socialization many things are happening eg disintergrating of nuclear families, divorce etc, although they may be caused by the life style, but the mass media is contributing to learn unnecessary life styles from foreign countries.

Generally mass media has got many positive contributions to socialization but there may be also some negative contributions according to the African cultures compared to European cultures of which nowadays are shared within societies.

eg Through TV people can learn many new informations and can acquire knowledge.

But through TV also there is actions which can mislead esp. to children wa

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DINGO THE NEED.

APPENDIX 9

ETHICS STATEMENT

The research complied with the American Sociological Research Association standards. All interviewees had the right to:

- Confidentiality

- Withdrawal at any stage of the research

- Request a report at the end of the research

- Research protocol – indicating the purpose of the research and the rights of the respondents.

Moreover, the research sought permission from the Sokoine University of Agriculture to conduct this research at the university, including using teaching and learning material (e.g. students' texts). The researcher ensured that throughout the research no respondent was interviewed or involved in any research activity at any stage against his/her will.

University of the Western Cape

Private Bag X17, Bellville. 7535 SOUTH AFRICA

Telephone : (021) 959-2978/2380
Fax   : (021) 959-1212/2420
E-mail   : fbanda@uwc.ac.za

FACULTY OF ARTS
LINGUISTICS DEPARTMENT

21 October 2005

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

FOLLOW UP ON DATA COLLECTION IN TANZANIA

Mr. Hashim Issa Mohamed is my student currently pursuing a PhD (linguistics). His thesis is provisionally entitled A *Critical Discourse Analysis of Academic Writing as Social Practice in Higher Education in Tanzania.*

He has made excellent progress so far. Apart from the substantial data he collected last year, he has also made tremendous progress towards completing his dissertation. I have already seen the first draft of his dissertation.

However, he needs to collect additional data in Tanzania to complete the process.

Therefore, any assistance rendered to him will be highly appreciated. Should you require further clarification, do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely

Professor Felix Banda (PhD)
Chairperson & Supervisor Linguistics Department

DEPARTEMENT
LINGUISTIEK
U.W.K.

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DEPARTMENT OF
LINGUISTICS
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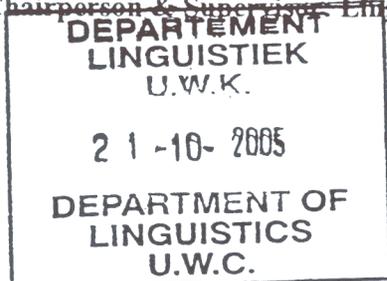
SOKOINE UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR
P.O. BOX 3000 MOROGORO TANZANIA
Tel:255-23-2603511/4,Dir:255-23-2603236 Fax 255-23-2604652 Email :dvc@suanet.ac.tz

Ref. No.: SUA/PF/Mohamed

Date: 11/11/2005

Mr. Hashim I. Mohammed
Department of Social Sciences
Faculty of Science
SUA - MOROGORO

u.f.s The Dean,
Faculty of Science
SUA - MOROGORO

Forwed. Best of luck
14/11/05

Dear Mr. Hashim,

RE: **FOLLOW UP COLLECTION OF DATA AT SUA WITH RESPECT TO MR. HASHIM I. MOHAMMED (PhD) STUDENT.**

We acknowledge to have received your letter dated, 2nd November 2005, with reference number FoS/SocSci/ST/27, with regard to the above heading. The University Management wishes to congratulate you for the good progress made.

This is to inform you that permission is granted for you to collect the required data at SUA.

Yours sincerely,

J.K Mtapa,
For: **DEPUTY VICE CHANCELLOR**

c.c.   The Vice-Chancellor
       The Deputy Vice-Chancellor
       The Registrar.