



جمهورية العراق

وزارة التعليم العالي والبحث العلمي

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كلية التربية للعلوم الانسانية

قسم اللغة الانكليزية

المرحلة الرابعة

Assessment اسم المادة

Chapter Five : عنوان المحاضرة

Test Design 1

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Chapter 5

Test Design(1)

Introduction

Language teachers need to acquaint themselves with the following four distinctive features before starting writing tests. Some of these features have been briefly mentioned earlier, but we need to discuss them in more detail for their importance. When describing assessment in an educational program, teachers are mainly concerned with:

- Test Format
- Test Scoring
- Test Result Interpretation
- Test Techniques

5.1 TEST FORMAT

Tests may be classified in three main categories, closed-ended, open-ended, and restricted-response. These three categories are briefly discussed here and will be fully illustrated with examples later on.

- **Closed-ended tests**

In a closed-ended test, the testee does not create, modify or develop the information. He selects from options that the teacher has put before him as in multiple-choice questions.

- **Open-ended tests**

In open-ended tests, the testee is free to initiate, elaborate adopt the response he considers appropriate for the question, as letter writing.

- **Restricted-response tests**

This format provides the testee with the opportunity to compose his response, but on very restricted grounds. The best example is cloze tests.

5.2 TEST SCORING

The process of scoring involves giving numerical scores to students' performance. Scoring is divided into three main categories: objective, subjective and semi-objective. The distinction is in the process of scoring, and nothing else. If no judgment is required on the part of the teacher, then scoring is objective. If the teacher's judgment is required, the scoring is said to be subjective. The scores on a semi-objective test are given according to certain criteria and a scoring scheme is needed to assure the relative objectivity of scoring, for instance (2) marks for a full answer, (1) mark for an incomplete answer, and (0=zero) for an incorrect one. Multiple-choice items are the most obvious example of an objectively scored test. Short-answer questions, which require a variety of brief responses, are semi-objectively scored, whereas the oral test or essay writing is necessarily subjectively scored.

5.3 TEST RESULT INTERPRETATION

The results of language tests can be interpreted in two different ways depending on the reference used. When the score results are interpreted in relation to the performance of a particular group of individuals, we speak of a norm-referenced interpretation. This is very common in our schools. If, on the other hand, the scores are interpreted with respect to a specific level or pre-determined criterion we speak of criterion-referenced interpretation. Tests that are developed to permit the first interpretation are called norm-referenced tests, and those that permit the second interpretation are called criterion-referenced tests.

General Considerations

There is a considerable range of methods by which students' abilities and performance can be tested. The process of choosing the appropriate one is governed by a number of considerations including:

a) Subject matter, b) Purpose, c) Age, d) Ability, and e) Time

Methods of language testing available for a language teacher include:

- Written assessment
- Oral assessment
- Aural assessment

FORMAT	CLOSED-ENDED	Restricted-response	OPEN-ENDED
SCORING	OBJECTIVE	SEMI-OBJECTIVE	SUBJECTIVE
TEST TECHNIQUES	Multiple-choice True/false Matching Rearranging Gap filling one Odd-man out Labelling Grid Transcoding	Transformation Completion Cloze Short-answer Qs Gap filling (with no options)	Extended writing: Composition Letter Essay Summary

Table 6: test format, scoring and techniques

5.6 OBJECTIVE TESTS

Objective tests have the following common characteristics:

1. Each objective test item has a precisely defined problem that can be solved in a short time.
2. An objective test has high reliability.
3. An objective test usually has high content validity.
4. The test provides wide coverage of subject content.
5. The test can be speedily and easily marked.
6. Marking is not influenced by the teacher's prejudices.
7. The test has the advantage of being easy to examine statistically.

5.7 TECHNIQUES OF OBJECTIVE TESTS

Objective tests include the following techniques:

1. Multiple-choice
2. Odd-one out
3. True/false
4. Labeling
5. Matching
6. Grid
7. Rearranging
8. Transcoding
9. Gap filling

5.8 MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ)

The multiple-choice test is generally recognized as the most widely applicable type of objective tests. It may be necessary to start with familiarizing students with the terminology used, namely:

- (a) Discrete item- a single complete item.
- (b) Stem-the initial part of the item which may be in the form of a question or incomplete statement.
- (c) Options- all the choices or answers (usually three or four).
- (d) Key- the correct answer.
- (e) Distractors- the incorrect choices.
- (f) Item Set- Five or more items to test one activity or skill like grammar or vocabulary.

- 1) Which country is to the north of Iraq is _____

- A. Syria
- B. Kuwait
- C. Iran
- D. Turkey

5.8.1 ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF MCQ

(a) Advantages

- 1) The multiple-choice test can be answered in a short time.
- 2) The test can have wide coverage.
- 3) The test is easy to mark and the marking is objective.
- 4) It has content validity and high reliability.
- 5) It can be set for any level of difficulty.
- 6) Large number of students can be tested in a short time
- 7) It is usually free from ambiguity as it restricts the testee's responses to a specific area..

(b)Disadvantages

- 1) Writing a technically sound item is not easy
 - 2) It takes a long time to construct.
 - 3) Finding sufficient number of incorrect but plausible distractors difficult.
 - 4) The test results can be distorted by pupils guessing answers or cheating by copying others' answers.
 - 5) The Only recognition and recall are expected from the testee.
 - 6) It can have a negative influence on classwork and learning
- Methods

5.7.2 SUGGESTIONS FOR CONSTRUCTING MC ITEMS

The following suggestions provide a useful set of criteria against which to prepare and judge an item.

- 1) The item should be short, meaningful and present a definite problem.**

Poor: The Nile_____

- A. flows from north to south.
- B. is as long as the Tigris.
- C. flows in the Sudan and Egypt
- D. Floods every year

2) The item should be free from irrelevant material.

Poor: Pupils in school should have to wear a uniform. What is the colour of the shirt pupils wear in your school?

- A. Green B. Blue C. White D. Grey

Better: Iraqi school boys have to wear-----shirts.

- A. green C. white
B. blue D. grey

(3) An item should contain only one correct answer.

Poor: Which of the following is the best source of heat for home use? --

- A. Coal
B. Electricity
C. Gas D. Oil

Better: Which is the most expensive source of heating for home use in Iraq? --

- A. Coal B. Electricity
C. Gas D. Oil

(4) Make sure you do not give away the right answer through grammatical cues.

Poor: She needs to get up earlier so she's buying an-----clock.

- A. time
B. alarm
C. watch
D. bell

Better: She needs to get up earlier so she is buying -----clock.

- A. a time B. an alarm C. a watch D. a ball

Having 'an' in the stem identifies choice 'b' as the correct response. Writing a/an with the options improves the item

(5) The stem should usually contain those words or phrases instead of repeating them in each option.

Poor: Does that shop stay open -----?

- A. on Saturdays
 - C. in Saturdays
 - B. at Saturdays
 - D. during Saturdays
- Saturdays?

Better: Does that shop stay open

- A. on
- B. at
- C. in
- D. During

(6) The options should be roughly kept of the same length as one another in a single item.

Poor: He began to choke while he was eating the fish.

- A. die
- B. cough and vomit
- C. grew very old
- D. be unable to breathe because of something in the windpipe

Better: He began to choke while he was eating the fish.

- A. die
- C. suffocate
- B. cough and vomit
- D. grow very angry

(7) The correct answer should appear in random order.

(8) Whenever possible, all options should be related to the same general area or activity.

(9) Items should be constructed in a way that no clues can be obtained from other choices.

1. This building is -----than that one.

- A. large B. larger
- C. more large
- D. largest

2. This student is cleverer -----that one.

A. from

B. for

C. than

D. to

(10) All distracters should be attractive to the student who is not sure of the correct answer. Plausible distractors are based usually on the students' mistakes in writing previous answers.