UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

DEPARTMENT OF ACADEMIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS

FIRST SEMESTER MAIN EXAMINATION, DECEMBER 2016

TITLE OF PAPER: ACADEMIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS: ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES (EAP)

COURSE CODE : ACS 111 /102

TIME ALLOWED : 2 **(TWO)** HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Write the name of your Faculty and Programme on the cover of your answer booklet.
2. Answer **ALL** questions.

TOTAL MARKS: 100

This paper consists of **8** printed pages, including the cover page.

THIS EXAMINATION PAPER IS NOT TO BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED BY THE INVIGILATOR.

QUESTION 1: COMPREHENSION — 50 MARKS

The following passage from the magazine *New African* discussed the role of the press in Africa. Read through the passage carefully and answer the questions that follow:

For a Better African Press

1 Since independence, many African governments have seized control of, or exert a major influence over the newspapers within their borders. The contention has usually been that they need these powerful institutions to help them achieve their stated goals of national integration, to establish democratic societies, to evolve correct attitudes and to deal with problems of development.

2 **However**, newspapers are **seldom used towards these ends**, says Obediah Mazombwe, a media researcher and educationalist at the University of Zambia. Mazombwe contends that the **great majority of newspapers in Africa are suffering from a colonial hangover**. They devote far too much space to trivial news from the developed world and the pleasure activities of elites, while ignoring many developmental problems in their countries. To illustrate his point, Mazombwe has taken a close look at two well known publications – the *Standard of Kenya* and the *Times of Zambia* – not because they are the worst, but because he considers them representative of many African newspapers. Writing in the latest issue of the Zambia journal of contemporary affairs, *Zango*, Mazombwe says that the Times and Standard, as well as most other African newspapers, devote too little space to regional and developing world news.

3 Before independence, African colonies neglected communication with neighbouring countries in favour of closer relations with colonial powers. Events and issues in one African country could as well have taken place on some other planet as far as the neighbouring countries were concerned. Since independence, there has been a **proliferation of pacts** among African governments to reverse this trend. But communication and cohesion will not be achieved unless African newspapers begin reporting more news about their neighbours, says Mazombwe.

4 African newspapers should, as far as possible, publish the general issues and events in neighbouring countries, their successes and failures and, unlike the Western Press, should not wait until the President of a country begins beheading his Ministers before they give that country any substantial coverage.

5 The coverage of other developing countries besides those in the same region is also important. This makes the population of developing countries **more conversant** with the

problems of other developing countries and how they go about solving them. The successes and failures of some countries can thus become lessons for others, since they all share more or less the same socio-economic problems. This already takes place at governmental levels, but it needs to involve and be appreciated by as great a section of the population as possible. The Standard devotes 38% of its space to foreign news. Of this only 29% is devoted to regional news and 38% to developed countries. As far as the Times is concerned 35% of the news slot is given to foreign news, of which 31% is regional, 45% covers developing countries and 24% covers the developed world.

6 Much of the developed world's news consists of **'funny'** pictures distributed by the trans-national news agencies, and detailed reports on sport in Western countries – all of which Mazombwe says is quite unnecessary. "The arguments that such news is demanded by the Western-orientated elite, who comprise the main readership and want to keep abreast of general trends and events in the West, is quite empty. The elites can obtain such news from the great variety of Western magazines that circulate in Africa, or by subscribing to Western newspapers and journals."

7 In the *Times of Zambia* and *Standard of Kenya*, 85% of all the foreign news should be devoted to regional and Third World news. Both papers could easily reduce the volume of foreign news from the developed world to 20% without any loss of vital information, by excluding trivia and printing only that which has an informative value. "That the two newspapers print more *Third World* news than regional news simply reflects their dependency on foreign news agencies. The developing areas from which they get large doses of news are therefore those where Western foreign policy interests and concerns are highest", notes Mazombwe.

8 Although the greatest proportion of news in the Standard and the Times of Zambia is, as it should be, national news – this is nevertheless **urban-orientated**. 'There exist in both Kenya and Zambia, as in most of Africa, rural-urban differences, which mock the very idea of equal distribution of wealth and development on which the countries were founded. In the African rural areas are some of the world's lowest standards of living. For many, life is simply rough and tough. This is in great contrast to the comfortable and high standard of living enjoyed by the small elite in the urban areas. The newspapers in Africa can do a lot in helping to bridge this rural-urban gap. Only 20% of national news in the Standard is devoted to rural affairs and only 16% in the *Times of Zambia*. "The coverage of rural news in both papers is far from enough, says Mazombwe, who would like the rural news raised to at least 35%. 'Coverage of such news is of vital importance to the development process."

9 Mazombwe rejects the usual explanation that the readership is **the literate elite** who live in urban areas: 'The 36000 circulation of the Standard and the 60 000 of the Times are mostly restricted to the cities more because of unwillingness to invest in more efficient countrywide distribution rather than the absence of a readership in the rural areas. There is a rapidly growing force of primary and secondary school teachers, health, agricultural and administrative officials in the rural areas. Some of these people are among the severest cases of **information malnutrition** in the world.

10 The low coverage of rural news by African newspapers purports a miserable state of affairs. The people in the urban areas develop an attitude that where they are is where it is all happening, or at least could happen (since most of them live in squalid overcrowded conditions) and so decide to stay on rather than go to the rural areas where apparently nothing happens. The rural people, seeing that most events and persons of any national significance covered in the national dailies are in the urban areas develop a strong urge to immigrate to the city.

Using information contained in the passage, select the letter of the choice which best completes the following statements. Write only the letter of the best answer.

1. Which of the following statements is true according to the passage?
   (a) African governments have achieved their political goals.
   (b) African newspapers ignore important events in the developed world.
   (c) African newspapers are often owned by colonialists.
   (d) African governments often control national newspapers.

2. The statement that newspapers are **"seldom used towards these ends"** (Par. 2) means that newspapers are seldom used to .....
   (a) achieve government aims
   (b) report on development issues
   (c) make societies more democratic
   (d) form more powerful institutions.

3. Mazombwe's statement that ***"the great majority of newspapers in Africa are suffering from a colonial hangover"*** (Par. 2) suggests that the majority of African newspapers...
   (a) have not changed in their approach to news.
   (b) support the views and attitudes of the former colonialists.
   (c) spend too much time attacking the former colonial powers.
   (d) are largely owned and administered by foreigners.

4. Mazombwe uses the *Standard of Kenya* and the *Times of Zambia* as examples mainly because ...
   (a) there are important similarities between these newspapers and other African newspapers.
   (b) they devote too little space to regional news and news of the developing countries.
   (c) they are East African newspapers which Mazombwe knows well.
   (d) the two newspapers are well known and read throughout Africa.

5. Mazombwe suggests that the Western Press mainly becomes interested in Africa when…
   (a) there are economic successes to report.
   (b) there are government changes.
   (c) there is bad news to report.
   (d) there are development problems.

6. Which of the following recommendation does Mazombwe not make?
   (a) That African newspapers should break off relations with the former colonial powers.
   (b) That African newspapers should inform their readers of the events in nearby countries.
   (c) That African newspapers should concentrate on the problems of developing countries.
   (d) That people in a developing country should know more about other developing countries.

[3 marks each] = 18

7. The phrase ***'funny' pictures*** (Par. 6), refers to the jokes and amusing stories told in pictures which often appear in African newspapers. Why is the word *'funny'* placed inside inverted commas?

[4]

8. What are the consequences of what the writer refers to as the urban bias of newspapers?

[4]

9. What do the following phrases mean:

   (a) proliferation of pacts (par.3)
   (b) more conversant (par. 5)
   (c) urban-oriented (par. 8)
   (d) literate elite (Par. 9)

[4 marks each] = 16

10. What purpose does the transitional word 'however' (Par.2) serve? **[3]**

11. What is the writer's attitude towards the African press? Do you agree or disagree with his views? Support your answer.

[5]

Passage adapted from: Sheal, P. & Omojuma, R. (1985) Advanced English Course for College and Universities in Africa. Essex: Longman

QUESTION 2: SUMMARY

50 MARKS

Read the following passage carefully and in your own words write a summary of about 200 words, stating the main points it makes about the effects of the misconception that "speaking English is a mark of intelligence".

Note: Marks will be awarded for clarity of expression and orderly presentation of ideas. Do not copy sentences from thepassage.

Speaking English is not a mark of intelligence

Adapted from Prince Mashele, *SOWETAN LIVE*, 05 September, 2016

Now that the election dust has settled, it is time to refocus on other matters of national importance that affect public life in South Africa.

This week our spotlight turns to the critical matter of African languages and identity. This is necessitated by the disturbing behaviour of some stupid black people in our communities.

This columnist has often attended funerals and religious sermons in rural villages and townships, where black people congregated either to bury their loved ones or to praise the Lord. One such funeral was particularly grotesque. Some local dolts went out of their way to address the multitude in English, in a 100% Tsonga-speaking village, at a funeral where there was no single white man.

The comical thing is that almost all the fools who went on and on in English broke the Queen's language beyond repair, in their misguided belief that speaking English is a mark of intelligence.

After the funeral, one granny expressed concern that children who go to institutions of higher learning return to the village speaking a language their parents cannot understand. The poor granny had not understood 90% of what was said at the funeral.

This phenomenon is widespread in South Africa. There are many township churches in which preachers use English, as if the Holy Spirit cannot speak Zulu or Sotho.

What most people don't realise is that the behaviour of the black priests who preach in English to their own black people is fundamentally ungodly. It is God Himself who made black people and their languages. The Lord wanted to look upon his people from the high heavens and derive joy from the beauty of their diversity.

In an attempt to sound clever, some misguided black priests distort God's design by trying to convert South African diversity into a drab English monolith. In the process, God is deprived of the beauty of the African languages He has created. His ears are pelted with broken English words by confused black priests. This is not to say that, in linguistically diverse congregations, black priests must not use English as a lingua franca. The real question is: why address people in your village and township in English when you all speak the same language?

This question is certainly not confined to religion; the attitude that English is a mark of intelligence permeates all branches of black life. Even in shebeens there are black drunkards who try to sound better by speaking broken English. What such stupid blacks don't realise is that the real owners of the English language view them as a joke. Imagine how you would feel seeing a dog that brags because it is wearing your expensive jacket.

After the Anglo-Boer War, Alfred Milner, the then British governor in South Africa, introduced what became known as Milner schools. These were schools built intentionally to anglicise Afrikaner children.

At Milner schools, Afrikaner children were not allowed to speak their language - Dutch. Any child heard speaking Dutch on school grounds would be made to stand in front of the class to chant: "I am a monkey, I spoke Dutch."

This experience - of forced Anglicisation - galvanised Afrikaners, and deepened their nationalistic fervour. They vowed to build their own schools, and to make their children appreciate and love their language.

To this day, Afrikaners continue to invest heavily in the development and promotion of their language. Don't be misled by AfriForum's public outcry, ostensibly in defence of Afrikaans.

There is no single black language in South Africa today that receives the kind of torrential money that pours into Afrikaans.

In a comical twist of political events, some black people after 1994 have been behaving as if Milner has instructed them to chant: "I am a monkey, I spoke Xhosa." The reason why Milner targeted Afrikaner children is that he well knew that a child's mind is easy to mould. He thus wanted Afrikaner children to grow up hating their own language.

Today, it is very disturbing to witness grown-up black people at funerals and in church displaying a self-imposed hatred of their own languages.

What such black people don't realise is that, by behaving the way they do, they are teaching their children that English is superior to black languages. When they grow up, the children will think that black tongues are the languages of monkeys.

Black people who associate English with intelligence must be reminded that, in London, there are white hobos who sleep under bridges. Those hobos speak their native English, but they remain uneducated and stupid. Indeed, a national dialogue is more than urgent - to save lost black souls among us: the ungodly priests who think English is heavenly, and the black idiots who force their unaccustomed tongues to pronounce difficult English words at funerals in our villages and townships.

Such people are enemies of African identity; their minds need to be decolonised.

http://www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/2016/09/05/speaking-english-is-not-a-mark-of-intelligence Retrieved 20/10/16