

Saudi EFL Majors' Productive Vocabulary Size

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Abstract

This study aimed to measure Saudi English majors' productive vocabulary knowledge. The subjects were forty-five Saudi male students with five years of study as English Language and Translation majors at King Saud University in Riyadh. Paul Nation's Productive Vocabulary Levels Test: Version A was administered to the subjects during the last two weeks of their final semester. The results showed poor productive vocabulary sizes under the five-word frequency bands. Furthermore, the mean scores deteriorated as the level of word frequency declined. The participants' average vocabulary size was approximately 503 words (50 %) in the 2nd 1,000-word level, 314 words (31%) in the 3rd 1,000-word level, 119 words (12%) in the 5th 1,000-word level, 10 words (1%) for the 10th 1,000-word level, and 107 words (13%) in the University Word List band. It was evident that participants' performances were highly affected by the word-frequency level in all test bands. Immediate intervention is required to improve students' performance and to prevent such poor performance among future students.

Keywords: EFL, King Saud University, Saudi Arabia, Saudi students, strategy training, vocabulary learning strategies.

حجم المفردات الإنتاجية في اللغة الإنجليزية لدى الطلاب السعوديين المتخصصين في اللغة الإنجليزية كلفة أجنبية

إعداد

إبراهيم القرني

قسم اللغة الإنجليزية والترجمة،

كلية اللغات والترجمة

جامعة الملك سعود، الرياض، المملكة العربية السعودية

الملخص

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى قياس معرفة المفردات الإنتاجية لدى الطلاب السعوديين المتخصصين في اللغة الإنجليزية كلفة أجنبية. كانت عينة الدراسة خمسة وأربعين طالباً سعودياً ممن قضاوا خمس سنوات من الدراسة كمتخصصين في اللغة الإنجليزية والترجمة في جامعة الملك سعود بالرياض. شملت أدوات الدراسة اختبار مستويات المفردات الإنتاجية الذي أعده بول نيشن؛ حيث تم تطبيق الإصدار (أ) إلى عينة البحث خلال الأسبوعين الأخيرين من الفصل الدراسي الأخير من دراستهم. وأظهرت النتائج أحجاماً ضعيفة في مفردات اللغة في إطار نطاقات التردد المكونة من خمس كلمات. علاوة على ذلك، أظهرت النتائج تدهور متوسطات درجات أفراد العينة مع انخفاض مستوى تكرار الكلمات. وكان متوسط حجم المفردات للمشاركين في الدراسة حوالي 503 كلمة (50%) في مستوى الـ 1000 كلمة، و 314 كلمة (31%) في مستوى الـ 1000 كلمة، و 119 كلمة (12%) في مستوى الـ 1000 كلمة، و 10 كلمات (1%) للمستوى العاشر من مستوى الـ 1000، و 107 كلمة (13%) في نطاق قائمة الكلمات الجامعية. وكان من الواضح أن أداء المشاركين تأثر بشكل كبير بمستوى التكرار الذي تتمتع به المفردات في جميع نطاقات الاختبار. ومن ثم، أشارت النتائج إلى ضرورة التدخل الفوري لتحسين أداء الطلاب ومنع مثل هذا الأداء الضعيف لدى الطلاب في المستقبل.

الكلمات الدالة: اللغة الإنجليزية كلفة أجنبية، جامعة الملك سعود، المملكة العربية السعودية، الطلاب السعوديون، التدريب الاستراتيجي، استراتيجيات تعلم المفردات.

Introduction

The fact that the acquisition of vocabulary is of utmost importance in the context of language learning and teaching was ignored for a long time. One of the reasons for this could be that educationists around the world, till the end of the 20th century, preferred to teach grammar first. Allen (1983) infers that teachers gave little attention to teaching vocabulary, and some language experts held that meaning could be learnt only through experience. They also believed that students would make errors in the sentence structures if they learnt a lot of words prior to mastering grammar. Consequently, most of the language teachers focused on teaching grammatical structures at the expense of teaching vocabulary. In the latter part of the 20th century, after several studies had been initiated, language teachers and course compilers realized the vital role that vocabulary plays in second language acquisition (Allen, 1983; Sanaoui, 1995).

After many years of negligence, the teaching and learning of vocabulary has received more attention in English as a second/foreign language (ESL/EFL) research in recent years, and many linguists and methodologists have

recognized the importance of lexical items in acquiring second or foreign languages (Allen 1983; Harmer 1997; Nation 1990, 2001, 2011; Oxford 1990; Richard and Renandya 2002; Schmitt 2000, 2010; Wilkins 1972;). The size of Vocabulary as an aspect of vocabulary studies has been investigated for many years. Meara (1996) defined vocabulary size as the number of words in a language for which a person has at least a basic form-meaning mapping knowledge. Undoubtedly, vocabulary size plays an important and crucial role in learning English as a foreign language (EFL). Consequently, learning of adequate vocabulary is regarded as an essential component for successful second language proficiency, and therefore plays an important role in all the four language skills. Richard and Renandya (2002, p. 255), for example, state that:

Vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write. Without an extensive vocabulary and strategies for acquiring new vocabulary, learners often achieve less than their potential and may be discouraged from making

use of language learning opportunities around them such as listening to radio, listening to native speakers, using the language in different context, reading, or watching TV.

Given the importance of vocabulary and vocabulary size, we should focus on vocabulary learning and teaching, check learners' progress in terms of their vocabulary learning and vocabulary size, and test vocabulary regularly. Nation (2008, p.144) maintains that vocabulary testing can be used to "measure learners' achievement by giving grades, and to measure learners' vocabulary size or proficiency. Furthermore, vocabulary tests can also be used for research purposes to evaluate teaching and learning activities." Research studies on teaching and learning of vocabulary, within the linguistics tradition, have mainly revolved around what vocabulary is to be learned rather than on how vocabulary is learned, concentrating on the learning/acquisition process. It was observed that successful language learners not only used more vocabulary learning strategies but also relied on "different strategies more than the lower level learners" (Celik and Toptas 2010, p. 64). O'Malley and Chamot (1990, p. 169) also emphasized that instructors might benefit from examining "a training system in which multiple strategies are taught within a single package."

This being said, one can conclude that it is of great importance in any EFL

program to measure vocabulary sizes, both productively and receptively.

Literature review

The attainment of a certain size of vocabulary for fluency in second language is being increasingly regarded as central to language acquisition. It is usually considered that if language structures constitute the framework of language, then it is vocabulary that "provides the vital organ and flesh" (Harmer 1997, p. 153). Researchers have been ceaselessly endeavoring to ascertain the most effective ways in which new vocabulary items can be acquired smoothly and promptly. These research outcomes signify the relevance of university education. University students are expected to learn independently, developing their learning strategies in an elective way. Since they are mature users of language, they are fully aware of their preferences and learning style. Using the experience and expertise of advanced students in the field of vocabulary learning may save a lot of time and effort for their younger and less proficient colleagues (Nosidlak, 2013).

Vocabulary items can be classified into receptive (passive) and productive (active) vocabulary, and they constitute a core component of any language program. Nation (1990) maintains that passive vocabulary knowledge means the ability of learners to recognize a word and recall its meaning when it is

encountered, while active vocabulary knowledge is the ability of the learners to write the required vocabulary item at the appropriate time. When it comes to vocabulary learning and teaching, language policymakers and language instructors should think of a number of important aspects in this regard, such as the type of vocabulary items that should be introduced in any given program, as well as the teaching methods/strategies that should be utilized. Nation (2008, 2013) maintains that focusing on such aspects will guide us better in deciding which vocabulary frequency we should pay more attention to: high or low frequency vocabulary. Language testing in general and vocabulary testing in particular are very important in deciding which vocabulary we need to pay more attention to. Schmitt (1994, p. 9), who postulates several possible purposes for giving vocabulary tests, states that:

Perhaps, the most common one is to find out if students have learned the words, which were taught, or which they were expected to learn (achievement test). Alternatively, a teacher may want to find where their students' vocabularies have gaps, so that specific attention can be given to those areas (diagnostic test). Vocabulary tests can also be used to help place students in the proper class level (placement test).

There are several vocabulary tests you can choose from, and there are two main broad types of tests: receptive and

productive vocabulary tests. The former is a matching test where the learners' recognition of word meaning is tested by selecting the correct definition or synonym for words from given options, whereas the productive test is a cued recall test where learners are required to produce words by completing a word in a sentence and the first letters of the words are provided to limit the answer option to the right words from the required word frequency level. Laufer and Nation (1999) stressed the idea that researchers should have a variety of vocabulary tests that they can draw on to measure the vocabulary size of learners. It is noteworthy that most of the researchers in the field of vocabulary studies either focus on testing the receptive vocabulary of EFL learners alone, or rarely compare receptive and productive vocabulary.

Laufer and Paribakht (1998) explored the relationship between three types of vocabulary knowledge including passive, controlled active, and free active vocabulary knowledge. The relationship was examined in terms of four variables: passive vocabulary size, learning context (foreign vs. second), length of stay in the second language context, and knowledge of French. The participants were learners of English in two different learning contexts, 79 in Israel and 103 in Canada. Data were collected through three vocabulary level tests. They included

Levels Test for passive vocabulary size, a Controlled Active Vocabulary Test, and the Lexical Frequency Profile. The results showed that passive vocabulary developed quickly and more predictably compared to active vocabulary. Furthermore, passive vocabulary was significantly larger than active vocabulary, both controlled and free. However, the gap between these different types of vocabulary knowledge was smaller in the second language context: that is, in Canada. The researchers concluded that the “benefits of residence in an L2 context only began to appear after about two years, as passive vocabulary was activated and the gap reduced” (Laufer & Paribakht 1998, p. 336). They also maintained that knowledge of French in Canada was a plus, particularly in the early stages of learning English as a foreign language.

Fan (2000) explored the gap between active and passive vocabulary knowledge. The subjects were 138 first year Higher Diploma students (96 males and 42 females) in the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Active and passive vocabulary tests as well as a questionnaire were used for data collection. Although it is generally believed that L2 learners know more words of the target language than they can actually use, the researcher stated that “there was no evidence to indicate a consistent ratio between active and passive vocabulary knowledge and the

relationship between them has been found to be more complicated than it appears to be” (p. 105). The researcher concluded that “although this is a small-scale study and the students under study were rather weak in proficiency, it has revealed that the gap between active and passive vocabulary is more complicated than it appears to be and more questions than answers seem to have arisen” (p. 118). Seven learning strategies that help to enhance active vocabulary knowledge have also been identified.

Webb (2008) investigated the relationship between receptive and productive vocabulary sizes. To collect accurate data, equivalent receptive and productive test formats with different receptive and productive target words were utilized in this study. The subjects were 83 EFL Japanese learners from three second-year English university classes with a minimum of seven years of English studies at varying EFL proficiency levels, from intermediate to advanced. The tested target words comprised 180 words, and they were selected from the COBUILD dictionary, based on the following two factors: frequency and overlap between first language and second language meanings. Receptive and productive translation tests were used to measure the participants’ vocabulary size at three-word frequency levels. In the receptive test, the subjects were required to write the Japanese translations to target words.

In contrast, in the productive test the subjects were given first language meanings and were required to write their second language equivalents. The results showed that total receptive vocabulary size was larger than productive vocabulary. The findings also indicated that receptive vocabulary size was indicative of productive vocabulary size. That is, learners who have a larger receptive vocabulary are likely to know more of those words productively than learners who have a smaller receptive vocabulary. Webb concluded that, "although the results of the present study might confirm that learners' receptive vocabulary size is larger than their productive vocabulary size, it is likely that this relationship varies from group to group" (p. 93).

The Present Study

Research Questions

This study aims to answer the following two research questions:

1. What is the size of the English productive vocabulary of the Saudi EFL learners towards the end of their undergraduate study?
2. What is the effect of the word frequency levels on the English productive vocabulary size of the Saudi EFL students?

Participants

Forty-five Saudi final-year male

students participated in this study. They had almost five years of study (approximately 2,300 learning hours) as English Language and Translation majors in the Department of English and Translation in the College of Language and Translation at King Saud University. Participation was voluntary.

Instrument

Adopted from Nation (2008. Pp.199-203), the Productive Vocabulary Levels Test (PVLTL), version A was used in this study. The PVLTL is a diagnostic test that assesses knowledge of English productive vocabulary, and it is easy to administer and score. Participants are required to produce words in their written forms. Moreover, the words elicited in the test are based on an existing corpus, and therefore represent an accurate profile of the words and their frequencies in natural use (Nation, 2008). The test consists of five separate sections, which represent four levels of word frequency levels, and the university word-list level. It assesses learners' productive knowledge of word meaning at the following distinct vocabulary levels: the 2nd 1,000-word level, the 3rd 1,000-word level, the 5th 1,000-word level, the 10th 1,000-word level and the University Word List level. In the test, each level consists of 18 test items, representing the whole frequency level with 90 words in the five parts of the whole test. For each item, a meaningful

sentence context is presented and the first letters of the target item are provided. According to Laufer and Nation (1999), the first letters are provided to prevent the test-takers from filling in another word that would be semantically appropriate in the given context, but which comes from a different word frequency level. Test items will be similar to the following examples, eliciting the words “melted”:

The lakes become ice-free and the snow mel ____.

Participants’ test scores were calculated and regarded as an indication of whether learners have mastered words in these levels of word families in English.

Procedures

The researcher administered the Productive Vocabulary Levels Test (PVLТ). The administration of the test took place during regular classes a couple of weeks prior to the end of the participants’ final semester. Oral instruction was given in Arabic to the participants before taking the test, and there was no time limit for completing the test. Participation was voluntary.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were presented to address the research questions of this study regarding the Saudi EFL university graduates’ productive vocabulary size, and the differences that might exist

between participants’ scores in their performance on the different word frequency levels of the test. Scores collected from this study were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), by applying the t-test to the data to get the means and standard deviations for each of the test items. As mentioned above, the 18 test items in each level are representative samples of a large group of words, thus the mean scores on the test are indicative of an estimate of the participants’ vocabulary size. If the overall score of the participants at the 3rd 1,000-word level, for example, was nine out of eighteen, then we assume that they know 500 out of the 1000 words at that level. Because we were testing vocabulary, a lenient scoring was followed in this study where the items were considered correct if participants produced the correct word with the right part of speech, even if there were mistakes in spelling or grammar. For example, if the required ideal answer is *melted*, other forms such as *melt*, *melts* and *melting* would be acceptable regardless of spelling mistakes (cf. Laufer & Paribakht, 1998; Nation, 2008)

Findings

The overall results showed, with no exceptions, poor productive vocabulary sizes under the five frequency bands. Furthermore, the mean scores deteriorated as the level of word

frequency declined, and different participants' performances followed at different word frequency levels. It was evident that participants' performances were highly affected by the word-frequency level in all test bands. Regarding the University Word List,

each word in the test represents 46.4 words in the original list (836 divided by 18), while under the other four levels of the test, each word represents 55.5 words (1000 divided by 18). See table 1 and figure 1 below:

Table 1.

Descriptive statistics of Participants' performance in all test levels البيانات الوصفية

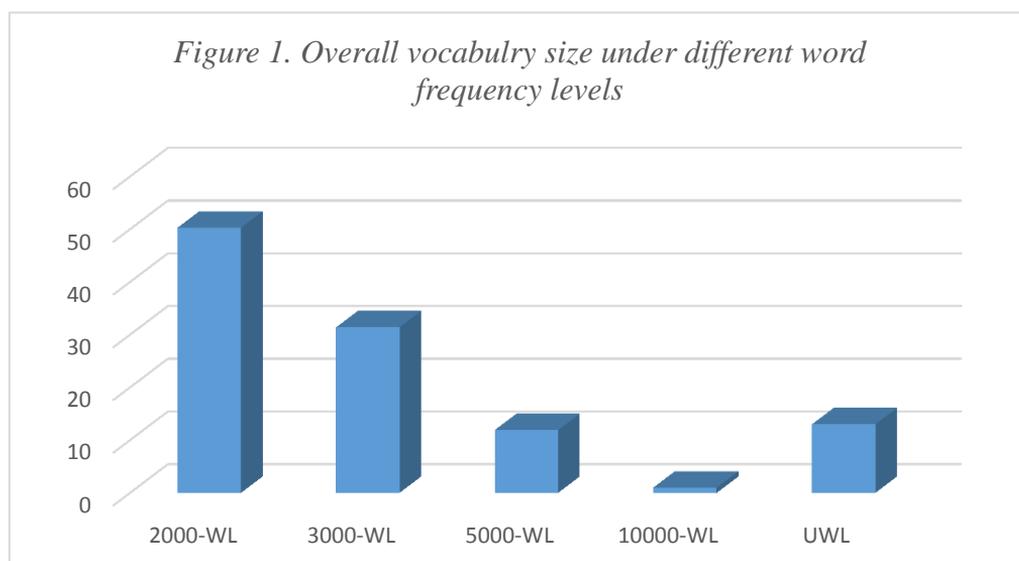
Productive Vocabulary Test Levels	N	Max. mean score	Mean	Std. Deviation	know words	Percentage
2 nd 1,000-Word Level	45	18	9.06	4.089	503	50.3 %
3 rd 1,000-Word Level	45	18	5.65	4.320	314	31.4 %
5 th 1,000-Word Level	45	18	2.15	1.925	119	11.9 %
10 th 1,000-Word Level	45	18	.176	.6262	10	1 %
University Word List (836)	45	18	2.30	2.5290	107	12.8 %
Overall mean score	45	18	3.87	2.3938	215	21.5 %

Results under the 2nd 1,000-word level had a mean score of 9.06. This would give us an estimate of 503 (50.3 %) known words by all participants. Participants had the highest score under this level. From the 3rd 1,000-word level, results showed a mean score of 5.65 with an estimate of 314 (31.4 %) known words. The mean score was 2.15 under

the 5th 1,000-word level, and this may lead us to assume that the estimated known words are 119, representing approximately 12 % of the total words under this band. By examining results from the 10th 1,000-word level, we found that only 1% (10 words) of the total number of words under this level was produced correctly. Participants had the

lowest mean score under this level. When it comes to the University Word List, the results showed an improvement in the participants' performance

compared to the previous level. A mean score of 2.3 was recorded, giving an estimate of 107 words (12.8 %).



Discussion

This study was conducted to measure the productive vocabulary size of Saudi EFL learners at five-word frequency levels. Furthermore, the aim was to look into the effects of these five-word frequency levels on the participants' vocabulary size.

With reference to the first question, the participants unexpectedly performed poorly in all test bands. Although it is expected that learners' productive vocabulary size is always smaller than

their receptive vocabulary size, their extremely poor performance was not expected, given that they were almost graduating from their undergraduate program. Comparing the percentages of performance of the participants in this study to the percentages of performance of participants in the same learning context in receptive vocabulary size (Alqarni, forthcoming 2019), it was evident that the differences between the performances in all the five test bands were large and unexpected. See table 2 below. The conclusion here is in conformity with the conclusion reached

by Laufer and Paribakht (1998), in that passive vocabulary was significantly larger than active vocabulary. Likewise, Web (2008) found similar results. However, the case was different in Fan's study (2000) where he maintained that the gap between active and passive vocabulary was more complicated than one would expect. One reason behind the vast and unpredicted variation in the test result might be that the learners were not accustomed to the new learning environment. Besides, the variation in teaching methods and the teachers' expectations, which were different from the school atmosphere, might also have triggered their slow acquisition of

productive vocabulary. In addition to that, vocabulary teaching has seldom been regarded as separate course content. In a traditional teaching atmosphere, vocabulary is always attached to either grammar components or reading skill. This affects the autonomy of the skill as a separate entity, and also prevents learners from understanding and using vocabulary independently as a tool to express their thoughts and experiences. Therefore, more effective strategies need to be explored to help learners move from teacher-centered vocabulary learning to being productive vocabulary learners in order to use language freely and effectively (Alqarni, 2017).

Table 2:
Performance in receptive versus productive vocabulary size tests

Vocabulary Test Levels	Performance Percentage	
	Receptive (Alqarni 2019)	Productive (Current study)
2 nd 1,000-Word Level	87.6 %	50.3 %
3 rd 1,000-Word Level	72.5 %	31.4 %
5 th 1,000-Word Level	58 %	11.9 %
10 th 1,000-Word Level	25.4	1 %
Academic Word List (570)	76.5 %	12.8 %
University Word List (836)		

With reference to the second research question, the results clearly showed the effect of word frequency levels. That is, word frequency levels correlated

positively with participants' performance, and better performance was recorded in high frequency bands. In other words, participants' performance

declined as the frequency level declined.

The findings of this study emphasize the diagnostic nature and the purpose of vocabulary size tests. Language instructors and policymakers can clearly identify a problem in this program. The problem is reflected in the learners' poor performance in the productive vocabulary size test in a way that is not comparable to many similar studies, especially regarding advanced EFL learners who have spent almost five years learning English at one of the reputable English programs in the Saudi universities. Education policymakers need to carefully examine these results, thoroughly investigate the cause of the problem, and suggest solutions to the problem. The researcher believes it is important to examine this issue from three angles: curriculum, students, and teaching practices. As a remedy for this poor performance, the following solution options are suggested: greater focus on vocabulary, devoting more time to vocabulary learning and teaching, and frequent vocabulary testing using different vocabulary testing formats.

The most plausible explanation for the poor performance seems to be that the acquisition of vocabulary is often considered an individual activity. Students seldom interact with their classmates in defining new words. Therefore, social strategies are often not used in the language learning classes.

This undoubtedly creates a hurdle in the acquisition of vocabulary to use in situations demanding social interactions. A profoundly helpful and essential factor in learning productive vocabulary is the dynamic participation of language learners in different learning contexts, such as classroom activities (Amirian & Heshmatifar, 2013; Nunan, 1992). Learners were found to have a larger amount of vocabulary during the early stages of education than at advanced stages of education (Catalan & Gallego, 2008). Students at the earlier level of language learning were more motivated to learn new words than in the later stages, and that motivation perhaps could be the reason for a larger receptive vocabulary size compared to productive vocabulary. This matter needs to be investigated further.

Reflecting on the wide disparity between receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge, Catalan says, “. . . when a particular word or phrase appears difficult to the students, they are told the definitions - a matter of translation. Often, however, learning new vocabulary items is left to the discretion of the students, and they are encouraged to look up the meanings of words in dictionaries” (Catalan, 2003, p. 12). According to Catalan, this kind of word acquisition, though beneficial for specific aims, may result in general deficiency in word knowledge.

It is universally acknowledged that a sensible and cohesive teaching methodology is imperative for curriculum designers, teachers, and students in order to teach second language vocabulary in a non-native environment (Alqarni, 2017). It is pedagogically vital that teachers play a more dynamic and collaborative function in instruction of second language vocabulary, by teaching in a balanced and integrated way, providing learning opportunities in context, and assisting learners in employing exclusive learning strategies to develop their vocabulary skills. The fundamental idea is to inspire language learners to acquire English vocabulary proficiently and efficiently and “become strategic and independent readers in the long run” (Tsai & Chang 2009, p. 36).

Conclusion

The goal of this study was to measure the productive vocabulary size of Saudi EFL learners at five-word frequency levels. Furthermore, it examined the effects of these five-word frequency levels on the participants' vocabulary size. Overall results showed, with no exceptions, poor productive vocabulary sizes under the five frequency bands. Furthermore, the mean scores deteriorated as the level of word frequency declined. The findings of the present study should initiate the implementation of a new strategy of

teaching vocabulary designed to encourage second language learners to acquire new words autonomously, in order to enhance their receptive and productive vocabulary in English, and to “produce a lexical competence characterized by greater breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge” (Agustín & Canga Alonso 2017, p. 152). Vocabulary learning strategies and strategy training should be taken into consideration too. Vocabulary learning strategies in learning new words in the target language has been the center of discussion among L2 researchers and instructors and it is considered to be a key contributor to learning a second or foreign language effectively. Similarly, it is important to find out how to increase the students' vocabulary in the target language in order to enable them to communicate effectively. Wilkins (1972) stated that “without grammar, very little can be conveyed; and without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed” (p. 111). Ismaiel and Al-Asmari (2017, p. 121) stress that it is imperative for language teachers to comprehend the exact and explicit acquisition needs of their students in order to successfully and effectually change the focus from “what to teach to how to teach vocabulary in the classroom”.

In conclusion, the results of this study should ring alarm for decision makers in this program, and a

comprehensive plan should be adopted. The program should include a review of textbooks, syllabus, teaching methods, and assessment procedures. Vocabulary learning strategies and strategy training should not be neglected.

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Acquisition Test

Part One

Teacher's Name:.....

State whether the following questions are true or false:

- 1- A test is a technique of determining a person's ability, awareness, or performance in a certain field. ()
- 2- Some tests measure general ability, while others emphasize on very specific competencies or objectives. ()
- 3- Testers do not have to know who the testees are. ()
- 4- One of the difficulties to overcome in constructing adequate tests is to measure only the desired standard and not include other aspects. ()
- 5- A well-constructed test is a tool that provides an accurate measure of the test-taker's capability within a domain. ()
- 6- A proficiency test should test the competence of the language. ()
- 7- The purpose of a placement test is to put a student into the appropriate level of a language curriculum or school. ()
- 8- A diagnostic test identifies specified aspects of a language. ()
- 9- An achievement test is connected directly to classroom lessons, units, or even a curriculum. ()
- 10- Good tests must be valid, reliable, applicable, and reliable. ()
- 11- Validity is the extent to which implications deduced from test results are appropriate, meaningful, and beneficial. ()
- 12- A reliable test should be reliable and dependable. ()
- 13- Multiple choice questions should be specific questions. ()
- 14- Multiple choice questions have precise meaning. ()
- 15- Multiple choice options should be short. ()
- 16- In multiple choice questions teachers should use negative statements as carefully as possible. ()
- 17- Multiple choice items should have at least four different answers. ()
- 18- Multiple choice items have clues to the correct answers. ()
- 19- Multiple choice alternatives should be randomly ordered. ()
- 20- Essay exams are easier to construct than objective exams. ()
- 21- Essay exams require more preparation than objective exams. ()

- 22- Essay exams are more personal than objective exams. ()
- 23- Essay and objective tests cannot measure the same content. ()
- 24- The fewer items a test has, the less reliable it is. ()
- 25- It is necessary to give obscure instructions. ()
- 26- Regular testing helps students to avoid falling behind. ()
- 27- Testers should be cautious when dealing with tests written by others. ()
- 28- It is important to have another person doing proofreading. ()
- 29- Essay tests are suitable when the group is small. ()
- 30- Objective tests are suitable when the group is not large. ()
- 31- Teachers should inform students of their progress. ()
- 32- In multiple choice questions teachers should make all alternatives reasonable. ()
- 33- In multiple choice questions teachers should make the alternatives mutually exclusive. ()
- 34- In multiple choice questions teachers should make alternatives almost equal in length. ()
- 35- True /-false questions are suitable for testing student comprehension. ()
- 36- True /-false items are easy to score. ()
- 37- In true /-false questions the student is forced to choose one of two probable answers. ()
- 38- True-false questions are not subject to guessing. ()
- 39- In true-false questions teachers should avoid the use of extreme modifiers. ()
- 40- In true-false questions teachers should avoid the use of unfamiliar language. ()
- 41- Matching questions are good to test knowledge. ()
- 42- Matching questions are also appropriate for the sciences. ()
- 43- In matching questions avoid clues to the right response. ()
- 44- Completion items are useful to test facts. ()
- 45- In completion questions, teachers should delete significant words. ()
- 46- Teachers should make much use of completions questions as matching or true /-false items. ()
- 47- In completion questions, there is only one correct response. ()
- 48- In completion items, teachers should provide grammatical clues. ()
- 49- An essay test usually has a small number of questions. ()
- 50- Essay questions help students to study more efficiently ()
- 51- Essay test items should be at the same level of learning. ()

- 52- After testing students should receive feedback. ()
- 53- The questions on the test should be ambiguous and unclear ()
- 54- Class size is important in the decision about the test type. ()
- 55- Essay tests are appropriate when there are 400 students. ()
- 56- Essay items are suitable to measure higher-level students. ()
- 57- True – false items are less time-consuming to construct. ()
- 58- The directions for tests should be simple, concise and clear. ()
- 59- All items of the same type should be different, if possible. ()
- 60- A sound evaluation needs to be free of bias. ()
- 61- Reliability and validity are not significant for a test. ()
- 62- If a test is valid, it is not necessary to be reliable. ()
- 63- Testing methods should be appropriate to learning goals. ()
- 64- Essay exams help students to write. ()
- 65- Essay exams are more subjective in nature than objective exams. ()
- 66- Essay tests limit the extent of content covered. ()
- 67- Construction of a test is an easy task for an instructor. ()
- 68- In multiple choice tests teachers should limit the use of expressions such as; "all of the above" or "none of the above." ()
- 69- In multiple choice questions teachers should give many clues in their alternatives. ()
- 70- In multiple choice questions, teachers must use negatives (e.g. “not” and “except”). ()

Part Two

Dear teacher: Complete the following:

- 1- In the instructions. teachers should tell students to review the entire test before they begin this will help
- 2- Multiple choice test taking tips are:.....
- 3- True-false items are good for
- 4- Multiple choice tests are good for
- 5- Advantages of true-false questions
- 6- Disadvantages of true-false questions
- 7- Matching questions are good for
- 8- Advantages matching questions
- 9- Disadvantages matching questions are
- 10- Completion questions are good for
- 11- Advantages of completion questions are.....
- 12- Disadvantages of completion questions are.....
- 13- Essay questions are good for
- 14- Advantages of essay questions are....
- 15- Disadvantages of essay questions are.....
- 16- In essay questions there are two types of scoring model:.....
- 17- For teachers to design essay questions they have
- 18- For teachers to grade essay exams they have to.....
- 19- The directions for any test should contain information concerning:.....
- 20- Reliability refers to:.....
- 21- Validity refers to:
- 22- Type of validity are.....
- 23- Essay exams are appropriate when:
- 24- General tips about testing:.....
- 25- There are techniques to answer short answer and fill in the blank:.....
- 26- Commonly used essay terms are:.....
- 27- Ways to reduce bias in test items are:.....
- 28- To help stop cheating; teachers can take the following steps:....
- 29- Some genarl guidelines for writing completion items:.....
- 30- Ways of scoring essay tests are:.....

The performance test:

Dear teacher, read the following passage and construct one question about each of the following skills:

Grammar tests:

- A- Error location.
- B- Multiple choice items.
- B- Re-arrange items.

1- Vocabulary tests:

- A- Synonyms and Antonyms.
- B- Derivatives.
- C- Filling in.

2- Spelling tests:

- A- Roots and suffixes.
- B- Missing letters.

3- Comprehension tests:

- A- Skimming and scanning questions.
- B- True-false items.
- C- Ordering given information and details.

4- Writing tests: The topic is:

(The characteristics of a good test)

- A- Write an outline for a paragraph
- B- Write a paragraph.
- C- Write an outline for an essay.
- D- Write an essay.

The Passage

“A test, in simple terms, is a way of measuring a student’s capability, knowledge, or performance in each area. Let’s have a quick look at the components of this definition. First, a test is known as a technique. It is a tool- a set of techniques, procedures, or items, - that involves performance on the side of the test-takers. To construct a good test, the method must be clear and structured: multiple choice questions with a given prearranged correct answers; a writing prompt with recording grading rubric based on a written question clear script and a checklist of predictable responses to be filled in by an administrator. Second, a test is designed to measure. Some tests measure an over-all ability, while others focus on very particular competencies or purposes. Next, a test measures somebody’s ability, performance, or knowledge. Test makers should know who the test- takers should be like. What is their previous experience and background? Then, a test measures performance, but the result shows the test-taker’s ability. In general, language tests measure one’s ability of language performance, that is to speak, write or read. On the other hand, it is usual to find tests constructed to tap into a test-taker’s knowledge on the language itself: defining vocabulary items, identifying linguistic features or reciting grammatical rubrics in written discourses. Finally, a test assesses a certain given field. In the case of a proficiency test, even though the real performance on the test involves a sample of all skills, that domain is overall proficiency in a language- general competence in all the skills of the language. Other tests may have very precise criteria. pronunciation exam might be a test of certain groups of phonemic minimal pairs. A vocabulary test may focus on only the groups of words covered in a lesson or a unit. One of the biggest difficulties to overcome in constructing appropriate tests is to measure the desired performance and not include other factors unintentionally.”

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