

THE RELEVANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF
NAMIBIA'S TEACHING METHODS OF ENGLISH MODULE, TO THE
GRADE 11 AND 12 ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE ORDINARY AND
HIGHER LEVEL SYLLABI
FOCUS: WRITING SKILLS

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the University of Namibia's module 'Teaching Methods of English' and establish its relationship with the Grade 11 and 12 English Second Language Ordinary and Higher level Syllabi in the focus area of writing skills.

The study followed a qualitative method of programme evaluation by evaluating the content and structure of the University module in relation to the school syllabus. Effectiveness of the student teachers' competency to teach writing was also looked at through lesson observations of six students selected randomly. Determining the students' overall knowledge on theories of writing and how the module prepared them to teach writing skills was done through completion of questionnaires by the sample of 23 students. Students' own writing competency as well as their competency in marking written work was also examined.

The main findings from the study show that the relationship between the Teaching Methods of English Module of the University of Namibia and the Grade 11 and 12 English Second Language Ordinary and Higher Level Syllabi is inconclusive as content in the university module is 'concealed'. Therefore, it needs to spell out some of the key concepts pertaining to the teaching of the writing domain. Student teachers demonstrated that they can teach most of the writing tasks featuring in the school syllabi, but their lesson presentations lacked chronology, rich teaching-learning aids and methods, practical writing activities and awareness of process-writing stages in the lessons. In general, students have a vague understanding of

theories underpinning writing. Their own writing proficiency present a mixture of originality, right structure and style on the one hand, while on the other, language errors continue to persist.

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List of Acronyms

UNAM = University of Namibia

NIED = National Institute for Educational Development

NSSC = Namibian Senior Secondary Certificate

NSSC (O) = Namibia Senior Secondary Certificate (Ordinary level)

NSSC (H) = Namibia Senior Secondary Certificate (Higher level)

NETA = Namibia English Teachers' Association

CLT = Communicative Language Teaching

B. Ed = Bachelor of Education Degree

DNEA = Directorate of National Examinations and Assessment

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my younger siblings: Penda-Mambo, Meameno, Ellen and Inotila, in a hope that they will all complete their studies and lead successful, independent career lives in the future.

“You are at the captain of your own ships!”

DECLARATIONS

I, Taimi Ndapandula Nghikembua, hereby declare that this study is a true reflection of my own research, and that this work, or part thereof has not been submitted for a degree in any other institution of higher education.

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TAIMI NDAPANDULA NGHIKEMBUA

CHAPTER ONE: ORIENTATION TO THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

1.1 INTRODUCTION

When the researcher started teaching after completing her teaching diploma, she regarded herself as a graduate with the latest knowledge in English teaching as well as general educational ideologies, only to discover the gap between training and classroom requirements. This was true for overall English teaching expectations in the schools, but most particularly the syllabus expectations regarding the writing domain. As simple as the writing tasks looked, the researcher struggled to take her learners through them and they obviously struggled with her.

Tisher and Wideen (1990, p.1) affirm that “If we want to give our young people the best education possible, we must first provide the best education and training to those who will teach them”. What this ‘best education and training’ involves is

obviously debatable. Most likely, it addresses part of the researcher's experience shared above. However, if teachers are seen as both agents and implementers of change in societies, as Zeichner and Dahlstrom (2001) pronounce, their teacher education/training programmes need to be relevant and effective. Addressing relevant knowledge, skills and values appropriately incorporates Namibian accepted competency-based education perspectives which integrate dimensions of 'education' as well as 'training' (Engelbrecht, 2007).

Descriptions of best teacher education curricula include references to policies and content designed to develop teachers' required knowledge, attitudes, behaviour and skills in order to perform their tasks effectively in the school and classroom context.

A very central course in teacher education is the 'Teaching Methodology' of a particular school subject. The role of such a 'Teaching Methodology' course is to promote the effectiveness of the methods and strategies used during teaching. Jacobs, Vakalisa and Gawe (2007) define a teaching strategy as a "broad plan of action" for facilitating teaching-learning activities with a view to achieve learning outcomes.

Engelbrecht (2008) proposes contemporary strategies for effective teaching such as 'direct' strategies which are deductive in nature and more teacher-centred; 'indirect' strategies which are inductive and learner-centred; 'interactive' strategies which allow cooperative learning and 'experiential' and 'independent' strategies. In order to implement such strategies, teaching-learning methods are employed, for example, discussion, question and answer, role-play, problem-solving, and experiments.

Teaching methods in turn integrate media, learner activities and learning content (Jacobs, et al., 2007).

Benjamin's (2004) study probed learners' poor academic performance in English and suggests that poor instructional strategies can be one of the causes. This is concurred by Otaala (2001) in a similar study as she reveals that teaching strategies that were used by some teachers in the schools that she visited were irrelevant. Benjamin adds that many teachers could also not interpret the syllabus. Syllabus use and interpretation is another typical factor influencing teachers' effectiveness and therefore pre- and in-service teacher training need to constantly address this, in developing effective teachers.

Equally important in teacher education is the alignment of programmes to school subject content to ensure relevancy of a programme. Liston, Whitcomb and Borko (2009) claim that there is a typical gap between teacher education programmes and public school reality in terms of the curriculum content. If a situation like this is true of the local teacher training institutions, it would be a matter of concern. This study examines this correlation between the University of Namibia (UNAM) English teachers' module and its relevancy to the English school syllabus, with specific focus on writing skills.

Currently, Namibian secondary learner performance in English is unsatisfactory given the status of English as the official language in the country. While marking

Grade 12 learners' continuous assessment and end of year examinations writing pieces on a regular basis, the researcher had noted that learners demonstrate very poor writing skills. Namibian statistics of performance in English Second Language of the Namibia Senior Secondary Certificate Ordinary level (NSSCO) have shown consistently poor performances. In 2008, a 68.27% of the Grade 12 learners scored below the C symbol in English as a Second Language, while in the previous year, 2007, a shocking 85.48% scored below the C symbol in English (Directorate of National Examinations and Assessment/ DNEA statistics, 2007/8). A quest into this poor performance therefore remains pertinent in issues of effective teacher education programmes.

Implications of poor performance in English proficiency as a national language are many. One of them is the limiting possibility for admission to tertiary studies. Most faculties at the University of Namibia for example require a C symbol in English as an entry requirement. It is therefore inevitable that English remains one of the most important subjects in the Namibian school curriculum and adequate training of teachers in teaching English is most important. One such important aspect of English teaching is the writing domain which remains a problematic area for learners (Nyathi, 1999).

In addition to that, the writing domain takes up a big chunk in assessment weighting. The NSSC(O) English Second Language Syllabus allocates 60% of assessment to the 'Reading and Writing paper' on both Core and Extended levels (National Institute

for Educational Development / NIED, 2009) while the Namibia Senior Secondary Certificate Higher level (NSSCH) syllabus consists of four papers of which all three comprise a part of assessment on writing. These are, Reading and Directed Writing paper 50%, Continuous Writing paper 20% and the Writing on Literary Topics 25% (NIED, 2009). If writing remains one of the most difficult skills to teach, learn and assessment even more, the implication is that, prospective English teachers' training needs to focus on this aspect in particular. The University of Namibia educates English teachers who will teach at senior secondary school level, that is, Grade 11 and 12. The main question in this study is therefore whether the English writing skills component of the University of Namibia's English teacher-education programme is relevant to the writing skills component of the English senior secondary school syllabus and whether student teachers develop effective teaching skills in this domain, while they are undergoing training at the university.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study's concern is that, English secondary school learners show poor writing skills in the different writing tasks presented to them on a regular basis, as well as in the examinations. Their writing reveals a lot of spelling and punctuation errors; poor sentence structure in general and in particular, persistent flaws in maintaining concord; wrong word-order; flaws in using possession as opposed to contraction; omission of articles, prepositions and conjunctions; incompetent use of tenses; the use of fragments (incomplete sentences); lack of coherence and logical flow/

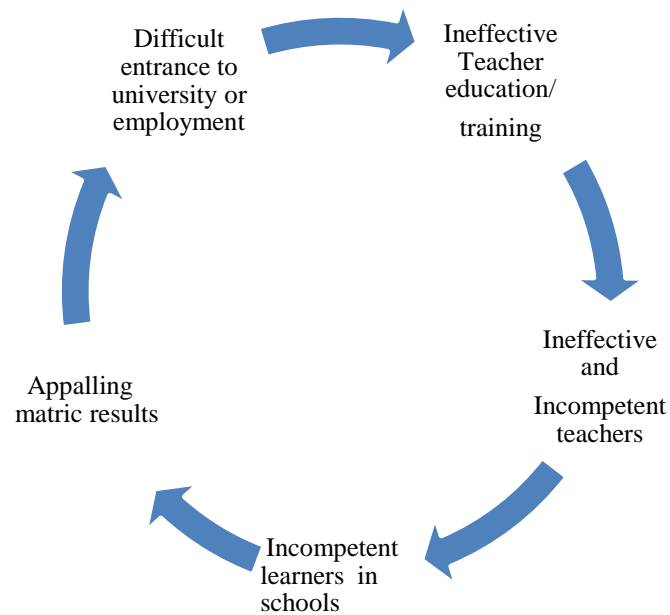
organisation of ideas; redundancy; lack of creativity; flaws in paragraphing; to mention but a few. Their knowledge and skills of how different writing tasks are written, is also quite minimal. These writing tasks include, inter alia, different types of essays, formal and informal letters, articles, summary-writing, and writing reports.

The researcher experienced the above situation when she was a secondary school English teacher and a national examination marker of the English subject. Eventually, when she became an English teacher educator and trainer, the researcher observed a similar problem of student teachers writing significantly poorly.

In an effort to find a solution to the writing predicament presented above, the researcher saw it fit to probe the situation from the teacher education and training point of view. Thus, the study looked at how English student teachers are prepared, at the University of Namibia, to teach secondary school writing. During their training, are the students aware of the writing tasks in the Ordinary and higher level syllabi, that they will be expected to teach in schools? Are they competent to teach these tasks? Are they proficient to write, themselves? Is the Teaching Methods of English Module therefore relevant and effective or not? These are some of the questions that clarify this concern.

The researcher decided to take the teacher education route as she fears for a vicious cycle that can happen. The possible vicious cycle can be pictured like the one on the next page.

Fig.1. Vicious cycle of ineffective teacher education/training



The diagram above clearly illustrates that quality teacher education is the backbone of every education system. If teacher education/training is ineffective, ineffective and incompetent teachers are bound to be the products. Incompetent teachers, will in turn produce incompetent learners, who are likely not to perform well in their Grade

12. The ultimate consequence is the difficulty to enter university or other tertiary institutions as well as difficulty to find employment.

The opposite of the cycle is however true. Effective teacher education/ training will produce effective teachers. Effective teachers will produce competent and excellent learners who will excel in Grade 12 and get into university or employment easier. This, therefore, also illustrates the significance of an effective teacher educator and a relevant programme. Although the study is not directly about the methods and strategies used by the English teacher educator him or herself, it is indirectly about it. The study inevitably also probes student teachers' own writing proficiency. It is logical that, in order to teach someone to write, one needs to be able to write proficiently. Since assessment is also an essential part of English writing, the study also has a special concern about the students' competence in marking and grading written work. An equally significant concern is regarding the students' own knowledge about 'writing', what exactly governs the process and on what fundamental theories and practices it is based. Without a comprehensive knowledge about writing theories and practices, the teaching of English writing in schools will remain extra taxing.

All this information, was gathered through an evaluation of the University of Namibia's Teaching Methods of English Module, looking at the writing domain's content and experiences of student teachers in the module. In the end, the module's

relevance and effectiveness to the English Second Language Ordinary and Higher Level Syllabi are determined.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

As indicated in Section 1.2, the main aim of this study was to evaluate whether the ‘Teaching Methods of English Module’ for prospective English teachers at the University of Namibia correlates with the writing skills content in Grades 11 and 12 NSSC English Second Language Ordinary and Higher levels as well as to evaluate how effectively such skills are mastered. This aim was explored through the following objectives:

- (a) To evaluate the module “Teaching Methods of English” and establish whether its writing skills content reflects writing content laid out in the Grade 11 and 12 NSSC English Second Language Ordinary and Higher level syllabi
- (b) To determine whether the UNAM students are skilled to teach the different writing tasks prescribed in the Grade 11 and 12 NSSC English Second language Ordinary and Higher level syllabi
- (c) To determine whether UNAM students are knowledgeable about theories of writing
- (d) To assess UNAM students’ own writing proficiency as well as their competence in marking and grading learners’ written work

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Writing is an inevitable part of our lives. As Caswell and Mahler (2004) put it, writing is the vehicle for communication in many aspects of everyday life. Parents write notes for their children, doctors write prescriptions, politicians write speeches, grandparents write letters, friends write e-mails. It is therefore an essential skill for all human beings and most particularly those who will teach it to others.

The study could be of significance at several educational levels. At tertiary level, the evaluation findings regarding the relevance and effectiveness of teacher training of English writing skills could be used to improve the ‘Teaching Methods of English Module’ course content and the methods and strategies used to teach writing skills. This in turn, could help teachers to better develop learners’ English writing skills at secondary school level. Better writing skills could lead to improved overall performance of learners in English and consequently better chances for access to higher education institutions or employment. Better chances for access to higher education institutions and/or employment could reverse the possible vicious cycle discussed in Section 1.2, ultimately impacting positively on the students’ personal quality of life and the country’s advancement as a whole.

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1.5 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

For accurate communication and validity of research, clarification of the meanings of key concepts in the title of the study is important. Such key concepts as ‘relevance’, ‘effectiveness’, ‘training’ and the ‘English writing component’, as well as acronyms used in the study are clarified next.

1.5.1 Relevance

Put simply, the word relevance in this study refers to relation and commonality of the contents of the two syllabi, that is, university teacher-training content and school content.

1.5.2 Effectiveness

Richards and Nunan (2000) state that effectiveness in teaching is measured by looking at the relationship between teacher behaviour and learner learning. In other words, if the learners learn after a certain teacher’s teaching behaviour/ competency or method, the method of teaching is regarded to be effective. If, on the other hand, learners do not learn after a certain method of teaching was used, then that method can be regarded to be ineffective. This study employs “effectiveness” to refer to the

success of the teaching methods used by student teachers to teach 'writing', as demonstrated in the micro- teaching sessions at the university. This implies in the end that, the teacher educator/trainer's methods to teach the students were also effective.

1.5.3 Teacher training and education

The researcher uses the term teacher training to mean specific preparation and guidance in teaching English writing skills in some cases in the study, but in most cases uses the two terms 'teacher education and training' synonymously to simply refer to the events going on at a teacher-training institution to thoroughly prepare prospective teachers to be competent to teach English writing skills in the schools after completing their studies.

1.5.4 English writing skills component

This refers to the writing tasks covered in the Teaching Methods of English module of the University of Namibia. These tasks are compared to Grade 11 and 12 writing tasks such as summarising, writing articles and reports, writing letters, sentence and paragraph-construction, essay-writing, the correct use of grammar in writing, punctuation and creative writing in general, among others (NIED, 2009, NSSCH, NSSCO). This is to determine whether the student teachers are exposed to the same writing tasks that they will be expected to teach in the schools upon completion of their studies.

1.6 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

Chapter One contains an orientation to and contextualisation of the research problem, the statement of the problem, significance and objectives of the study as well as definitions of key concepts constituting the title of the study and acronyms used in the study.

Chapter Two discusses literature on notions regarding curriculum design perspectives about relevant and effective teacher education programmes. It also presents English teacher-education programmes (with the focus on writing skills) at selected different universities. This chapter also focuses on the personal and national importance of training in English writing skills as part of students' English writing proficiency. It further presents various models and theories governing the writing process and the teaching of writing skills as well as the student teachers' awareness of these. The chapter also compares the writing domain's school syllabus content to the UNAM Teaching Methods of English writing aspect.

Chapter 3 covers the research methodology and design. In this chapter, the research design, data generating methods, instruments used to generate data, the population, sample and sampling procedures, data analysis procedures, validity and reliability as well as limitations of the research are outlined. Research ethics are also considered in this chapter.

Chapter 4 presents the results of the study.

Chapter 5 covers the discussion of results. The research question is answered here as data is made sense of.

Chapter 6 consists of recommendations suggested about the relevance and effectiveness of the Teaching Methods of English module at UNAM.

The thesis ends with a conclusion section.

The next chapter provides a literature examination of notions and practices regarding curriculum designs of English teacher training/education programmes, models and theories of teaching writing. The chapter also includes the content and relevancy of English teacher training to English teaching in secondary schools, the effectiveness of methods and strategies practised at teacher-training institutions, and the importance of national writing proficiency, among others.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter starts with scholarly views and practices regarding curriculum designs and models. It further looks at teacher education curricula in general, and in particular, language teacher education curriculum. The teaching of English writing in Namibian schools is also discussed. Literature on the different types of writing as well as methods and strategies used to teach writing is also reviewed.

2.1 Curriculum design perspectives about relevancy of teacher education programmes

2.1.1 Curriculum perspectives and models

Different perspectives and models on what school curricula should consist of have been proposed by curriculum experts since time immemorial. Proponents such as John Dewey, Hilda Taba, and Ralph Tyler, are well-known in this field. Their

ideologies will be looked at later. First, an attempt at defining what curriculum really is, needs attention.

Due to the fact that key players in education represent a diversity of values and experience, this definition is usually a difficult one to negotiate. Several scholars have defined curriculum as:

- what is taught in school
- a set of subjects or courses
- the syllabus
- content
- a set of performance objectives
- what is taught both inside and outside school and is directed by the school
- what an individual learner experiences as a result of schooling
- everything that is planned by the school personnel

(Marsh, 1997; Oliva, 2005)

Different views have also been brought forward regarding the advantages and shortcomings of defining 'curriculum' in certain ways shown above. Most of the debate has, for example, centred around the first four definitions of curriculum given above namely, as what is taught in school, the syllabus, the content or a set of courses or subjects. The progressivists regard this type of definition problematic as they argue that the traditionalist view of limiting curriculum to a body of school subjects, subject matter, syllabi, course of study, list of courses or documented

programme of studies is inert and does not make a curriculum until the material becomes actualised by the learner (Tanner and Tanner, 2007).

Yet, others have a problem with the definition that widens curriculum to everything that happens at school and what the students experience as they regard this to be what is known as ‘instruction’. They are, therefore, proponents of what is referred to in most curriculum books as, ‘Curriculum-Instruction Dualism’. Tanner and Tanner, (2007) explain this as the notion that curriculum and instruction are two separate realms. Posner and Rudnitsky, (1997) also regard the two terms as different. They define curriculum as ‘what is taught in school or is intended to be learned’. In other words, curriculum represents ‘a set of intentions or a set of intended learning outcomes’. They regard ‘instruction’ on the other hand as, ‘a plan indicating how to facilitate learning’. They guard against using the two terms synonymously as they assert that the one is the ‘blueprint’ and the other is ‘the specific steps’ taken, ‘the how’.

The researcher regards all the above views on what curriculum is, as valid. However, she does not see so much divide between curriculum content and instruction. This does not mean that she necessarily views everything that is happening at the institution as curriculum. For her, the one is part of the other. In other words, instruction is carried out from the curriculum, and curriculum informs instruction. To relate this to this study, the researcher believes that the curriculum content of the Teaching Methods of English module, which comes in the form of a module

descriptor, spells out what must be taught in this module. In this description, guidelines on how instruction should be carried out, will inherently be there. Hence, the view that curriculum informs instruction.

In summary, the contemporary view seems to be advising people to take the layman's view of what curriculum is, that is, 'what is taught in school or the content of the subject matter'. As argued in the previous paragraph, the researcher also sees it enough to settle with this kind of layman definition, taking into account that this description of what is to be taught also informs instruction.

Another important matter in curriculum issues is however *what a curriculum should include*. It is now time to look at the different schools of thoughts or theoretical perspectives on curriculum.

Before John Dewey's time, that is, the twentieth century, curricula in the schools in the world, solely followed what is known as **the traditional perspective** on curriculum. Founded by William Torrey Harris in 1879, **the traditionalist view (also known as the empiricist view)** on curriculum held that education was the process by which the individual is elevated into the species. Therefore, the curriculum should make the accumulated wisdom of 'the race' available to all children. They believed that the textbook would make a common body of facts equally accessible to the children. The teacher, using the lecture-recitation method,

would be the driving force. Examinations would monitor and classify the students as they progressed through a graded education system (Posner, 1995).

Critics of the traditionalist view thought that its authoritarian posture was in conflict with the nature of democracy and its view of children as passive recipients of information is inconsistent with the growing body of psychological knowledge. They think that its approach to school knowledge as compartmentalised, isolated from everyday living, static and absolute, made schools increasingly irrelevant to life in a rapidly changing and complex world. They further regard that kind of curricula as too academic and intellectual and external to reality (Posner, 1995). John Dewey, an experientialist, was the main critic of this traditional view on curriculum.

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, **the Experientialist view which is also pragmatic in nature**, led by John Dewey, (Posner, 1995; Kelly, 1999) is based on the assumption that everything that happens to students influences their lives. He therefore, advances that curriculum must be considered extremely broadly. The consequences of any situation include not only what is learned in a formal sense but also all the thoughts and feelings. He cautions that no two individuals can experience the same situation in precisely the same way, as they are different. He asserts that curriculum is vocational and social. For Dewey, the only way of knowing if a belief is true is to test it.

Experientialism holds that curriculum should be based on needs and interests of the learners and is subject to constant change. Knowledge is not static. It should expand on individual experience and it should combine both intelligence and the social. This is true. Curriculum needs to take good care of the learners' needs, in other words, what is relevant to them and what is useful to them in life. To put this in the context of this study, if the curriculum that student teachers learn is not useful to what they will be expected to impart in schools, then, that curriculum is deficient. In his pedagogic creed, Dewey (2009) believes that the child's own instincts and powers furnish the material and give the starting point for all education, which is also what the researcher believes.

Other perspectives on curriculum are also worth mentioning. **The Behavioural view** of an educational psychologist Edward Thorndike, which can also be traced back to the Greek philosopher Aristotle, holds that curricula should be geared towards what the students should be able to do in very specific measurable terms or objectives. They believe that the students' behaviour should be analysed to identify the prerequisite skills. Teachers need to provide opportunities for students to practise each skill with feedback and then evaluate their performance (Posner, 1995). This theory is relevant to this study, to a great extent. This study holds that, demonstrating competence to teach writing skills, ability to write as well as to mark written pieces, are prerequisite skills needed by student teachers of English, while they are still at university. These skills are honed in the module 'Teaching Methods of English'. The

researcher attempted to find out how these skills are sharpened and presented the findings regarding this, in Chapter 4.

The Cognitive view on curriculum has the famous Jean Piaget as its main proponent. It is also traced back to Plato, the Greek philosopher. They believe that a person's knowledge and ideas are innate and all the teacher needs to do is help the person recall them. Learning to them is recollection, and recollection is the search for and discovery of innate ideas, followed by the construction of new concepts from these ideas. This is a fascinating view and assurance that it ought not to be difficult for the student teachers to be able to teach writing competently, as well as to write competently themselves, for example. This is because, according to this view, the knowledge of writing is innate to them already. All they need to do is to search for, and discover this knowledge. This does not, however, undermine the fact that, writing is not acquired as other skills such as speaking. It needs instruction, guidance and a lot of practice, as many scholars such as Stables (1992), Swarts (1999) have echoed. In this regard, the Teaching Methods of English module needs to guide students to be competent teachers of this language skill namely, writing.

The cognitive view further emphasises meaningful learning, understanding and thinking. It asserts that curricula need to allow students to construct their own knowledge based on what they already know, and to use that knowledge in purposeful activities requiring decision making, problem solving and judgements (Posner, 1995). The researcher is in full agreement with this.

Different paradigms of curriculum development have also been discussed. Dewey progressed with his experimentalist view to suggest that curriculum development should include the learner, the society as well as the organised subject matter. Hilda Taba, another prominent curriculum scholar of 1945 has also just rested her view on Dewey's as she proposed that curriculum should include studies of learners, studies of the society and studies of the subject matter. Perhaps the most prominent of all is Ralph Tyler who in 1949 came up with what is today known as 'The Tyler Rationale' or 'The Tyler Model'. This rationale is an expansion of Taba and Dewey's notions of what a curriculum should include. She believes that the sources of curriculum objectives should be: studies of learners, studies of contemporary life outside school and subject specialists who will look into the relevance of the subject matter for the non-specialist. Her studies are exemplified in her famous questions that she feels every curriculum should seek to answer:

1. What educational purposes should the school seek to attain? (identifying objectives)
2. What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes? (selecting the means for attaining objectives)
3. How can these educational experiences be effectively organised? (organising these means)
4. How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained? (evaluating the outcomes)

(Tanner and Tanner, 2007); (Tyler, 2009)

Whether the above elements are reflected in the University of Namibia's Teacher Education curricula can be another possible study.

2.1.2 Teacher Education Curriculum

Teacher education defined in Chapter 1, Section 1.1 as an overall programme which imparts bodies of knowledge to student teachers or teachers (Swarts, 2000); a form of education which is properly planned and systematically tailored and applied for the cultivation of those who teach or will teach, particularly but not exclusively in primary and post-primary levels of schooling (Okafor, 1988); has been of popular talk since its inception. Most of the discussion has been around the relationship between teacher education institutions and school (McIntyre, 1997); the bridge between theory and practice (Calderhead and Shorrock, 1997); and the general effectiveness of the teacher education programmes (Iredale, 1996).

McIntyre (1997) is dissatisfied by the relationship between teacher-training institutions and schools as he points out that an issue in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) remains how work in the two contexts, that is the teacher education institution and the school, can be effectively interrelated. This is also the researcher's concern. McIntyre (1997) yearns for partnership between schools and universities in ITE. He suggests that each party needs to contribute. University needs to contribute broad research, theory based knowledge and perspectives and schools need to contribute

knowledge of teaching and schooling as well as practical perspectives. He goes on to suggest that these different perspectives should be brought to bear on every element of the agreed curriculum and each should be used to interrogate the other critically.

The above dissatisfaction is concurred by Iredale (1996) as he maintains that, teacher education has not had an outstanding successful track record in many places, for both structural and cultural reasons. What these specific reasons are, he has not pronounced but, he maintains that there is an increasing recognition that initial teacher training methods in many places are so ineffective that they add little value to the ability of a future teacher to operate effectively in the classroom. This is worrisome. He further reveals that even if there are effective teacher training processes at work in selected places, there is frequently a lack of liaison between those who design, write and determine the school syllabus and those who are actually involved in the teacher training process. This lack of coherence between these two parties is worrisome as it continues to widen the gap discussed in Chapter 1 Section 1.1. This is what this study sought to find out, whether or not, the content of the Teaching Methods of English module (regarding writing) is indeed in line with the Grade 11 and 12 content.

What are the views of student teachers themselves who go through teacher education? Calderhead and Shorrock (1997) reveal that several studies carried out over a period of time have pointed to a similar trend - student teachers appear to be dissatisfied with the bridge between theory and practice. Their perception of what

happens in their college or university courses seems difficult to reconcile with their practical experiences in the classroom. This seems to concur with the researcher's experience. A closer look at teacher training/education curricula seems necessary. Lewin and Stuart (2003) define 'teacher education curriculum or curricula' as the entire experience throughout the training programme, as taught by college teachers, as organised both on and off campus, and as learnt by trainee teachers.

Most authors agree however that generally, any teacher training/education programme must include the following components (Lewin and Stuart, 2003); (Okafor, 1988):

- Subject content or subject-matter area concentration aspect: adequate knowledge and understanding of the subject(s) to be taught in school
- Pedagogic content knowledge or methods: ways of teaching and assessing the subject(s) appropriate to the learners' level
- Education and professional studies: a basic education of how children develop and learn, plus some craft knowledge on how to manage the teaching process
- A practicum: opportunities to bring all these together and practise, performing the role of the teacher
- General education: courses designed for personal growth and enrichment

This appears to be a holistic picture of what a prospective teacher should be exposed to before going in the field. Whether these aspects are found in the University of

Namibia's education programme is worth confirming. This study did, however, not look at the whole education programme, so, it was not able to fully pronounce itself on this.

2.1.3 Language Teacher Education Curriculum

Roberts (1998) states that at approach level, a language programme is based on a model of linguistic competence (What is it to know the foreign language?) and language acquisition (How is it learnt?). A Language Teacher Education (LTE) programme is based on a model of teaching competence (What is teaching, what do teachers know?) and a model of acquisition (How do people learn to teach?). At the design (planning) stage, programme objectives and structures are decided upon. Decisions on selection, sequencing, weighting and integration of programme elements; the content of courses, methods and staff-student roles; learning tasks and materials; and assessment and evaluation are also taken. In the implementation stage, plans are carried out such as working with student-teachers, monitoring and assessing their reactions. During this stage, adjustments are also made as some ideas take unexpected directions.

Two models of teaching are also applied in language teacher education namely, the operative model and the problem solver model. In the earlier model, the teacher is restricted to meeting the requirements of a centralised curriculum such as the delivery of a textbook as planned, to a set timescale. Training objectives in this model will be based on mastery of a set of competencies determined by the centralised syllabus. In the latter model, a decentralised curriculum gives teachers greater autonomy in making educational decisions. The curriculum is diversified and adapted to learners' needs. It requires the teacher to be able to diagnose problems and adapt materials and design original learning activities. In this case, the function of an LTE programme will be to prepare the teacher as a free agent (Roberts, 1998).

The models above reflect distinctions which point to different paradigms of knowledge namely the knowledge-centred paradigm and the person-centred paradigm. Theoretical underpinnings of these paradigms reflect the positivist (knowledge-centred) and phenomenological (person-centred) paradigms of knowledge respectively. The knowledge-centred paradigm underpins the notion of person as input-output system and model-based learning while the person-centred paradigm underpins humanistic and constructivist perspectives (Roberts, 1998). A language programme that follows the knowledge-centred paradigm will, in other words, view knowledge as objective and from which generalisations can be made. This knowledge is, therefore, external to the person's or student's context. A person-centred paradigm that is phenomenological in nature, will on the other hand, seek to understand behaviour by understanding the person's inner life, perceptions and

expectations. It is internal to the person and aims to provide the context for personal meaning.

A mixture of these paradigms is, in the researcher's opinion, favourable. A curriculum ought to be rich in knowledge on the one hand, but on the other, it ought to be geared towards producing people as human beings, who are able to execute certain behaviour. In the context of this study, the researcher's premise is that, the university module, 'Teaching Methods of English, and all other similar modules in other subject areas, intend to meet this dual purpose: to transmit knowledge in the specific subject area, and also to develop teachers' teaching 'behaviour' or methods of transmitting that knowledge. In the first purpose (knowledge transmission), curriculum expects to get out what curriculum put in (input-output). In the second purpose (person-centred), curriculum hopes to produce a teacher as a human being who is able to execute behaviour, from the choices at hand, as well as construct new ones.

The last teacher education paradigms to be examined were those of Zeichner (1983) and Wallace (1991) in Roberts (1998).

Table 1. Zeichner and Wallace's Teacher Education Paradigms

Behaviourist	Teacher Education as mastery by imitation of scientifically validated by behavioural skills for example
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	micro-teaching
Personalistic	Teacher Education as growth of the whole person and assertion of the self for example counselling-based approaches
Traditional Craft	Teacher Education as mastery of inherited craft knowledge by means of apprenticeship to a master teacher for example whole school-based pre-service training
Enquiry	Teacher Education as development in attitudes and skills -orientated enabling teachers to analyse novel pedagogic problems and arrive at contextually appropriate solutions
Craft Model	The young trainee learns by imitating the expert's techniques, and by following the expert's instructions and advice.
Applied Science Model	Professional education is seen as the acquisition of empirical scientific knowledge as the basis for effective practice, a theory-into-practice approach.
Reflective Model	Develop expertise by direct experience and conscious reflection about that experience; enable development by exposing assumptions that underlie routine behaviour and considering alternatives

(Roberts, 1998)

When designing a Teacher Education programme, the type of paradigm or model informing TE practices needs to be clearly defined. Sometimes a programme can be characterised by not only one paradigm, but a mixture of many. The curriculum model informing the module under study will be determined in the discussion chapter.

2.2 English Teacher-Training programmes at different institutions

What should English teacher-training programmes or modules at tertiary education involve? Richards and Nunan (1990) declare that second language teacher education programs typically include a knowledge base drawn from linguistics and language learning theory, a practical component based on language teaching methodology and an opportunity for practice teaching. This is concurred by Roberts, (1998) as stated in Section 2.1.3 as he asserts that a language teacher education programme should include linguistic competence as well as teaching competence. The study reviewed three English teacher-training modules offered at different universities. Two of these are international and they are: Hogeschool Rotterdam University in the Netherlands, and the William Paterson University of New Jersey in the United States. The third one is the home university, University of Namibia. The English methodology module of these universities will be made reference to in this section.

The three universities were chosen for the mere fact that, the two international ones have partnerships with the University of Namibia and former Windhoek College of

Education and it was easier for the researcher to obtain information from the colleagues at these institutions. It was also good coincidence that they are situated in different continents, which will give the study varied perspectives of academics from different parts of the world. Weighting ourselves against these institutions will give us a balanced international view of teacher-training programmes which will ultimately earn us a good academic standing.

It is worth bearing in mind at the onset, however, while we look at these three university programmes, we should not expect to copy an exact programme from another university. Every institution has its own unique characteristics dictated by the context in which it finds itself. The idea is to see if there is anything that is likely to work in our programme and it is currently not there or something that is there and should not be. The best thing will be to actually realise that we are doing the right thing right. The table below shows the English teacher-training modules of the three institutions.

Table 2. Comparison of English Teacher-Training Module at three universities

	University of Namibia	Rotterdam University (the Netherlands)	William Paterson University, New Jersey (USA)
Name of the module and Code	Teaching Methods of English ECLE 3700	Vakdidactiek/ Helpdesk ECTS 1,2,3,4	Methods of Teaching Secondary English Language Arts Seminar CISE 412

Length	1 year	4 years	1 year
When it is offered	In Year 3	Integrated throughout the 4 years	In Year 4
Structure of the module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Module description (generic) - General Exit Learning outcomes - Specific Learning Outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A basic plan of topics to be covered each year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Objectives - Learning Outcomes - Course content
Common English/ writing content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Theories and approaches in language teaching and learning, Teaching different language skills, classroom management, setting tests and marking, peer-teaching, assessment and evaluation, ESL research articles, portfolios, error analysis 		
Exclusive content/ emphasis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Content of school syllabus - Evaluating internet sites regarding content and teaching methods - Teaching of Cross-curricular issues - Learner-centred features in English language teaching - Co-operative methods - Effective explanation and questioning skills in English (Use of Bloom's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Peer-teaching - Modern foreign language methodology (show and tell) - Collaborative learning - Essay-writing through literature reading - Creative writing module (using different writing prompts: visual, aural, kinetic) -Web-based projects - Cambridge Advanced Exam (CAE) Writing course (compulsory for all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching multicultural adolescent literature from various genres - Literature circles -Integrating language arts - Writing as a process - Conferencing - Reflective journal writing - Collaborative novel reading and impression sharing with partners via email - Non-print sources

	Taxonomy) - Analysing specimen examination papers and memorandum - Different types of assessment: formative, summative, formal, informal, criterion-referenced, norm-referenced - a resource file including different documents required in English teaching, including ministerial documents	teachers in the Netherlands)	
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Source: University of Namibia -Teaching Methods of English Course Outline, 2010; Hoogeschool Rotterdam - Vakdidactiek/Helpdesk Module Description; William Paterson University of New Jersey - Methods of Teaching Secondary English Language Arts Seminar Module Description

The table above shows that the three universities' English teacher-training address more or less the same issues. Differences can however be spotted regarding the length of the module, when it is offered as well as where the emphasis of English teacher-training really is.

Starting with the common, it is a relief to the researcher to note that, the home university's module, in line with other universities and in line with what literature shows (Richards and Nunan, 1990), Roberts, (1998), offers content on theories of language teaching and learning (linguistics), and language acquisition, and a model of teaching competence. This is evident in the table as content such as theories and approaches in language teaching and learning covers the linguistic part, while setting and marking of tests, error analysis as well as peer teaching covers the practical teaching competence part. Teaching of the different language skills, of which writing is also part, is also covered at all three universities. The modules also include an element of education professional studies on how to handle the learning environment, such as classroom management as suggested by Lewin and Stuart, (2003); Okafor, (1988). Assessment and evaluation, analysing ESL research articles as well as keeping language portfolios are also some of the common activities featuring in the English teacher-training modules of the four universities.

In addition to the common content, the three universities also cover topics that can be viewed as a little exclusive to each of them. The University of Namibia's module familiarises students to the school syllabus content that they will teach. This is a positive thing as it is also one of this study's main concerns. As Calderhead and Shorrock, (1997) reveal in Section 2.1.2, most students' perception of what happens in their college or university courses seems difficult to reconcile with practical experiences in the classroom. This is concurred by Liston, Whitcomb and Borko

(2009), as discussed in Section 1.1, as they observed that there is a typical gap between teacher education programmes and public school reality regarding curriculum content. It is also what the researcher experienced, as narrated in Chapter 1, Section 1.1.

Other topics point towards aspects such as learner-centred features in language teaching (which also includes cooperative methods), integrating cross-curricular issues, as well as evaluating internet sites regarding the content and methods. Questioning skills in relation to Bloom's taxonomy are also explored and applied in class.

Analysing specimen examination papers and memoranda also features in the University of Namibia's Teaching Methods of English module. This is also part of the concern that is related to one of the study's objectives in Section 1.3(e) which addresses students' marking competence. The shortcoming regarding this is that the module descriptor does not specifically indicate marking of written pieces as part of the topics. It is probably implied/included in error analysis.

Assessment also features in the other universities' modules but is probably more prominent in the home university's as its importance and different types are explored in detail. What also features prominently is the inclusion of the resource file (similar to a portfolio mentioned in all universities). What is a little different in the University of Namibia's course outline, however is that, it points out the content of the file which includes among others, ministerial documents such as subject policy, the

syllabus and others such as ESL research articles' critique, examples of authentic texts and sample lesson plans of all language skills among others.

What comes short in the home university's module is clearly an emphasis on developing students' writing skills as well as on the teaching of writing, and, this is the focus of this study. There is no mention in the descriptor of writing concepts such as the popular 'Process Writing', for example, or 'Creative Writing'. The researcher's assumption is that, these are 'perhaps' covered in the topic 'Teaching of the different language skills', but that remains an assumption. There is therefore need to specify certain content. This point also applies to concepts such as 'Communicative Language Teaching' for example. It is the most recent and most popular approach used in language teaching in the world and also one which the Namibian English syllabus follows, so it needs to be singled out.

It would also be better to specify some content out of the school syllabus, for argument sake, pointing out the different writing tasks done in Grade 11 and 12 such as narrative and argumentative essays, articles and reports, formal and informal letters and so on. Regarding literature also, the module descriptor could point out how to teach poetry/ short story/ play, in addition to merely saying the teaching of the four language skills including literature. The biggest challenge is however 'time', as the module is offered only for one year.

It was also part of the researcher's concern in this study, whether teacher training at the University of Namibia includes training students on how to differentiate the teaching of the different syllabus levels. In Namibia, the school curriculum for English language syllabus comes in six tracks namely, English First Language, English Second Language, English Second language has two tracks: Ordinary Level and Higher Level. Ordinary Level has two more tracks, that is, Core and Extended levels. Students' understanding of these levels and training in different syllabus expectations, tasks and assessment of such tasks is, therefore, very important while they are still at university. When they start teaching in the schools, they are usually expected to teach at any of the levels, regardless of whether they had training or whether they actually are competent themselves or not.

The University of Rotterdam's module emphasises peer-teaching throughout the four years. Teaching is also characterised by 'show and tell'. The teacher educator /trainer shows the students how a certain aspect/topic is taught and does not only 'tell' them. This is what many scholars advocate that teacher education should be, in order to reduce the 'Do as I say and not as I do Syndrome' thought to characterise many teacher education classrooms today. Collaborative learning is also one of the frequent topics in the module. This university also places emphasis on writing. Most writing is done through literature reading, thus integrating the two skills. Creative writing also features quite prominently. This is done using different writing prompts: visual, aural, kinetic and others. The module also makes use of web-based projects that students do from time to time. What also shows prominently on this module is

the Cambridge Advanced Examination (CAE) Writing Course that prepares students for this particular exam. CAE is compulsory for all teachers in the Netherlands.

The William Paterson University in New Jersey offers the Methods of Teaching English Language Arts (Seminar) module and in addition to the common content identified already, it focuses on topics such as the teaching of literature. The one striking feature is that, literature is specified as ‘Adolescent literature’, thus addressing the age-group and reading interest of high school learners. There is, therefore, a lot of mention about ‘literature circles’. Like at Rotterdam University, literature reading is also integrated with writing. Writing as a process or the concept ‘Process Writing’ features quite prominently. This is also a positive thing as already articulated. Conferencing, reflective journal writing as well as creative writing in general are also some of the prominent topics in this module.

All the above are excellent ways of developing effective writing skills and simply instilling the love of writing, the most difficult skill to learn and teach as discovered by Broughton, et.al (1994); Byrne (1995) and Clark and Ivanic (1997). The module also places emphasis on sharing of impressions via email usually in the form of collaborative novel reading. The use of non-print sources in general is explored quite frequently.

Overall, the structure of the modules at the three universities seem to follow a more or less similar design as they all outline general aims of the module, moving down to

objectives or learning outcomes before they outline the topics or themes to be covered. As pointed out earlier in this section however, there is a need for the University of Namibia's module topics to be a little more specified, and a special plea to explore the 'writing skill' more. This is because, as pointed out in Chapter 1, Section 1.2, the learners' writing skills at secondary school level are not at an acceptable standard and the researcher's assumption is that, probably 'writing proficiency' and 'the teaching of it' are not well-addressed at teacher-training/education level.

What also needs a closer look at is, the length of the module. While the researcher suggests that the module descriptor needs to include specific content topics such as process writing, creative writing, journal writing, strategies to teach writing, Communicative Language Teaching and so on, she is well aware that, one year cannot suffice the teaching of all that. The University of Rotterdam integrates its content throughout the whole four years, thus creating room to develop an English teacher with the necessary comprehensive English knowledge. The former Basic Education Teacher's Diploma offered at the former Colleges of Education in Namibia also integrates/integrated both pedagogy and theoretical knowledge throughout the three years in the module 'English Language Education'. According to the researcher's experience as a teacher educator for this module, it was still a struggle to cover all that is regarded as necessary to equip a prospective English teacher with, before they start teaching in the schools.

The fact that the module is offered in the third year also needs to be looked at. According to the university calendar, students go for their first teaching practice at the beginning of the third year before the formal beginning of the academic year. This implies that they start teaching in the schools before they even set foot in the Teaching Methods' class, in other words without any knowledge of how to approach the teaching of that subject and without school syllabus knowledge.

2.3 English writing teaching in Namibian secondary schools and the status of English at national level

Few studies have been done in Namibia in the area of teaching English writing skills. In one study, Nyathi (1999) investigated constraints encountered by teachers in teaching English in Namibian secondary schools and states that teaching writing is the most problematic area experienced by teachers. The writing area is followed by speaking, listening and reading, in that order. This sounds logical that the receptive skills are easier to teach than the productive ones and that is probably why more weight is allocated to the writing domain in the syllabus than to the receptive skills for example listening and reading. As stated in Section 1.1, the latest school syllabus allocates 60% of assessment to the writing paper on both Core and Extended levels

(NIED, 2009) while the Higher Level Syllabus consists of three papers which all comprise a part of assessment on writing namely, Reading and Directed Writing paper 50%, Continuous Writing paper 20% and the Writing on Literary Topics 25% (NIED, 2009).

Nyathi's other study, Nyathi (2001), which examines constraints experienced by local teachers in teaching English Second Language (ESL) writing, reveals that many of the ESL teachers do not understand the academic writing expectations of the communicative syllabus. It further shows that Namibian teachers still apply traditional teaching methods which rely heavily on activities such as controlled exercises, drill and rote learning. Being involved in the English teaching fraternity, the researcher has also noticed this misinterpretation of the "Communicative approach" in language teaching. The trend, so far, in Namibia has been that, teachers either entirely neglect the teaching of grammar as they reason that Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) says no grammar teaching, or they resort to the teaching of pure grammar rules in isolation, thus following the traditional method. Nyathi (2001) seems to concur with this view.

This implies that teacher training programmes need to include the writing theories of the Communicative Approach. Approaches and methods are to be covered at this level and before they go into the schools, prospective teachers need to fully understand concepts such as Communicative Language Teaching, Grammar-Translation Method, the Direct Method, the Audio-lingual Method, Suggestopedia,

the Silent Way, and other popular and contemporary language teaching methods. Communicative Language Teaching is one of the most recent, popular and most proposed methods, as it is a hybrid of all the others. The worry sets in if teachers lack its understanding and application. It advocates teaching of language in meaningful context. The teaching of grammar is still there. It is just not done in isolation and does not merely dictate teaching and learning of pure grammatical rules which are usually learned deductively. Instead, recent strategies of letting learners discover grammar rules themselves for example (inductive learning), are encouraged in Communicative Language Teaching.

The teaching, learning and assessment of writing skills in CLT ought to follow the same approach. Teachers and student teachers ought to shy away from the traditional teaching, learning and assessment of English written pieces that focus primarily on accuracy and neglect creativity, organisation, fluency and meaning. Authors like Nyathi (2001) recommend that teacher training should contain newer ESL writing theories and “Applied Linguistics” with special focus on developing ‘writing skills’. The researcher agrees with these recommendations as it appears to be a logical way that misunderstandings and discrepancies in English teaching especially writing, will be addressed.

While some studies were done regarding the teaching of English and the teaching of writing skills in Namibian schools, no existing study has so far been done at English teacher-training/education level in the country. There is, therefore, still a knowledge

gap in establishing why exactly the teaching of English writing in schools is difficult and why consequently learners' writing is appalling. It is something that teacher-training institutions should relook.

Teacher education/ training programmes in English Teaching Methodology, with special focus on writing skills, at three different institutions in addition to the University of Namibia, are presented in Section 2.4. This is done for comparative reasons. Nunan (1999) reveals that small-scale programme evaluations provide an excellent research training ground for graduate students. Aspects such as curriculum content and practice, relevance to school curriculum, the duration of the course, the numbers of hours spent per week, the number of credits, are in scrutiny. It will be worth noting, however, that every programme has advantages and disadvantages as Ashworth (2000) alerts. A careful programme will be one that takes the best out of each.

Relevance as per our definition “commonality and relatedness of the two curricula, that is, the teacher-training curricula and the school curricula”, plays or should play a major role in education. The typical gap between teacher education and public school reality in terms of coping with curriculum content, as earlier alleged by Liston, Whitcomb and Borko (2009) needs to be narrowed as little as possible. Ensuring relevance of programme content and practice should be an ongoing and shared responsibility by all stakeholders. School and teacher-training institutions partnership is, therefore, a necessity.

Institutions of higher learning themselves ought to have forums where they, from time to time, evaluate their practices. Evans (1995) narrates his experiences in DUET (Developing University English Teaching), a platform that was founded in Britain, where English teachers from institutions of Higher Education come together to reflect on their own practices. NETA- the Namibian English Teachers Association, which brings together Namibian teachers of primary, secondary and tertiary education levels to deliberate on issues concerning English teaching in the country, boasts the same aspirations.

The status of English in the country as an official language and language of instruction as per our language policy, makes it an unavoidable subject area and its writing proficiency a necessity not only for learners and students in schools and tertiary education institutions, but for all people. For students, it is important, in addition to what was argued already, to have a reasonable writing proficiency even if they are not English students, because all other subjects are written in English.

Logically, therefore, one's English writing proficiency will inevitably determine one's success in any other subject. For the rest of the people, good English writing proficiency means effective communication, for example, for a politician writing a speech. For an entrepreneur writing a business proposal, it promises a better opportunity for funding. For an ordinary citizen writing a complaint to any service

provider in the country, it might mean, a solution to a problem. Efforts for national writing proficiency are, in this case, worth looking at.

2.4 Theories, models, methods and strategies of teaching writing

2.4.1 Writing theories and models

Theories on writing reveal the nature of writing as a skill that requires a great amount of care and perfection. This makes it a difficult skill to teach. Byrne (1995) maintains that relative to speaking, writing is a codified form of expression which requires instruction. Clark and Ivanic (1997) also deliberate on the fact that a skill such as speaking for example is acquired while writing is learned which makes it a more self-conscious activity and carries with it the association of ‘schooling’. The natural order of language acquisition also places writing at the end of the continuum as it ranks the skills in this order: listening, speaking, reading and writing. All this implies the complex nature of the skill and the need for its meticulous, continuous training and practice.

Second language writing research highlights the notion that writing needs to be treated as a ‘process’ and not only as a product. Researchers (Raimes, 1983, Burnham, 1989, Brookes and Grundy, 1990, Kroll, 1996, Nunan, 1991 in Negonga, 2001) promote the use of process-writing stages such as pre-writing, drafting, revising and sharing with an audience. This process-writing paradigm which the

communicative approach also advocates, allows writing practice through step-by-step guidance by the teacher or teacher educator. Caswell and Mahler (2004) provide an action tool for teaching writing which follows the above-mentioned five stages of writing: pre-writing, writing, revising, editing and publishing. They assert that life is simpler and more efficient when events happen in a specific order such as morning routines, cooking dinner and so on. They give an analogy with Mathematics where students follow a formula to solve a problem and suggest that the writing process ought to follow a formula of some sort too, given the complexity of the skill.

Unfortunately, the teaching and learning curricula characteristic of our schools and teacher-training institutions are such that writing tasks are given and expected back by the teacher or teacher-educator in a very short span of time. Usually, tasks are given in a lesson of 40 minutes (an average length of lessons in Namibian schools) or one hour (an average length of lessons at tertiary education institutions) and expected at the end of that period. This allows for no application of such five stages suggested in the process writing scheme. Students and learners have no ample time to generate ideas, put them down, make changes, make final touches and share them. Caswell and Mahler (2004) give an example of an eight-day process-writing process. Every writing task needs not to take this long to perfect, but it is an indication of how laborious it can be and how unreasonable it is of teachers, to expect flawless written work after forty minutes or one hour of writing.

The examination settings are just as non-ideal for process-writing. Here, students and learners are subjected to a time-limited, formal, tense environment which allows for no freedom of the mind to generate ideas and craft them continuously. Perhaps it is time to review our examinations, testing and practice of English writing skills?

The last stage (sharing/publishing) is also particularly uncommon in our English classrooms. Learners'/ students' written work reach their destination when a grade is awarded as thereafter, it is discarded. As Caswell and Mahler (2004) exclaim, 'writing is meant to be read!' They suggest creation of writing portfolios, manuscripts and oral presentations in order to share students'/ learners' work with one another as well as the outside people. The study was interested in finding out students' knowledge and application of practices such as process writing and these findings are shared in Chapter 4.

Richards (2000) suggests that, to prepare effective language teachers, it is necessary to have a theory of effective language teaching – a statement of the general principles that account for effective teaching. This theory, he argues, should form the basis for the principles and content of second language teacher education which is dependent upon the following sequence: (a) Describe effective language teaching processes; (b) Develop a theory of the nature of effective language teaching; and (c) Develop principles for the preparation of language teachers. He discusses two approaches from which theories of teaching as well as principles for teacher-

preparation programmes can be developed and he calls these the micro-approach and the macro-approach (Richards, 2000).

In the micro-approach, Richards (2000) includes low-inference aspects or competencies such as the relationship between teacher behaviour and pupil learning as well as aspects such as time spent on tasks. These competencies do not in themselves constitute effective teaching but are linked to more complex aspects of teaching, which fall under the macro-approach. The macro-approach, Richards (2000) defines as the examination of the total context of classroom teaching and learning, in an attempt to understand how the interactions between and among teacher, learners and classroom tasks affect learning. This is a holistic approach as it involves both low and high-reference categories. This perspective seems to reiterate that a good teacher needs both adequate subject content and pedagogical knowledge and skills (Anderson, 1995), as the researcher also concurred in Sections 2.1.2 and 2.1.3 of this chapter.

2.4.2 Types of writing

In addition to process writing, other types of writing characterise the English classrooms. These are: controlled writing, guided writing, free writing, creative writing, among others. It is also important to discuss another angle of writing, the concept of 'genre writing'. These writing types are discussed to provide some information on different ways of developing writing skills, and to later establish the

link between this knowledge and the knowledge that student teachers under study, possess regarding these writing types. Findings of students' knowledge regarding the writing types are presented in Chapter 4. The writing types are thus discussed below.

Controlled writing refers to writing that includes copying down of sentences on the chalkboard, filling- in-blanks, re-ordering of words, substituting words, dictation and the like. The focus of controlled writing activities is not on meaning. Learners or students can copy down a sentence even if they do not know what it means. The focus is to master basic sentence writing (Doff, 1997; Broughton, Brumfit, Flavell, Hill and Pincas, 1994; Baker and Westrup, 2000).

Controlled writing is a useful method at elementary level of learning English and less useful at secondary school level where learners have moved from cloze writing exercises and paragraphs to longer writing, language production exercises. It however helps if an English teacher knows about this method and can apply it where necessary.

Guided writing is a move from controlled exercises to freer paragraph writing. The principle of guided writing is that the teacher provides a short text as a model for the learners. Learners for example, read a paragraph about a student's day, then write about their own days or they read a description of a room and write descriptions of other rooms. They can also be given a model text about a town or village and they write a similar text about a town or village in their area which can either be real or

imaginary. The idea is that, because learners are progressing from sentence writing to paragraph writing, the teacher needs to guide them in order to make this transition easier (Doff, 1997). Sometimes the teacher can do the guidance with the aid of pictures (Broughton, et.al, 1994; Baker and Westrup, 2000).

Free-writing takes two slightly-different meanings. The first one is the opposite of guided writing where a topic is thrown at the learners or students without any guidance or prompts. A task such as ‘Write a paragraph/an essay about your town/village’ can be given and the learners will decide individually what about their town or village they will write. Learners will approach this task from different perspectives. Some might write about the physical features of the town, others might take the sociological and human features while others might focus on the demographical features of these places. The topic is open to different ideas (Doff, 1997; Baker and Westrup, 2000).

Another perspective of free-writing is the one that is synonymous to a ‘writing storm’. This is when a topic of writing is provided and the learners are asked to write non-stop about it. They are given the freedom to write about anything that comes to mind regarding the topic, not worrying about spelling mistakes, punctuation conventions, organisation of ideas, paragraphing, meaning or any other conventions of writing. The idea is to give a platform to generate ideas in whatever form they are (Broughton, et.al., 1994; Doff, 1997).

Creative writing suggests imaginative tasks such as writing poetry, stories, plays or any other form of writing that the writer initiates out of his/her imagination (Harmer, 2008). Creative writing allows people to tap into their own experiences. People often strive harder to write creatively than to do other forms of writing as they are likely to take pride into what they have produced. This is not so true when they engage in other types of writing such as writing controlled exercises.

Genre writing represents the different types of writing or the different genres of writing. Writing texts take different forms. They are in advertisement forms, formal letters, reports, poetry, newspaper articles, argumentative essays and so on. Harmer (2008) cautions that when writing within a certain genre, students need to consider a number of factors: the need to have knowledge of the topic, the conventions and style of the genre and the context in which their writing will be read as well as the audience that will read that text. They also need to see different examples from the same genre. So, if they are asked to write a newspaper article, they have to find or be provided with different newspaper articles so that they model from them.

Genre-writing is very characteristic of our secondary school English teaching. As pointed out in Section 1.2, the Grade 11 and 12 English second language syllabus writing tasks include essay-writing, writing newspaper or school magazine articles, report-writing, writing diary entries, writing formal and informal letters, summary-writing, among others.

All this understanding about the different writing types, provided the platform for the researcher, to base the research instruments on, more particularly the questionnaires. It later also informed the recommendation chapter of this study. Methods and Strategies for teaching writing are also discussed below, for the same reasons the types of writing were discussed. A clear overlap between these can be noticed.

2.4.3 Methods and Strategies for teaching writing

There are several approaches to teaching writing. Abisamra, (2001) presents six approaches that can be used in teaching writing namely, the controlled-to-free approach, the free-writing approach, the paragraph-pattern approach, the grammar-syntax-organisation approach, the communicative approach, and the process approach. He also proposes activities that can be done in applying the process approach. These are presented later on.

(a)The Controlled-to-Free Approach

As explained in Section 2.4.2, controlled writing refers to writing that limits itself to activities such as copying down sentences, filling-in-blanks, substitution of words and the like. The Controlled-to-Free Approach is a model of controlled writing. As discussed in Section 2.4.2, the purpose of controlled writing is to master basic sentence writing. Students are first given sentence exercises, then paragraphs to copy or manipulate grammatically by changing questions to statements, present to past or

plural to singular. They might also change words to clauses or combine sentences. With controlled compositions, it is relatively easy for students to write and yet avoid errors, which makes error correction easy. After they have reached an intermediate level of proficiency, students are allowed to try some free composition. This writing approach stresses on grammar, syntax and mechanics. It emphasises accuracy rather than fluency or originality.

(b) The Free-writing Approach

As discussed in Section 2.4.2, free-writing is a writing technique when students are asked to write freely on any topic without worrying about grammatical errors. This approach stresses writing quantity rather than quality. The emphasis is on content and fluency rather than accuracy and form. Once ideas are down on the page, grammatical accuracy and organisation follow. The teacher does not correct the mistakes that might be on the written piece. He/She simply reads the piece and may comment on the ideas the writer expressed. Some students may also volunteer to read their own writing aloud to the class. Audience and content are regarded very important in this approach.

(c) The Paragraph-Pattern Approach

The Paragraph-Pattern Approach stresses organisation. Students copy paragraphs and imitate model passages. They put scrambled sentences into paragraph order. They identify topic sentences, general and specific statements to go in a paragraph.

(d) The Grammar-Syntax-Organisation Approach

This approach looks simultaneously on more than one composition feature. Teachers who follow this approach, maintain that writing cannot be seen as composed of separate features which are learned sequentially. Rather, they train students to pay attention to organisation while they also work on the necessary grammar and syntax. This approach links the purpose of writing to the forms that are needed to convey a message.

(e) The Communicative Approach

This approach stresses the purpose of writing and the audience for it. Student writers are encouraged to behave like writers in real life and ask themselves the crucial questions about purpose and audience:

Why am I writing this?

Who will read it?

In most cases, the teacher has been the audience for student writing. Some feel however that writers do their best when writing is truly a communicative act with a

writer writing for a real reader. The readership can therefore be extended to classmates and penpals.

(f)The Process Approach

As discussed in Section 2.4.1, the teaching of writing has recently moved away from concentrating on the written product to an emphasis on the process of writing. Thus writers ask themselves: How do I write this? How do I get started?

In this approach, students are trained to generate ideas for writing, think of the purpose and audience, write multiple drafts in order to present written products that communicate their own ideas. Teachers who use this approach give students time to generate ideas through a developmental process. Students make decisions about the genre and choice of topics and collaborate as they write. Thus, they engage in pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing and publishing. However, as the writing process is recursive in nature (Caswell and Mahler, 2004), they do not necessarily engage in these activities in that order.

During the pre-writing stage, students can use various strategies to generate the writing content such as: brainstorming; using mindmaps/word webs, clusters (Caswell and Mahler, 2004) and other graphic organisers; using outlines or jot-lists; free-writing about the topic; engaging in peer or teacher-student discussions and conferences; interviewing a person knowledgeable about the topic; reading about and

researching the topic; listening to music; viewing media such as pictures, movies, television; reflecting upon personal experience; examining writing models; responding to literature; role-playing and other drama techniques and asking the wh-questions: what, who, where, when, how and why (Abisamra, 2001).

Does the module 'Teaching Methods of English' of the University of Namibia, cover all these approaches for teaching writing? This is the question that the researcher carried as she discussed these approaches. The answer is found in the discussion chapter.

Conclusion

This section has attempted to review literature notions regarding the two units of analyses of the study, that is, 'the relevance of the University of Namibia's English teacher-training module', thus looking at its curriculum content, as well as, 'the effectiveness of the methods of teaching writing skills'. Curriculum design notions and perspectives that inform teacher education curricula were discussed. Typical components of a Language teacher education curriculum were also identified. Writing theories, writing types and genres as well as general approaches and strategies, useful to teach writing effectively, have also been explored. Discussion on the importance of writing proficiency at national level was also attempted.

The next chapter presents the methodology used to collect data in this study.

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research design

This research is qualitative in nature. However, the researcher also borrowed techniques from quantitative design. This will be made clear in the sections that follow, in this chapter. Qualitative research aims to get a complete understanding of

the phenomenon being studied. In qualitative research, the researcher collects numerous forms of data and examines them from various angles to provide explanations and extend the understanding of a phenomenon. Qualitative research contributes to theory, educational practice and policy-making (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001). Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtler (2006); Johnson and Christensen (2004) and Gall, Gall and Borg (2007) describe qualitative research as interpretive and a method which applies inductive reasoning. Generally, qualitative research is regarded to be the type which aims for systematic descriptions of individuals and systems, and is concerned with subtleties of meaning and processes.

In this specific study, the researcher sought to evaluate the relevance of the writing skills component in the Teaching Methods of English Module and the effectiveness of teaching methods used by students to demonstrate the ability to teach English writing in schools. To carry out the study, the researcher examined the situation by collecting data from various angles. Results of this study will also be interpreted and descriptions of students' abilities as well as description of the module, under discussion, provided. Hence, it is a qualitative study, as McMillan and Schumacher (2001) and others, justify above. Knowledge (theories) on how to ensure effective teaching of the English writing skills can be inductively constructed.

This study followed a 'programme evaluation' design. Charles (1995) describes evaluation research as research whose purpose is to help make sound judgments about the quality of particular (a) programmes (b) procedures such as methods of

teaching or (c) products such as instructional materials. Data are obtained from materials being evaluated and the people who are using them. The current study clearly falls under this research design as it sought to evaluate the relevance of the university module and the effectiveness of the methods and instructional materials used in that module: The Teaching Methods of English. The study also falls under this design, with regard to the methods used to collect data. As it will be noted later, the researcher obtained data from the materials that are being evaluated, in this case the Teaching Methods of English Module and the Grade 11 and 12 English Second language Syllabus. Data were also obtained from the people who are using these materials, in this case, the student teachers doing that module.

Nunan (1999), as quoted earlier, affirms that, small-scale programme evaluations can provide an excellent research training ground for graduate students. Hudson (1989) in Nunan (1999) adds that, the measurement of student performance is the key to program evaluation. The researcher clarifies that, this was indeed a small-scale programme evaluation, as it only evaluated a component of the teacher education programme namely, the ‘Teaching Methods of English Module’, and not the whole teacher education programme.

It is also important to stress that the study did not evaluate the whole “Teaching Methods of English” course but only looked at the component “writing skills” and how these skills are reflected in the module. This is because, as stated already, writing is the most problematic area experienced in the schools currently.

3.2. Sample

The sample of the study was initially planned to be the whole population of the students doing the Teaching Methods of English module in 2010, because it was a manageable figure. Thirty-two (32) students were enrolled for the Teaching Methods of English module, that year. This course was then, and is currently offered only in the third year of the Bachelor of Education programme.

The sampling procedure was therefore aimed to be purposeful. Gall, Gall and Borg (2007) describe purposeful sampling as sampling whose goal is to select cases that are likely to be 'information-rich' with respect to the purposes of the study. All 32 students were regarded to be 'information-rich', regarding the teaching and practice of writing in the Teaching Methods of English module, the theories on writing as well as the writing tasks that form part of the Grade 11 and 12 school syllabus. These were mostly constituents of the questionnaire. On the day of handing out questionnaires however, only twenty-three students were present in the class. The final sample therefore came to twenty-three (23) English major students which makes up a 71.8 percent of the total student population. This is still a reliable figure. The sampling technique employed in the end, was therefore inevitably 'convenience sampling' which makes the whole sampling procedure 'Purposeful Convenience Sampling'.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001) convenience sampling is used with a group of subjects selected on the basis of being accessible or expedient. It is convenient to use the group of subjects. In this study, it was convenient to have the 23 students doing the Teaching Methods of English as subjects because they were accessible to the researcher on that day. Being accessible did not in any way however compromise the results of the study because they still belonged to the population that the study focused on. The only difference is that the number reduced a little, but not (as discussed above) in a way that will make the results unreliable. Twenty-three (23) students therefore completed the questionnaires.

Six students who presented micro-lessons on writing were observed in the English Teaching Methods class. This makes up 26.08 percent of the 23 students. These observations were done mainly to triangulate the data obtained from the questionnaires, as well as the students' own writing pieces. Triangulation is defined as the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behavior, to validate the data (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007).

Lesson observations were done to elicit information regarding one of the study's main units of analyses, namely 'effectiveness of the teaching methods used to teach writing'. The sampling of the six students was also a mixture of random and convenience. The module lecturer informed the students that they should each choose a language skill that is, listening, speaking, reading, writing and grammar, that will be a focus of their lesson. Six students chose to present writing lessons. The

procedure could be viewed as random in a sense that, every student had an equal chance of being observed if they chose a writing lesson. As McMillan and Schumacher (2001) state, ‘in simple random sampling all the members of the population have an equal chance of being chosen’. Random sampling procedure is also recommended when the population is small (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001).

However, the procedure also provided some leeway on the side of the students as they could only present a writing lesson if they chose to, and were comfortable with teaching writing. This could be viewed as an element of convenience. Researchers use convenience sampling when they use subjects that are available or volunteer and are willing to participate in the research study (Johnson and Christensen, 2004). Although six students were more than the 10% of the 23 students, the researcher also decided to conveniently go ahead with this sample, as it would be more information rich than the mere 2 students which are in actual fact the 10% of 23.

3.3 Data generating methods and procedure

Data in this study were generated by analysing the documents used in training English student teachers as well as the syllabi used to teach English in Grade 11 and 12. The analysis focused on the relevance of the writing component of the student teachers’ Teaching Methods of English module. In addition, the researcher gathered data from questionnaires completed by twenty-three third year students who were doing the Teaching Methods of English module in 2010. Furthermore, the researcher

observed micro-teaching lessons of six students in the Teaching Methods of English module, to evaluate their effectiveness of teaching writing skills.

The researcher obtained permission from the Dean and Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Education respectively, through her supervisor, to conduct this research in the faculty. Permission letter is attached as part of the appendices of this study. Thereafter, the researcher obtained permission from the lecturer of the Teaching Methods of English course to observe the six students' micro-teaching lessons on writing.

3.4 Research instruments

Four methods and instruments were used to collect data for this research. These methods were used to answer the research objectives given in Chapter 1, Section 1.3. They are discussed below.

3.4.1 Document analysis

Data were collected from relevant documents such as the Module Descriptor of the Teaching Methods of English module as well as the Grade 11 and 12 English as a Second Language Ordinary and Higher Level syllabi. This was to examine the 'relevance' unit of analysis. Crossley and Vulliamy (1997) maintain that when used carefully with triangulation, documents are a valuable research method in their own right.

3.4.2 Questionnaires

A questionnaire (Appendix 1) was used to establish students' knowledge of writing types and theories, the use of the school syllabus in the Teaching Methods course, as well as the knowledge of teaching the different writing tasks in the said syllabi. Although not all scholars agree with it, McMillan and Schumacher (2001) suggest that questionnaires are reliable data gathering tools if well-designed, as they can result in conscientious responses. The researcher acknowledges the fact that, questionnaires are not qualitative research tools. However, they were useful to this study, to a certain extent, mainly for triangulation. As mentioned in Section 3.1, this was the quantitative element in this study. As it will be seen in Chapter 4, Section 4.2.2, the results of the questionnaire are also in quantitative format.

3.4.3 Lesson Observations

Standard lesson observation forms (Appendix 2) were used to observe six students' micro-teaching lessons on writing. This was to find out if they could present English lessons as well as look at the methods they used to present these lessons, thus probing into the 'effectiveness' unit of analysis. This also confirmed what they could do practically, in comparison with what they stated in the questionnaires.

3.4.4 Students' own writing and marking of written work

The researcher further used the Grade 12 sample examination writing questions to elicit information on the students' own writing proficiency. Students were given past Grade 12 sample examination writing tasks to write so that the researcher could determine whether the student teachers themselves could write those tasks they would expect their learners in the schools to write. Both Higher and Ordinary level tasks were given. The tasks given were: writing a letter to the press (Higher level), paragraph-form summary writing (Ordinary level extended and higher level), point-form summary writing (ordinary level core), a narrative essay (higher level), an argumentative article for a school magazine (ordinary level extended) and a friendly letter (ordinary level core and extended).

Students were asked to mark each other's written work in order for the researcher to determine their competence in marking written pieces. They were provided with the Grade 11 and 12 marking grids for written pieces, to peer-mark one another. Afterwards, the researcher collected all marked scripts and used these to analyse both the writing proficiency as well as marking competence of the students. The writing proficiency rubric (Appendix 3) was used to determine the students' writing proficiency, while the Grade 11 and 12 marking grids (provided on pages 111 and 113), were used to assist in determining the students' marking competence.

The researcher used all these instruments to determine the correlation and consequent relevance of the course as compared to the secondary school content, as well as to determine the effectiveness of the students' methods of teaching writing skills as well as assessing written work, which the Teaching Methods course should have exposed them to. As stated earlier, the various instruments were used to strengthen and triangulate the data.

3.5 Data analysis

The researcher analysed the different materials mentioned in the previous sections according to the two main units of analyses. Regarding the unit of analysis 'relevance of the Teaching Methods of English content to the English as a Second Language Ordinary and Higher Level Syllabi', the researcher first tabulated content topics featuring in the two documents. This allowed the researcher to see congruence between school content and content of the Teaching Methods of English course. This ultimately provided facts about the relevance of the Teaching Methods course.

The study applied a qualitative content analysis method. Wilkinson and Birmingham (2003) describe content analysis as a research tool which applies significance or meaning to information you have collected and helps to identify patterns in the text. They further give examples of texts suitable for content analysis as essays, journal articles, books, chapters in books, discussions, newspaper articles, speeches and others. Content analysis further guided the evaluation of the programme 'Teaching Methods of English writing domain'.

In qualitative content analysis, the research is concerned with capturing the richness of data and describing unique complexities of these (Wilkinson and Birmingham, 2003). This study did therefore not merely examine how many times a word, theme or issue appears in the two documents, but rather established themes and key issues/topics common in the school syllabi and the Teaching Methods of English module descriptor.

The researcher used the “relational content analysis” method/model proposed by Wilkinson and Birmingham (2003). Relational analysis is a qualitative content analysis method which follows the following sequence:

- (a) Deciding on the question (relevance of the content and effectiveness of methods)
- (b) Framing the analysis (identifying the exact issues or themes or units of analyses to be analysed). In this case, it was the content of documents already mentioned as well as the methods used by the students in the Teaching Methods of English class to teach writing (See Fig.3 in Chapter 4).
- (c) The third step in the model is to decide which types of relationship to examine. In this case, the researcher looked for a correlational relationship between the content of the Grade 11 and 12 syllabus and the content of the Teaching Methodology of English course descriptor and outline.

(d) Thereafter, the texts (content) of the documents were coded and categorised.

(e) The fifth step was to explore the relationships. The researcher explored the strength or weakness of relationships and coded it either 0 (no relationship) or +1 direct relationship and -1 indicating an indirect relationship. Codes indicate positive and negative relationships.

(f) The relationships explored were then coded and thereafter analysed.

(g) The last step in the Relational content analysis model was then to map the relationships. This is where the researcher presented relationships between content in the respective documents in graphical (visual) form (See Fig. 3 and Fig.4 in Chapter 4)..

Regarding the unit of analysis ‘effectiveness of the course and methods practised by students to teach writing, as well as effectiveness of their own writing and marking proficiency’, most of the analysis will be done narratively. As stated in Section 3.5.2, the results of the questionnaire brought a quantitative element (although to a small extent) to the study. The researcher analysed the questionnaire by noting how many students responded how, to the different items in the questionnaire and grouping them. This proportion was presented in tables and worked out in pie charts. Other data from the questionnaires are also presented in a summarised manner, where the

researcher first grouped students' responses to a specific item, for example, their understanding of process writing. These responses are presented in the exact wordings of the students.

The lesson observation analysis is mostly narrative but tables were also used, to make more visual sense of the data. The students' own writing pieces are discussed, looking at three main aspects of Appendix 3 (Assessment of students' own writing proficiency): content and ideas, organisation and form and language. The researcher also discussed the students' marking competence, focusing on aspects such as awareness of errors, the correct/incorrect use of the marking grid and awarding of the marks thereof, the appropriateness/ accuracy of the judgment leading to the grade and, the comments/feedback provided by the marker. This was done mostly narratively.

3.6 Validity and reliability

Validity is defined as the extent to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure (Lodico, et al. 2006). Validity is also achieved if objectives of the research are achieved, and also when the research design and methodology are valid. Instruments in this research were constructed and used in such a way that they focus on what the research aimed to find. In other words, they aimed to measure exactly the relevance and correlation of the Teaching Methods of English Module to the

school syllabus as well as whether the students could effectively teach the specific writing skills content which they are expected to teach in Grade 11 and 12.

Other instruments also sought to test other aspects of writing namely, the students' own writing competence, their marking competence as well as how much assessment of writing is actually done in the course. The researcher believes that using the above-mentioned instruments immensely validated the data. Crossley and Vulliamy (1997) also regard validation of data as a process in which researchers can both have confidence in their own analyses and can present their analyses in ways which can be independently checked by others.

Reliability as discussed by Lodico, et al. (2006) is the consistency with which a measuring instrument yields certain results when the entity being measured has not changed. By using different sources and instruments which could be triangulated, the data can be viewed as reliable.

3.7 Limitations of the study

A study looking into the relevance of the teacher-training/education content to the school content and the effectiveness of the module 'Teaching Methods of a school subject should have, for some people, logically also looked at the teacher-trainer/educator's training of the students, that is, his/her methods of teaching the students. This study did not cover that part. The reasoning is that, as argued earlier in the

study, when you focus on the unit of analysis ‘effectiveness’, then you are bound to concentrate on one thing: the end-product. As Hudson (1989) in Nunan (1999) argues, the measurement of student performance is the key to program evaluation. One cannot really measure the students’ teaching competence/effectiveness of the programme through the lecturer. However, the reverse can be true. What the lecturer taught the students can be seen through what the students are able to do in the end.

Another limitation to the above argument and hence to the study is also what Nunan (1999) admits to as unfortunate is that, ‘It is not always possible for the evaluator to obtain data on what the students could do before taking part in the programme’. The possibility in this case is that, students might have learned about the writing tasks somewhere else, maybe already at high school, or from other English courses at the university and before taking the Teaching Methods of English module. So, they might not necessarily have learnt it from the module. Evaluating the students also at the beginning of the course might therefore have given a clearer picture of the difference of what they have learned in the module and what they could do already before they attended classes in that module. This limitation was hard to control.

The fact that the study did not look at other English modules taken by the students throughout the B. Ed (Secondary) programme could also be viewed by some as a limitation. However, the researcher reasserts the focus of the study ‘the relevance and effectiveness of the Teaching Methods of English Module’. The researcher acknowledges the fact that the students receive the English content from the

Humanities Faculty, along with all other students doing other courses. That rich linguistic content is a fundamental necessity for everyone who plans to become an English teacher and should never be overlooked. However, the study's concern was the simple writing content of Grade 11 and 12 (in addition to high university content), such as summarising, writing articles, letters and essays as narrated in the researcher's experience in Chapter 1.

At the time of submitting this study, the researcher could also not make a regional university comparison in addition to the two international ones. This could have added some meaningful value and bring in more familiar context into the study, if a similar module at a university in one of the neighbouring countries was looked at. This shortcoming was however due to reasons beyond control.

It should therefore in the end be noted that the above could be viewed as limitations in the way they have been explained, but not in a way that they could downgrade the results of the study, as per the justifications above. The results of the study therefore remain highly credible.

3.8 Research ethics

Conducting research in an ethical manner is an important responsibility of every researcher. The researcher obtained written permission from the Education Faculty

of the University of Namibia. Consent of the Teaching Methods of English lecturer was also gained before observations were done in the class and questionnaires handed to the students. The researcher also availed her final written product about the other universities' modules used in this study, to the respective persons she contacted at these universities to double-check that the information about their modules is correct. This is to ensure transparency. Research subjects were treated respectfully and anonymity was guaranteed in the research instruments.

Conclusion

This chapter outlined the methodology used to collect data in this study. Thus, the design, population and sample used, were discussed. The chapter further indicated methods and instruments used as well as procedures followed to generate these data. Analysis of the relevant documents, use of questionnaires as well as lesson observations were the key data gathering procedures. The chapter also looked into aspects of validity and reliability, limitations of the study as well as ethical procedures that this study followed. The next chapter presents the results collected.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

This chapter presents the research results based on the two main units of analysis for this study: Firstly, **the relevance** of the University of Namibia's Teaching Methods of English module's writing content to the writing content of the Grade 11 and 12

Ordinary and Higher Level Syllabi; and secondly, **the effectiveness** of the students' methods of teaching secondary school writing, that is, Grade 11 and 12.

The Teaching Methods of English Module Course Outline and the Grade 11 and 12 Ordinary and Higher level Syllabi were the instruments used to look into the relevance unit of analysis. Lesson observations, students' written work and students' marking of written work, provided data regarding the effectiveness unit. Data pertaining to relevance is presented first.

4.1 The relevance of the Teaching Methods of English Module to the Grade 11 and 12 Ordinary and Higher Level Syllabi

As pointed out in Section 3.6, the Content analysis method was used to analyse the content of the three documents, namely the Teaching Methods of English and the Grade 11 and 12 Ordinary and Higher Level Syllabi.

4.1.1 Overview of the University of Namibia's 'Teaching Methods of English' Module

In addition to the information provided in Section 2.2, it should be noted that, the module is a double semester one, offered in the third year of the Bachelor of Education programme. The description is the same for all teaching methods of all other school subjects. Coded ECLE 3700, it is ranked at NQF level 7 and lists the

competencies required for National Professional Standards. The module is allocated 2 hours theory for 28 weeks and 2 hours practical per week for 28 weeks. This makes a total of 56 hours of theory per year and 56 hours of practical per year respectively. The course counts a total of 16 credits. Prerequisites for enrolling for the Teaching Methods of a school subject is the General Teaching Methodology ECFG 3782, done in the preceding years. The course is aimed to offer NQF level six, school subject content.

This module description includes developing students' understanding, skills and dispositions regarding the school subject issues such as: aims of the subject; syllabus content of Grades 11-12 NSSC Ordinary and/or Higher level; learner-centred features, lesson planning, supporting of learning, general and creative methods; use of resources; instructional management; assessment policy and practices; maintaining motivation and discipline. Continuous Assessment counts 50% towards the final mark and consists of 50% theory and 50% practical work. The examination contributes 50% towards the final mark. Prescribed texts include a school textbook for the subject (The Course Outline is provided as Appendix 4).

Eight content areas emerging out of the module's Exit Learning Outcomes (ELOs) and Learning Outcomes (LOs) can be narrowed down to: School subject content, Lesson planning, Methods of teaching, Questioning skills, Teaching-learning resources, Instructional management, Assessment and Micro-teaching. Under the area of 'Subject school content', the Teaching Methods of English module also

familiarises the students to the ministerial documents governing the teaching of English in schools. These documents are, among others, the English Subject Policy and the National Curriculum for Basic Education in Namibia. In the subsection ‘Lesson Planning’, students learn about long and short-term planning where they compile schemes of work, formulate lesson objectives and basic competencies and design lesson plans. The topic ‘Methods of teaching’ explores co-operative methods such as group and pair work as well as all learner-centred methods and strategies. Methods used to teach the different language skills namely, listening, speaking, reading, writing and grammar are also explored under this topic.

This module also looks at questioning skills in line with Bloom’s taxonomy of questioning levels namely, knowledge, understanding, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Students classify questions in these levels and also employ these levels when tasked to design questions for an English class/lesson. In addition to that, they also explore ways of providing both oral and written feedback as well as analysing errors.

The teaching and learning resources area includes creating teaching-learning aids, using the internet as a resource, using school textbooks as well as doing self-study through the resources. The module also looks at ‘Instructional Management’ where aspects such as maintaining classroom discipline and motivating learners and providing guidance are discussed. The Assessment topic covers the different assessment types, assessment guidelines in the school syllabus as well as

examination papers, tests and memoranda. The last content area in the module is Micro Teaching. In this outcome, students present lessons to their peers and reflect on their and each other's teaching. The diagram on the next page gives a visual representation of the content of the module under study, 'Teaching Methods of English'.

4.1.2 The Grade 11 and 12 Ordinary and Higher Level Syllabi

The two senior secondary syllabi were both included in the study because students doing the course Teaching Methods of English at the University of Namibia will teach either Ordinary level or Higher level when they start teaching in the schools. There is, however, no distinction at teacher-training level of these two curricula, which is a little cause of concern.

The aims of the two senior secondary curricula of English regarding writing are relatively the same. The Ordinary level syllabus aims 'to develop learners' ability to use English effectively, accurately and appropriately for practical communication in writing' (NIED, 2009, p.2); while the Higher level also states 'to enable learners to communicate accurately, appropriately and effectively in writing' (NIED, 2009, p.2). The learning content and assessment weighting, however, took different widths and depths of focus.

It can be seen that both syllabi prescribe fairly common content but also bring in the differentiation, evident in the different phrasing of the words or supplementary content, to indicate the depth or breadth of focus. While the Ordinary syllabus, for example, only aims for the learners to write using complete sentences, the Higher level wants them to write with enthusiasm, maturity and conviction to produce a reader friendly style. When it comes to a wide range of texts to be written, the Ordinary syllabus exposes the learners to, in addition to the common transactional writing pieces such as letters and reports, the more information transfer type of tasks such as form-filling, a task which does not feature in the Higher level syllabus. The latter syllabus on the other hand, asks for the more imaginative and discursive potential of the learners as it prescribes imaginary and discursive essays. It goes without saying that this is to achieve the analytical and critical abilities aimed for at this level.

Vocabulary expansion is another important aspect prescribed in both syllabi. They aim for a rich and varied use of vocabulary by the learners. The Higher level syllabus however aims for more, such as: a specialised vocabulary in different subject areas, the use of homophones, homonyms, synonyms, antonyms and idioms.

Perhaps what is more interesting is the content that appears exclusively at one level and not the other, content such as grammar usage. It is a very interesting and in fact, wise thing to integrate grammar in the writing skill. This is because people use grammar when they write. To simplify it: People write grammar or, What people

write is grammar. Detaching it from its form can be viewed illogical. This, however, occurs in the Ordinary syllabus. It might be worth relooking this. Grammar usage in the Ordinary syllabus only occurs as a separate skill while in the Higher level, it appears both separately and integrated into the writing skill.

The type of grammar topics/aspects integrated in the Higher Level writing are also those in which our learners in the schools show problems, as discussed in the initial chapters. This is proof that this syllabus is attempting to address this setback. The question however is, whether teacher-training is aware of these particular grammatical problematic aspects prescribed in this syllabus and, to what extent the Higher Level syllabus is in use at teacher training level in the Teaching Methods of English class. The researcher has not been able to clearly establish this. Following is an attempt at the final comparison of the syllabi and the Teaching Methods of English module. It is presented looking at three main areas, namely general aims of the subject, specific learning content regarding writing and, assessment weighting of the writing domain.

4.1.3 Comparison of the Teaching Methods of English Module and the Grade 11 and 12 English as a Second Language Ordinary and Higher Level Syllabi

The following table summarises the content of the Teaching Methods of English Module of the University of Namibia against the content of the two senior secondary

syllabi. As it has been the focus of the study, only content pertaining to writing in the syllabi is reflected in the table.

Table 3. Comparison of the Teaching Methods of English Module and the Grade11-12 English Second Language Ordinary and Higher Level Syllabi

	Teaching Methods of English Module	Grade 11-12 English Second Language Ordinary Level and Higher Level Syllabi
1. General Aims of the subject	- Developing students' understanding, skills and dispositions regarding the school subject issues such as: aims of the subject; syllabus content of grades 11-12 NSSC (Ordinary and/or Higher level), learner - centred features; lesson planning, supporting of learning; general and creative methods; use of resources; instructional management; assessment policy practices; maintaining motivation and discipline	- To enable learners to: develop the ability to use English effectively, accurately and appropriately for the purpose of practical communication in speech and writing
2. Learning Content	- Content of NSSC Ordinary and Higher level syllabi (Included as	Objectives, competencies and topics: - Developing, producing, and organising

<p>pertaining to writing</p>	<p>part of the module descriptor)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Content of English as a school subject - Applying appropriate methods for teaching different skills - Analyse learners' errors in different skills and how to correct them - Strengths and weaknesses of school textbooks in use - Principles underpinning written feedback - Evaluate the (learners') syllabus assessment guidelines - Set and analyse specimen examination papers, tests, memoranda and other assessment instruments - Apply guidelines to moderate an examination paper and memorandum -Two sample lesson plans on how to teach writing - Samples of marked literary essays and creative writing essays 	<p>ideas into coherent pieces of writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning, structuring, drafting, and editing written work - Writing with enthusiasm, maturity and conviction - Writing a wide range of texts such as formal and informal letters, articles to newspaper and school magazine, reports, essays, summaries, reviews, speeches, diary entries, form-filling - Apply appropriate style in writing, use contractions where appropriate, use figurative language and imagery in writing, use appropriate format/layout - Demonstrate clarity and conciseness in writing through giving facts, expressing thoughts, opinions and feelings, use different types of register, use skills of analysis and interpretations in responding to texts - Show comprehension of given texts, select specific information from literary sources, brochures, book reports, film reviews - Show competence in the use of spelling and basic punctuation marks to achieve effect in writing, apply basic spelling
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		<p>rules such as correct syllabification of words, contractions, fractions, possessive case, words commonly confused, spelling of words in the continuous tense, homophones, homonyms,</p> <p>- Vocabulary usage: use, acquire and apply appropriate and effective vocabulary in different contexts; use direct and unambiguous vocabulary; use vocabulary for personal, social and academic use; vocabulary specific for certain fields such as education, technology, sport, social matters, law and so on; synonyms and antonyms; use rich and varied vocabulary to describe, explain and argue.</p> <p>- Grammar usage: use appropriate grammatical structures in writing among others: articles (a, an, the); correct verb tense e.g. <i>We have a house</i> instead of <i>We are having a house</i>; active and passive voice; use and place adjectives and adverbs correctly; structure simple and complex sentences in writing; apply correct use of concord; use modal verbs; direct and indirect speech; relative clauses and idiomatic expressions</p>
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3. Assessment of the writing domain	- Continuous Assessment 50% (50% theory and 50% practical work) - Examination 50%	- Ordinary level: (Paper 1 and 2) Reading and Directed Writing 60% weighting -Higher level: Paper 1- Reading and Directed Writing 50% weighting Paper 2: Continuous Writing 20% weighting Paper 3: Writing, Speaking and Listening on Literary Topics 30% weighting
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Source: University of Namibia (2010), Teaching Methods of English Course Outline

NIED (2009), NSSC English Second Language Ordinary and Higher Level Syllabi

As stated in Section 3.6, qualitative content analysis was employed in analysing the content in the three documents namely, the Teaching Methods of English module descriptor and the Grade 11 and 12 English Second Language Ordinary and Higher Level syllabi. Patterns, themes and topics emerging out of this table are twofold namely, those featuring in both documents (thus showing similarities) and those featuring only in the school syllabi (thus showing a potential gap in training).

Steps in the Relational Content Analysis method discussed in Section 3.6 (Wilkinson and Birmingham, 2003) are applied as follows:

Step 1: The question/unit of analysis: **The relevance of the Teaching Methods of English module to the Grade 11 and 12 English Second Language Syllabus**

Step 2: Exact issues/ themes to be analysed: **The writing content in the two documents**

Step 3: Type of relationship to be explored: **Correlational relationship**

Step 4: Content/themes/categories emerging out: The figure on the next page shows the content, themes and categories emerging out

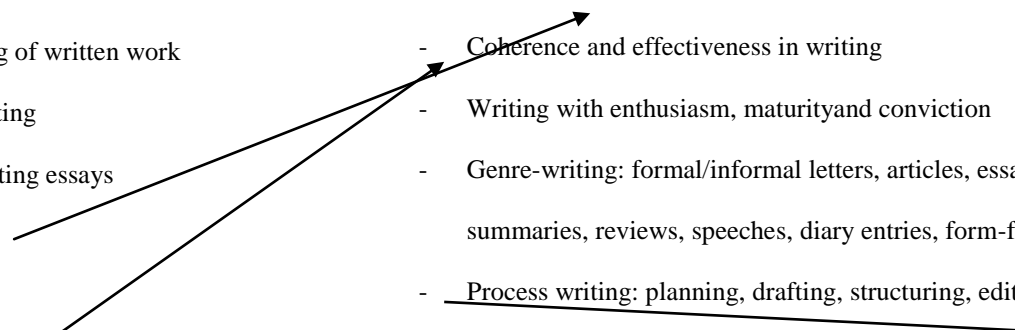
Fig.2 Content/Themes/Categories emerging out of the University
of Namibia's Teaching Methods of English Module and the Grade
11 and 12 Ordinary and Higher Level Syllabi Content

Teaching Methods of English Module

- Error analysis and editing of written work
- Methods of teaching writing
- Literary and creative writing essays
- School Syllabus content

Grade 11 and 12 Ordinary and Higher level Syllabi Content

- Coherence and effectiveness in writing
- Writing with enthusiasm, maturity and conviction
- Genre-writing: formal/informal letters, articles, essays, summaries, reviews, speeches, diary entries, form-filling
- Process writing: planning, drafting, structuring, editing
- Appropriate style and register
- Use of figurative language and imagery in writing
- Appropriate format
- Clarity and conciseness
- Spelling and punctuation
- Vocabulary usage and Grammar usage



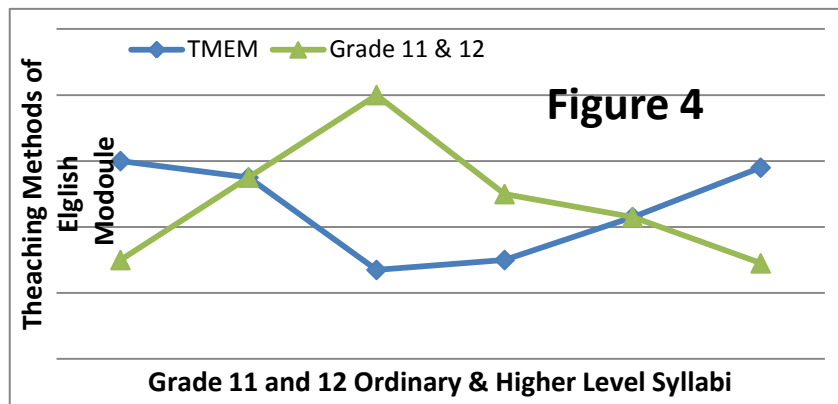
A common topic in these three documents appear to be only **‘editing written work’**. Other broad topics regarding writing in the Teaching Methods of English module are: **‘how to teach writing (sample lesson plans)’** and **‘literary and creative writing essays (sample)’**. The overall topic is perhaps the one about **‘the school syllabus content’**, which one assumes exposes students to most of the writing content in the syllabus.

Step 5: Exploring the strength or weakness of the relationship: Based on the content in the two documents presented above, the relationship between the university module ‘Teaching Methods of English’ and the Grade 11 and 12 English Second Language Ordinary and Higher Level Syllabi can be declared **‘inconclusive’** or ‘indifferent’.

The motivation for the above is that, school syllabus content in the Teaching Methods of English module is ‘concealed’. One can therefore not claim that the relationship is indirect or negative -1, as it says that school syllabus content is looked at. At the same time, one cannot confidently assert a direct or positive relationship +1 as this syllabus content is not specified in the module. The figure on the next page concludes the last step in the Relational Content Analysis method.

Step 6: Mapping the relationship

Fig. 3 The relationship between the University of Namibia's Teaching Methods of English module and the Grade 11 and 12 English Second Language Ordinary and Higher Level Syllabi



The scatter line graph above can be read together with Figure 3 presented earlier in this section (p. 86). As it can be seen and as it has been pointed out already, the relationship between the Teaching Methods of English Module and the Grade 11 and 12 Ordinary and Higher Level Syllabi is difficult to determine. The two lines in the graph show that the two documents' content is almost independent of each other. There are only two points where the two meet. The **first point** can be represented by the theme which includes '**editing written work**' in the Teaching Methods of English which links to one of the process writing stages in the Grade 11 and 12 Syllabi, '**editing**'. The **second point** where the two lines meet can be represented by the theme '**school syllabus**

content’ in the university module which links with the topic ‘**Grade 11 and 12 Ordinary and Higher Level Syllabus**’ itself. The rest of the points are hanging loose on their own, which signifies an

independent kind of nature of these two documents. Hence, the relationship between them is declared inconclusive.

4.2. Effectiveness of the “Writing Skills” Component of the University of Namibia’s Teaching Methods of English Module

As stated in Chapter 1, effectiveness in this study looked at effectiveness of teaching writing tasks as demonstrated by student teachers in the micro- teaching sessions.

Lesson observations and a questionnaire were the main instruments used to look into the effectiveness unit of analysis in this study. To triangulate the data, analysis of the students’ own writing and marking proficiency is also shared. Results of the observations are presented first.

4.2.1. Results of Lesson Observations

Six students’ micro lessons were observed. Four male students and two female students presented these lessons. The topics presented on writing were: a descriptive essay, form-filling, the use of figurative language and imagery in writing, summary-writing, formal letter of complaint and report-writing. The first four topics were presented by the male students and the last two by their female

classmates. The researcher's notes on lesson proceedings are included in Appendix 2.

4.2.1.1 Strengths of lesson presentations

Overall, the students' presentations were fairly impressive. The immediate positive thing was that, all topics were taken from the syllabus or are part of the Grade 11-12 syllabus. The students also stressed in their presentations that the topics were part of the syllabus, although they never mentioned whether it was the ordinary or higher level one. It was clear however that the presentations were more of ordinary level expectations than they were of higher level. Expectedly, the students also referred the topics to the examinations, which was good. This showed that they were aware of the popular examination questions and their explanations were geared towards answering tasks in the examinations. Their explanations were therefore in general terms, fairly good and accompanied by examples. They also displayed fairly good questioning skills. All six students displayed confidence in their presentations, possessed fairly good content knowledge on how different tasks are written or most important aspects of writing different tasks.

The **descriptive writing lesson** made use of a power point presentation, although handouts with step-by-step prompts and pictures to be described could have been

more appropriate. This however was a good attempt by the student to integrate ICT in his teaching. The student also showed pictures at the end of the lesson for the students to identify the friendly clown described in the paragraph. This lesson also took students through a jot-list technique, one of the starting points of writing a descriptive piece. Students had to use connectives to organise points in a coherent paragraph.

In the **form-filling lesson**, the student used an authentic application form for UNAM residence as an example. He emphasised the importance of reading instructions carefully, observing neatness, knowing details such as initials, residential address, not leaving spaces blank and so on.

The lesson on **the use of figurative language in writing** emphasised the purpose of painting pictures in the reader's mind to give a certain effect. Some examples of imagery were given.

The **summary writing lesson**, for example, (one of the difficult lessons to teach) emphasised among others, the importance of reading instructions first, identifying main points, adhering to word-length and the use of own words but not own ideas.

The **formal letter of complaint** highlighted the importance of sticking to facts and leaving out irrelevant details, using formal register and tone, providing

evidence when the incident happened, providing contact details for follow-up and suggesting what can be negotiated if the concern cannot be fully resolved.

Report-writing pointed out inclusion of answers to the wh-questions what, who, where, when, why; a catchy headline; accurate information coupled with evidence; the use of the past tense, among others.

In general terms, students are aware of the correct format of the different tasks as per the Grade 11-12 requirements, were well-prepared and had fairly good spoken English.

4.2.1.2 Some weaknesses observed in the students' presentations

Most of the students, from the six observed, seemed to have a problem with chronology in their presentations. Their lessons were a little haphazard, preventing someone from following logically. Students also lacked awareness of different teaching-learning methods characteristic of learner-centred and communicative language teaching. Most of their lessons were dominated by teacher's explanations followed by the question and answer method. This was not always suitable in a writing lesson as writing is not a question and answer activity. It is a practical, hands-on activity. In most lessons, no actual practical activity was given to engage the students. Exception was to the lesson on

descriptive writing (one of the best lessons observed), although more time should have been allowed for the activity.

The researcher also did not observe application of process-writing and its stages. It was obvious that the students had no awareness of this concept (This was also clear from the students' responses in the questionnaire, to be discussed next). Other main observations were that, not all students had lesson plans so, sometimes the observer did not know what the lesson objectives were. There were also a lack of teaching-learning aids, most particularly visuals. The chalkboard dominated the presentations.

Regarding specific lesson stages namely, pre-activity, while-activity and post-activity, both strengths and weaknesses were also noted. The table below summarises overall results.

Table 4. Observations of lesson stages: Pre-, While- and Post- Activity stages

Lesson Stages	Strengths	Weaknesses
Pre-activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lesson topic clearly introduced - FATP* fairly made clear - Questions asked to link pre-knowledge to new one 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of visuals to catch the learners' attention - No specific technique (such as brainstorming, an outline, free-writing, jot-list and so on) was used to let the learners generate ideas.

		Exception: A jot-list was used in the descriptive writing lesson.
While/During-Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quite good explanations given - Examples provided - Authentic materials used in some lessons, example: a UNAM residence form was used to give an example in the form-filling lesson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - haphazard presentations - No actual activities were given to engage students in writing. - Question and answer method dominated the lessons. - Lack of collaborative learning activities - Process-writing stages did not feature.
Post-Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Recap on lessons done 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow-up activities not always given - Sharing of work not observed

*FATP = Function, Audience, Topic, Purpose

General impression will be discussed in the next chapter.

4.2.2 Results of the Questionnaires

Twenty-three students completed the questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised eighteen items. Section A probed students' knowledge of the different types of writing they ought to have learned in the Teaching Methods of English module, while Section B enquired about their familiarity and use of the school syllabus in

the course. Students were asked to indicate whether they had studied the types of writing such as process-writing, free-writing, journal writing, among others, in the module and to what extent. They were also asked to explain what selected writing types entailed. In Section B, students had to indicate the frequency of using the syllabus in the Teaching Methods module as well as demonstrate their competency by explaining what selected writing tasks from the Grade 11-12 Ordinary and Higher level syllabi entailed and how they were written.

4.2.2.1 Section A: Writing Knowledge and the Teaching Methods of English Module

Question 1.1 enquired whether the students had studied the different types/methods of writing in the Teaching Methods of English class. They had to indicate this, using a 4 point scale (see Appendix 1).

Results of the respondents' responses to Questions 1.1.1-1.1.7 are shown in the tables and pie charts on pages 96-98. The diagram will only show the number of students who said they studied the different types of writing at the rating scale of 3= moderately and 1= not at all. This is because these are the two most significant responses among the four. It puts the mind at ease if something has been studied moderately enough, which means there is not much to worry about, and it disturbs the mind to realise that something has not been studied at all, which means that there is reason to worry. The other two options 'very little' and 'a lot of times'

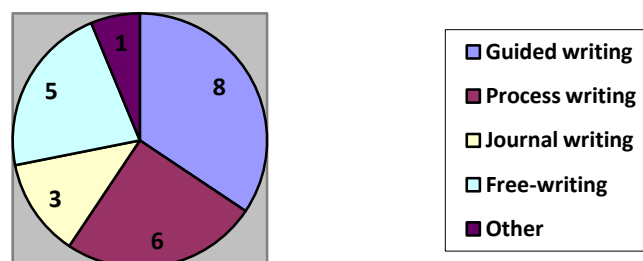
can be regarded as ‘extra information’ which brings little worry, in case of the former and more satisfaction in the latter. They do not necessarily tell anything different.

The table and chart below show the results of the students in the Teaching Methods of English class who said they studied the different writing types at a moderate rating.

Table 5. Number of students who indicated that they studied the different types of writing in the Teaching of Methods of English **moderately** (in descending order)

Guided writing	Process writing	Free-writing	Journal writing	Other
8	6	5	3	1

Fig. 4. Number of students who indicated that they studied the different types of writing in the Teaching of Methods of English **moderately**



The following number of students indicated the moderate extent to which the different types of writing were studied in the Teaching Methods of English class. Guided writing has the highest number of students (8), followed by Process writing (6), then Free-writing (5) and lastly, Journal writing (3). ‘Other’ was represented by only one student. Writing types listed by the student under ‘other’ were, essay-writing, report-writing, diary-writing, agenda writing and memo writing.

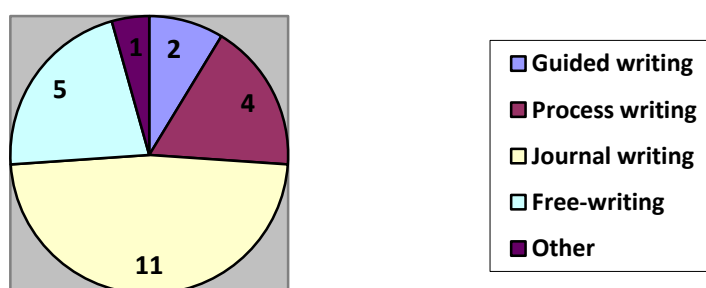
Table 6 and Fig. 5 show the number of students who claim that they have not studied the different writing types at all.

Table 6. Number of students who indicated that they **did not** study the listed types of writing in the Teaching Methods of English class **at all** (in descending order)

Journal writing	Free-writing	Process-writing	Guided writing	Other
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11	5	4	2	1
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Fig.5. Number of students who indicated that they **did not** study the listed types of writing in the Teaching Methods of English class **at all**



The following number of students indicated that they **did not** study the respective types of writing at all. Guided writing was indicated by 2 students, Process-writing 4 students, Journal writing 11, Free-writing 5 and Other 1.

An analysis of Figure 4 and 5 results lead to a definite conclusion regarding at least two writing types namely, **guided writing** and **journal writing**. It is clearly evident from the two figures that **guided writing** has been covered and practised at some length or at least students are quite familiar with it. Hence, 8 students have indicated that they had studied it moderately and only 2 students said that they had not studied it at all. On the other hand, **journal writing** results indicate

that only 3 of the students seemed to think that it had been covered and practised at length. On the contrary, 11 students claimed that journal writing had not been covered or practised in the Teaching Methods of English class.

Items 1.2.1 and 1.2.2 asked the students' understanding of the writing types, **process-writing** and **free-writing**. The responses were as follows:

Students explained **process-writing** as: a piece of academic writing that follows a logical sequence; refers to writing as a process that involves different components; breaking down of the writing process; when learners follow certain guidance in writing about a given topic; writing is a continuous thing that has to be done step by step constantly; the process that takes place before, during and after writing; ongoing writing; a process of writing whereby ideas must be in a logical order; writing that requires steps; writing that is guided by the lecturer.

Some **misconception** of the term included: processing information to make it yours and meaningful; taking notes during a lecture; learners are limited to write about something specific and give facts; includes articles, letters, memos, reports, notes, diary entries. Four students left the question blank and one had no idea what the term means.

The students' responses were a little general to conclude whether they really knew the meaning of the term 'process writing' or whether they were merely attempting vocabulary guesses. Although the words step by step featured in some responses, the keywords drafting, revising, editing, rewriting and so on did not feature in any of the responses.

Regarding **free-writing**, students had a more accurate understanding as they **stated**: writing just about anything- the content is up to the writer; writing your own views; to write about anything and you don't have to follow the rules such as grammar and syntax; a type of writing whereby one writes about any topic of his or her own and not guided or given instructions by the teacher or lecturer; writing freely without being guided by the question on what to include in the writing; writing that is not restricted to anything; writing as a means of expression- learners can write whatever they feel; when learners are given a chance to write about any topic they feel like; learners write in a way that they are not limited to writing certain things - they express themselves through it.

Only two students left the space blank and only three inaccurate answers were **recorded**: writing that students do under individual terms; this includes

essay-writing and summaries and writing done at one's own free will and at own leisure time.

Section B items 1.3.1-1.3.2 asked about the extent to which the Grade 11-12 syllabus is used in the Teaching Methods class and how often the lecturer or the students refer to the writing skills content of the school syllabus respectively. The responses to the former were: 1 student said that they had never used the syllabus in the Teaching Methods of English class, 3 students said that they used it seldom, 8 students responded that they used it sometimes and 11 students said that they used it quite often. The latter question's responses were as follows: No one said 'the lecturer or the students never referred to the writing skills content of the Grade 11-12 syllabus'. Four students said that the lecturer or the students seldom referred to the writing skills content of the syllabus, 7 students indicated that they sometimes referred to the writing skills content of the syllabus while 12 students responded that the lecturer and the students referred to the writing content of the school syllabus quite often.

Items 1.3.3 a-f gathered information about how well-prepared the students were to teach six selected writing tasks from the syllabus, and demanded a short description of what the task entails and how it is written. The following rating scale was used to indicate the extent of their preparation (by the module 'Teaching Methods of English'): 1= no preparation; 2= very little preparation; 3=

enough preparation. The writing tasks listed were: a formal letter of complaint, an informal letter, a newspaper article, an accident/crime report, an argumentative essay and a paragraph-form summary. The responses per item were as follows:

Regarding the **formal letter of complaint**, one student claimed that he/she had no preparation, 7 admitted that they had little preparation while 12 students affirmed that they had enough preparation for the task. Three of the students did not rate this item. The table below summarises the ratings above.

Table 7. Students' responses on their preparation on how to write the formal letter of complaint

No preparation	Very little preparation	Enough preparation	No rating
1	7	12	3

Students' descriptions of what the task entails and how it is written included: *two addresses-one for the complainant and another for the manager, purpose of letter is written before content; formal register is used; there must be the subject, salutation, paragraphs and complementary closure; concise and to the point; no greetings because you are not familiar with the person; formal diction; be specific; provide evidence; clearly state your complaint; give credit*

where it is due; no slang; provide contact details, when the incident happened, people involved, what you want to change; Yours faithfully; Dear Sir/ Madam.

The **informal letter** had the following ratings: one student stated that he/she had no preparation; 7 students indicated that they had very little preparation, while 11 of them confirmed that they had enough preparation. Four students did not rate this item. This is shown in the table below.

Table 8. Students' responses on their preparation on how to write an informal letter

No preparation	Very little preparation	Enough preparation	No rating
1	7	11	4

A summary of responses to what **an informal letter** entails and how it is written were, among others: letter to a friend/ parents/someone you know, one address, salutation: Dear John; greetings; friendly register; purpose of letter not needed; slang is not avoided but should be at comprehensible level; written to a friend or family member or someone close; can be invitation to a birthday party or any social event; daily spoken language is used; ending depends on the relationship, informal register. **Wrong answers included:** Ending: Yours faithfully/Yours sincerely, **Salutation:** Dear Friend; use of slang.

The **newspaper article** had the following responses: Students who said they had no preparation regarding this task were three, those who had very little preparation 11 and 5 stated that they had had enough preparation. Four (4) students did not rate the task at all. The table below summarises the ratings.

Table 9. Students' responses on their preparation on how to write a newspaper article

No preparation	Very little preparation	Enough preparation	No rating
3	11	5	4

Description of how the task is written included: *no idea, slang should be avoided, formal vocabulary; article to appear in newspaper, paragraphs with different points, every sentence starts with topic sentence; formal language and to the point; it must have a topic; article addressing certain issue; title-introduction-body-conclusion; opinion-related; formal register; writer's name should be written at the end; particulars of writer not needed but can provide at will; article written to the newspaper reporting on an event that happened; article that can have complaints, comments, suggestions, no real names published.*

The **accident/crime report** had the following responses: Six (6) stated that they had no preparation, 7 said that they had little preparation, 7 affirmed that they had had enough preparation while three (3) did not rate the item.

Table 10. Students' responses on their preparation on how to write an accident/crime report

No preparation	Very little preparation	Enough preparation	No rating
6	7	7	3

Responses on the description of how the task is written were among others: *form of writing reporting an event, includes where, how, what and when the event took place; topic in upper case, date, subject, past tense, short; it is more or less like an article, written in paragraphs preceded by a topic; report of incident that happened, provide evidence, time, date, past tense; report of something, consists of descriptions for example murders, colour of car, date, time, who, when, where, why; formal language; written in passive voice and reported speech, past tense, includes wh-questions; title, writer of the report, time event occurred, perpetrator's name, victim's name, type of accident/crime, location of accident/crime; title that captures purpose of report, past tense, has conclusion;*

a brief writing that gives an overview of what has happened somewhere, should have title, past tense, introduction-body-conclusion; report about an accident, written in passive manner and past tense; no use of subjectivity 'I'.

The **argumentative essay** had the following ratings: Three (3) students stated that they had no preparation regarding the writing of the essay, six (6) said they had little preparation, eleven (11) affirmed that they had had enough preparation while three (3) did not rate the item.

Table 11. Students' responses on their preparation on how to write an argumentative essay

No preparation	Very little preparation	Enough preparation	No rating
3	6	11	3

Descriptions of how the task is written include: a piece of writing in which someone argues about either supporting or opposing a point of view stated; an essay arguing on a certain issue that they don't feel good about; an essay in which you argue for or against a certain issue and come to a conclusion of how you want things to be and why; learners give arguments whether they agree or disagree- they have to back up their arguments; an essay where one argues his

or her point of view, should state his/her side of argument and give supporting ideas, three paragraphs introduction- body -conclusion; has parts of a normal essay, tries to convince the reader, ability to argue in writing; an essay where the writer argues academically, includes own opinion stating reasons why he/she is for or against the topic under discussion; both sides of the topic are argued for; the writer gives his/her opinion on something; either for or against, title, introduction-body divided into paragraphs- conclusion; the writer tackles the topic given whereby he/she has to argue; an essay in which one is expected to argue both for or against the motion, written like an ordinary essay; either agree/disagree, give reasons to support a certain idea, more or less similar to debating.

Students' understanding of what an argumentative essay involves is also quite good.

Paragraph-form summary was the last item in the questionnaire and the responses were as follows: One (1) student claimed that he/she had no preparation, five (5) stated that they had little preparation while fourteen (14) admitted that they had had enough preparation. Three (3) students did not rate the item.

Table 12. Students' responses on their preparation on how to write a paragraph-form summary

No preparation	Very little preparation	Enough preparation	No rating
1	5	14	3

Descriptions of how the task is written were: a shorter version of a long piece of writing that has to be paraphrased; topic sentence, supporting sentence, concluding sentence, heading not always necessary; use of main points; main ideas summarising the text in own words; important points of entire text, only relevant points; summarise or paraphrase a text, should be in range of given word limit, captures main points of the original text; shortened version of a longer passage, find keywords/ main ideas and supporting sentences from original passage, then structure into paragraph using conjunctions, in one's own words; summary that is in paragraph form, shorten a text by taking out main ideas and putting them in their own words as well as combining them to make up a paragraph within the limited number of words, often written in one's own words; devoid of own ideas but can use own words.

4.2.3 Results of the students' own writing proficiency and marking competence

Students were given past Grade 12 sample examination writing tasks to write so that the researcher could determine whether the student teachers themselves could write those tasks they would expect their learners in the schools to write. Both higher and ordinary level tasks were given. The tasks given were: writing a letter to the press (higher level) 1 student, paragraph-form summary writing (ordinary level extended and higher level) 2 and 1 student respectively, point-form summary writing (ordinary level core) 2 students, a narrative essay (higher level) 2 students, an argumentative article for a school magazine (ordinary level extended) 1 student, a friendly letter (ordinary level core and extended) 2 students and a letter to the press (higher level) 1 student. This brought the total number of written and analysed scripts at 12. This was in fact, the total number of students who were in class that day. It should be noted that, this data collection activity was done on a different day. The researcher gave the tasks at random, making sure in most cases that, each task was attempted by at least two students.

4.2.3.1 Students' writing proficiency

As stated above, these results are based on 12 students who did the writing tasks. Results are presented according to the tasks.

The **friendly letter** task asked students to write to a friend about a recent visit to a rest camp. Students started with the writer's address, followed by the salutation

‘Dear Alex’ or ‘Dear Charlie Mwamba’. After the salutation, students proceeded with the opening paragraph which both indicated a close relationship between the writer and the recipient. These are remarks such as: ‘Hope all is still well like your mother assured me during her last visit to Windhoek three months ago’ and ‘I hope you are doing fine with your exam preparations. I am okay after a visit to Chacha rest camp’.

The content of both letters was on a visit to a rest camp and paragraphs were used. The use of language ranged from using text message service (sms) language, to misspelled words. The following sentence was spotted: ‘I would like to tell u my brief experience at the above mentioned rest camp’. The word ‘sightseeing’ was also spelt as ‘siteseeing’.

The address in one of the letters was presented as follows:

03/11/2010

Rundu

Nkarapamwe

P. O. Box 1180

The ending in one of letters was given as: Yours truly (and the first name), while in the other, it was given as:

Your friend

(name and surname)

The **prose form summary of higher level**, the student compared two contrasting places, ‘Terminal place’ and ‘Monaco’. The students pointed out the main activities happening in the two places. The word length was exceeded, however. The **ordinary level prose form summary** showed a lot of word lifting and less paraphrasing. Lack of coherence between ideas in the paragraphs was also noticed.

In the **point-form summary**, students mostly identified the main points. Methods used to protect lions in the Kalahari were given for example as ‘use of radio collar and aerial surveys’, ‘tracked using San trackers’. The following sentences were also given: ‘The lions are being monitored via radio collars’ and ‘Their well-being and gene make up are tested in blood’.

In the **argumentative article for a school magazine**, students had to give their views on the effects of tourism on the country. The student pointed out both positive and negative effects of tourism. The article was also paragraphed and ideas showed some coherence. Both introduction and conclusion were also clearly

evident. The following sentences were identified for discussion in the next chapter:

'The tourist industry have generate thousands of jobs to local people.'

'The lions were shooted.'

'This people bring in their culture that is unacceptable.'

‘

Regarding the higher level **narrative essay**, both students had to continue a story that started like this: 'She was watching TV when suddenly the phone rang. She picked up the phone and...'. One of the student's work was paragraphed and the other not. Both students created convincing storylines. One of the students wrote *'She picked up the phone and within seconds of speaking to the person on the other end, the smile on her face was washed away. She sunk into the chair with the phone glued to her left ear unconsciously.'* Other sentences included: *'She was voiceless and her lips went dry instantly'. 'How I wish she did not go to the extent of rubbing that in the faces of her enemies!' 'I stood there watching my helpless sister not blinking and watching throughout the window as if she had electronic eyes.'*

The student who wrote the **letter to the press** expressed his/her disappointment about the schoolboys who die from rugby-related injuries and others who end up in wheelchairs. Some suggestions were also given. The salutation 'Dear Editor'

Ordinary level)

(NIED, 2009, p. 27)

As explained already in this section, the marking grid has two sections namely, the Content and Style section and, the Language and Structure one. In each section, there are five bands. As it can be seen above, the Content and Style bands are going down the grid (vertically), while the Language and Structure ones are going across (horizontally). The horizontal bands also make provision for the three writing questions always present in the English question paper. The first question is usually out of 10 marks, the second out of 12 marks and the last one out of 16. Hence the columns with numbers 10, 12 and 16. One has to use the right column depending on whether one is marking the 10 marks question, the 12 marks question or the 16 marks question respectively.

After reading the written work, the marker then makes a judgement where the written piece falls in terms of Content and Style as well as Language and Structure. The marker will then see where the two bands meet and that will be the mark/grade for the written piece. To illustrate this, the marker who is marking a 10 mark question decides that the work falls under the Content and Style band 3 (C3) and the Language and Structure band 2 (L2). The marker will then see where the C3 band meets the L2 band in the 10 marks column. There is a 6 in that square, and that will be the mark awarded out of 10. The 12 mark question with

the same judgement, that is, C3 L2 will then be awarded 7/12 and the 16 mark question, 9/16.

The marking grid for higher level tasks is shown below.

Table 14. Marking grid for written work (English Second Language NSSC Higher level)

MARKING GRID FOR WRITTEN COMPONENT (PAPER 2)						
ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE NSSCH		LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5
CONTENT AND STRUCTURE	STYLE & ACCURACY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> mature and convincing style suited to subject effective vocabulary good handling of complex grammatical structures hardly any mistakes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reasonably stylistic wide range of effective vocabulary complex sentence structures possibly good grasp of grammatical structures a few mistakes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sense of style some effective vocabulary sentence structures fluent some mistakes, mostly minor spelling, commas, collocations, choosing the wrong word, etc. tackles the task satisfactorily occasional awkwardness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> limited style appropriate vocabulary sentence structures clear without much ambition various mistakes which do not impede reading some attempt at ideas and order 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no evidence of style vocabulary sometimes simple sentence structure insecure, some blurring of meaning frequent mistakes impede easy reading almost incomprehensible
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> subject matter fully developed and manipulated complex development structure promotes easy and accurate reading throughout mature writing 	40 – 33 20 – 17	32 – 29 16 – 15	28 – 25 14 – 13	24 – 21 12 – 11	20 – 17 10 – 9
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> some original and complex ideas Vitality evident frequent explanation and exemplification paragraphs well structured and linked clear sequence of plot/argument 	32 – 29 16 – 15	28 – 25 14 – 13	24 – 21 12 – 11	20 – 17 10 – 9	16 – 13 8 – 7
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> overall sequence of ideas obvious Soundly competent some interesting and clear development and explanation mostly well structured and balanced. Some linking of paragraphs some repetition of ideas possible 	28 – 25 14 – 13	24 – 21 12 – 11	20 – 17 10 – 9	16 – 13 8 – 7	12 – 9 6 – 5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> generally enough to complete the task ideas developed but not always enough some signs of overall plan in places the balance and sequence of plot/argument may be weak 	24 – 21 12 – 11	20 – 17 10 – 9	16 – 13 8 – 7	12 – 9 6 – 5	8 – 5 4 – 3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> some ideas randomly written no consistent development information may be list like unequal paragraphs sentences sequenced poorly 	20 – 17 10 – 9	16 – 13 8 – 7	12 – 9 6 – 5	8 – 5 4 – 3	4 – 1 2 – 1

NOTE: For example: If *Style & Accuracy* is Level 3 and *Content & Structure* is Level 2, then marks awarded will be: 21 – 24 or 11 – 12
40 20

(NIED, 2009, p. 26)

The Higher level marking grid uses the same principle as the Ordinary level. It has the Content and Structure section as well as the Style and Accuracy section. As it is explained on the bottom of the grid, if Content and Structure falls under Level 2, while Style and Accuracy falls under Level 3, the marks awarded will be from 21-24 for the 40 marks question and 11-12 for the 20 marks question. This is because, this is the square in which the two levels meet.

Students gave ticks for good ideas given, right words used or good language use shown. They underlined or circled wrong words or language errors that they noticed. Some students wrote the right words on top of the wrong ones that they underlined. They also gave comments at the end of the tasks in the margins. A comment such as ‘word limit’ was noted in the summary task, for example. All students indicated Content and Language bands and awarded the marks where the two bands meet. In the letter to the press, however, the marker indicated the Content band as C5 and the language band as L4, but the final mark as 17/20. Discussion of this point is done in the next chapter.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the data that were collected as an attempt to answer the research questions: Is the content of the Teaching Methods of English module of

the University of Namibia relevant to the content of the Grade 11-12 English Second Language Syllabus? Are English student teachers competent to teach the different writing tasks prescribed in the Grade 11-12 syllabus? Are they competent to write themselves? Are they competent to mark written tasks? The ultimate question has thus been: Are we doing the right thing right?

Discussion of data and an attempt to answer the questions follow in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

This chapter deliberates on the findings of the previous chapter.

Discussion delves into the pertinent issue in this study, that is, the relationship between the content of the Teaching Methods of English module and the two school syllabi of Grade 11-12 English as a Second Language Ordinary and Higher level, as it emanates from the data. Findings regarding students' lesson presentations through observations by the researcher, students' knowledge of the types and theories of writing, their knowledge of how different writing types are

written, and, their own writing and marking proficiency through writing tasks given to them by the researcher, will also form an integral part of this chapter's discussion in determining the effectiveness of the training received in the course. Discussion of how our university module fares, compared to other teacher-training programmes for English teachers at selected institutions as discussed in Chapter two Section 2.2 will also form part of the discussion.

5.1 Research Objective (a): The University of Namibia's Teaching Methods of English Module and the NSSC English Second Language Ordinary and Higher Level Syllabi

5.1.1 The University of Namibia's Teaching Methods of English Module

The eight areas/themes discussed in Section 4.1.1 are generally the main areas that a methodology class ought to expose prospective teachers to. These eight areas are: School subject content, Lesson planning, Methods of teaching, Instructional management, Teaching-learning resources, Assessment, Questioning skills and Micro-/peer-teaching. These are in line with Roberts's, (1998) knowledge-based and person-based paradigms discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.1.3 on what a language teacher education curriculum should include. In this

regard, we can assert that our module fares quite well in terms of appropriate content.

The subtopics under each of the areas also look into the essential aspects of each, except the School Syllabus topic. The Lesson Planning theme for instance looks at the formulation of objectives and competencies, compiling a Scheme of work as well as drawing up lesson plans. The methods of teaching theme looks into cooperative methods and methods for teaching different skills. As it is to be discussed later on in this chapter, however, a lot more specified subtopics in this theme should have been included. The theme ‘Instructional Management’ covers three main subtopics such as classroom management and discipline, motivating learners and providing guidance. All these provide fundamental knowledge that will lead to an all-round teacher as they form part of the realities of teaching and classroom situations.

Creating and developing resources, using the internet to research on language teaching, using school textbooks as well using these resources to do self-study, all these subtopics under the theme ‘Teaching-learning resources’ give the students hands-on experience on the reality of being a teacher, that is, being able to go an extra mile to develop and use resources for teaching and learning. Exposing students to the different methods of assessing learners’ work, understanding the assessment guidelines in the syllabus, looking at how to set examination papers,

tests and compiling a memorandum are all essential skills and content necessary in teacher-training and education. The module should be credited for this.

Questioning skills which cover Bloom's taxonomy, providing oral and written feedback as well as analysing errors and editing written work are all very essential. Another essential element of teacher-training is micro- or peer-teaching. This theme also forms part of the module and it is highly commended.

Another positive aspect of the module is that it includes the school textbook of the particular subject as a prescribed book, in addition to other university level prescribed books. This is a good thing because it exposes the students to the subject beforehand so that they have ample time to explore it, in and out before they start teaching when they graduate.

All in all, it appears that the module 'Teaching Methods of English' has elements of different curriculum paradigms and models discussed in Chapter 2. In addition to Roberts's, (1998) knowledge-based and person-based paradigms as noted earlier in this section, elements of behaviourist, personalistic, enquiry, as well as applied science model as discussed by Zeichner (1983) and Wallace (1991) are found in the module. There is an element of imitating desired behaviour through micro-teaching (behaviourist), and growth of the whole person as students use internet to research on language teaching as well as do self-study (personalistic

and enquiry). When students use and design teaching- learning resources and they get hands-on with these, an applied science model can be seen.

5.1.2 Comparison between the Teaching Methods of English Module and the Grade 11-12 English Second Language Syllabus Ordinary and Higher Level

Table 3 (p.80), Figure 2 (p.85) and Figure 3 (p.87), will form the basis of discussion for the research objective one, that is, ‘To evaluate the module Teaching Methods of English and establish whether its writing skills content reflects “writing” content laid out in the Grade 11 and 12 NSSC English Second Language Ordinary and Higher level syllabi. All these figures show that the relationship between the content of the Teaching Methods of English Module and the two syllabi, the English Second Language Ordinary and Higher Level, is inconclusive. As shown in Figure 3 (p.87), the themes emerging from the three documents do not show immediate and clear commonalities. The only common themes appear to be ‘Editing of written work’ and the point stating that ‘School Syllabus Content’ is also included in the module. Figure 3 also shows detached points independent of one another.

As already pointed out in Section 4.1.3, the only two common themes and the only ones that meet (Fig.3) do not lead to a conclusive relationship between the three documents and the study cannot assert either a positive correlational

relationship +1, a negative correlational relationship -1 or a non-existent relationship 0. This is because, as argued in the same section, Section 4.1.3, most of the content in the Teaching Methods of English Module is not ‘unpacked’. Somehow, it seems to be there. It is just not always specifically spelled out.

An example of the above, is a theme/learning outcome ‘applying appropriate methods for teaching different skills’; and ‘content of NSSC Ordinary and Higher level syllabi’. In these outcomes, the writing skill is also included. However, methods of teaching writing are many (Doff, 1997; Broughton, et.al.; Baker and Westrup, 2000, Abisamra, 2001). Some of these methods and strategies are discussed in Sections 2.4.2 and 2.4.3, namely, guided writing, free-writing, controlled writing, creative writing, process-writing, scaffolding, using mind maps/word webs/jot-lists and many others.. Not specifying skills and not specifying methods and strategies of teaching each of these skills leave the content concealed. Two teacher trainers/educators teaching this same module might not cover the same topics.

The theme ‘Content of NSSC Ordinary and Higher level syllabus’ alone is also quite vague. What exactly is in these syllabi? Yes, the module might cover the whole syllabus, but what are these topics, competencies or tasks that are being covered? This simply leaves an assumption that the syllabus is covered in the module but it does not confirm what exactly in the syllabus is covered. It would

give a clearer picture if the Teaching Methods of English Module Outline summarises some of the most prominent topics /themes /competencies in the Grade 11-12 English Second Language syllabus. It should, for example, state language skills specifically such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar and literature and also indicate strategies or methods used to effectively teach each of the language skills. It also ought to show broader but popular topics of English teaching-learning methods and approaches such as **second language learning approaches and methods, communicative language teaching** and the like.

One also expects the teaching of language skills to be accompanied by some content so that at a glance, one can see what, about the language skills, the module is covering. Topics such as extensive and intensive listening, listening for pleasure and strategies for teaching listening, ought to feature under the teaching of listening for example. Oral communication, aspects of fluency and accuracy perhaps, the teaching of pronunciation (can actually be a separate branch of teaching falling under phonetics and phonology), strategies for teaching speaking, also ought to feature under speaking. Concerning reading, topics such as extensive and intensive reading, skimming and scanning, reading for understanding and others could also be listed.

Writing, the main focus of this study, could include topics such as process-writing, creative writing, directed writing, strategies for teaching writing and so

on. Grammar topics can include teaching grammar in context, teaching of vocabulary, spelling, passive-active voice, tenses, parts of speech, sentence patterns and so on (NIED, 2009). These are some of the basic topics appearing in the Grade 11 and 12 English Second Language Ordinary and Higher level syllabi as shown by the comparison Table 3 in Section 4.1.3. A topic such as integration of skills can also be included somewhere in the module. These are merely examples. The idea is that ‘some flesh’ ought to accompany these descriptors to show what exact content is covered in the module for that specific subject. This point is also suggested in the recommendations.

It remains difficult therefore to establish the exact relationship between the module and the two syllabi. What is comforting is perhaps the mere Exit Learning Outcome (ELO) that states ‘Students should be able to demonstrate understanding of the content of the NSSC Ordinary and/or Higher level syllabi’. However, this is not enough. One can conclude that the module includes the whole syllabus/syllabi regardless of what content might be covered. The researcher also does not expect that the whole syllabus (syllabi in this case) can be covered in the module of one year. However, important aspects that make up the core of the school subject are mandatory.

5.1.3 Comparison of the Teaching Methods of English module with the English teacher-training programmes of the other two institutions

Discussions in this section can be followed in conjunction with Table 2 in Section 2.2.

It was quite a useful exercise to look at programmes at other institutions on how they train English teachers. Quite a number of aspects came out from those programmes. The first one is that their methodology modules are longer, that is, they are spread over the years. At Hogeschool Rotterdam for example, the subject runs for the whole four years the students are studying for the teaching degree. This is an indication that we need to think about our one year methodology course of 28 hours theory and 28 hours practical.

As a current teacher-trainer/educator at one of the former colleges of education, it is clear to me that, English teacher training is currently an integration of content and methodology over the three years of the teaching diploma. Integration has also received some criticism but, those three years helped us to cover a big chunk of English teacher-training fundamentals of theory, practice and school content (syllabus). One still struggles to cover everything needed by a prospective English teacher in those three years. One can therefore imagine that, covering similar content in a period of one year is almost impossible. The university therefore needs to critically look into extending the duration of the Teaching Methods module. Three options can probably work: three years for both school subjects

simultaneously or two years for both school subjects one after the other or a four year integrated subject covering university level subject knowledge/fundamentals, school subject content and methodology. Students can have two major subjects running simultaneously starting from the second semester, that is, after doing the core subject 'General Teaching Methodology' in the first semester.

The other thing that came out clearly from Hogeschool Rotterdam and William Paterson University has to do with offering various separate writing modules as part of the methodology class. Writing courses such as Creative Writing and Reading and Writing are offered at these universities. In the earlier course, students are familiarised with a wide variety of genres (prose and poetry) and writing styles, exploring strategies for teaching creative writing as well as making it more enjoyable at both student and pupil level. The course gives students different ideas how to teach creative writing at different levels. Attention is paid to different kinds of writing prompts such as visual, aural, kinetic, individual and group work. The Reading and Writing course deals with essay-writing through reading. Students have to read text material, short stories, a novel and a Shakespeare play and write an essay based on those.

The above brings the discussion to the third aspect, that is, integrating writing with other language skills such as reading and literature. Integration of language skills is an important aspect of language teaching. Literature is especially a

powerful tool for teaching any of the other language skills but particularly reading and writing. At a recent book launch in Windhoek, this point was reiterated by one of the speakers. Both William Paterson and Hogeschool Rotterdam use literature as one of the routes to practise writing. Our local university, University of Namibia can add this to the English Teaching methodology module.

Perhaps another point can be added regarding literature-teaching. In Namibia recently, there is a strong argument about the teaching of literature. First, its inclusion in the syllabus (Ordinary Level Second Language as it is currently not there) and secondly, the question of whose literature and what literature. The first point has been a plea for the past few years in the English Second Language Curriculum Committee Panel at NIED in which the researcher served. A reason for its absence in the said syllabus was said to be limited costs. This situation is ironic as the same government that is urging learners to cultivate a culture of reading, is not ready to allow the learners an opportunity for reading. Literature is one such platform.

The second point has also been quite of popular debate in the English-teaching fraternity lately. At a recent book launch in Windhoek, English teachers asked the questions ‘Whose literature and what literature should be taught in our schools? Should it necessarily be Shakespeare? One needs to read Shakespeare at one point in one’s school years but a relevant choice of Shakespeare is also very important.

A question has to be asked ‘Which age-group will enjoy which Shakespearean play? Literature is about enjoying reading and should not be regarded as a nightmare as one of the adolescents experienced with one of Shakespeare’s books ‘The Tempest’. Literature that gives a regional and local perspective is also recommended. The latter is still a challenge though as there are very few Namibian writers at the moment.

The overall point here is that, literature should be integrated in teaching other language skills, most particularly reading and writing. Starting at teacher-training, it should be of the right choice for its audience. At William Paterson University, student teachers learn how to teach adolescent literature because they will be teaching adolescents. This also implies that high school learners also study adolescent literature, a right choice of literature for their age-group. Namibia can draw an example from this.

Writing as a process also features quite prominently in the content of the two western universities. At William Paterson University, one of the Methods of Teaching Secondary English Language Arts course objectives is ‘recognising the importance of writing as a process and providing instruction that utilises the stages of the writing process. Caswell and Mahler, (2004) provide a useful tool for process-writing stages. At Hogeschool Rotterdam, writing as a process is reflected in the teacher-training course as students’ literature essays that they have

to keep in a portfolio are handled from draft stage, through to editing until they reach the final product stage. Treating writing as a process cannot be emphasised enough.

Integrating technology in the course is also another point that came out from the programmes. The University of Namibia's module has as one of its exit learning outcomes (ELO) 'Students should be able to evaluate relevant internet sites regarding content and teaching methods' (Teaching Methods of English Course Outline, p.3). Both Hogeschool Rotterdam and William Paterson University also pronounce themselves quite prominently on the use of technology in teaching and learning. They make frequent use of web-based platforms where students post their work and the lecturers and other students can comment on. They do group projects via email or discussion room and do power point presentations at William Paterson University.

5.2.1 The NSSC English Second Language Ordinary and Higher Level Syllabi

and their differentiation at teacher-training level (in the module)

What surfaced from the analysis of the two syllabi, namely English Second Language Ordinary level and English Second Language Higher level, is also worth discussing. Both syllabi intend to let learners plan, structure, draft and edit written work before they attempt a piece of writing. This is process-writing in

itself, the concept advocated by several authors as pointed out in the literature review (Raimes, 1983, Burnham, 1989, Brookes and Grundy, 1990, Kroll, 1996, Nunan, 1991 in Negonga, 2001). Since this concept cannot be seen in the module descriptor however, one cannot assume that this content is common in the two documents. The syllabi also include quite a number of grammatical aspects that were indicated in the first chapter. Using contracted forms of writing, the possessive case, spelling and punctuation, using figurative language and imagery, using rich and varied vocabulary, among others, form an essential part of the syllabi. This is encouraging.

What takes a more prominent place is probably the inclusion of grammar in the writing skill in the Higher Level syllabus. As pointed out in Section 4.1.2, it is a tactful way of integrating grammar in writing. To re-emphasise what was said already, ‘What we write is grammar’. Therefore we cannot isolate the two.

The aspects listed under this section in the syllabus also reveal what the learners in the schools struggle with, in their writing, as pointed out in Section 1.2. Deciding when to use the definite article ‘*the*’ and when to use the indefinite ones ‘*a, an*’ still challenges some secondary school learners. Applying the correct verb tense especially choosing between the progressive tenses and the simple tenses as in ‘*We have a house*’ instead of ‘*We are having a house*’ is quite another challenge for the learners. The same is true for using passive and active voice correctly, direct and indirect speech, correct use of concord, the use of modal

verbs, using simple and complex sentences in their writing (this links with using relative clauses) as well as competence in using idiomatic expressions in writing. All these feature under the writing content of the Higher level.

The question on differentiation remains unanswered. The researcher cannot provide concrete findings regarding the issue of whether differentiation of the Ordinary Level and Higher Level syllabi is done in the Teaching Methods of English module. After some probing from the lecturer as well as the students, the researcher concluded that the students are not really trained in differentiation of these different syllabi. Students' lesson presentations also did not show at what levels those lessons were being aimed. Training of the first language NSSC First Language is also not distinct. There is therefore a definite gap here (in training). To what extent are the higher level and first language syllabi covered in the module? All these questions remain unanswered.

The whole question of differentiation in the module, therefore, remains unclear. This is a concern because when student teachers graduate, they are subjected to teaching at any one of these levels, whether they have been trained to teach it or not. Training, therefore, needs to include how to teach at all levels and especially prepare students well at teaching the difficult levels namely, Higher Level and First Language Level. It is a little ironic to expect our students to be able to teach at first language however, as in actual sense, they are second, third and even

fourth language speakers. The same is true for the teacher educator (s). However, the situation in the schools is as it is, and these remain issues for national debate.

5.3 Research Objective (b): To determine whether UNAM students are skilled to teach the different writing tasks prescribed in the Grade 11 and 12 NSSC English Second Language Ordinary and Higher Level Syllabi

The findings regarding this objective are based on the lesson presentations observed by the researcher. The immediate answer to the question whether students are competent to teach writing tasks at Grade 11 and 12 level such as descriptive essay-writing, summarising, report-writing, complaint letter, form-filling and using figurative language and imagery in writing is in the affirmative. Despite some shortcomings stated in the previous chapter, Section 4.2.1.2 and in Table 4 in the same section, the students' lesson presentations were fairly impressive. Students by all means aligned their topics and lesson objectives to the syllabus and related them to popular examination tasks. The confidence they displayed, fairly good explanations and content knowledge as well the fairly good spoken English that they demonstrated puts one at ease that the preparation in the

Teaching methods of English class, in terms of lesson presentation is of fairly good standard.

However, the shortcomings as presented in Section 4.2.1.2 and Table 4 in the previous chapter need to be discussed further. The four prominent ones that the researcher feels need to be emphasised and improved on are: lack of chronology in presentations, lack of teaching-learning aids and methods, absence of practical activities in writing lessons as well as not applying process-writing stages in the lessons. Chronology is very important in any presentation because it allows people to follow logically, thus avoiding confusion. Learners tend to get confused easily so, when presenting a lesson, the teacher needs to do this in a logical sequence (in most cases). The lack of teaching-learning aids is of big concern too. Using teaching-learning aids is of crucial importance in teaching. This cannot be compromised. Student teachers need to know that in order for learning to take place, one (or more) of the learners' senses need (s) to be stimulated namely through seeing, touching, hearing, tasting, smelling and so on. This is possible in all subjects including English writing. The pre-stage of the lesson for example plays a bigger role in stimulating the senses, thus catching their attention and focusing them on the lesson. This is why this stage is sometimes referred to as the 'Catch and Focus' stage or the Arouse and Direct stage. This stage particularly, was not well utilised.

As already mentioned in Section 4.2.1.2, most of the students' lessons did not include a practical writing activity. It was perhaps not always possible to let other students engage in writing during these lesson presentations as they were not 'real lessons' but, short written pieces that would just demonstrate how to go about teaching and writing of a certain written piece were possible. Writing is a hands-on, practical activity and not a question and answer activity as most student teachers persisted.

5.6 Research Objective (c): To determine whether UNAM students are knowledgeable about theories of writing

Results of questionnaires indicate that students' knowledge of theories underlying writing and writing types in a wider scope such as process writing, journal writing, free-writing and creative writing in general leaves much to be desired. Eleven (11) students out of twenty-three (23), stating that they have not done journal writing at all (Fig. 7) and only six (6) affirming that they have done process writing in the Teaching Methods of English (Fig. 6), cause a degree of worry, especially about the latter. This is also confirmed in the students' responses about what the concepts involve. Their understanding of process writing is quite vague. Although the phrase '*step by step*', '*ongoing writing*',

‘writing that is guided by the lecturer’, ‘ideas must be in a logical order’, are not far from what process-writing entails, none of the responses included the process-writing steps namely, pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, and sharing (publishing).

Process-writing is a recent popular approach regarding writing and the teaching of writing and the researcher cannot emphasise it enough. Caswell and Mahler (2004)’s process-writing action tool stresses that teacher modeling is crucial. Their analogy of viewing the teacher as a coach clearly demonstrates this point. As they put it ‘a coach does not watch silently as the team practises and critique afterwards but, he\she is an active participant in the practice and stands on the sidelines as the game is played’. The same is true for writing. The teacher should work with the class and individual students each day leading to the final paper. During this time, the teacher critiques, points out strengths and weaknesses and offers support. The Teaching Methods of English module therefore needs to include these concepts as part of its content.

Other results however show some positive signs. The question on **the use of the Grade 11 and 12 English Ordinary and Higher Level syllabus in the Teaching Methods of English** for example, is one. Eleven (11) students stating that they used the syllabus quite often in the Teaching Methods of English class and only one (1) student claiming that they never used it in class, is quite positive.

These results are also confirmed by the lesson presentation results as the researcher pointed out already in Section 4.2.1.1 that one of the strengths of the students' lesson presentations that she observed was that all the topics were taken from the syllabus. The module and lecturer need to be commented on this.

The question **on how often the lecturer and the students referred to the writing content in the Grade 11 and 12 syllabus** also has favourable results as **no** respondent said the lecturer and students **never** referred to the writing content in the school syllabus. On the contrary, 12 students confirming that they and the lecturer referred to the writing skills content in the school syllabus quite often, is quite a good sign.

Results on how the Teaching Methods Module prepared the students on how different writing tasks are written are also generally good. Only one of respondents claiming to have had no preparation on how to write the **formal letter of complaint** and the **informal letter** respectively, gives no reason for concern. On the contrary, 12 and 11 students affirming enough preparation in the **formal letter of complaint** and **informal letter** respectively are quite satisfying. This is also confirmed by the students' descriptions of what the tasks involve and how they are written, as they gave the right descriptions to a large extent. Descriptions for the formal letter of complaint, for example: the writer should provide the purpose of writing; clearly state your complaint; formal register used;

provide evidence; among others, are all correct. Students' responses also showed awareness of the correct format as they stated: two addresses - complainant's address and recipient's address.

Descriptions regarding how **an informal letter** is written were also relatively good. The wrong answers given regarding the ending of an informal letter are of little concern for the researcher. Students (as do learners in schools) use 'Yours faithfully/ sincerely' as an ending for an informal letter, which is wrong. That is in fact, the conventional ending for a formal letter, each used depending on the extent of acquaintance between the writer and the recipient. It is not an ending for an informal/friendly letter. Endings for friendly letters can be anything from 'Your friend', 'Yours', 'Regards', 'Kind regards', 'Best wishes', 'With love', 'Love', 'Your loving son/daughter' and so on, depending on the relationship between the two. Likewise, the wrong salutation given as: 'Dear Friend' is also quite a disturbing one. 'Dear' should be followed by the name of the person for example, 'Dear Paula'. This is because, the friend has a name and the writer knows this friend's name. Addressing a well-known person as 'Dear Friend' is quite awkward. In this regard, the writing of an informal letter remains a matter of concern and needs reinforcement.

The **newspaper article** responses also leave much to be desired. However the attempts to describe what this task involves and how it is written give some

encouragement as the students provided correct information. Phrases such as, article to appear in newspaper; paragraphs with different points; title – introduction-body-conclusion; article addressing a specific issue; particulars of writer not needed but can provide at will; article can have complaint, comments or suggestions; all show quite good understanding of what a newspaper article is and how it is written.

Although the number of students who indicated that the module prepared them to write **an accident/crime report** is low, their descriptions of the task show quite good understanding. They have correctly shown that it is a piece of writing reporting an event that happened and provides information about the wh-questions, what, where, when, who, how, why, regarding the event. Their indication that the past tense and formal language are used is also correct. Phrases such as ‘provide evidence such as colour of car’ are also quite a good indication. These responses show that students had a very good understanding of how an accident/crime report is written and what content should be included in this piece of writing. It is indeed impressive. The six (6) students who claimed to have had no preparation in this writing genre and seven (7) who said they only had very little preparation, are actually misleading figures.

Regarding the **argumentative essay**, the students' responses also show that the module gave them some preparation as many of them affirmed to have gotten enough preparation. Their understanding of the task was also fairly good.

Students' responses on how well the module prepared them regarding the writing of a paragraph-form summary were the most positive as only one student claimed that they were not prepared how to write this task, while 14 students affirmed that they had enough preparation. Their understanding of the task is in line with their rating as they gave correct descriptions of what the task entails and how it is written. What showed the researcher that the students fully understand how to summarise a text is especially this phrase 'not own ideas but own words'. It is ironic, however, that their understanding was not fully employed in their own writing of the paragraph-form summary that they were asked to do by the researcher as already reported in Section 4.2.3.1. They did well in including only the relevant points but not as well in paraphrasing the texts. In most cases, they lifted words/ phrases/sentences exactly as they were from the text.

5.5 Research Objective (d): To assess UNAM students' own writing proficiency

as well as their competence in marking and grading learners' written work

The overall writing proficiency of the students looked promising. Some creativity was observed in the narrative essays. Students showed originality, competent use of idioms, eloquent writer's style and a well-sequenced, convincing storyline. Their vocabulary was also varied in general. Other positive aspects regarding other written tasks are: not showing problems of run-on sentences with comma-splice error (common in secondary school learners' writing); writing complete sentences; paragraphing their work; following the correct format of different tasks; correct use of punctuation and quite a good command of language, among others.

Their friendly letters also revealed students' awareness of audience and informal register and tone. A sentence like 'Hope all is well like your mother assured me on her last visit to Windhoek three months ago' in the opening paragraph shows a close relationship between the two friends. It also reveals that the friendship is a continuous one , and has other links besides the two friends, that is, some information about them is passed through the mother. However, like learners in the schools, students also in some cases misunderstood the use of informal register as they went to the extent of using text message service (sms) language. Such text message language such as 'u' for 'you' was observed in both friendly

letters. One of the sentences read ‘*I would like to tell u about my experience at Chacha camp*’.

Other language mistakes, as noted in Section 4.2.3.1, featured aspects such as misspelling of words, inconsistencies in maintaining concord, incompetent use of tenses and singular/plural swap. Spelling mistakes such as ‘siteseeing’ for ‘sightseeing’, ‘distroy’ for ‘destroy’, ‘refrees’ for ‘referees’ were spotted. Concord mistakes were mostly noted in the argumentative essay and will be discussed later. Although the format was generally correct in the friendly letters, wrong order in the address was observed in one of the letters as the student had the writer’s address in reverse order as follows: *03/11/2010*

Rundu

Nkarapamwe

P. O. Box 1180

An address should however be in opposite order of the above as it should start from the specific to the general and not vice-versa. This means that the post box number should be given first, then the location or area (Nkarapamwe) and then the town (Rundu). The date should be provided last in the address.

There were also some incorrectness in the salutation and ending of the friendly letter as the student’s salutation read ‘*Dear Charlie Mwamba*’ and the ending :

Your friend

Kaní Kaní

Only the first name should be used in the salutation and ending of a friendly letter.

The summary question was attempted fairly. Inclusion of relevant points was a stronger point than other aspects of summarising. Like in the learners' work in the schools, there seems to be lack of paraphrasing or use of own words in the summary. Lack of coherence between ideas in the paragraph also continued to feature. Students had disjointed points that they simply 'dumped' in the paragraph. Although the instruction says the summary should be in one paragraph, some students insisted on writing more than one paragraph. This is especially true at ordinary level. In the higher level paper where students are expected to summarise more than one issue, they of course will have different paragraphs.

The point-form summary in the ordinary core level is the easiest as the students do not have to struggle to organise ideas in a coherent paragraph but simply identify these relevant, main ideas and list them in point-form. However some students still struggled to have these ideas in real note-form where only keywords/phrases should be given. They wrote full sentences which were too wordy and might, in the end, compromise the space provided. as only the redundant information might fit there. This led to unnecessary loss of marks.

Some students attempted well by giving only keywords as in the following:

Methods: *'use of radio collar and aerial surveys'.*

The argumentative essay revealed inconsistencies in maintaining concord as in the following sentences: *'The tourist industry have generate a lot of jobs', 'Tourism affect Namibia in many ways'.* The earlier sentence in fact, also shows incompetence in the use of the present perfect tense where the main verb should take its past participle form. This sentence was also spotted: *'The lions were shooted'.* This passive sentence should also have its main verb 'shoot' in its past participle form 'shot'. The verb 'shoot' is irregular and does not follow the -ed rule. This is also an indication that students need to review and drill the table of irregular verbs. It is one of the 'must know' content by every English teacher or prospective English teacher.

Another one of the common language errors that my students at the teacher-training college and the learners at the schools make, which was also observed in the argumentative essay is, the vice-versa swapping of the plural demonstrative pronoun 'these', with the singular one, 'this' as in the following sentence: *This people bring in their culture that is unacceptable.*

In general, the language errors made by the student teachers in this study, show a significant relationship with errors made by secondary school learners, as discussed in Section 1.2.

Overall, the students' writing was far better than the researcher suspected.

General positive aspects of their writing included inter alia facts such as:

- They did not really write abnormally long-winding sentences or run-ons;
- Most of their sentences were complete, so they do not really have problems of fragments;
- Paragraphing featured quite consistently in their writing except for few instances discussed earlier;
- They knew the correct format of the different written tasks;
- They did not seem to have problems with punctuation; and
- Their language usage was quite good.

Results discussed in Section 4.2.3.2 regarding students' **marking proficiency**, indicate that students show awareness of the marking grid. They are also fairly competent, given the difficulty of marking itself. Marking English written tasks is a subjective feat and one that even experienced teachers struggle to master. Different people have different judgments. What might be a convincing and creative piece to one, might be a dull and predictable one to the other. The idea was actually to see that students' marking competence is not so far off and that

they are able to interpret the marking grid correctly. Mastering marking is something that they will spend time working at, even years after they have started teaching.

Fairly good judgment of awarding marks in the narrative essay was observed. Students indicated the right errors and had some useful comments in the margins and at the end of the tasks. A comment 'word limit' was noted in the summary question. They however wrote the correct words on top of wrong ones, which is not always advisable. Marking should indicate that there is an error somewhere and what type of error it is, but not correct the error for the learner. This limits their input at the stage of making corrections. If learners correct their own mistakes, they will take note of that mistake, and are not likely to repeat it next time. It is thus a learning process for them.

Some poor judgement was, however, noted especially in awarding the language mark in the summary question. Students gave inflated marks for language such as 3 out of 4 when it should, in fact, be a 2 or 1. This is because, as stated earlier, the students' summaries showed poor paraphrasing and lack of coherence between ideas/sentences in the paragraphs. This does not allow logical flow. These are aspects of language and if they are noted in the paragraph but the mark is 3 out of 4, then something is wrong with the marking.

In one of the pieces *letter to the press* (higher level), final marks awarded for the task did not correlate with the Content/ Language band allocation. The student's allocation was C5 L4 which stands for Content level 5 and Language level 4, but the final mark awarded was 17/20. This interpretation is wrong because, according to the marking grid, a C5 L4 allocation gives 3-4 marks out of 20. It should be stated that, the marking grid ranks 1 as the highest and 5 the lowest. If the student thinks that the written work is worth 17/20, then the content/language allocation will fall under the C1 L1 bands. See Table 14.

In general, more marking practice and the use of the marking grid should be done in the Teaching Methods of English class in order to perfect this very difficult task: marking a written piece.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the results of the study, presented in Chapter 4 and tried to make sense of these results. The chapter has also reached conclusions regarding the five research objectives of this study and others. These are presented below.

Regarding the relevance unit of analysis, the relationship between the writing content in the Teaching Methods of English Module of the University of Namibia and the writing content in the Grade 11 and 12 English Second Language

Ordinary and Higher Level Syllabi could not be established (is inconclusive) as the writing content of the University's module is concealed.

The study also found that the duration of the module 'Teaching Methods of English' is shorter at the University of Namibia than at other universities looked at in this study. This is why the content is not as specified as it needs to be.

The study could also not assert whether the training/education in the Teaching Methods of English class on teaching English at Ordinary, Higher Level or as a first language to Grade 11 and 12 learners is differentiated. The First Language Level in particular is not mentioned in the Teaching Methods of English module.

Regarding the effectiveness unit, results show that students who attended the module teaching Methods of English in 2010 could teach most of the writing tasks prescribed in the Grade 11 and 12 NSSC English Second Language Ordinary and Higher Level Syllabi. However, their lesson presentations lacked: chronology; use of rich teaching-learning aids and methods; practical writing awareness of process-writing stages.

Students had insufficient knowledge of theories underpinning writing, the different types of writing as well as methods of writing. They had very vague

understanding of what concepts such as process-writing, journal writing, among others, entail.

The 2010 Teaching Methods of English Module students' own writing proficiency was satisfactory. They displayed the right formats, paragraphing, originality of ideas, conviction, competent use of idioms, eloquent writer's style as well as awareness of audience and appropriate register. Writing both paragraph-form and point-form summaries, however, remained a challenge. Language problems such as spelling errors, flaws in maintaining concord, wrong word-order, singular/plural swap, use of slang and sms language, among others, also persisted. These errors show significant similarities with the errors made by secondary school learners.

Students were fairly competent in marking written pieces but more practice is needed in order to master the skill. Their competence in using the marking grid left much to be desired.

The next chapter offers recommendations regarding the above findings in particular, but also regarding the teaching of English and writing skills in general.

CHAPTER SIX

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter serves the last purpose of this study: to recommend and offer suggestions regarding the findings pertaining to the title ‘The relevance and effectiveness of the writing component of the University of Namibia’s Teaching Methods of English Module, to the Grade 11 and 12 English Second Language Ordinary and Higher Level Syllabi.

A number of issues (both strengths and weaknesses) have been unearthed regarding the content offered in the writing module in relation to school content. These include the readiness and preparedness of students to teach in the schools, student teachers’ own writing competency, as well as students’ competence in marking written work. Recommendations geared towards improving shortcomings are suggested.

The following recommendations have been considered:

6.1 The content in the Teaching Methods of English Module needs to be more specified.

The findings concerning the relationship between the Teaching Methods of English content and the Grade 11 and 12 English Second Language Ordinary and Higher Level syllabi show that, a relationship could not be clearly established. This is because, unlike in the Grade 11 and 12 English Second Language

Ordinary and Higher Level syllabi, the writing content in the module is not really specified. The topics below are suggested to form part of the writing content in the Teaching Methods of English class, to indicate what exactly is covered regarding the development and teaching of writing skills.

- Creative writing – An expert can be called in on a yearly basis to give workshops on creative writing. Writing as a form of creativity and fun fosters writing skills a lot faster than writing for perfection and grading.
- Journal writing (It can be a part of creative writing.) Students can be advised to keep journals as part of the English teacher training programme where they record their ‘leisure writing’. Off-loading on a notepad keeps the student on a habit of writing and they no longer see it as a burden. As Brindley (1997) puts it, ‘The best writing is vigorous, committed, honest and interesting’. When students go for teaching practice, they can also be asked to keep a school experience journal where they write their experiences.
- Process writing – This should be applied in the Teaching Methods of English class, on a regular basis. The lecturer should model this by applying the steps of process writing when she/he gives writing tasks to students. Students should apply this during peer-teaching as well as micro-teaching sessions.

- Genre writing –This should also be reflected in the Teaching Methods of English class by allowing students to practise writing of different genres.

6.2 Extension of the module ‘Teaching Methods of English’

The data gathered on similar modules at other universities suggest that, a teaching methodology course needs more than one year to cover. This will enable the lecturer and the students to cover all the necessary content as well as practise the necessary skills. Content in a subject such as Teaching Methods of English includes the different theories about language teaching and learning, specific theories about the teaching and learning of the different language skills such as writing, demonstration of these skills by the lecturer and most importantly students, recent research in second language teaching and learning, testing and assessment of the second language learner, marking and providing feedback, among many others. In addition to that, they need to thoroughly explore the syllabus of the subject at school level.

English teachers’ own proficiency also needs to be strengthened, not only in the University Core subjects but also in the Teaching Methods class. The University of Namibia therefore needs a more extensive and intensive Teaching Methods course that extend over a longer period of time. The suggestion is that the length can be increased to three (3) or two (2) years minimum.

The other option regarding this, is to integrate the content and methodology over the four years as it is done in the new primary education programmes of the University of Namibia offered at the University's satellite campuses (former Education Colleges).

6.3 Differentiation of the curricula at teacher-training level

The English curricula in the schools are differentiated into various tracks such as second language, ordinary, higher level, core, extended, as well as first language. The concern in this study regarding differentiation has been whether the module Teaching Methods of English also bears this differentiation in mind and trains the students accordingly. If this is not the case at the moment, the module needs to put this into consideration. The other concern also points to the question: Who trains first language teachers that are teaching English as a first language in the schools? Are these teachers and/or teacher-trainers, users of English at native-speaker or nearly native-speaker level/competence? These are simply some of the pertinent questions we need to constantly ask ourselves. Perhaps, these questions are more fitting to be directed to those in charge of school curriculum development than to the teacher-training institution.

6.4 More practice on lesson presentations

One of the study's findings is that the students' lesson presentations lacked chronology and use of visual aids, among others. It is therefore recommended that the module should allow students more practice to present lessons to peers, not only to get marks, but also simply to practise in order to improve in the identified areas.

6.5 Practise writing more

The study found that the students' own writing proficiency was not too bad, but also not highly desirable. It is therefore suggested that both the students and the lecturer (through provision in the module) should make it a continued effort to practise writing skills. Students should be given ample opportunities to engage in creative writing and journal writing, through the stages of process writing. Summary-writing (one of the tasks in which the students showed difficulty), also ought to be practised regularly to ensure coherence and paraphrasing. Other writing tasks such as the newspaper article and accident/crime report also need to be reinforced. In other words, the practice of genre writing in its entirety, needs to be made enough provision for, in the module.

Reinforcement of correct language use in writing also needs to be done to minimise language mistakes regarding spelling, concord, tenses, word order and so on, through the integration of grammar in writing and vice-versa.

6.6 Apply the process-writing concept in writing

Every book and chapter on writing highlights the importance of process writing. This cannot be emphasised enough in the teaching and practising of writing. Caswell and Mahler (2004) have especially developed an action tool to implement the process of writing. This tool presents various ideas on different strategies for teaching writing. Teachers can find, among others, the writing process chart on pages 18 - 20 of Caswell and Mahler's (2004) book quite useful in implementing process writing. This concept is central in the teaching of writing and it should also reflect as one of the main topics in the Teaching Methods of English course outline under the domain 'writing'.

6.7 Give more practice in marking, using the marking grid and giving written

feedback

The findings regarding students' marking competence suggest that the students are aware of what mistakes to look for in the written texts, they are aware of the

marking grid used to mark written pieces and they can give fairly useful comments. However the study found that not all students could competently use the marking grid. As mentioned already in Section 4.2.2.2 and Section 5.6, marking English written tasks itself is subjective and requires a lot of practice and experience. Inviting an experienced external examination marker to class to practise marking with the students is recommended.

6.8 Link Teaching Practice to the Teaching Methods Module

Students at the University of Namibia start their teaching practice at the beginning of the third year. It is also in the third year that they start with the Teaching Methods of the School Subject module. The difference is however that they do teaching practice in the school subject before they actually study the methods of teaching. This scenario is not a favourable one. The module therefore needs to start earlier, as suggested above.

6.9 The interrelationship or interdependence between teacher training institutions and schools

Linked to the above point are the inevitable interrelationship and interdependence between institutions that are training teachers and local schools. If quality teacher training/education is to take place, our institutions need to establish and maintain

constant, lasting relationships with one another. This two-way relationship is vital in exposing prospective teachers to the teaching environment, at the same time keeping the schools abreast of the latest pedagogical knowledge and research that universities are constantly engaged in. It is therefore a win-win situation. Our university can look into the idea of ‘partner-schools’ or ‘guinea-pig schools’. Those in close proximity are usually most convenient.

6.10 Learning how writing is acquired or learned

Theories on acquisition and learning of writing skills should form part of the Teaching Methods of English module. This will make the practice and teaching of writing skills easier.

6.11 Writing as composing as opposed to writing as secretarial

English teacher educators should mark a distinction between treating writing as a secretarial skill and writing as composing as Brindley (1997) underlines. The earlier can be too prescriptive and has potential to over-emphasise the mechanics of writing over other aspects of writing such as creativity, imagination and organisation. Research and experience have proven that, taking the ‘writing as composing’ view leads to more success than focusing on it as a secretarial skill where the emphasis is on spelling, punctuation, indentation of paragraphs and so

on. This is in line with Harmer's (2008) support for what he coined as 'writing for writing' and not 'writing for learning'.

The genre-approach in the teaching of writing, as Harmer (2008) suggests is also recommendable as it allows the students to produce written work they can be proud of in different genres. This links with the next recommendation: sharing written work.

6.12 Sharing of written work

As pointed out earlier on in this study, one of the shortcomings when giving learners or students written tasks is that, their work stops at the grading stage. It is never shared with a wider audience such as the rest of the class, the school community or the local community. Learners therefore perceive writing as only 'a class task' for which they will receive a mark and not as something that is purposeful in their lives. Our approach as teacher educators and teachers therefore needs to shift towards creating platforms for students' and learners' work to be shared. Publishing their work, creating blogs or websites where they can post their work for the wider audience or simply making an anthology of their writing into a class reader or school newspaper are some of the ways in which the learners' or students' work can be shared. They are inclined to feel very proud if they see their work published and will in the end see the purpose of writing.

6.13 Recognising the interrelatedness of writing, reading, speaking, literature (integrating writing with other skills)

Brindley (1997) has noted the interrelatedness of the language skills in teaching. One cannot operate in isolation. It was also seen in the English teacher training programmes of the other institutions in this study how writing is integrated with literature reading. The Grade 11 and 12 English Second Language syllabus also integrates grammar in writing. Teachers and teacher-educators should equally be able to foster the writing development of their pupils and students through reading or listening to a variety of styles by fine authors. This interrelatedness is important to note in a teacher training module like the Teaching Methods of English.

6.14 The National Writing Project

The concept of National writing projects is common in the western world. Significant success has been claimed from these projects (Brindley, 1997). It is something worth trying in our country too. The University as the highest institution of learning can take the initiative.

6.15 English Teaching Organisations/platforms

As English teaching continues to be a challenge, organisations like NETA – Namibia English Teachers’ Association have been founded. The Association brings together English teachers from different levels across the country. This is commendable. Such organisations also exist, elsewhere in the world. In Britain, an organisation known as DUET- Developing University English Teaching, brings together teachers from institutions of higher education to reflect on their own practices. As Evans (1995) confirms, teachers learn to work collaboratively. Our institution should, therefore, continue to use the NETA platform to allow exchange of knowledge and expertise in English teaching.

6.16 The teacher/teacher trainer as a classroom researcher

‘Effective teachers are constantly engaged in classroom research’ (Ashworth, 2000). Classroom research is something that as teachers and teacher-trainers, we need to start practising. By researching our own students and our own teaching methods, we will be able to overcome problems such as poor writing as experienced by our students and learners. Each classroom is unique because it consists of unique individuals who experience unique problems. We can therefore not always rely on research findings and generalisations of other people who live miles away from us.

6.17 Teacher modelling is important

Caswell and Mahler (2004) promote that teachers should model their writing to the learners. The same can be said to teacher-trainers/educators. People learn something better when they see it done. Teachers and teacher-educators therefore need to be a good example to the learners and students and avoid the ‘do as I say and not as I do’ syndrome, a scenario popular in many teacher education/training classrooms.

6.18 Co-teaching

The idea of co-teaching or team-teaching is not commonly practised in Namibia. Co-teaching is especially helpful at university level teaching as it promotes sharing and exchange of knowledge, didactics and resources. It also maintains uniformity in the standards of teaching. When two teachers or lecturers teach together, the scope of their teaching is wider and the impact stronger. Co-teaching is also in itself quite a fun experience. Our university needs to encourage it as far as possible.

In recommending the above, the researcher does not imply that the University of Namibia or the lecturers involved in training English teachers or in developing

their modules have failed in their job. On the contrary, the researcher is fairly content with the findings. We can be proud of our university as it is not very far-off from what literature says as well when compared with similar international modules. However, there is still room for improvement in the respective areas identified.

7. CONCLUSION

The study into the relevance and effectiveness of the University of Namibia's Teaching Methods of English Module to the Grade 11 and 12 English Second Language Ordinary and Higher Level Syllabi regarding writing skills has reached a few conclusions. The issue of relevance of the module's content to the syllabi could not be clearly established as the content regarding the language skills, for example, is not specified. Other findings include the fact that the duration of the module is short, and will not allow for all that needs to be studied by a prospective English teacher. Unspecified content especially pertaining to the development and teaching language skills, has contributed to students' limited knowledge in this area. This was evident in their limited knowledge in the theories regarding the development of and methods for teaching writing skills. Their knowledge of popular writing concepts such as Process writing, Journal writing and others, generally left much to be desired.

Students in the Teaching Methods of English class can write English pieces fairly competently and have a fairly good idea of how to teach most of these genres. They need to be more familiar with other genres however. Their language also needs a little more attention as some errors continue to persist. The study found that the writing errors made by English student teachers had a direct relationship with the errors made by learners in the schools. Students are fairly competent in marking, given the difficulty of marking itself. However, their use of the marking grid requires more practice.

As a university, it can be asserted that the module under study fares reasonably well when compared to international standards. However, it is necessary to work on the identified areas where shortcomings have been detected. Recommendations offered in the previous chapter can be a good start.

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