

# UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

DEPARTMENT OF ACADEMIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS

SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION, JULY 2014

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

**COURSE CODE:** ACS 102

**TIME ALLOWED:** 2 HOURS

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Write the name of your Faculty and Programme on the cover of your answer book.
2. Answer **TWO** Questions: **one** from Question 1 and **one** from Question 2
3. This paper consists of **8 pages**, cover page included.

THIS EXAMINATION PAPER IS NOT TO BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION IS GIVEN BY THE INVIGILATOR.

## QUESTION 1

## Reading Comprehension

50 marks

### Instructions:

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions that follow.

### Does Africa Need Its Police?

The Police in Africa are losing control. The explosion of armed crime on the continent underlines the shortcomings of the security forces just when they are most desperately needed. According to a United Nations survey, three Africans out of every four in the cities have been the victims of violence in the past five years. This is nearly twice as many as in the cities of Asia and even South America, where the crime rate ranks among the highest in the world (1). And the survey only covers Uganda, South Africa and Tanzania; it does not include Nigeria or Congo (former Zaire), both notoriously violent countries.

2. Incapable of arresting wrongdoers, the authorities (police, judiciary and prison services) resort to a repression which is a reflection of their powerlessness. This leads them to make an example of certain offenders as a substitute for a proper rule of law. The punishments they mete out are a pure show of strength, intended to impress the public, like the notorious "Palm Beach shows" where thieves are executed on the Lagos seashore.

3. These popular entertainments are reminiscent of medieval Paris when criminals were quartered in public. In Paris executions gradually became more discreet, and by the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as the state gained in strength, executions were hidden behind prison walls (although in Paris public executions did still take place up to 1939). If people are still beaten up in police cells, nowadays it is usually done without leaving any marks, to avoid repercussions.

4. In sub-Saharan Africa, however, torture remains common practice since the police are completely unaccountable and democratic opposition forces are often silenced. The prison system inherited from colonial rulers is no longer aimed at righting wrongs or compensating injuries to the individual or society at large. In most of these countries, where the authorities' approach to crime is entirely repressive, prison no longer serves the purpose of rehabilitating offenders. Only South Africa, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Namibia and Sao Tomé have abolished the death penalty; and Ivory Coast, Djibouti, Niger, Senegal and Togo no longer enforce it.

5. In many countries the forces of law and order do more harm than good. They are often the main weapons suppliers to the underworld, directly or indirectly. The conflict in the Congo

was a notable example. The civilian population, suffering in turn from the depredations of Mobutu's soldiers and then from the violence of the rebels, would have been better off without an army.

6. In Nigeria only 0.4% of stolen property is recovered, which says a great deal about police efficiency (2). It is not that police officers do nothing. They are actually in collusion with the criminals and most of the goods they seize are secretly resold to fences – or to the original owners .... It is true that the police are poorly paid, but this does not justify them holding passers-by to ransom at gun-point. In fact, the corruptibility of the police is not just a matter of poverty. In Nigeria, it is an indirect effect of the oil boom of the late 1970s when there was plenty of easy money to be made.

7. A survey carried out in Lagos, the biggest city in sub-Saharan Africa, revealed that two-thirds of its residents consider the police totally ineffectual (3). Most people had reported violent crimes in which they were victims or witnesses to their local police station, but nearly 60% said that nothing was done. Only 1% of the people questioned thought that police roadblocks served any purpose other than to extort money from motorists! Less than half thought that security would be improved if the police were better equipped and corruption weeded out.

8. On the other hand, more than 90% of people living in Lagos thought that community watch schemes helped combat crime. Two-thirds already have such schemes, especially in the poorer districts: half of them have clubbed together to employ night watchmen, a quarter have set up barriers to close off their streets at night and more than 10% are involved in "community policing" patrols. Only 1% have any confidence in night watchmen recruited individually (4). People in the better-off districts are more inclined to employ security firms, a luxury reserved for the rich. Such arrangements are just as common in most of the major cities of French-speaking Africa (5).

9. Africans have become advocates of self-defence on the American model. In South Africa (as in Uganda) most of the population are dissatisfied with their police force. Only one in five people in the cities has not yet taken any anti-theft precautions. And they have the most sophisticated security firms in Africa. In the poorer countries security systems are too expensive and usually out of reach, but there are moves towards "urban retrenchment", with locks, grilles and compounds and often a security guard as well.

**The Growth of Self-defence**

10. Unregulated self-defence without state supervision or the neutrality expected of a public service clearly has risks. Abuses are frequent and encourage a spiral of violence. Local patrols can be taken over by political movements and become privatized armies. The converse can happen. When apartheid ended in South Africa some soldiers, sensing the way the wind was blowing, set up lucrative security firms.

11. According to the UN survey, Africans seem to be most severe on thieves (6). Unlike vendettas, which at least conform to specific social rules, the lynching of a thief caught in the

act in a market is not part of any system of justice – certainly not traditional justice, which at least requires consultation beforehand. The “necklace” in South Africa, “Article 320” in Mali (named after its cost – 300 CFA francs for a litre of petrol and 20 francs for a box of matches) and “Weetee” (soaking with petrol) in Nigeria, all involve setting light to someone suspected of witchcraft or theft with a tyre around his body. People are killed for stealing an orange. What the angry crowds are doing is making an example of the criminal, preventing a repetition of the commonest crimes and working off their frustration by picking on a scapegoat.

12. The privatization of security is having an impact on the African state in more ways than one. The people it governs are becoming more and more independent and, at the level of its institutions, the system benefits those who have money – through corruption and the availability of police officers and weapons for hire. The police provide bodyguards for the powerful and subject the poor to repression and violence. They are neither respected nor trusted, and even ordinary crimes are in some sense a protest against the authorities.

13. One could object that abolishing the police would increase unemployment and crime. But it is noticeable that after civil wars, for instance at the end of the Biafra war in Nigeria in 1970, many ex-combatants were integrated into the police force to prevent them turning to crime. The result was the criminalization of the police. Crime was not backed up by state violence. There are other possibilities for redeployment of men trained in violence. For example, in Mozambique in 1993, guerrilla fighters and government soldiers agreed to return to the countryside, with UN aid.

14. The international community’s present aim – reform of the institutions inherited from the colonial powers – lacks imagination. The concept was inherently unsound in that these institutions were created to protect the powerful – then the whites, nowadays the rich, whoever they are. Through SCTIP (the Service central de coopération technique internationale de police), France trains the police in most of the French-speaking states from Ivory Coast to Gabon, unless it decides to train the Foreign Legion directly to maintain order in towns, as in Djibouti. The British, not to be outdone, have the BMATT (British Military Assistance Training Team).

15. The fortunate experience of the Office of Public Safety in the United States shows the potential pitfalls of external powers training Africa’s police. The OPS was dismantled in 1973, 11 years after being set up, because the courses it funded at the International Police Academy usually just trained “death squads” which could be used to prop up any authoritarian regime so long as it was anti-communist. The main beneficiaries of American aid in Africa at the time were the police in Liberia, Somalia, Congo (after President Mobutu came to power) and Ethiopia (before the collapse of Emperor Haile Selassie’s regime). Now none of these countries has a police force at all.

16. As soon as a war is over, attempts are made to set up a police force, sometimes, as in Liberia or Somaliland, from scratch. After the national reconciliation conference in Boroma in May 1993, for instance, as far as Somaliland was concerned the aim was to help the

demobilization of armed militiamen (estimated at 50,000) by integrating them into a body which would prevent them drifting into crime, rather than to create a police force. Without funds and a proper state apparatus, the plan did not work and the militias kept their weapons.

17. In spite of all this, the potential for reform exists. Decentralisation seems to be one possibility which could meet specific local needs. In Nigeria, with the same budget, police manpower could be cut from 130,000 to 10,000 and efficiency improved at the same time. The federal police would have an investigatory role, modelled on the American FBI. The “visible” policing functions could be delegated to self-defence patrols. Any abuses would be severely censured and local leaders would be answerable to the authorities. However, this would call for careful supervision and proper training.

18. The need for a formal law enforcement agency is not in question; the point is to involve the public by adopting a system that already exists in practice. With the state – and state funding – in crisis in sub-Saharan Africa, the trend seems irreversible. Is it not time to make it part of a radical reform of the security apparatus?

*Translated by Barbara Wilson*

(1) Jan J. M. Van Dijk: Response to crime across the world. Results of the international crime victim survey, Vancouver (Canada), University of Leyden, Netherlands Ministry of Justice, April 1996.

(2) In Western Europe, the rate is nearly 50%. See Marc Antoine Perouse de Montclos, “Violence et sécurité urbaines en Afrique du Sud et en Nigeria, un essai de privatization: Durban, Johannesburg, Kano, Lagos and Port Harcourt”, L. Harmattan, Paris, 1967.

(3) A.A. Adeyemi, et al.: “Ordinary crime and its prevention strategies in metropolitan Lagos”, in Hernando Corner Buendia (ed.), *Urban Crime, Global Trends and Policies*, UN University Tokyo, 1989.

(4) Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos, “L’ordre régné sur l’Afrique fortune, *Le Monde diplomatique*, March 1996.

(5) “Le boom de l’insécurité”, *Jeune Afrique*, Paris. No 1,888, 12 March 1997.

(6) Jan J.M. Van Dijk, *of. Cit.*, 1996, p.7.

Marc-Antoine Perouse de Montclos is a researcher at the Institut français de recherche scientifique pour le développement en coopération (Orstom)

**Source; LE MONDE DIPLOMATIQUE October 1998**

**Answer the following questions:**

1. According to Paragraph 1, several countries have a very high crime rate. Give four countries that are examples of high violence. [8]
2. What does the writer mean by “a security watch scheme” (Paragraph 8)?
  - A. The people from local organizations in order to keep the police away
  - B. Local communities form their own private police forces
  - C. The police cooperate with the local communities
  - D. Everyone provides their own individual security arrangements [3]
3. What does the writer think can be done to improve the situation in the cities of Africa?
  - A. The police forces should be abolished
  - B. The police forces should be strengthened
  - C. Governments should cooperate with local private organizations
  - D. The police should be retrained by France, Britain and the United States [3]
4. Give names of two countries in each case below where
  - A. there is no police force at all
  - B. people are dissatisfied with the police
  - C. the police are trained by France
  - D. thieves can be killed without trial
  - E. after a civil war, the combatants were redeployed as law enforcers [10]
5. Who conducted the United Nations survey on crime mentioned in Paragraph 1? [3]
6. With the use of two examples from the passage, explain how the police exhibit corruption. [8]
7. What according to the writer, but in your own words, should the role of the police force be, if the situation is going to be improved? (See especially Paragraph 17) [10]
8. What, according to the writer, have been the results of the attempts of the Western powers (France, Britain, US) to improve the situation? [5]

**Question 2: Summary**

50 Marks

Read the following passage carefully and in your own words write a summary of about 130 words on the main points raised in this passage.

**The Impact of Violent Television Programmes on Children**

Adapted from: <http://www.englishdaily626.com>

The kind of television shows children watch and whom they watch them with can just be as important as the amount of time they spend in front of the tube, according to researchers at a children hospital in America. They reported this in a new study that finds an association between violent shows and peer problems.

Children who watch violent television programs especially those who watch such shows alone spend less time with friends than children who watch a lot of non-violent programs. Although the study could not determine a cause and effect relationship, researchers suspect one exists. They suggest that violent shows might teach and encourage aggressive behaviour in children, which in turn isolates them from their peers. And that isolation, scientists suggest, appears to create a cycle that makes violent programming more attractive to lonely children.

Researchers agree that a lot of studies about violence and television deal with behavioural outcomes that don't resonate with people because they occur years later. The study was intended to produce real-life outcome that would motivate parents to consider the potential consequences of uncensored viewing that are more immediate. While concerns about the harmful impact of violent TV shows on children are scarcely new, their influence on children's friendships and social activities has been little studied.

This is considered a novel and interesting study as it looks at TV violence and peer relationships among children. The study suggests that the content of shows and the context in which they are viewed may influence social relationships in a more complicated way than previously believed.

Many researchers had speculated that TV viewing displaces time spent with friends. However, these researchers found that children who watched television with friends also spent more time socializing in other ways while those who watched violent shows spent significantly less time with their peers.

Studies have found that the average school-age child spends 27 hours a week watching TV and that 61% of programs contain violence. To determine whether violent content affected relationships with peers differently than non-violent shows, researchers analysed diaries kept by a parent or other adult during one week day and one weekend day for children between the ages of six and 12. The name of the TV show was recorded as was the presence of other people in the room and activities performed while a show was on. Crime shows, police dramas and cartoons such as Power Rangers were classified as violent, as were other shows where violence was a central theme. News, sports and non-fiction programming were omitted from the study.

Each hour of violent television watched by children aged six to eight corresponded to 20 minutes less time spent with friends, while children nine to 12 who watched an hour of violent shows spent 25 minutes less time with peers. Viewing non-violent shows did not affect the time spent with friends. The authors of the study say that viewing television together is one activity that enriches childhood friendships. The amount of violence watched in first grade typically predicts how aggressive the person will be 15 years later. The link goes from violent TV to aggressive behaviour in children.

The message from the study is simple and clear. Parents, and not their children, should be in control of the TV. That means, parents must monitor what children are watching, not turning on the set in the morning and leaving it on all day and not allowing children to watch shows meant for adults such as *CSI* or *Sopranos*.

Thus, parents ought to be aware of this. It is not only the amount of time children are spending, it is what he or she is watching.