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The impact of communication skills course on students' development of communicative abilities at the Sokoine University of Agriculture: an appraisal

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This study is about the Impact of the Communication Skills (CS) Course on Students' Development of Communicative Abilities at SUA. The general purpose of the study was to conduct an appraisal on the teaching and learning of the CS Course. It was undertaken as a case study. The data collection instruments included questionnaires, interview schedules, observation schedules, and review of textual materials.

The major findings for this study included the following: First, most of students had deficiencies in communication skills at the time they joined the university. Secondly, the teaching of note-taking and writing skills was mainly done through non-interactive lectures. Third, majority of students did not employ writing techniques during lectures and in their assignments and they exhibited deficiencies in writing skills even after doing the course. Fourth, the CS Course did not meet students' expectations in addressing their communication skills needs. Fifth, the course was designed to offer general communication skills regardless of the students' differences in academic disciplines.

The author recommends for a situational analysis to be done with a focus on matching students' diverse academic communication requirements to communication and study skills taught in the CS course. Furthermore, this study recommends to the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training to improve English Language Teaching at all lower levels of education.