



LANGUAGE AND CHEATING IN HIGHER LEARNING EDUCATION EXAMINATIONS - A CASE STUDY OF THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA

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Abstract:

This study intended to examine the language used in cheating in higher learning education examinations. The study specifically sought: to explore the body language used during cheating in examination; identify reasons for choice of the body languages in cheating during examination; to identify linguistic expression used to facilitate cheating in examinations. The study used both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The researcher used random sampling to obtain the sample. The study involved 350 students from Dar es Salaam regional centers of the Open University of Tanzania (OUT). The instrument used for data collection was the questionnaire. The data were analyzed through SPSS 16 version. The study found that; the most used forms body language in cheating during examination are facial expression (81.4%) and hand-finger gestures (62.3%). However, majority of the students rated high on the positioning of the invigilator (91.1%), number of invigilators during invigilation (80.0%). And the angle one sat (57.7%) as reasons for the choice of body language in cheating during examination. Further, students gave linguistic expressions of body language in cheating like: "attention" (eye brow movement), "ready to help someone" (head movement up – down), "I don't know" (body posture- up- down shoulder movement or right left of the head) "wait" (up and down of the hand palm). It can be said that, cheating during examination is obvious; use of certain body language depends on the needs and intention of the cheating student in cheating. It is recommended that the invigilator should be keen when invigilating, and the institution has to send their invigilators for short course on language use in educational context especially during examination and techniques used in cheating for quality education.

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1. Introduction

Academic cheating has been acknowledged in almost every type of formal education institutions. It is considered as an academic dishonesty. Academic cheating is found at all levels of schooling from grade school to graduate school and is a growing problem at postsecondary institutions (Wideman, 2008 and Kelley & Bonner, 2005). Other forms of academic dishonesty include plagiarism, fabrication, deception, bribery, sabotage and professorial misconduct (Lambert et al 2003). Academic cheating is a violation of academic integrity (Kitahara, Westfall and Mankelwicz, 2011). Academic cheating can occur at two levels; Institutional and individual. (Hyland, Bourin, De Lisle, 2011). Institutional cheating involves inflation of students' score to maintain market share, where as individual cheating is where a student in an institution violates the established rules governing the administration of a test or completion of an assignment to have an unfair advantage over other students on a test or assignment (Cizek 2004). Academic cheating can be classified into three classes; cheating by taking, giving or receiving information from others; cheating through the use of forbidden material or information; cheating by circumventing the process of assessment (Faucher, Dina 2007). Cheating by taking, giving or receiving information from others includes; looking at another student's paper, answer sheet or work, students collude to sit in such a way to coordinate copying, or communication via body language or other responses. Communication through body language involves use of sign language or a code for transmitting answers such as clicking pencils, foot tapping cape turning on head, or gestures

Moreover, studies have shown that, cheating in education can be explained from different perspectives. For instance a study done by Szabo and Underwood (2004, for postsecondary students, it shows that more males (68%) cheat than females (39%) it was also found that the more one is experienced in academic life, the less the chances of involvement in academic cheating. For example, third year students were less likely to cheat than first or second year students (Szabo & Underwood, 2004; Brown, 2002). Furthermore, International students or students from different cultural backgrounds have been identified as a group who demonstrate a high level of academic dishonesty (Park, 2003; Ercegovac & Richardson, 2004).

Open and Distance Learning system (ODL) is a type of education system which provide an opportunity in terms of flexibility, access and multiple modes of knowledge

acquisition (Keegan 1996). Academic cheating in Distance Higher Education is one of the biggest academic dishonesty practices “corrosive problem” (Gallant and Drinan, 2006). Gallant and Drinan (2006) agree with Ravasco (2012) on “Technology-Aided Cheating in Open and Distance e-Learning”. The study explored certain student perceptions on academic dishonesty in an ODL environment: (a) its prevalence, (b) the manner in which it is done, and (c) ways in which it can be prevented. The findings showed that: 40.38% more cheating on ODL, 30.76% cheating in regular face to face, 28.85 uncertainties. The findings are supported by Ramorola (2012) who did a study on “Cheating in Summative Assessment in an ODL education Programme: A case of an undergraduate qualification” at the University of South Africa. The study found that, the students under ODL do cheat because they lack time for preparations due to family bereavement, ill health of either the student or a family member, and wedding preparations. In addition, the study also found differences in cheating by gender, more female were likely to cheat than male with the reasons that, females lack time for thorough subject preparation because of the demanding home responsibilities. This gives the implication that the students under ODL are exposed to many home activities which they can’t avoid and hence affect their study habits, However, it can be also be concluded that, the students under ODL may cheat due to lack of ODL study skills.

2. Reasons for Academic Cheating

There are a number of reasons which make students to cheat in the academic situation. According to Anderman, Cupp and Lane (2010) in their study “Impulsivity and Academic Cheating”, outline two reasons which contribute to cheating in the classroom situation; classroom goals structure (mastery goal structure and performance or personal goal structure) and motivational contextual structured goals. The personal goals structure include performance concern, job leaves no time for study, financial aid depends on GPA good grades are needed for a job or graduate school, illness prevents adequate preparation. The mastery goals structure comprise semester workload too heavy, professor/text did not adequately explain material, too many tests on one day, unfair tests designed, unreasonable workload in course Sitting arrangement, Weak Invigilation or Inadequate invigilation, Peer influence during examination. (Anderman 2010) In addition, Schab (1991) and Cizek (1999) mentioned, the nature of exam that is, multiple choice and short answer questions responses requiring responses in point rather than in essay form encourage, cheating in examination room and also students perceptions that, those who cheat are not caught, and if they are, they are given punishment. Misuse of technological advancement contributes to cheating in the

examination. Chinamasa et al (2011), did a study on “Examination Cheating: The reasons found were under mastery goal structure which includes; inadequate lecturing staffs, lack of resources in the library resulting in students relying on lecture notes, lack classes writing examinations in squeezed room with limited a number of invigilators, sudden change of the examination timetable where the examination papers are brought closure. Academic cheating likely to occur when personal goal structure are present in the classroom (Murdock 2004).

2.1 Methods used in Academic cheating during Examination

Studies have shown different methods used by students in cheating during examination. A study by Chinamasa et al (2011) identified two method of cheating; individual and collaborative. Individual method of cheating is where an individual attempts or plans or cheats by using his or her own strategies. Ramorola (2012) mentioned strategies are called crib notes and they are a common tactic used to cheat in examination (Cohen and Felson 1979). The strategies include; writing notes on hand, thighs, ruler, shirtsleeves, skirt hems and inside the shade of their caps. Collaborative methods involve two or more candidates planning the cheating strategies or attempt to cheat. The strategies include; a candidate raising the script in front to allow the one behind to read the answers, body language (gestures, sign language facial expression to mention the few), exchanging of question papers, swapping sitting places as well answer booklets. The present study looked at the collaborative method of cheating involving the use of body language concentrating more on the academic aspect.

3. General Objective

To examine the language used in cheating in examinations

3.1 Specific Objectives

1. To identify types of body language used during cheating in examinations;
2. To identify reasons for the choice of the body language used during the examinations;
3. To describe linguistic expression of body language used to facilitate cheating in examinations.

4. Method

The study was conducted in Dar es Salaam region, involving the three regional centers of the Open University of Tanzania Ilala, Kinondoni and Temeke. The study involved students from the Open University of Tanzania who have ever sat for examinations before that is from second year on wards. A total of the 350 students were involved in the study. The data was collected through the questionnaire. The questionnaire had four sections, section A: personal information of the respondent, section B: types of body language used during cheating in examination, section C: reasons for the choice of the body language used during the examination, section D and linguistics expression of body language used to facilitate cheating in examination. Data were analysed quantitatively using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). In the analysis the author used YES and NO categories in the analysis, 'YES' means the statement or information has been accepted or agreed or mentioned by the respondent while 'No' means the respondent did not agree with or did not mention the information. Frequency and percentages were computed. Tables and figures were used to present findings.

5. Theoretical Framework

This study were guided by Functional Model of Language is derived from the systemic functional theory of language development and use by Michael Halliday (1975, 1985a, 1985b). The theory continues to be modified and developed by Halliday, and others including; Ruquiya Hasan (1986) and Jim Martin (1984) Systemic-Functional Linguistics (SFL). The approach is now used world-wide, particularly in language education, for purposes of discourse analysis. A systemic approach allows a person to focus on meaningful choices in language. Functional Model of Language (FML) considers language as a system which we use to construct meanings for different purpose that is, the same language can be used in different ways. Also the FML asserts that, language is a social process, the centre of our construction of reality, means of communicating with others, a system of choice, and resources of making meaning as well as the context in which language is used will determine its appropriateness. As far as the body language in this study is concerned, literatures have shown that the same language can be the used by different people of the different culture and providing different meaning. For instance, the body language used in cheating during examination can also be used in different context convey different meanings. Therefore, there is a need to learn how to choose our language to meet our particular needs in a certain situation. The choice of

body language depends on the needs (cheating) in a certain situation (exams) in order to construct meanings.

6. Languages and Communication

Language is a tool for communication. There are two forms of language communication these are; verbal and non-verbal. Verbal communication involves the arrangement of words in a structured and meaningful manner, adhering to the rules of grammar. The message is then conveyed to the audience in either spoken or written form. While the non-verbal communication includes body language, sign language and technology assisted language. However according to Andersen (1999), non-verbal communication includes; visual/kinesic cues such as facial expressions, eye movements, gestures, and body orientation; vocal/paralinguistic cues such as volume, pitch, rate, and inflection. Moreover, DeVito & Hecht (1990) argue that, the two forms of communication are separated by their definition, however, when communication through language is done, the meanings are not separated into channel, that is, the verbal and non-verbal messages interact and become integrated into one communicative event. Non-verbal communication substitute complement accents, regulates and contradicts the spoken messages (Knapp and Hall (2006). The substitution occurs when the non -verbal type of communication is used instead of the verbal communication. For instance in a classroom situation, a child may answer the question correctly; therefore the teacher may 'smile' instead of saying 'good'. Thus, language use through the two forms of communication, that is, the non-verbal and verbal communication depends on the context; time as well purpose of communication. Both forms of communication are very important.

6.1 Body language and use

Research shows that the majority of our communication is nonverbal. Body language as one non-verbal communication includes; body movements of the head, eyes, neck, hands, arm, feet, gestures or other parts of the body to reflect expressions (MEGEP, 2008). The study of body movement and expression is called kinesics. There are three general categories of body language; facial expressions, gestures and body movement (Toastmasters international, 2011). These forms of body language are used in different situation needs (Sime, 2006), for different purposes as well as to convey different meanings. Ozuorcun (2013) did a study on the "importance of body languages in the Intercultural Communication" the study reveals that, body language has different meanings in different cultures, age, attitude, levels and context. The study also shows

that, body language is culturally dependent; gestures that are acceptable in one culture can be offensive in another. For instance, the same body movement may reveal completely opposite meanings in cross-cultural communications. For example, in the whole world a person would nod their head up and down to say yes. On the other hand, the people in Turkey, North Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Syria, and Sicily nod their head up to express “no”. Shaking their heads back and forth, means “yes” (Megep, 2008).

Fast (1977) shows that there is also body language for sex, power and aggression. For the case of body language of power, the book reveals that, the way a man walks reflect the way he uses his body, the uses the body can tell the type of a man he is, example a tentative person will walk tentatively almost questioning the ground at every step. In education context, body language is also important. In the classroom situation; by the use of body language, teachers express enthusiasm, warmth, assertiveness, confidence or displeasure through their facial expressions as well as gestures. Sometimes, a teacher may reinforce or modify student behavior by the use of smiles, winks, frowns and scowls. Therefore, the less you use body language in the classroom, the less successful your class is (Ali, 2011). Toastmasters international. (2011), point out the following reasons use of body language word limitations, nonverbal signals are powerful, nonverbal messages are likely to be more genuine, nonverbal signals can express feelings too disturbing to state, a separate communication channel is necessary to help send complex messages.

Body Language is a means of communication which helps in exchanging our deep thoughts, ideas, emotions and the working of our mind with other fellow human beings. Meaning depends on how the signs are interpreted. Even if though body language is useful, it has been misused. Lambert, (2003) says that, academic dishonesty has always been a major concern of many universities because it cuts through the heart of the pursuit of knowledge and the purpose of higher education. His statement motivated the author conduct a study on types of body language used during cheating in examination, reasons for the choice of the body language used during the examination and describe linguistics expression of body language used to facilitate cheating in examination.

7. Results and Discussion

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the respondents

Demographic Characteristics	Categories of the characteristics	N	%
Sex	Male	227	64.9
	Female	123	35.1
Regional Center	Kinondoni	213	60.9
	Ilala	101	28.9
	Temeke	36	10.2
Year of Study	Second year	195	55.7
	Third year	101	28.9
	Fourth year +	54	15.4
Marital Status	Married	36	10.3
	Single	314	89.7
Employment status	Employed	87	24.9
	Self-employment	54	15.4
	Not employed	209	59.7

Source: Field Data

More males (64.9%) participated in the study as compared to female (35.1%) Majority of the respondents (89.7%) were single. In regard to employment status, (57.7%) of a sample was unemployed. This implies that most of the students currently studying at the Open University of Tanzania (OUT) are those who join the institution directly from secondary school.

Table 2: Types of body language used during cheating in examination

Types of Body languages	Yes		No		Total (%)
	N	%	N	%	
Facial expression	285	81.4%	65	18.6%	100%
Hand and finger gestures	218	62.3%	132	37.7%	100%
Placement of objects	05	1.4%	325	98.6%	100%
Body postures	65	18.5%	285	81.5%	100%
Movement of shoulder	24	6.8%	326	93.2%	100%
Movement of head	86	24.6 %	264	75.4%	100%

Source: Field Data

From the findings above it is clear that, facial expression (81.4%) and hand and finger gestures (62.3%) are commonly used by forms of body language by students in cheating during examinations. Placement of the objects and movement of shoulder were the least commonly used modes (1.4% and 6.8%) respectively. This implies that, students are

familiar with body language used in academic cheating. Students use the body language which the invigilators cannot observe easily to cheat in examination.

Table 3: Reasons for the choice of body language in cheating during examination

Statement of the Reasons for the choice of body language	Yes		No		Total (%)
	N	%	N	%	
Position of Invigilators during invigilation	319	91.1%	31	8.9%	100%
Aims of cheating	108	30.8%	242	69.2%	100%
Students relationship	16	4.5%	334	95.5%	100%
Sitting arrangements	202	57.7%	148	42.3%	100%
Number of invigilators invigilating in one session	280	80.0%	70	20%	100%

Source: Field Data

The data above indicates that, respondents worry most about the invigilators when planning to cheat or when attempting to cheat. The respondents (91.1%) mentioned positioning of the invigilator as being the first factor for the choice of certain form of body language to be used in academic cheating during examination followed by numbers of invigilators who invigilate in one session (80.0%). Also sitting arrangement (57.7%) mentioned to be the reason which motivates students to choose and use a certain type of body language. The findings by Chinamasa et al, (2011) shows invigilation is one major factor that motivates students to cheat. The study reported the invigilator sitting away from the candidates, doing other assigned responsibilities. In addition, the study revealed that the number of invigilators was small compared to the number of candidates, a ratio of 1: it 100. The invigilation process is very important in preventing students from cheating, because inadequate invigilation may motivate students to cheat by using both individual cheating strategies and collaborative cheating strategy.

According to Smith (2000), students have a tendency of using prearranged signals to receive or communicate answers to and from others. Schab (1991) emphasizes that during examination, candidates usually sit as they are pleased and in a zone of maximum surveillance in the proximity of someone who knows.

Table 4: Linguistics expression used to facilitate cheating in examination

Body movement	Linguistics expression	No	Rated (%)
Eye brow movement	Attention	177	50.5%
	Demand for help	173	49.5%
UP-down head movement	Demand for help	7	2.0%
	Refuse to help	70	20.0%
	I don't know	65	18.5%
	Ready to help	208	59.5%
Handling and placement of objects	Attention	237	67.7%
	Demand for help	70	20.0%
	I don't know	43	12.2%
Right-Left head movement	Attention	72	20.5%
	Refuse to help	172	49.1%
	I don't know	106	30.3%
Up-Down shoulder Movement	Demand for help	7	2.0%
	Refuse to help	145	41.4%
	I don't know	63	18.0%
	Ready to help	70	20.0%
	Wait	65	18.5%
Up-down hand palm	Attention	108	30.9%
	Refuse to help	7	2.0%
	Means question number	70	20.0%
	Wait	165	47.1%
Movement of hand and finger gestures	Attention	124	35.5
	Demand for help	120	34.2%
	Look at it	63	18.0%
	Means question number	43	12.2%

Source: Field Data

As far as the linguistic expression of the type of body languages is concern, the respondents were given a list of different items of body languages expression and from their experience; they were to show different linguistic expression. From the descriptive above respondents are familiar with the body languages used in academic cheating during examination, as 163 of the respondents agreed seeing their fellow students cheat in the examination while 187 of the respondents refused to have seen others cheating during examination. Therefore, from this point of view, it is easy for the respondents to provide linguistic expression of the body languages used in academic cheating. The findings above show that most of the types of body languages. When used in academic cheating gives the linguistic impression of being attentive or someone demanding for help. For instance intentional 'eye brows movement' gives two linguistic impression one is attention (50.5%) and demand for a help (49.5%).In addition, linguistically

handling and placement of objects means seeking attention, (35.5%). For attentiveness, one may need to be helped by another person, that is, demanding for help can be in understanding the question or being told something to fill in the blank space. Refusing to help is another linguistic expression. This involve 'right-left movement' (49.1%) and up-and 'down shoulder movement' (41.4%). This might mean, doesn't know, or doesn't want to be disturbed while doing an examination; it might be worrying to be seen by the invigilators those are likely reasons of someone refusing to help in the examination. Moreover, up-down movement according to students means 'Ready to help'(59.5%) someone asked and is ready to help and the up- down hand palm means, one has understood what has been asked but the person who has asked has to wait for a while. The linguistic expression above especially of the up and down of the head is similar to the findings of Ozuorcun (2013) which means "yes" this is applied in the whole world. However the same body language means 'no' in Turkey, North Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Syria, and Sicil'. The differences in expression may be due to differences in culture, situation and needs.

The forms of body language above, if used by the students intentionally, in examination room may bring the linguistic expression as shown above. This depends on the relationship which exists between students. Moreover, if the same body language is used in the absence of intrapersonal relationship in the same context, cannot give the same linguistic expression. This concurs with the argument that successful relationships are the foundation of Good means communication (Ali, 2011).

8. Conclusion

In this study, body language is used as one of the strategies for collaborative academic cheating it is a conscious kind of language The need and the choice of language is realized best by those who use it in certain situation. Interpersonal relationship body language is highly used by students in cheating to achieve their goals to succeed in education.

9. Recommendations

A. Recommendation to invigilators

- Invigilators should rotate in examination room;
- Invigilators should cooperate in examination room.

B. Recommendation to regional centre

- On time and adequate Provisional of study materials;

- Remind of examination rules and regulations in each session;
- Sitting arrangement should not encourage and motivate academic cheating.

C. Recommendation to Director of Examination Syndicate (DES)

- To have reasonable number of invigilators per examination room;
- To provide academic orientation on invigilation conduct.

D. Recommendations for further studies

- The study on the use of technology in detecting body language in academic cheating in higher learning education.

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