

English Language Testing in Higher Education of Pakistan

Wajdan Raza

College of Humanities & Sciences
PAF-Karachi Institute of Economics & Technology, Pakistan
wajdanrazahhotmail.com

180

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the past testing and teaching were deemed as two separate entities. This is the reason that efforts to set directions and foci required for making them productive remained unsuccessful until the emergence of English as an International Language (EIL). It was this development that pushed the concept of language testing forward to the re-conceptualization and upholding their inseparable relationship. This correlation becomes a core issue when it comes to English language learners and is impossible to analyze either of them without referring to the other (Heaton, 1988). The aim of this paper is to help English language coordinators understand the concomitant role of decentralized testing and to create positive effects on classroom teaching. To squeeze all that goes under centralized language testing within the confines of the present paper would be neither possible nor desirable.

1.1 TESTING IN PAKISTAN

Pakistan is the third largest South Asian country in the Outer Circle in which 18 million Pakistanis speak English for several purposes (Kachru, 1989; Boltan, 2008). Its utility is felt dominant at tertiary level education as English is used in books and in and outside

classrooms in the Pakistani universities (Mansoor, 2005; Khan, 2003). Furthermore, students have to take their papers in English. Keeping in view these developments, the National Committee on English (NCE), set up by The Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC), has recently laid emphasis on the English language proficiency of university students by introducing three mandatory and one optional English language courses, of three credit hours each. The NCE has also initiated the project of English Language Teaching Reforms (ELTR) with an aim to improve English Language Teaching (ELT) in the 124 universities through training of English language teachers and providing logistic support needed for the reforms (HEC, 2007).

2.0 STANDARDIZATION VS DECENTRALIZATION—AN EMERGING DICHOTOMY

Although attempts to centralize and/or standardize language testing and use it as a gatekeeper for employment and higher education are in vogue in Pakistan, e.g. the establishment of the National Testing Services in the wake of the current HEC standardization policy, the aim of this paper is to focus on the need for a decentralized and more autonomous language testing policy within

institutions, as it could be more realistic and facilitating in classroom contexts. Conversely, the centralized language testing is severely criticized for being heavily influenced by capabilities of test-takers to pay for test preparation, which in turn not only discriminates, say, the poor and the rich, but also harmfully affects the objectives of language education (Ross, 2008; Briggs, 2004; Leman, 1999; Sacks, 2001). For instance, entry tests introduced by the University of Karachi (KU) last year have been criticized by its very own teachers (Ilyas, 2008). A KU high-up expressed that it was unfair as majority of the prospective entrants were poor (ibid.). However, acknowledging the significant role of the standardized tests, Popham (2005) has recently come up with two guidelines for their preparation: professional ethics and educational defensibility. According to these guidelines, test preparation violates the professional ethics if it involves unethical norms of the education profession, while the educational defensibility is considered intact if no test preparation increases the scores of the students without simultaneously increasing their mastery of the assessment domain tested. This implies that test preparation is potentially misleading if it does not help learners improve their skills but provides them with trick to score better regardless of their existing capabilities. Popham's point is favorably received globally but hardly practiced in Pakistan. I have visited at least ten ELT centers personally that prepare people for the IELTS in Pakistan. Almost all teachers were seen aiding and abetting the tricks to improve test score and passing tips and formats on to their students as how to get seven to eight bands in the IELTS without improving their English language skills. The 'learning format' of the writing task 2 (See Appendix I) of the IELTS, which I managed to get from an ELT centre, took me by surprise. It was a cloze test type of activity, which required filling the gaps in accordance with the issue raised in the task. I saw this use of cloze test item as a trick to improvise test score for the first time.

It becomes almost palpable that Popham's guidelines are hardly followed in classroom contexts where

performance of students and teachers is accounted high only if students score well in tests. In other words, test-based accountability offers least opportunity to teachers in particular for a successful ELT practice. Furthermore, a large-scale-one-time achievement test may misrepresent the abilities of students and create feelings of frustration on the part of teachers and institutions. In developing countries, like Pakistan, the negative effect intensifies and hits the social values harder, as English is the language of elites and has always been considered as an access to upward social mobility (Mansoor, 2005; Rahman, 1999; Haq, 1993) which is mediated by educational access. Unfortunately, the access to K8 or K12 education in general and English language learning in particular has been unequal and unfair owing to incapability of the majority to be socially mobile. Let me explain it with a particular reference to Pakistan, which has two different systems of education: one in government schools and the other in private schools. The means of communication in government schools is Urdu or a regional language, while in private ones English is used for communication making it the most prestigious language as it is the language of law, business and higher education too in the country and many South Asian contexts (Haq, 1993; Ross, 2008). Next to this is difficulty in matching priorities of centralized language testing with the ones in local decentralized language testing. For example, governments in the Outer Circle prioritize English language education for national economic development while institutions in the same Circle might focus the language use in the academic settings only.

Messick (1996) summarizes this issue with a reasonably balanced view that there may be several factors other than test itself which do not allow positive effect on classroom activities. Thus, the test should not be considered invalid unless substantial information is gathered as to how it has negative impact. The premise on which good ESL language testing is built on therefore is to motivate capable individuals to gain access to social mobility in meritocracies by teaching them English language in courses offered in higher education of developing countries, with current pedagogic theories of language. And, the language learning should be

assessed with frameworks pervaded with high reliability and validity.

2.1 BACKWASH

Hence, tests can aid learning and teaching both if aimed to assess the required skills (Heaton, 1988; Hughes, 1994). Their effect is referred as washback or backwash in language studies and can play positive role in educational reforms (Alderson, 1986; Pearson, 1988). Many researches have been carried out on washback explicating that it can be either beneficial or harmful depending upon the content and techniques (Alderson & Wall 1993; Bailey 1996: 257; Cheng & Falvey 2000). For example, if skills not required for every day communication are assessed, the test could leave harmful effect on teaching and learning, such as mechanical test of writing skills by giving multiple-choice questions on grammar. On the contrary, the test with requisite skills for communicative purposes is perceived facilitating for classroom activities, e.g. assessment of oral-aural proficiency comprising a topic of general concern for a discussion without making any pre-appointed end to it. This means that the test-takers must not be encouraged to learn by rote for the test preparation but they should come up with their genuine emerging ideas and the skills to establish, develop and maintain real life communication with their peers. In addition, it is important to notice that by doing so validity increases but reliability could be low. (See Raza, 2008 for a quick understanding about validity and reliability in language testing). Unfortunately, most ESL curricula focus a priori grammar without taking into account that grammar, English grammar in particular, is dynamic, changing and regularity-based, not a fixed-rule governed phenomenon which reduces the cultural and social role of language learning and inhibits students from the language classroom discourse (Shoham, 2000). This view is supported by Hopper (1993) who sees grammar as incomplete, dynamic and emergent, which is discursively learned through communicative tasks congruent with socio-cultural theory. Perhaps it is our cultural and contextual knowledge which helps language learners negotiate meaning and engage themselves in dialogue

and discourse (Saville-Troike, 1991). Hence, it is better to teach and test ways to describe diagrams, place an order in a restaurant or make a request than to know about parts of speech, tenses or active-passive voice. Regrettably, these bad practices are recurrent in Pakistan and consequently keep English language classes less democratic, more silent, and heavily teacher-centered, setting the significance of negotiation of meaning aside.

2.2 TYPES OF TESTING AND THEIR USAGE IN PAKISTAN

There are various types of testing which measure test-takers' abilities, with different objectives. Interestingly, some types of English language testing employed in higher education of Pakistan are not differentiated. For instance, English language proficiency tests which, by definition, measure test-takers' proficiency regardless of their previous learning or the course content that they may have followed in the past (e.g. TOEFL/IELTS), are considered similar to achievement tests that, contrary to proficiency tests, are directly related to language courses and assess as to how successfully learners have achieved the objectives of the courses.

Progress achievement test is carried out during the course and helps teachers give feedback to learners on their performances while final achievement test is given at the end of the course but does not provide teachers with an opportunity for feedback. Both achievement tests become proficiency tests at times and are run in the Pakistani universities leaving their validity highly questionable. Furthermore, tests, which help place students of same ability in a group and are referred as placement tests, are sporadically used in Pakistan. Similarly, diagnostic tests, which aim to identify strengths and weaknesses of learners and help teachers decide if further teaching is required, are not utilized either.

As a result, freshman courses taught in the Pakistani universities appear to be a priori grammar based, in which communicative language content is either

absent or meager. Since speaking component is recently introduced, course objectives of oral communication are hardly mediated by its content, which in turn puts both learning and teaching at stake. For instance, its testing is carried out through presentations, possibly creating negative backwash on classroom activities.

2.3 REAL COMMUNICATION—A MISSING LINK

Another significant problem, highlighted by VanPatten (1998), of the gap between Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and ESL classroom practices is (mis)interpretations of the concept communicative which cause negative backwash effect. One of the commonly held misinterpretations among most ESL teachers in Pakistan is that knowing a grammar leads to communication without taking it into account that humans are creative and produce infinite sentences with finite sets of rules. Chomsky (1957) furthers this point reasoning out how a sentence remains nonsensical even with ‘correct grammar’ by giving the following example, which is most quoted in linguistics nowadays:

“Colorless green ideas sleep furiously.”

This concept is further critically evaluated by Dell Hymes who describes that syntax (which is limited to grammar here) has no meanings without the rules of use (Coulthard, 1985). In other words, it is use of the target-language than its grammar which needs to be focused as a means of language acquisition, not as a result. Hymes discusses communicative competence using four categories with a particular emphasis on the category of appropriacy, in which a proficient language user needs to know about cultural norms and expressions apposite to given situations (ibid.). E.g. language users should be able to greet, negotiate, describe, apologize, etc. depending upon the domains that they are speaking. Similarly, university students should be taught how to take notes, participate in discussions, frame questions and arguments, write papers, present ideas, etc. Such uses should be engaged into communicative activities

and tested with the aim to assess the expansion of the learners’ knowledge. To assess the expansion of the learner’s knowledge new items should be presented in the tests. Furthering the concept of communicative competence, Lantolf (2000) thinks that learning is culturally situated phenomenon and testing compatible with learning should be perceived as a ‘social practice and a social product’. Communicative competence is the only possible way to make this practice successfully. Although the language testing is always perceived difficult due to complex nature of language proficiency of test-takers in different situations and domains—e.g. some test-takers can perform better in discussions than long monologues. Similarly, test-takers, who are students of engineering, can describe plans and drawings more efficiently than engage themselves in the language required in socialization—it is highly controversial how a ‘non-native speaker’ can communicate better in the domain of engineering than a ‘native speaker’. The discussion about native and non-native controversy is beyond the scope of the present paper though.

Therefore, it is fundamentally significant to integrate communicative competence into English language tests and make ways for reasonable validity and the facilitation in classroom context. The communicative purpose may be ignored while testing knowledge of a dead language, e.g. Latin, but this purpose must be the main objective of living language testing. And, teacher’s feedback should be aimed to motivate the learner to develop and meet the required scale of proficiency set in the course.

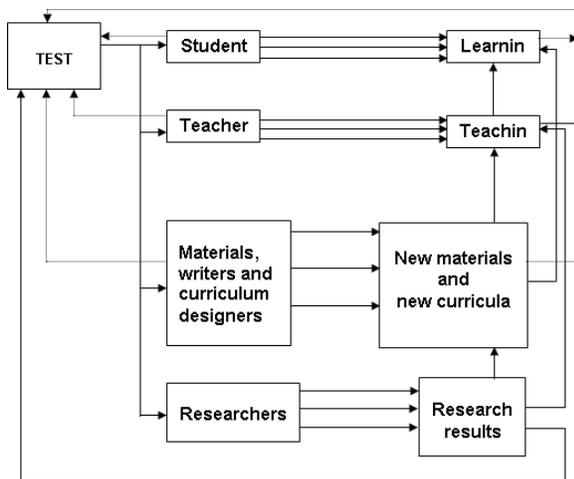
2.4 HUGHES AND BAILY ON POSITIVE BACKWASH

After discussing the philosophy of communicative language teaching and testing, and the current flawed practices in the Pakistani ELT situations producing harmful backwash, it has become relatively easier to understand Hughes’s (1993: 2) washback mechanism for improved learning that comprises the trichotomy of participants, process, and products. The Hughes’s assumption is that the attitudes and perceptions of

participants towards their teaching and learning are changed or reinforced by the test. In the later stage of washback, these changes involve participants to take actions (process) to positively or negatively affect learning outcomes—the product. Figure 1 depicts that tests, after being processed, could give a rise to better teaching, learning and material development. This expected improvement could be augmented with constant research results. In the Figure, the possible influence from the participants on the test is highlighted by dotted lines. (See Hughes, 1993 for the detailed discussion).

Figure 1 A basic model of washback

PARTICIPANTS PROCESSES PRODUCTS



Bailey (1996) developed a basic model of washback incorporating Alderson & Wall's (1993) Washback Hypotheses (See Appendix II) and Hughes's (1993) trichotomy of test effects: participants, process and product. The crux of these fifteen hypotheses is that the test affects teachers and learners only disregarding the significant contributions of administrators, material writers, curriculum designers and researchers. However, Hughes (1993) acknowledges administrators, material developers and publishers as participants, in addition to classroom teachers and students. The process, with a particular focus on learning process as a whole, refers

to actions taken by the participants and plays a pivotal role in bringing backwash but is not easy to measure whereas things learned are termed products. Measuring washback is therefore both controversial and problematic in research at times. For instance, what most teachers in Pakistan consider communicative in their teaching techniques is simply monologic (one-sided) and what they claim might be diametrically opposite to what they actually do in classroom.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

Two freshman courses of English language were evaluated. Term papers of eighteen English language teachers teaching at a private university in Karachi (its name is not shown in the present paper at the request of the university management's) were collected in 2007 and analysed in conjunction with the course outlines, course objectives and aims of the programme. To do this all, frameworks of Shomay, et al. (1996), Alderson & Hamp-Lyons (1996) and Cheng (1999) were partially used. It was noticed that the classes were relatively better in size—ranging from 30 to 40—than those of 80 to 100 students of public higher educational places. Nine teachers were teaching first semester course and the remaining the second semester's. One session of each teacher was attended. In an attempt to reduce the potential deficiency in the frequency of classroom observation, teachers were requested to grant permission to observe their classes the very same day of request, in order to minimize the possibility of any extraordinary teaching plan. Unstructured interviews with the teachers were used to elicit perceptions about language proficiency.

4.0 DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis was initiated with classroom talk time, one of the determining factors of the nature of classroom discourse. It was then extended to test items presented in term papers underpinning grammatical focus testing, for the most part. Students' scores were discussed at the end.

Table 1 is a rough assessment of different levels of

classroom interactions in the fifteen sessions, defining the prevailing conditions of teacher-centred English language classrooms' activities. It was also observed that the classes were limited to monologic speaking, creating highly non-interactive environment. That was quite disappointing for adult ESL classes, because students' responses disclose how precisely or vaguely a point made by the teacher is listened to.

Table 1: Classroom talk time

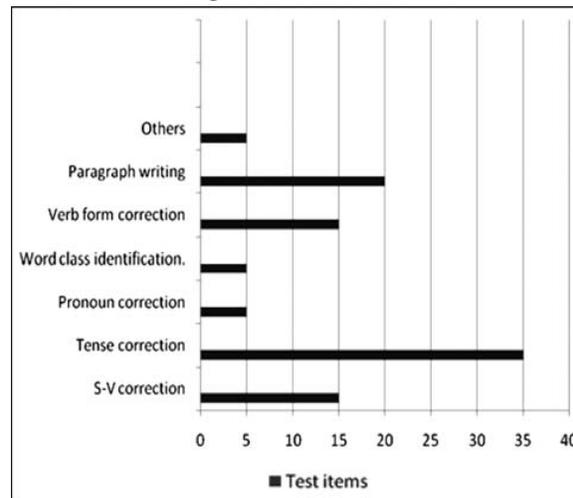
Classroom talk	Classroom talk time (%)
Student talk time	15
Teacher talk time	85

Fifteen per cent student talk time was not encouraging either as only few (maybe more extrovert, confident, and 'proficient') students were asked to speak in classes, which is again monologic of being unlikely to be responded to. Linguistically speaking, all good classes, ESL classes in particular, have an explicit classroom discourse mainly emerging with the help of teachers, who produce utterances at the beginning that hold the possibility of being responded to. Their single-spoken sentences turn into dialogues when other speakers—students in classroom setting obviously—make responses and extend the sentences beyond monologic. Similarly, this dialogic interaction revolves around an idea until a new concept emerges that, in turn, culminates with a discourse. Hardly did the classroom discourse exist in the present case. In fact, expecting their students to merely recall verbatim previously taught, the teachers used to ask low-level cognitive questions concentrating on factual information and memory and limiting learners' understanding and communication. Should we use 'shall' in this sentence? and Do we use 'a' or 'an' with MA? are two such examples. However, these questions, according to Ellis (1993), help teachers avoid a slow-paced lesson, keep the attention of the students, and maintain control of the classroom. High-level cognitive questions, analysis based and more effective for students of average and high ability, should also be incorporated in ESL classes, as the low-level ones are largely beneficial for young disadvantaged learners and

primarily involve mastery of basic skills (Gall, 1984).

Figure 2 shown below is the categorization of the test items given in the term papers of the first semester English course. It is evident that that almost all test items, except paragraph writing, were heavily grammatical correction based. It is also interesting to note that test-takers who attempted correction items successfully must have passed without being involved in real communication. Perhaps it was only paragraph writing which necessitated real communication and might have given the assessor an opportunity to see how ably the test-taker floated an idea about the given topic, developed it and managed to finish it with different stylistic devices. Unfortunately, that was limited to a single test item in the present case, which carried only 20 per cent marks. The markers who were teachers of the same courses disclosed in the interviews that they considered subject-verb agreement (S-V) and 'good vocabulary' far more important than the development of pertinent ideas, their completion, and their relevance to the given topic. Additionally, there was no rating scale to assess this subjective test item, which made reliability of the paper highly questionable as well.

Figure 2 Distribution of test items in term papers of First semester English course



Now, if you look at Figure 3, essay writing carried seventy per cent marks in term papers of the second semester English course and had a better validity due

Research

to their performance-oriented test items. Although précis writing and review writing were in the course, I consider them useless for students majoring in engineering and management sciences. At this point, we can see how the course objective and its outline influence both teaching and learning. And, any inclusion of contents, which have no significant value for the students, could cause negative backwash effect. For example, test items of review writing were aimed to compel test-takers to recall the story of a movie or of a novel, even if they had not read a single page of the work or seen the first scene of the picture but just got their gist from the Internet and learned by rote.

18G

Besides the questionable reliability in the absence of a rating scale, the test item of essay writing could not be perceived highly valid either. Have a look at the items given in two papers:

Write an essay of 300 words on ‘autobiography’.

RRRRRRRRRRR

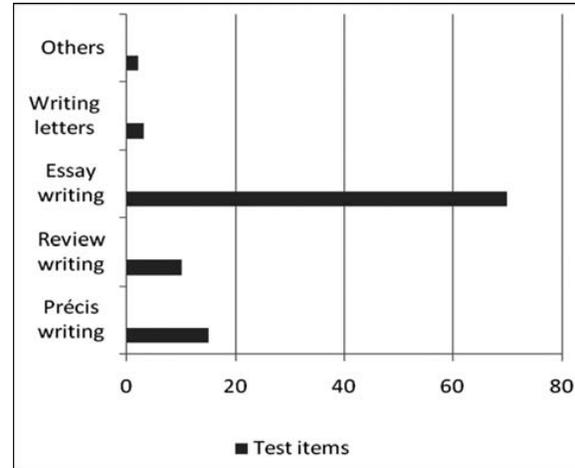
(Paper A) Write a short description on any one:

- a- Policeman
- b- Sales girl

RRRRRRRRRRR (Paper B)

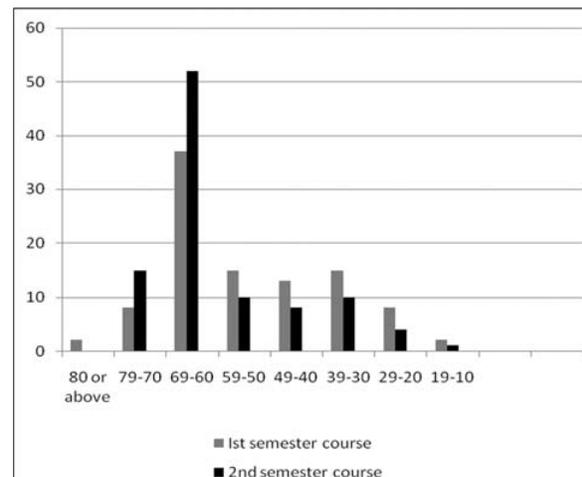
The test item of Paper A was puzzling due to two reasons. First, it is ambiguous whose autobiography was to be written. Secondly, test-takers could not attempt it successfully if they might not have known the meaning of the word ‘autobiography’. Had a clear situation been described, the item would have been easier and more valid. In my point of view, ‘Describe yourself and share some past events of your life you still remember. Your word limit is 300.’ could be a better replacement of the Paper (A) test item. What I am trying to emphasize here is that the language of the test item should not be a hurdle; it must be stimulating, easy-to-understand. That is how students can properly be assessed. The validity of the test item of Paper (B) was very low as test-takers with engineering background would hardly have any information about a sales girl or a policeman. It was perhaps good to test knowledge than writing skills of a prospective engineer.

Figure 3: Distribution of test items in term papers of Second semester English course



Below is the graphic description of marks obtained by students in term papers of the first and second semester English language courses. The University, where the papers were set and marked, follows the current policies of the HEC on achievement tests and passes candidates who score at least 60 per cent. Figure 4 shows that more than fifty per cent candidates failed in the first semester term papers, while around 65 per cent candidates pass the second semester term papers.

Figure 4 Marks scored in English language courses of first and second semesters.



After interviewing teachers, following points were gathered as reasons for the high rate of failures:

1. Majority of students were very weak in English language and could not understand it in class.
2. The students could not write or speak a single grammatically correct sentence.
3. It was difficult to teach the mixed-ability classes.
4. The University management interferes in the English language teaching and badly needs good understanding of unique needs of language courses in Pakistan and their immediate recognition as language courses, not subject ones.
5. Students considered the language courses less important.
6. Some students were irregular therefore failed.
7. As students were weak, they needed more classroom learning time.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

After this survey, it is easy to see that ESL classroom testing is heavily grammatical and ineffective, which leads us to draw the following conclusions:

1. ESL tests must be communicative performance based in approach, which should be reflective of real life communication. They must encourage test-takers 'to do something' and carry out tasks successfully.
2. Testing must not be indirect, which is regrettably frequent in Pakistan. For example, error-correction multiple choice test items are mistakenly presumed that they test grammar of test-takers. They must be avoided thus.
3. Testing should be considered as an on-going research activity, whose findings must be utilized for the improvement of the ELT programme.
4. To make tests more reliable, all four skills should be tested separately.
5. Tests should be criterion referenced for pedagogic purpose as it may help teachers to see as to how proficient the student has become in the given skill.
6. Achievement tests should be developed with a particular reference to the course objectives. Tests

for basic level students should be easier than the ones for advanced level students. Teachers must change their thinking that the so-called grammar is tested at the beginning and extended response skills (speaking and writing) at the end of the programme. Both of them could be tested but the level of difficulty should clearly be specified.

7. Listening and speaking should be tested in the early phases of learning, as reading and writing are considered relatively difficult in language acquisition.
8. Self-assessment could motivate students and enable them to assume greater responsibility, thus creating positive backwash. It is beneficial and easily workable in formative tests in particular.
9. As the language of tests is perceived different from the ones used in daily life, students must be made acquainted with it well before the tests. It is better to develop tests with the linguistic simplification approach. Ensure that the language used for test instructions is easily understood. Use active voice, common vocabulary and include visual support.
10. Test accommodations, which are a means of reducing difficulties the students face in testing situations, should be taken into consideration. It is viewed that target accommodations are promising for English language learners and do not increase the scores but help students take tests comfortably (Kopriva, 2000). Extended time and additional breaks are examples of accommodations. It is also important however to note that what accommodation is provided in the given testing situation while assessing the test-takers' performance.

I hope these guidelines may help university management in general and its teachers in particular streamline ESL classes successfully and create opportunities for positive backwash on classroom teaching.

- (i) Kachru's Concentric Circles consist of three circles: Inner Circle comprising English-speaking countries, Outer Circle countries, say, Pakistan and India, in which English has a long history and serves a vital role in

domains of power, and Expanding Circle countries wherein English has no official role, e.g. Germany and France.

(ii) IELTS is jointly managed by The University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES), The British Council and IDP Education Australia: IELTS Australia. It tests all four skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking and is used for going abroad in Pakistan. There are two modules of the IELTS Test - Academic module and the General Training module. The Academic Writing module consists of two activities: Task 1 and Task 2. Candidates are given 60 minutes to complete both tasks. In Writing Task 1, IELTS candidates are asked to describe information that is usually presented in the form of a graph, table or

diagram. They must write at least 150 words and the writing task should be done in 20 minutes. The Academic Writing Task 2 asks you to write a short essay of a minimum of 250 words. The essay is usually a discussion of a subject of general interest. You may have to present and justify your opinion about something, give the solution to a problem or compare differing ideas or viewpoints. The discussion in this present paper is on the Writing Task 2.

(iii) Crystal (1999) defines cloze test as a technique used in teaching and testing reading comprehension, in which readers guess which words have been removed at regular intervals from a text. Some omissions are more predictable than others.

REFERENCES

- Alderson, J. Charles, and Dianne Wall (1993) Does Washback Exist? *Applied Linguistics*, 14.2: 115-29.
- Alderson, J. C. (1986) Innovations in language testing. In Portal, M., editor, *Innovations in language testing*. NFER Nelson. 93-105.
- Alderson, C., & Hamp-Lyons, L. (1996) TOEFL Preparation Courses: A Study of Washback. *Language Testing*, 13.2: 280-297.
- Bailey, K. (1996) Working for washback: A review of the washback concept in language testing. *Language Testing*, 13: 257-79.
- Boltan, K. (2008) English in Asia, Asian Englishes, and the Issue of Proficiency. *English Today*, 94.2: 5-8.
- Briggs, D. (2004) Evaluating SAT coaching: Gains, effects, and self-selection. In Zwick, R. (Ed.) *Rethinking the SAT: The future of standardized testing in university admission*. New York: Routledge-Falmer. 217-34.
- Cheng, L. (2005) *Changing Language Teaching Through Language Testing: A Washback Study*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 40-100.
- Cheng, L., and P. Falvey (2000) What Works? The Washback Effect of a New Public Examination on Teachers' Perspectives and Behaviours in Classroom Teaching. *Curriculum Forum*, 9.2: 1-33.
- Cheng, L. (1999) Changing assessment: washback on teacher perceptions and actions. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 15. 253-271.
- Chomsky (1957) *Syntactic Structures*. The Hague: Mouton. Reprint. Berlin and New York (1985).
- Coulthard, M. (1985) *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis*. Longman. 40-78.
- Crystal, David (1999) *The Penguin Dictionary of Language* (2nd Ed.). Penguin Books: UK. 58.
- Ellis, K. (1993) Teacher questioning behavior and student learning: What research says to teachers. (Paper presented at the 1993 Convention of the Western States Communication Association, Albuquerque, New Mexico). (ERIC Document Reproduction No. 359 572).
- Gall, M. (1984) Synthesis of research on teachers' questioning. *Educational Leadership*. 42. 40-47.
- Haq, Anjum Riazul (1993) The Position and Status of English in Pakistan. In Baumgardner (Ed.) *The English Language in Pakistan*. Karachi: Oxford University Press. 14-15.

- Heaton, J.B. (1988). *Writing English language tests* (2nd Ed.). London: Longman. 5- 10.
- Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (2007) Annual Report (2005-06). Islamabad: Higher Education Commission of Pakistan. 99-120.
- Hopper, P., and Thompson, S. (1993) Language universals, discourse pragmatics, and semantics. *Language Sciences*, 15. 4: 357-76.
- Hughes, A. (1993) Backwash and TOEFL 2000. Unpublished manuscript, University of Reading.
- Hughes, Arthur (1994) *Testing for Language Teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 22-23.
- Ilyas, F. (2008, 21 October). KU meeting to debate pre-test issue today. *Daily Dawn*. Karachi, Pakistan.
- Kachru, B. (1989) Teaching world Englishes. *Indian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 13.1: 85-95.
- Khan, M. K. Raza. (2003) Washback Effects of English Language Testing in Pakistan. *SPELT Quarterly*, 18.3: 1-7.
- Kopriva, R. (2000) Ensuring accuracy in testing for English language learners. Washington, DC: Council of Chief State School Officers. Retrieved September 22, 2007
<http://www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/EnsuringAccuracy.pdf>
- Lantolf, J. P. (2000) Introducing sociocultural theory. In J. P. Lantolf (Ed.) *Sociocultural theory and second language learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Leman, N. (1999) *The big test: The secret history of the American meritocracy*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux. 20-87.
- Mansoor, S. (2005) *Language Planning in Higher Education: A Case Study of Pakistan*. Karachi: Oxford University Press. 275-77.
- Messick, S. (1996) Validity and washback in language testing. *Language Testing* 13, 241-56.
- Pearson, I. (1988) Tests as levers for change. In Chamberlain, D. and Baumgardner, R. (eds.). *ESP in the classroom: practice and evaluation*. *ELT Document* 128. Modern English Publications, 98-107.
- Popham, W. J. (2005) *Classroom assessment: What teachers need to know* (4th Ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education. 300-310.
- Rahman, T. (1999) *Language, Education, and Culture*. Karachi: Oxford University Press. 98.
- Raza, W. (2008, 29-31 October) A rating scale to assess English speaking proficiency of university students in Pakistan, presented in the Third International Language Learning Conference. University Sains Malaysia. Penang, Malaysia.
- Ross, Steven J. (2008) Language testing in Asia: Evolution, innovation, and policy challenges. In *Language Testing*. 25.1: 5-13.
- Sacks, Peter (2001) *Standardized Minds: The High Price of America's Testing Culture and What We Can Do to Change It* ISBN: 978-0738204338.
- Saville-Troike, M. (1991) Teaching and testing for academic achievement: The role of language development. *Occasional Papers in Bilingual Education*. 4.
- Shohamy, E. (2000) The relationship between language testing and second language acquisition, revisited. *System*, 28.4: 541-53.
- Shohamy, E., Donitsa-Schmidt, S., & Ferman, I. (1996) Test impact revisited: Washback effect over time. *Language Testing*. 13.3: 298-317.
- VanPatten, B. (1998) Perceptions of and perspectives on the term "communicative." *Hispania*, 81.4: 925-32.

APPENDIX I WRITING TASK-2 (250 words)

It seems to be valid that Topic name (Problem) is gaining grounds and cropping up as a serious concern in our society. Much to your surprise, most people are heard saying that Causes of topic (problem) 1. _____ D 2. _____ & 3. _____ is related to many other issue, for instance, related Problems 1. _____ D 2. _____ & 3. _____. Lets us take a detailed look at the causes of the growing problems “internet addiction”.

One of the obvious reasons spawning Topic name(Problem) is the reason 1. _____. Another reason for the increase in the reason 2. _____ is the _____. It is true that reason 3. _____ is also affecting the above problem which entails that it is putting a bad impression on the social order.

There are many effects of this rapidly growing problem and these are:

Effect 1. _____. Effect 2. _____.& Effect 3. _____.

There may be several ways to rectify these difficulties. In my opinion, the most viable solution pertaining to catastrophe is:

Solution 1. _____ Solution 2. _____ \Solution 3. _____

After grasping the complete picture and highlighting the pros and cons of Topic name (Problem) , it is evident from the above elucidation that people need to be aware of their responsibilities and responsible agencies/ department should seriously consider the change in society. It is the worst irreversible trend, the Topic name (Problem) will become very serious.

SAMPLE ANSWER

Internet Addiction

It is true that internet addiction is becoming a serious problem in our society. This is surprisingly as most people think that materialism, drug and need for money is related to many other problems such as Illiteracy, Alcoholism and Crimes. Lets us take a detailed look at the causes of the growing problems “internet addiction”.

One of the obvious reasons of increase in materialism is the breakdown of the family system. Another reason for in crease in the drug is lack of job opportunities and lack of social activities. It is true that need for money is also affecting the above problem which entail that media is putting a bad impression on the society.

There are many effects of this rapidly growing problem and these are: Drug use, Immorality and Poor grades in school.

There may be several ways to rectify these problems. In my opinion the most viable solution pertaining to catastrophe is: Therapy, education and family support. Proper attention to the towards therapy can be most effective. Proper education can built a good conscious and resources for proper earning. Family support can also play an important role to overcome this problem.

After grasping the complete picture and enlighten the pros and cons of Internet addiction, it is evident form the above elucidation that people need to become aware of their responsibilities and responsible agencies/ department should seriously consider the change in society. It this worst trend is not reverse, the Internet addiction will become very serious.

Appendix II

Some Possible Washback Hypotheses Suggested by Alderson and Wall (Huges, 1993, pp. 120-121)

1. A test will influence teaching.
2. A test will influence learning.
3. A test will influence what teachers teach; and
4. A test will influence how teachers teach
5. A test will influence what learners learn
6. A test will influence how learners learn
7. A test will influence the rate and sequence of teaching; and
8. A test will influence the rate and sequence of learning
9. A test will influence the degree and depth of teaching
10. A test will influence the degree and depth of learning
11. A test will influence attitude towards the content, method, etc., of teaching and learning
12. Tests that have important consequences will have washback; conversely,
13. Tests that do not have important consequences will have no washback
14. Tests will have washback on all learners and teachers

Appendix III

Aim of the English Proficiency Development Programme

The aim of the programme is to systematically guide students for improving their pronunciation, developing their vocabulary, and refining their knowledge and usage of English grammar.

Objective of Course One

To help students form both grammatically and semantically correct and well-knit structures to communicate both in written and spoken English.

Main features of the course outline:

Word class, tenses, modals, passives conditionals and narration

Objective of Course Two

By the end of this course students should be able to write aptly and coherently.

Appendix IV

Outlines of Courses English II (English Composition)

Course objective

By the end of this course students should be able to write aptly and coherently.

Sessions	Topics to be covered
1	Analysis of the subject (title) practice
2	Brain Storming and mind mapping practice
3	How to make an outline(practice)
4	How to write a paragraph
5	Practice and feedback
6	Practice and feedback
7	Practice and feedback
8	Practice and feedback
9	How to write a Precis
	Difference between précis and paragraph
10	Practice
11	Practice
12	Practice
13	How to write a review book review, movie review and article review
14	Practice – movie review
15	Practice – article review
16	Practice – book review

ⁱ Kachru's Concentric Circles consist of three circles: Inner Circle comprising English-speaking countries, Outer Circle countries, say, Pakistan and India, in which English has a long history and serves a vital role in domains of power, and Expanding Circle countries wherein English has no official role, e.g. Germany and France.

ⁱⁱ IELTS is jointly managed by The University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES), The British Council and IDP Education Australia: IELTS Australia. It tests all four skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking and is used for going abroad in Pakistan. There are two modules of the IELTS Test - Academic module and the General Training module. The Academic Writing module consists of two activities: Task 1 and Task 2. Candidates are given 60 minutes to complete both tasks. In Writing Task 1, IELTS candidates are asked to describe information that is usually presented in the form of a graph, table or diagram. They must write at least 150 words and the writing task should be done in 20 minutes. The Academic Writing Task 2 asks you to write a short essay of a minimum of 250 words. The essay is usually a discussion of a subject of general interest. You may have to present and justify your opinion about something, give the solution to a problem or compare

differing ideas or viewpoints. The discussion in this present paper is on the Writing Task 2.

Crystal (1999) defines cloze test as a technique used in teaching and testing reading comprehension, in which readers guess which words have been removed at regular intervals from a text. Some omissions are more predictable than others, of course, but working out the possibilities certainly demonstrates how well you know your language. Its use in the test preparation centres in Pakistan is poles part.

17	How to write an essay
18	Practice
19	Practice
20	Practice
21	Practice
22	Practice
23	Punctuation
24	Punctuation (practice)
25	Methods of writing a letter
26	How to write a letter (formal)
27	Invitation / Apology
28	Application
29	Practice – letter writing
30	How to make an advertisement.

