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**Investigating the Application of the Competency-based Approach
in Testing: Case Study of Omar Idriss High School El-Kantara**

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to all my family

To my lovely MOTHER and FATHER for their prayers

To my dearest SIBLINGS

To my friends and whom I adore

The ones I will never forget the greatest moments we shared together

Acknowledgments

My greatest gratitude goes to my supervisor **Dr. Saihi Hanane** whose dedicated supervision and unrelenting encouragement enabled the concretization of this work. Sincere thanks are extended to the jury members: **Dr. Salhi Ahlem, Mr. Chenini Abdelhak** for having kindly accepted to read this thesis. I am also grateful to Omar Idriss high school English teachers for their cooperation and comprehension.

Abstract

In its attempt to adapt to the fast paced changes in the worldwide scene when it comes to education, Algeria launched the competency-based approach in all around the nation's classrooms, like any other relatively new practice, deficiencies are often noticed, a prime example of this is the assessment of learners' competencies, the present study is an attempt to gauge the compatibility of the assessment instruments used in the Algerian high schools to the competency based assessment guidelines. For this study, several paper-and-pencil tests have been collected from Omar Idriss high school (El-Kantara). Among the collected tests, 22 students tests are selected randomly to undergo an analysis per predetermined criteria, and then a self-constructed checklist is composed to specify whether the quality being evaluated is observed in a particular test under consideration., the results suggested that teachers regularly use selective response tests, and plenty of isolated items without involving oral production, group performance, integrated performance, and other interactive tasks. Therefore, there is no assessment of the relevant skills directly as they are performed in reality-like situations. It is also noted that the majority of the tests lack one or more qualities of usefulness, the analysis have shown an apparent contrast between the qualities frequency. It is concluded then that no selected test pertained in a satisfactory way to the CBA assessment characteristics.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

- CBA - Competency-based Approach
- CBLT - Competency-based language teaching
- CB - Competency-based
- CBE - Competency-based Education
- CRT - Criterion-referenced test
- NRT - Norm-referenced test
- PLAB - Pimsleur language tests aptitude battery
- MLAT - Modern language aptitude test
- ESL - English as second language

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General Introduction

Looking from a broad perspective, education is being considered as an investment in the eyes of the learners, and as they are more concerned with the yields of their investments in the form of education, Teaching and learning sphere continually witness new approaches with different perspectives that seek to further enhance learners experiences, as well as make teaching outcomes more likely to be fulfilled and noticed in reality: In that sense, Algerian policy makers and education experts while making reforms to the educational sector, adopted the competency based approach (CBA) in a bid to raise the efficiency of the teaching process and to concretize the well-defined educational goals that are expected from it.

1. Statement of the problem

In its attempt to adapt to the fast paced changes in the worldwide scene when it comes to education, Algeria launched the CBA in all around the nation's classrooms. The approach is drastically different in all aspects from its predecessor, the teaching process' objectives shifted from the theoretical knowledge to successfully doing specified tasks and from the teaching process itself to purely outcomes-based. Consequently, the assessment of learners' achievements did not get spared from transforming to a performance-based model where learners mastery of language is measured not by what they know from the rules of language, but to how they fare when faced by situations that requires the use of their knowledge from the language. Like any other relatively new practice, deficiencies are often noticed in the form of mismatches between how the instructions are in the proposed teaching approach and teacher' practices in classrooms, these deficiencies can get worse when teachers apply some aspects of 4 the proposed approach without applying others although the approach' aspects are closely related and complementary in nature, a prime example of this is the assessment of

learners competencies that CBA asserts must be criterion-based with a very specified outcomes to assess learners on, the present study is an attempt to gauge the compatibility of the assessment instruments used in Algerian high schools to the competency-based assessment principles.

2. Aims of the study

The wider research aim of the present research is gauging the extent to which testing in Algerian high schools is appropriate to the principles of the CBA in general and the competency based assessment in particular, narrowly focused aims are:

1. Determining the usefulness of the tests administered in the high school of Omar Idriss as a basic requirement for the competency-based assessment.
1. Investigating whether the competency-based assessment in EFL is applied in the context of Omar Idriss high school in El-Kantara.
2. Suggest recommendations that have the prospect of improving the assessment of students in line with the CBLT.

3. Research questions and hypothesis

Question: Are the principles of the competency based assessment used in the assessment of EFL learners in Algerian high schools?

Hypothesis: The principles of the competency based assessment are not used in the context of testing in the Algerian high schools.

Chapter I

I.1. Testing in Language Learning

Introduction

Laying the theoretical framework for the present research is the basic concern of the first chapter, which consists of two parts. We start the first section by giving an overview of the relationship between testing, assessing and evaluating, clearing ambiguities related to language tests, and including a classification of the types of language tests, to finish by outlining the fundamentals necessary for the construction of the language tests. The second half of the chapter deals with the second variable in this research, we begin by stating the background behind the competency-based teaching as a major approach to the planning of language programs, its definition, and what characterizes it as a method of teaching, we then move to the competency-based assessment as an outcomes-based testing methodology.

I.1.1. Evaluation, Assessment and testing

Evaluation, assessment and testing are popular and sometimes misunderstood terms in the field of language teaching. Therefore, it is necessary to draw a clear distinction between these terms that are in center of the present research.

I.1.1.1 Evaluation

(Kizlik, 2014) defines evaluation as an inclusive term which encompasses all the information to be collected in relation to learners' education because evaluation seeks to draw a full picture of the student as well as his capacities and abilities, to evaluate a given situation then is to judge the worthiness, the goodness and appropriateness of the situation based on a defined purpose or criteria.

I.1.1.2. Assessment

Another broad term is assessment which is different from evaluation in that assessment is a continuous process that does not aim to determine a value but rather to improve the situation through measuring knowledge, skills and attitudes. (Harmer, 2007) Views assessment as checking the learners' progress in regard to their achievements, it is a broad concept that includes several behaviors such as offering a comment, responding to a question or giving a remark. Although assessment and testing have the same objective of determining whether the learning objectives have been met, testing is more specific in comparison to assessment; this is because testing is considered the kind of assessment that is conducted at the end of learning.

I.1.1.3. Testing

Testing is a common theme in humans' social life throughout history, proving capabilities or establishing credentials of any sort was, and still is largely linked to performing adequately in relation to a predefined performance threshold or by simple terms, passing the test successfully. In modern days, proving capabilities related to language in a language-specific tests is a simple notion in the first glance, yet, perhaps little is understood about language testing except the scene of pencil and paper as well as the overwhelming stress upon thinking about it (McNamara, 2000). While (Caroll, 1968) States the definition of tests as instruments or procedures that are constructed to trigger a certain behavior from which we can interpret some characteristics of the test taker.

I.1.2. Additional Testing Terminology

I.1.2.1. Objective versus Subjective Tests

According to Kopriva (2008) there are two main test types are distinguished by means of how they are scored, the objective test raters compare the candidate's answers to a set of correct or possible answers, so the answers are objectively scored without external factors. In opposition, Subjective tests criteria of rating is vaguer than its counterpart, such as an essay, the rater judgments and opinions about the correct answers in aspects of what should it include, and how it should be presented, are possible subjectivity factors. Questions formats often used in objective tests are fixed response format such as multiple choice and true/false/not given questions. The subjective tests use open ended questions such as essays, interviews and comprehension questions.

I.1.2.2. Formative versus Summative Tests

During the instruction phase, formative testing is undertaken with the purpose of collecting information about learners, showing which aspects of learning students has already mastered and discovering possible routes to continue the growth process, so the feedback given by the teachers to the learners which is meant to improve learners language and communicative ability is considered to be formative testing.

At the end of the instruction phase, when decisions need to be made in regard to learners education, summative tests are conducted to collect the necessary information for the decision making process, taking into account what learners has grasped and what material have they covered in their learning process. Thus, summative tests are used to judge the learners performance to make decisions accordingly (Cizek, 2010)

I.1.2.3. Criterion-Referenced versus Norm-Referenced Tests

As Abedi (2002) describes it, criterion-referenced testing usually intends to measure the mastery of a specific course or syllabus instructional objectives, the purpose is to measure of how much has been learned from well-defined material. The learner achievement is strictly estimated with respect to the extent of which his knowledge has covered the criterion that was set beforehand. Contrary to CRT, The main concern of the norm-referenced testing is measuring the global language ability of a learner, his achievement is not linked to a specific criteria but rather interpreted relatively against the results of other learners who took the same test, NRT practical purpose is placing learners within the normal distribution of learners based on achievements.

I.1.3. Test Types

I.1.3.1. Regarding the purpose

I.1.3.1.1. Placement test

As its name suggest, this test is designed to gauge the learners' abilities in the language before the beginning of instruction, it is concerned with measuring the degree to which the learners have the required skills and abilities to begin the stage of instruction, the test can also act as a filter which is responsible for categorizing the learners' into those who are ready for getting instructions and those who are not, it is worth mentioning that the test content is not linked to a specific syllabus. (Brown, 2004)

I.1.3.1.2. Achievement test

Achievement tests enable the measurement of the degree of learning in relation to predefined content and objectives, (McNamara, 2000) defines achievement test as a tool that measures what a learner has learned in a given period of time based on a clear and explicit

indication of the instruction that has been given, this definition imply that the achievement test is closely linked to a given syllabus as well as process of instruction.

I.1.3.1.3. Diagnostic test

In contrast with the placement tests, diagnostic tests are held during the instruction, (Brown, 2004) States that the diagnostic tests seek to identify the hard parts in the language based on the learners' performance on the different parts of the test, if a relatively high number of students fail at a given part, the teacher then determines that part as a potential deficiency that needs further adjustments, so the diagnostic tests show where the learners are finding a difficulty in learning and consequently what should be concentrated on to help learners overcome their deficiencies.

I.1.3.1.4. Proficiency test

Brown (2004) states that although proficiency tests are related to what learners has already studied or what their knowledge has come to, proficiency tests is concerned primarily with the ability to use the language in future situation without any limitation to a syllabus or formal learning, the goal here is to decide the test taker relative proficiency in a language so that he can be liable for occupational or instructional privileges such as asylum seeking, residency or citizenship application.

I.3.1.1.5. Aptitude test

According to (Brown, 2004)the aptitude test is conducted simply to predict the learning of a language degree of success even before the learning occurs, their design is characterized by gradual difficulty in order to measure the general ability to learn a specific language. The two most used aptitude tests are the modern language aptitude test (MLAT) and the Pimsleur Language tests aptitude battery (PLAB), although these tests are not common nowadays due

to their nature of mimicry, memorization, and puzzle-solving that lacks any prediction of learners' communicative competence.

I.1.3.2. Regarding the Method

Three types of tests can be distinguished, the traditional paper and pencil tests, performance tests and the portfolios.

I.1.3.2.1. The Paper and Pencil tests

This type is generally considered the most used type of examination, the term refers to the set of examinations in which candidates are presented with questions and they respond to it by writing, it is used to assess both isolated components of language such as grammar, vocabulary and the candidates' understanding of language through listening and reading. Candidates answer the questions using several formats (McNamara, 2000), the two most used formats of questions include:

- a- Multiple choice responses: the candidate is required with the mission of choosing the correct answer (or answers) from multiples choices.
- b- Short answers questions: the candidate is expected to answer the question in the form of a short answer, this type of questions does not indicate much about the language competences such as speaking and writing except indirectly.

I.1.3.2.2. Performance-based tests

(McNamara, 2000) asserts that in contrast with the paper and pencil test, the learners in performance tests are assessed in a communicative situation such as an interview, the most commonly tested skills using this type are the speaking and writing skills, the candidate performance are first elicited and then judged by a test rater using communicative related criteria, such as the successful execution of the communicative act, and the simulations of

real-world contexts. Performance-based tests are more realistic in nature but difficult to evaluate as well as being time consuming.

I.1.3.2.3. Portfolios

Portfolios are another method which is used in language testing, Portfolios can constitute of varied types of student's individual works such as writings, recordings, notes, extracts from the projects and performance on traditional tests. Portfolios reflect different aspects of development, achievement, interest and motivation (Bachman & Palmer, 1996).

I.1.4. Language Test Fundamentals

Language test quality is measured according to Spolsky (1968) in aspect of eight main qualities that are namely: reliability, validity, and authenticity, wash back, interactiveness, usefulness, transparency and practicality. The importance of each quality differs from one test to another, so it can be said that the test usefulness can only be measured in relation to a specific situation. However, two of the qualities, which are respectively, reliability and validity, critical for tests and are referred to as crucial measurement components. This is partly because these are two qualities that supply the major justifications for using test scores as base for making inferences and decisions.

I.1.4.1. Reliability

Davies (1968) Sees reliability as an essential measurement quality to the usefulness of any language test, reliability is considered as the consistency of measurement. That is to say, a test is reliable if it yields similar results on different occasions. Reliability relates mainly to the consistency of test scores, which means that a test would offer similar results if it were performed at another time. For example, at two different times in two different settings, and if an identical test were to be offered to the same group of learners, the test-taker should not

notice any difference whether he takes the test on one occasion and in one setting or another. Likewise, if we create two copies of a test that are meant to be utilized interchangeably, it should not matter to the learner which form or variant of that test he takes. The learner also should get roughly a similar score on either version of that test. Inequivalent variants of exams are considered a possible threat to reliability, in that matter, using specifications can be beneficial and strongly recommended; detailing all versions of the test with taking into account all test specifications can guarantee equivalency across the versions.

Generally speaking, three major factors can influence test reliability. Test factors; such as the arrangements and content of the questions along with the given time for learners to finish the exam must be consistent. Testing research shows that longer exams, for example, provide more reliable results than brief tests according to. Overall, the more reliable tests are those with more items in them as it is deemed that teachers will be provided with more samples of learners' language ability. Administrative factors are also essential for the reliability of tests. These incorporate the classroom setting (seating arrangements, lighting, acoustics, absence of intrusive noise, etc.) and the way the teacher oversees the administration of his exam. Affective factors in the response of individual students can as well be an effective factor, personality type, and learning style, fatigue. Test anxiety can be reduced by training students to use better test-taking strategies. A major concern in both structuring and using the test is to recognize sources of bias in a given measure of language ability and to minimize the effect of these potential factors on test reliability. (Bachman L. F., 1990)

(Henning, 1987) Classifies the threats to language test reliability by causing fluctuations in scores in three major categories. Fluctuations in the learner, embodied in the form of a variety of settings that may cause interference, and that is related to the learner that may change his true score from test to another such as including additional learning of the material or forgetting due to time passed, physical influences such as sickness, fatigue,

emotional problems, and practice effect which means that a student's score could improve because he has taken the test many times that the content is familiar, that familiarity may create a deviation in the learner's score from the score that more reflect his actual language ability. Furthermore, fluctuations in scoring, flaws in the scoring process or Subjectivity in scoring can add bias to learners' scores and influence the reliability of the test's results. These kinds of errors usually happen within (intra-rater) or between (inter-rater) the raters themselves. Fluctuations in test administration, because inconsistent testing conditions and administrative procedures can reduce significantly the reliability of language tests. This problem occurs mostly in institutions where different groups of learners get tested in various locations on different dates. Reliability is considered an essential characteristic of test scores cannot provide us with information about the abilities we want to measure unless they are relatively consistent.

I.1.4.2. Validity

Validity is to a far extent the most important and complex criterion of an effective test. Henning defines validity as follows: "Validity in general refers to the appropriateness of a given test or any of its component parts as a measure of what is purported to measure. A test is said to be valid to the extent that it measures what it is supposed to measure. It follows the term valid when used to describe a test should usually be accompanied by the preposition for any test then may be valid for some purposes, but not for others" (Bachman, 1990)

Within the notion of validity, two types can be recognized according to Cronbach (1960). External validity which is also-called criterion validity because the students' scores as being compared to other criterion measures of their ability. Also, Internal validity which is related to the studies of the content of test and its perceived effect. External validity relates to

the studies comparing students' test scores with measures of their ability gathered from outside the test.

I.1.4.2.1. Internal Validity

Internal validity can be assessed through several metrics. The following three metrics, which are respectively face validity, content validity, and response validity are the most prevalent.

I.1.4.2.1.1 Face Validity

Which is defined by Alderson et al (1995) as the kind of validity that involves the test's broad acceptance. Brown (2004) stated that it requires an intuitive perception about test's content by people whose judgment is not necessarily expert, such people constitute the examinees who take it, the administrative personnel who decide on its use as well as other psychologically inexperienced commentators. According to Alderson et al (1995), the importance of face validity is demonstrated in the following points, tests that do not appear to be valid to users may not be taken seriously for their given purpose. Second, the less test-takers think of the test as face valid. The less they will perform to the best of their ability on that particular test and respond properly to its objects. Thus, face validity effects concern the response validity of the test.

I.1.4.2.1.2 Content Validity

Alderson et al (1995) outlined content validity as follows, "the representativeness or sampling adequacy of the content-the substance, the matter, and the topics-of a measuring instrument". In other words, a test has content validity if the questions in it or the activities it requires the student to perform ,are those which he has been taught to answer or perform in the course of his study.Content validity is distinguished from face validity in the sense that while

in the latter we do not fundamentally accept the judgment of others, although we respect it, in the former (content validity), we collect judgments from people who we are qualified to believe. It involves “experts” making judgments in some systematic way.

I.1.4.2.1.3 Response Validity

A separate source of validity involves gathering information on how students who are tested react to its items. Alderson et al (1995) asserted that in response validity, there is “a growing range of qualitative techniques like self-report or self-observation on the part of test takers are used to understand how they respond to test items and why” (as cited in Henning, 1987, p.96). Data can be assembled in two ways: First, introspectively while test-taking. But in this case, data gathering can conflict with the method being investigated. Second, retrospectively after the candidate was tested, they can be questioned about the reasons why they wrote the answers they did, the problem with such retrospections is that candidates may not memorize why they answered in a particular way. The most reliable solution is to use parallel introspections. They consist of candidates “thinking about” while responding to the test’s questions and encouraged during periods of silence by silent observers. However, this solution is not accurate due to candidates not taking a authentic test but a test for research purposes (Alderson et al, 1995)

I.1.4.2.2. External Validity

The second type of test validity is the test’s external validity, which is comprised of two parts, namely the concurrent and predictive validity.

I.1.4.2.2.1. Concurrent Validity

Messick (1980) stated that a test has further validity if its results are confirmed by different tests whose object is to measure the same thing and whose validity has already been

established. This is called concurrent validity. In other words, concurrent validity includes the comparison of the test results with some other measure for the same candidates taken at roughly the same time as the test (Brown, 2004); the other measure may be scored from a parallel version of the same test or some other test.

I.1.4.2.2. Predictive Validity

According to Alderson et al (1995), its most simplistic form is to give learners a test, and then give them another test of the ability the original test was designed to predict. Predictive validation is essential because it identifies the students who might be at risk when studying in an English medium setting because of weaknesses in their English.

I.1.4.2.3. Construct Validity

Ebel and Frisbie (1991) defined the concept of construct validation is the manner of assembling evidence to support the claim that a given test indeed measures to psychological construct the creators intended it to measure. The purpose is to discover the significance of scores from the test, to ensure that the marks mean what we suppose them to mean. The term construct points to a psychological construct, a theoretical conceptualization about an aspect of human behavior that cannot be estimated or perceived directly. Parts of constructs are motivation, achievement attitude, anxiety, intelligence, and reading comprehension.

Put it differently, it refers to the entirety of evidence about whether a particular operationalization of a construct appropriately represents what is intended by the theoretical description of the construct being measured. According to (Moss, 1994) construct validity in an oral test can be interpreted based on a criteria involving grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation, appropriateness of social context and fluency. So, construct validity involves the comparison and correlation of the present test with tests that have already been recognized as valid. A frequent topic in language testing literature is the view that reliability and validity

are closely interlocked. While validity focuses on the theoretical aspects and interweaves these concepts with the empirical ones, reliability focuses on the empirical aspects of the measurement process. For this reason, it is harder to assess validity than reliability.

I.1.4.3. Authenticity

In order for language learners to perform in real situations that require some kind of language ability, both the teaching-learning process and testing should reflect the types of situation that learners may encounter in the future, that can be possible when language teachers use authentic materials in their testing, using materials that are appropriate in aspect of language level when testing can boost the learners exposure to the natural target language and ensure to a far extent that they are equipped with the necessary concepts as well as vocabulary to function well in real-life situations.

I.1.4.4. Practicality

An important characteristic of a good test is practicality. Classroom teachers need to think of how to overcome or better avoid practical matters related to testing. For example, good classroom tests should be “teacher-friendly.” A teacher normally should have the time to be able to develop, administer, and mark it within a reasonable period and depending on accessible resources. Tests are only helpful to learners when they are delivered quickly and when the feedback from the assessment is perceived by the student. Practical issues can also include the cost of test maintenance and development, resources (everything from computer access, copying facilities, and equipment to storage space), adequate time (for construction and test length), ease of marking, availability of suitable/trained graders. For example, a common knowledge between instructors is that ideally, it would be optimal to test the speaking skill one-on-one with ten minutes allocated per student. However, for a class of

40learners, this could take more than four hours. Also, what would the other 39 students do throughout the testing process? (Brown, 2004).

I.1.4.5. Washback

Washback is described as the effect of testing on teaching and learning. Ryan (2002) refers to washback as the effects that the tests have on student's preparation for the test, it incorporates the effects of an assessment on learning preceding the test itself. Formal tests can have a positive washback in the case of students receiving more than a single number grade. A teacher's evaluation of an exam should include as many aspects of the test as possible to accomplish positive washback. Knight (2009) adds that one way to improve washback is to comment specifically on learners' performance in the test, for example by giving praise for strengths as well as criticism for weaknesses. Thus, for learning and teaching to continue smoothly and successfully, students should have the chance to get feedback and give feedback on the teacher's feedback; washback should create this atmosphere of exchange between teachers and learners.

I.1.4.6. Usefulness

For Bachman and Palmer (1996) the most important consideration when designing and developing a language test is the application for which it is designed "Test usefulness provides a kind of metric by which we can evaluate not only the tests that we develop and use but also all aspects of test development and use". Thus, usefulness is the most significant quality or cornerstone of testing. Bachman and Palmer's model of test usefulness dictates that any language test must be developed with a specific purpose, a defined and known group of test-takers, and specific language aspect in mind.

I.1.4.7. Interactiveness

Bachman and palmer (1996) defined interactiveness in language assessment as the degree and type of involvement of the test taker's personal characteristics in performing the test task. The individual traits that are most relevant for language testing are the test taker's topical knowledge, language ability, and affective schemata. For instance, a test task that requires a test taker to relate the topical content of the test input to his topical knowledge is expected to be comparatively more integrative than one that does not .Interactiveness was portrayed by Bachman and Palmer (1996) in the following figure:

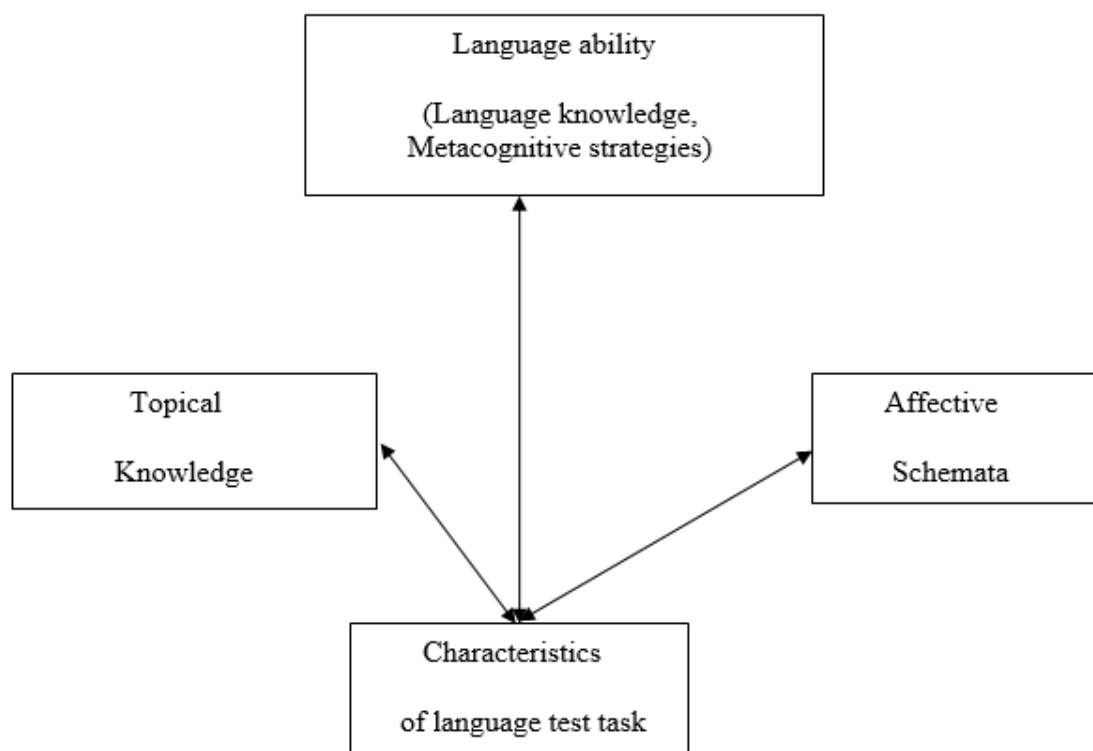


Figure01 Interactiveness In language test

I.1.4.8. Transparency

Knight (2009) relates the transparency in language testing with the availability of open, accurate information to students about testing. Such information should introduce the objectives that are supposed to be evaluated, formats to be used, the weighting of items and sections in the scoring process, the time allocated to finish the test, and evaluation criteria. Transparency dismisses the myths and mysteries surrounding testing and makes students' part of the testing process.

I.2. Competency-based Teaching and Assessment

I.2.1. Definition of the Competency-based Approach

The application of the competency-based instruction principles to language teaching is called competency-Based language teaching (CBLT). In a CB program, the unit of progression is mastering specific competencies and skills as it is learner-or participant-centered, it seeks to teach students the basic skills they need in order to prepare them for situations they would commonly encounter in every-day life.

A debate may go around the use of “Competence” and “Competency”. We will be content here to join Smith (1996) definition in his article "What is competence? he considers the first as visitors and qualifications enabling the individual learner for real life tasks while the later as atomistic abilities or skills to be attained in gradual stages and on different learning occasions. Despite this slight difference, “Competence” and "Competency" are used interchangeably in this paper .In reference to language," Competence” or “Competency” is one’s underlying knowledge of the system of a language ;its rules of grammar ,its vocabulary, all the pieces of a language and how those pieces fit-together. In a broader meaning, competency refers to a combination of social, cognitive and communicative skills which all together are used as the operational definition.

Relying on competencies, CBE focuses on the outcomes or outputs of learning in the development of language programs. It defines educational goals in terms of precise measurable description of the knowledge, skills, and behaviors students should possess at the end of a course of study .Hence, CBE addresses what the learners are expected to do with the language .In other words, it seeks to teach the language in relation to the social context in which it is used. Competency-based language teaching has for this reason been used as a

framework for language teaching in situations where learners have specific needs and where the language skills they need can be fairly predicted (Richards and Rodgers, 2001)

Schenck (1978) sees competency-based approach in education as an outcome based instruction and is adaptive to the changing needs of students, teachers, and the community. Competencies describe the student's ability to apply basic and other skills based on a set of outcomes that are derived from an analysis of tasks typically required of students in life role situations. There are two things to be noted about the competency-based teaching as Richards (2006) states, it first seeks to build more accountability into education by describing what a course of instruction seeks to accomplish, and it shifts attention away from methodology or classroom processes to learning outcomes. In a sense, it can be said that with this approach, it does not matter what methodology is employed as long as it delivers the desired outcomes.

I.2.2. Competency-based Approach Characteristics

Competency-based education (CBE) is perceived as an approach where the focus shifts from what students know about language, or the explicit knowledge of rules such as grammar, to what they practically can do with it. The course planning, therefore, starts with the identification of the tasks the learner will need to perform within a particular setting (an example would be the role of a company worker, restaurant chef, or a doctor) as well as the language demanded within those tasks. According to Richards (2006) a typical specification of competencies for a job training course includes what the learners will be able to:

- Identifying a variety of jobs through simple help-wanted ads.
- Describing own skills and work experience.
- Demonstrating the ability to fill out a simple job application with assistance.
- Producing relevant and correct forms of identification for employment.

-Identifying income tax deductions, social security as well as tax forms.

-Demonstrating good understanding of employment expectations, rules, regulations, and safety.

In this case course designers would then have to plan language lessons around these competencies. In conclusion, we can sum up the CBE characteristics by outlining the following points:

- Competencies to be achieved are carefully identified and selected in advance.
- Participants progress through the instructional program at their own rate by demonstrating the attainment of the specified competencies.
- Self-paced learning.
- Language learning objectives are broken into narrowly defined sub-objectives in order for both teachers and students to get clearer sense of progress.
- Ongoing and continuous assessment process.
- Student centered instruction when it comes too bjectives, pace, level, which are also defined in terms of individual needs.

I.2.3. Competency-based Approach Objectives

Competencies consist of a description of the essential skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviors required for effective performance of a real-world task or activity. CB approach to language teaching and assessment offers teachers and students an opportunity to revitalize their education and training programs. Hence, the quality of teaching and student learning will be enhanced by the clear specification of expected outcomes and the continuous feedback that CB assessment can offer a performance outline of language tasks that lead to a demonstrated

mastery of language associated with specific skills that are necessary for individuals to function proficiently in the society in which they live (Auerbach, 1986).

It is clear that what characterizes the CB approach is its focus on the outcomes of learning as the main objective of the teaching process. Richards and Rodgers (2001) identified features involved in the implementation of CBLT programs in language teaching as:

- A focus on successful functioning in society. The goal is to enable students to become autonomous individuals capable of coping with demands of the world.
- A focus on life skills, rather than teaching language in isolation, CBLT teaches language as a function of communication about concrete tasks. Students are taught just those language forms required by the situations in which they will function.
- Task-or performance- oriented instruction: what counts is what students can do as a result of instruction; the emphasis is on overt behaviors rather than on knowing language or ability to talk about language and skills.
- Outcomes are public knowledge specified in terms of behavioral objectives so that students know what behaviors are expected of them. (Cited in Richards, 2006)

From the above-mentioned points, it can be said that the central objective of CBLT is assisting students in becoming more effective in their communicative, intellectual, cultural, and social performance of real-world tasks. In short, learners will:

- Develop the ability to think critically and solve problems.
- Be creative, able to use the power of analysis, imagination, and set and test hypotheses.
- Transfer their English learning competencies to other learning situations.
- Develop various communication skills.
- Be tuned to quality performance (e.g. projects and presentations).

- Be willing to work hard, and be lifelong learners.

I.2.4. Teaching-Learning in the Competency-based Approach

Since CBLT is a teaching approach that focuses on the outcomes of language learning, it emphasizes what learners are expected to achieve with the target language. Consequently, the approach considers the learning process outputs more important than the learning process itself. Competency-based language teaching is concerned with what learners are supposed to achieve with the acquired language. In other words, CBLT turns attention away from methodology or classroom processes to actual results that can be demonstrated. But that does not mean the neglect of the learning-teaching process, what follows is four principal parts that are essentially important to any competency-based curriculum, namely the teacher, learner, competency, and evaluation.

Due to the four being interconnected, the good exploitation of the collective four will generate successful results in FLT, as it is displayed in the following diagram by Fletcher (1991).

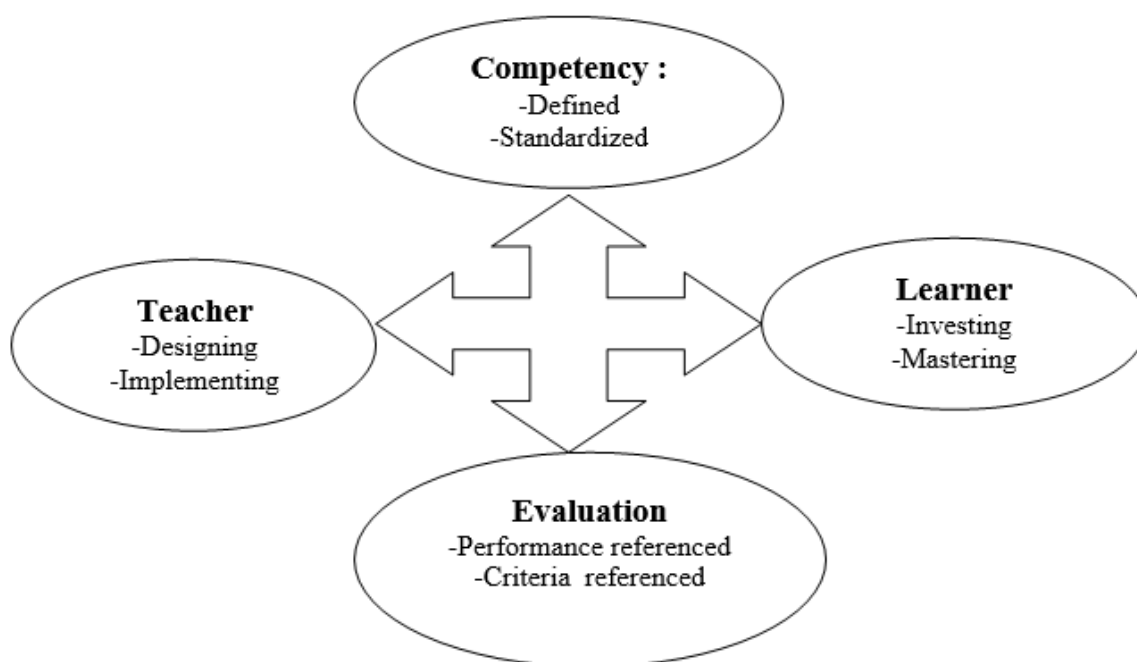


Figure 02 A model of competency based syllabus in EFL

I.2.4.1.Competency

Competencies that are required from the learners to master are predefined, they should specify exactly what is demanded from learners, this enables learners to be aware of what should be taken into focus at any given point. An example of competencies that may be integrated into a competency-based school curriculum is illustrated in the following diagram by Chappuis (2009). For both learners and instructors, it is rather a matter of designation of roles to be played individually and cooperatively.

I.2.4.2 Teacher

A teacher's sense of appropriateness is a determining factor in bringing the language classroom to meet the expected learning objectives. Since the main role of the teacher is that of, counselor, assessor, and organizer, it boasts his/her confidence to deal in a free way with any textbook or methodology and to go beyond the classroom walls. Therefore, teachers are supposed to change their teaching habits and adopt new ways and new techniques to comply with the principles and goals of the new approach (CBLT). In addition to using prescribed textbooks, the teacher is expected to produce his/her own teaching technique or procedure advocated by any new methodology. Hence, access to other teaching materials has become easy especially with the wide-spread of the internet. However, some teachers still stick to the textbook as they strongly believe learning is absolutely exam-driven. (Black and William, 1998)

I.2.4.3 The learner

In any given teaching-learning process, the role of the learner is of high importance. For a long time, learners have also always been considered as recipients of knowledge, or in other words, parrots, they have behaved accordingly in classrooms. Yet, competency-based

language teaching is a learner-centered approach, its focus moves from what students know about language to what they can do with it. In this sense, learners are given the choice, and the ability that was not available before, to be more responsible and prepared to acquire and learn by themselves, as long as they meet the anticipated goals from them. Like any other approach, they are supported by qualified teachers who play the role of facilitators and supervisors to guide them through mastering the required competencies. (Black and William, 1998)

I.2.4.4 Evaluation

If teaching occurred according to the competency-based education methodology, it is imperative to consider new assessment tools that suit with the new principles. The language learners' assessment has always been a matter of administering knowledge-based tests in the former language teaching assessment methodologies, the primary focus in CBLT teaching, as well as assessment, is on demonstrating the mastery of relevant skills. (Mulder et al, 2007).

Since our concern in this research is CB assessment, we will devote the second part of this chapter to deal with it in details.

I.2.5. Competency-based Assessment

I.2.5.1. Issues related to competency-based assessment

Some related issues should be introduced before we go deep in competency based assessment for their importance to make things clear.

I.2.5.1.1. Criterion-referenced

Since CBE specifies standards to aim at by the end of the course; therefore, it is criterion rather than norm referenced. Simon (1969) argues that the assessment in CB programs must be criterion-referenced with the criterion being the competencies upon which the program is

base. The previous argument leads us to define Criterion-referenced assessment and its relationship with competency based assessment.

Criterion referencing is a familiar term to assessment having been advocated within education since early 1960's. It is concerned with clearly specified outcomes, and with assessments that address these outcomes separately rather than dealing with "pass-marks" or norms. In fact, the need to move away from norm-referencing and ranking to an emphasis on what students can actually do, and about the beneficial effects of clear criteria on teaching and learning are arguments which we meet in CB assessment. Criterion referencing tests also have come to be associated primarily with the concept of testing for mastery just as CB assessment has done. But Wolf (1995) argues that "the detailed methods adopted by criterion-referenced and CB assessment also made it clear the latter is a specialized development of the former".

I.2.5.1.2. Norm-referenced

As it is mentioned above, CBA is 'criterion-referenced' rather than 'norm-referenced'. We find it necessary to give a brief definition to the latter. Norm-referenced is an approach to measurement in which an individual performance is evaluated against the range of performances typically of a population of similar individuals (McNamara, 2000) which is not the case in CB programs.

I.2.5.1.3. Performance-based

According to Scheneck (1978), the competency-based approach has much in common with such approaches to learning as performance-based education. Consequently, the competency-based assessment is mostly performance based, it focuses on what students can actually do with the language to demonstrate the appropriate knowledge related to a particular standards performance.

I.2.5.1.4. Continuous Assessment

Continuous assessment is another familiar term in CB programs. In this latter, participant's knowledge and skills are assessed as they enter the program. Those with satisfactory knowledge and skills may bypass competencies already attained. Pretesting also determines what skills they lack, and participants are post-tested after instruction on that skill. If they do not achieve the desired level of mastery, they continue to work on the objectives and are retested. This situation can be reached thanks to the continuous feedback that the CBLT offers. Moreover, instruction is not time-based, students program at their own rates and concentrate on just those areas in which they lack competence. (Grant et al., 1979)

I.2.5.2. Characteristics of the Competency-based Assessment

The rise of the competency-based assessment began in American teaching education and certification processes, followed by the U.K since there was a dire national need that is surfacing, there were not enough young workers among the workforce, there was significant interest for highly particular objectives and learning plans in a diversity of contexts. The competency-based assessment came with the long waited method in which the learner or candidate outcomes, or what can he give in reality, is in center point (Wolf, 1995).

Before dealing with major characteristics of CB assessment, we would like to give its definition as it is stated by Baartman et al. (2006). Competency-based assessment is a form of assessment that is derived from the specification of a set of outcomes that so clearly state both the outcomes –general and specific- that assessors, students and interested third parties can all make reasonably objective judgment with respect to student achievement of these outcomes, and that certifies student progress on the basis of demonstrated achievement of these outcomes. Assessments are not tied to time served in formal educational setting. Wolf's definition of the competency based assessment entails three main characteristics:

- It emphasizes on outcomes, specifically, multiple outcomes, each distinctive and separately considered.
- The belief that these outcomes can and should be specified to the point where they are clear and unambiguous. That assessors and assesses should be able to understand what is being assessed, and what should be achieved.
- The decoupling of assessment from particular institution or learning programs. And it is not time based assessment.

It is worth noting also that criteria to be used assessing achievement and the conditions under which achievement will be assessed are explicitly stated and made public in advance. Moreover, assessment of competency takes participants knowledge and attitudes into account but requires actual performance of the competency as the primary source of evidence. Hence, tests in a CB program are used to ascertain whether or not the students attend specific objectives. Students' receive credit according to the progress they have made and the amount of material they have mastered, rather than according to their standing or rank within class. (Black, 1989).

I.2.5.3. Competency-based Tests

In the context of a competency-based program, tests are generally associated with the criteria defined by the school curriculum. In this meaning, competency-based tests are distinguished by the following three features:

Validity and reliability: In contrast with the traditional tests that are concerned with what is called norms or pass marks. Competency-based tests are developed around the minute specification of outcome which is intended to be clear and unambiguous. This specification of required aims guarantees the validity and reliability of assessment. As Bradley (1989, p88) said, "reliable, parallel assessment can be derived from it directly".

Flexibility in scheduling: if students are permitted to take tests when they feel ready to do so, the teacher must establish flexible system of administering tests. If aspects of traditional teaching are applied to classes where the teacher should schedule all tests in advance, the teacher may schedule tests somewhat earlier than the prescribed dates. In this way he/she will be able to correct the examination and return results to students before the official dates. Students who do not achieve the objectives may be retested at the regular examination time. (Brindley, 1994).

Rapidity of scoring: if students are allowed to take tests over as often as necessary for them to demonstrate that they have mastered the material being tested, it is essential that they will be informed of their test results as quickly as possible. It is usually advisable to give series of short tests rather than one long test; in this way the student who experiences difficulties will retake only that short test about those specific competencies he/she did not master. The teacher also will save the time of recording long tests several times.

Conclusion

The present chapter has provided relevant background knowledge about the testing in the context of language learning, and its majors theoretical and practical elements, as well as its application in teaching. During every stage of instruction, the learners' progress should be assessed and provided by corrective feedback from either the teacher or study peers. In that regard, language teachers use a variety of testing practices, which each has its strengths and weaknesses. Nevertheless, language testing should adhere to several principals to be considered for the assessment process, as well as to adequately measure what it is supposed to measure. We also discussed the competency-based approach in the context of language learning as an approach that seeks to measure learning regardless of time. Learners' prove their language mastery by demonstrating competencies, as long as learners can function properly within real-life settings, the learners are considered to be language users, which is

the primary goal of the CBA. According to the competency-based approach, teachers are relieved of many of their previously known duties, most of the study time is allocated to learners, their practice of the tasks and activities, and their assessment which was revealed through this chapter to be timeless and objective-oriented, learners are ultimately assessed based on the outcomes they display during actual performances of the objectives.

Chapter II

Research Methodology and Discussion of the findings

Introduction

The introduction of the competency-based approach in the field of language learning brings about major implications in terms of the learners' assessment. Assessment formerly comprised of conducting knowledge-based tests. While knowledge-based assessments can be used in CBT to measure mastery of content, the main focus of the CBT is to measure the mastery of language skills. Within this scope, the assessment within the competency-based must be criterion-referenced, with the competencies upon which the program is based as a criterion. In this study, our concern is the issue of test type and content appropriateness to the competency-based assessment, along with highlighting this problem on the Algerian secondary school tests after the implementation of the Competency-based education in 2005. The attempt to give an evaluation of the tests originates from our endeavor to prepare teachers in complying with the new competency-based trend in teaching in general, and the closely related assessment strategy in particular. Thus, It is our primary concern to investigate the method's degree of feasibility in the various present classroom tests. The people that are most likely to carry out the evaluation process successfully are test creators and teachers, with teachers being in an optimal position when equipped with the underlying theoretical background, teachers are the ones who are immersed in a daily basis with the classroom environment and situations, and they are the responsible party who are supposed to yield practical results from theoretical materials. It is only in the real classroom tests that evidence can be collected to investigate the suitability of the conducted tests to the competency-based assessment.

II.1. Instruments

We will make use of the content analysis method. Weber (1990) describes the content analysis method in research as using a set of procedures to form legitimate inferences from written materials, and it has various advantages when compared with other research approaches. Firstly, content analysis is applied right to texts or transcripts, or the products of human communication. Secondly, high-quality studies use both the quantitative and qualitative interpretation of documents. Moreover, the different kinds of documents provide a credible source of information for a long time, due to their lifespan that amounts to several decades or even centuries. Finally, the unobtrusive characteristic of this research method guarantees that no part of the communicational situation is being interpreted, therefore, the risk that they will behave according to certain expectations, which can consequently alter the validity of data. For the purpose of this study, a self-constructed checklist is composed and presented in the tables below to facilitate the use of questions to assess the gathered classroom tests. This checklist's elements are extracted from multiple sources for more inclusive look regarding the description of the good competency-based test, sources include Brown (2004, p.31) as well as Lyle F. Bachman and Adrian S. Palmer (1996:155) checklists for test evaluation. It includes a space to specify whether the quality being evaluated is observed in a particular test under consideration or not.

II.2. Research procedure

Upon analyzing the selected tests, our focus will be on the degree of the competency-based assessment guidelines applicability on those tests. In that regard, we determined that the convenience sampling will be the most suitable choice in the wake of the sanitary crisis, the researcher however, aimed to draw the tests sample from the biggest possible pool of English language tests through keeping variety when it comes to teachers and the corresponding

academic years. Various paper-and-pencil tests have been collected from Omar Idriss high school (El-Kantara). Among the collected tests, 22 tests are selected randomly. Cohen et al. (2007) describe the process of content analysis as simply coding, categorizing, comparing, and concluding. As for Dörnyei (2007), coding is applied to diminish or clarify the data while emphasizing and preserving their specific peculiarities to connect them to more general concepts, whereas “code” is commonly a label related to a particular idea or concept intended to make the particular piece of information manageable and malleable. Also, categorizing points to producing meaningful categories into which words, phrases, or sentences. As the parts of analysis can be arranged while comparing means making connections between categories. Finally, concluding which attains to the idea of expressing theoretical considerations on the basis of the text and the results of the analysis. Taking into consideration the theoretical framework, the study will be based on the application of the following criteria:

- Test usefulness
- Competency-based assessment

II.3. Assessment criteria

The criteria for the evaluation of test quality and appropriateness differ from one test type to another. These criteria depend on the purpose of the test, whether it is general or in accordance to competency-based assessment.

II.3.1. Test usefulness

Brown (2004) stated the three principles of reliability, validity, and practicality to be the major indicators for both designing an assessment procedure and evaluating an existing one. Quizzes, final exams, and standardized proficiency tests among others can all be analyzed through these three lenses.

II.3.1.1. Test Reliability

As seen in chapter I, test reliability concerns the test, the teacher, and administrator.

Unreliability of a test causes variation in test scores due to factors other than the one thing we want to measure. Amongst the factors that affect test reliability, four factors must be checked:

1. Is the test photocopy of acceptable quality and clear fonts?
2. Does the test have a proper length?
3. Are the tasks instructions clear (not vague or ambiguous)?
4. Are the instructions and items correct?

II.3.1.2. Test Validity

The most important point regarding validity in the classroom test is content validity (Brown, 2004), this means the extent of the classroom materials integration into classroom tests, as well as the degree to which the learning objectives are mirrored in those tests. Another crucial form of test validity is face validity, which is the quality of structuring assessment procedures to elicit the optimal performance of the student. We will consider:

1. Is the structure of the test logically organized?
2. Does the test cover what has been studied?
3. Is the test suitable for the students' level?
4. Can the objectives of the test be sufficiently identified from the proposed items?

II.3.1.3. Test Practicality

Practicality is dominantly related to the teacher and student time constraint, cost, and administrative details, and to a degree by what occurs before and after the test. To determine whether a test is practical for our needs, an answer to the following questions is needed:

1. Is it easy to administer the test?
2. Can students complete the test comfortably within the test time frame?

3. Is the scoring system feasible in the teacher correcting time frame?
4. Are methods for reporting results explained in advance?

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	S11	S12	S13	S14	S15	S16	S17	S18	S19	S20	S21	S22	
Reliability																							
1	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	
2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			
4	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓			✓
Validity																							
1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Practicality																							
1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Tableau 01 frequency checklist regarding test usefulness

Table 01 shows the frequency checklist regarding test usefulness. A self-constructed checklist was composed by the researcher to facilitate answering questions in order to extract the necessary results, as well as the coding of the literature related to the language test usefulness in Brown (2004). The above checklist includes the three major principals of the useful test, which are respectively reliability, validity, and practicality.

II.3.2. Criteria for Competency-Based Tests

We saw before that the competency-based assessment focuses on the outcomes or outputs of learning in the development of language tests, which are the main references that instructors depend on to make a reasonable objective judgment concerning student achievement. Of the various characteristics of competency-based assessment, the criteria includes key five major points from which we draw subpoints to include in the self-constructed checklist, as follows:

II.3.2.1. Knowledge and Simple Understanding

Well-constructed and brief responses items are one way of assessing the subject matter, procedural knowledge, and simple understanding in the students, particularly when it comes to recognizing or remembering isolated facts, definitions, spellings, concepts, and principles. The questions can be answered and scored quickly, so it is efficient for teachers.

II.3.2.2. Reasoning and Interpretation

This requires the understanding of cultural patterns of meaning in presented discourse because interpretation is a step beyond comprehension and indicates the ability to "get what is between the lines".

II.3.2.3. Assessing the Four Skills

A distinctive criterion of competency-based programs is that they take into consideration, in an equal manner, the four skills of the target language (reading, writing, listening, speaking). Consequently, competency-based assessment tests both receptive skills (reading and listening) together with productive skills (writing and speaking).

II.3.2.4. Behavior

(Burns, 1972) Asserted that the competency movement is packed with nouns and adjectives emphasizing the essential role of behavior, "shaping behavior" and "behavioral objectives" are examples of them, it is the specification of the behaviors, or what is commonly called behavioral objectives that give leverage to the competency-based approach. Learning objectives in the CBA are specified behaviors, or what the learner can do in the end of the instructional period, which must be demonstrated by the learner as a preparation for performing complex professional activities.

II.3.2.5. Interaction and Communicative Ability

As far as communicative competency is concerned, learners are supposed to acquire the communication competencies within the foreign language to an acceptable standard, allowing them to communicate fluently and appropriately. For personal and social situations, learners are recommended to get the appropriate social tools to express their identity and interact using an appropriate and acceptable social manners with speakers of the target language.

Table 02 displays the frequency checklist regarding the competency-based assessment criteria. A self-constructed checklist was composed by the researcher to facilitate answering questions in order to extract the necessary results, as well as the coding of the literature related to the language test usefulness in Bachman and Palmer (1996). The above checklist covers ten main points that characterize the competency-based assessment practices, including interpretation, reasoning, integrating the four skills, communicative abilities, and behavior.

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	S11	S12	S13	S14	S15	S16	S17	S18	S19	S20	S21	S22	
1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5																							
6																							
7																							
8																							
9																							
10		✓			✓	✓																	

Tableau 02 Frequency checklist regarding the competency-based assessment criteria

II.4. Analysis of the results

We extracted the following quantitative data from the previous checklists of test usefulness and competency-based assessment criteria, upon analyzing the tests. The results are as follows:

II.4.1 Test usefulness

II.4.1.1 Test Reliability

Test reliability criteria	Yes	No
Is the test photocopy of acceptable quality and clear fonts?	82%	18%
Does the test have a proper length?	91%	9%
Are the tasks instructions clear (not vague or ambiguous)?	64%	36%
Are the instructions and items correct?	64%	36%

Tableau 03 Test reliabilityfrequency

The analysis of the test reliability table shows that only 8 out of 22 tests are reliable. These tests, as it is shown, are S1, S2, S3, S11, S13, S15, S18, S20. This number represents only 36%. The remaining tests S4, S5, S6, S7, S8, S9, S10, S12, S14, S16, S17, S19, S21, S22 are unreliable, with a percentage of (64%). The reliability of tests is attributed to the fact that all the criteria are satisfied. Equally important, the unreliability of tests can be attributed to the fact that not all the criteria are satisfied. That is, these tests have only partial reliability:

75% for S4, S7, S8, S9, S12, S14, S16, S19, S22.

50% for S6, S17.

25% for S5, S10, S21.

Hence, this result drew a fundamental yet significant consideration. The four measurement qualities of the test copy clarity, appropriate length of the test, the clarity of instructions, and correctness are basic conditions. If the test does not fulfill complete reliability, or it has only partial reliability as seen in the drawn results, a significant part of tests is not satisfactory enough to be taken by students in fair conditions.

II.4.1.2. Test Validity

Test validity criteria	Yes	No
Is the structure of the test logically organized?	100%	0%
Does the test cover what has been studied?	100%	0%
Is the test suitable for the students' level?	91%	9%
Can the objectives of the test be sufficiently identified from the proposed items?	96%	4%

Tableau 04 Test Validity frequency

The results obtained from the test validity frequency table determine that 20 out of 22 tests put under criteria are valid with a percentage of 91%. In terms of content validity, all tests are equally valid. In comparison, face validity is not satisfied in two tests that are S3, S8, the sole deficiency in the two tests is that some of the proposed material is inappropriate regarding the students' level. Thus, the tests are predominantly valid.

II.4.1.3. Test Practicality

The table above points out that all the tests are practical. As such, the quality of easiness to administer, appropriateness of time frame, the feasibility of scoring, and stating the methods for reporting results are all satisfied.

Test practicality criteria	Yes	No
Is it easy to administer the test?	100%	0%
Can students complete the test comfortably within the test time frame?	100%	0%
Is the scoring system feasible in the teacher correcting time frame?	100%	0%
Are methods for reporting results explained in advance?	100%	0%

Tableau 05 Test practicality frequency

II.4.2. Competency-based assessment

Competency-based assessment criteria	Yes	No
Does it test the students' knowledge of language?	100%	0%
Does it test the student' reasoning and deep understanding?	91%	9%
Does it test reading skills?	100%	0%
Does it test the writing skill?	100%	0%
Does it test the student' listening skill?	0%	100%
Does it test the student' speaking skill?	0%	100%
Is there an integration of skills?	0%	100%
Does it test the student' language in terms of behavior?	0%	100%
Does the test contain the element of interaction?	0%	100%
Does it test the student' communicative competence?	14%	86%

Tableau 06 Competency-based assessment criteria frequency

Table 06 shows that all the analyzed tests examine students' knowledge and simple understanding. Reading and writing skills are extensively involved, However, none of the tests contained elements that gauge the students' listening and speaking skills, the same goes for an important skill which is deep reasoning and interpretation. In addition, there is no integration of the skills and no interaction of learners to measure their social use of language.

As far as assessing the communicative competence is concerned, the tests S2, S7, S8 examine the level of communicative competence among students, whereas the rest do not expand to such lengths. (see table 05). In S2 students are required to respond to a letter sent by a friend. In S7 the writing section instructs them to write dialogue. Finally, S8 requires students to write a speech. In the remaining tests, writing tasks revolve either around summarizing, ordering sentences, or writing a composition about a given topic.

It is insufficient to explore the usefulness of classroom tests just by conducting quantitative data analysis. Therefore, making justifiable interpretations from the part of the researcher's is desirable. Assessing the overall usefulness of a given test is essentially subjective since this involves personal judgments from the test developer. The following analysis takes into consideration the different reasons that lead to a lack of reliability and validity of tests, on the part of the test creator. We identified the reasons to be within four main classifications:

- Lack of linguistic knowledge.
- Lack of knowledge about the test non-linguistic content.
- Technological equipment misuse.
- Lack of attention when developing the test.

In an attempt to investigate the lack of reliability and validity, which is found in several test sheets under this study, the researcher extracted the most frequent mistakes which marked the majority of these tests. As the study of 22 tests concluded that the teachers

appeared to have a lack of theoretical knowledge about the language. To consolidate this deduction, empirical research was used to put more credibility into these interpretations. As for the linguistic mistakes that confirm this claim, grammatical as well as punctuation mistakes are the most present. S6 shows that the instructions are not correct because the correct form of the verb "occupy" in the Written Expression part is occupied and not occupy, a period should be put to show a new sentence and avoid misunderstanding. An inaccuracy of instructions can also be noticed in S10 where there are two wrong instructions. The first one in the third question. The correct form should be: "Answer the following questions according to the text" instead of: "Answer the following questions according to the tex". The latter can also be attributed to the test developer's lack of attention, while the second mistake can be located in the instruction of the second part. It is essentially a short summary "of" the text and not a short summary "to" the text. In the test S21, it is hard to determine whether the lack of attention or the lack of linguistic knowledge caused the mistake in the third question, in which the teacher used the verb do instead of does. The incorrectness of instructions persists along with the tests S5, S6, S7, S10, S14, S16, S17, S21. (See appendices)

Even though the lack of linguistic knowledge is the main reason for tests unreliability but it is not the sole. Lack of none-linguistic knowledge that is the awareness of the content in the test as well as the cultural luggage, together with misuse of technological devices is of great value in the consistency and therefore the reliability of language tests.

Ambiguity can also be considered as a lack of attention from the part of the test designer, as an example to illustrate ambiguity. The fourth activity in S4 reveals that the test designer lacks background knowledge. The instructions say that the student needs to find the question for the statement "through the repetition of slogans". The text contains more than one

use of slogans. Consequently, there is more than one possible answer to the question. This might confuse the students and possibly hinder them from completing other questions.

Most teachers do not give much importance to the test sheet of paper, since it is supposedly irrelevant to the performance of students, whereas a not well-photocopied paper plays an important role in their poor performance. A badly photocopied test sheet can be associated with the teacher's lack of skills regarding technological devices. This can clearly be shown in S5, S9, S17, S21.

II.5. Discussions of the results

We classified the present research' results based on the criteria we used in the test evaluation, the outcomes are two sections dealing with the general usefulness, as well as the compatibility of the sample with the competency-based assessment guidelines

II.5.1 Test Usefulness

Based on the analysis, out of the selected 22 tests, only seven tests are considered useful tests with a percentage of 32%. Based on the fact that test usefulness pertains to the function of several different qualities, all of which contribute in unique but interrelated ways to the overall usefulness of a given test, the remaining ones that lack one or more quality are not considered to be useful, and this is partly because the qualities are more or less imbalanced with noticed contrast between one quality and the other. In this case, validity and practicality are maximized at the expense of the third quality of reliability.

II.5.2 Compatibility to Competency-based assessment

When compared to the traditional tests, the selected tests in this study and the traditional tests have the same characteristics, no distinctions can be noticed. The exams are largely based on the usual reading comprehension part followed with mastery of the language

part to conclude with written expression in best cases, and just another uncreative task of ordering phrases in many cases (see appendices). Interpretation tasks are unheard of, communicative competency can be rarely found as we have seen, the positive side of these tests are the same as the traditional testing methodology, including an extensive assessment of explicit linguistic rules and the comprehension skills.

Pedagogical implications and further suggestions

Although traditional forms of assessment can provide psychometrical valid measures of language learners' performance, they usually fail to deliver the kind of information that serves the competency-based purpose, which is namely what learners can do with the foreign language. What follows are some pedagogical implications that are recommended to solve this problem.

When designing tests for language learning classes, it is needed from the teachers to bear in mind the characteristics of useful tests, how practical, valid, and reliable the tests will be. When writing tests, it is important to work out what we want to achieve especially since the learners' results will indicate their mastery of the language. It is helpful to make a list of language items to be included in the test, however, it is not advised to be always a paper and pencil test.

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the application of assessment procedures that are radically different from traditional forms of assessment. More authentic tools of assessment such as portfolios, interviews, journals, project work, and self or peer-assessment have become increasingly common in EFL classrooms. These tools of assessment are more student-centered because students are more involved in their learning and give them a better sense of control for their own learning. This is one of the most significant characteristics of a competency-based assessment.

The assumption that new theories are very likely to yield interesting results in acquiring a foreign language is increasingly popular among scholars. Therefore, teachers are supposed to change their testing habits and adopt new ways and new techniques to comply with those assumptions, principles, and goals of the new approach. If a teacher, for example, adopts his/her outdated audio-lingual procedures and techniques - and has in mind, for example, to get students to acquire the basic pragmatic strategies for communication in English and interact in appropriate manners with other speakers of the language- he will have to adapt his teaching and testing techniques to the new methodology and consequently the learners' performance will be better.

There are many ways of testing the students' abilities to use the foreign language. We will provide the most important ones. In testing the listening skill, we may ask students to make or choose the best summary of what they have been listening to. We may also ask them to put a set of pictures in the right order as they listen to a story, or to comprehend a phone message, as listening tasks. When testing the speaking skill, we can interview students or we may arrange them in pairs and ask them to perform a number of tasks. In addition, we may ask them to discuss the similarities and differences between the two pictures. Moreover, we can ask them to describe how to furnish a room, or to perform role plays such as buying a flying ticket or asking for information in a shop.

One of the problems with prevailing attitudes towards testing is the view that all tests are summative. Students might have thought 'whew I am glad that is over; I do not have to remember that stuff anymore'. The challenge that test designers face is to change that attitude among students. They can instill more formative quality to what students might otherwise view as a summative test. They can offer students an opportunity to convert tests into 'learning experiences'; this can be achieved by a delivery (by the teacher) and internalization (by the student) of appropriate feedback on performance.

Interaction, communicative competence, and integration of skills can be tested in many ways. The project work is one of them. The latter is based on creating opportunities for language learning through problem-solving, cooperative learning, collaboration, and organization of meaning-processes which are believed to be central to foreign language acquisition; "a project is an activity which learners carry out using their available language resources and leading to real outcome" (Richards and Renanday, 2002). Examples of projects are solving problems, sharing and comparing experiences, etc. In carrying out projects, learners will be taking part in such processes as negotiation of meaning, paraphrasing, and experimentation which lead to successful language development.

For appropriate use of the project work, students are supposed to work in small groups; choose a topic of interest and investigate it. Pupils then analyze and interpret data, and finally present their findings in class. In carrying out the task, students experience enough opportunities for meaningful use in realistic contexts. The use of project work does not only provide valuable real-world knowledge but also provides the basis for a meaning-based pedagogy that goes beyond a focus on studying a language that is completely deprived of its contextual use. It is also considered as a valuable vehicle for integrating the four language skills across a variety of educational settings.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis of these tests, we noted that the tests administered in our high schools leave much margin for improvement. A lot has been said about the use of competency-based education in Algerian high schools but little has been done in terms of teachers teaching approaches and classroom procedures. Some of the teachers are depending on the same way of testing as the way they were tested or the way they used to test students before the introduction of CBA. In other words, teachers are stuck using the traditional

method of testing they used to from their own previous experience without adapting their teaching practices to the latest method. If it was taken into consideration in our schools the fact that the competency-based assessment should test the competencies upon which the curriculum is based, we can conclude that no present test is actually testing what has been taught. Basic skills such as speaking and listening are taught in all the levels but they do not get tested on these two fundamental skills. Teachers regularly use paper-and-pencil selective response tests, and plenty of isolated items without involving oral production, group performance, integrated performance (across skill areas), open-ended responses, and other interactive tasks. Students, therefore, do not get an assessment on the important and relevant skills directly as they perform them, in actual or simulated real-world tasks.

General conclusion

Implementing the competency-based approach in teaching the English language, and subsequently, the related assessment methods in a sufficient and efficient way are still something to be seen. This study concludes that the testing methods did not get its share of improvement. According to recent studies, teachers' understanding of the CBA is mediocre and the Algerian educational institutions face many challenges that limit the effectiveness of CBA lesson plans implementation, and the learners' assessment process did not make an exception. In light of these challenges, supporting the execution of the educational reforms in the field, including, the provision of extensive CBA pedagogy preparation for instructors.

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LAST TERM EXAM

PART ONE: READING (15 points)

A/ Comprehension. (8 points)

Read the text carefully then do the activities.

"Child labour" is, generally speaking, work for children that harms or exploits them in some way (physically, mentally, morally, or by blocking access to education).

Not all work is bad for children. Some social scientists point out that some kinds of work may be completely harmless, except for one thing about the work that makes it exploitative. For instance, a child who delivers newspapers before school might actually benefit from learning how to work, gaining responsibility, and earn a bit of money. But what if the child is not paid? Then he or she is being exploited.

In Africa, one child in three is at work, and in Latin America, one child in five works. In 2000, the International Labour Organisation estimated that 246 million child workers aged between 5 and 17 were involved in child labour. Moreover, some 8.4 million children were engaged in the so-called "unconditional" worst forms of child labour, which include forced labour, the use of children in armed conflict, trafficking in children and their organs.

One may say that poverty is widely considered the top reason of why children work at inappropriate jobs for their ages. However there are other reasons as lack of good schools and day care lack of other services such as health care, and family problems.

1- Choose the main idea of the text.

- a- Children and exploitative work
- b- Children and labour organizations
- c- Children's educational problems

2- In which paragraph is it mentioned that work may be beneficial to kids?

3- Say whether the following statements are True or False according to the text.

- a- Children's work is always harmful.
- b- The number of the African children involved in work is lower than the one in Latin America.
- c- Poverty is one of the causes of child labour.

4- Answer the following questions according to the text.

- a- What is child labour?
- b- What are the benefits of children's work?
- c- What causes child labour?

5- What or who do the underlined words refer to the text?

- a- them (§1)
- b- who (§2)
- c- she (§2)

B) TEXT EXPLORATION

(7 points)

1- Find in the text words that are opposite in meaning to the following:

- a- benefits (§1)
- b- harm (§2)

2- Complete the following chart as shown in the example.

Verb	Noun	Adjective
Example: to harm	harm	harmful/harmless
to benefit	.....	.....
.....	.....	exploitative
.....	care	.....

3- Complete sentence (b) so that it means the same as (a).

- 1a) Your father smokes .
b) I wish.....
- 2a) The film was so boring that I could not finish it.
b) It was..... that.....

4- Classify the following words according to the pronunciation of their final (-s).

Kinds	- exploits	- services	- ages	- delivers	- benefits
	/s/	/z/	/s/	/z/	/s/

5- Reorder the following sentences to make a coherent paragraph.

- a) Children also experience violence at home
- b) That is why international organizations defend their rights.
- c) which sometimes leads to had injuries or death.
- d) Violence is found in schools, in streets and in the places of work.

PART TWO: Written Expression

(5 points)

Choose one of the following topics.

Topic one : Write a composition of about 120 words on the following:

Some children work to help their families. What sort of advantages may they get from their work.

Use the following notes.

- learning organization
- gaining moral satisfaction
- gaining responsibility
- learning how to work
- earning a bit of money

Topic two : Write a composition of about 120 words on the following:

Do you think that businessmen should be socially responsible in their business? Justify your opinion.

PART ONE . Reading.

Read the text carefully and do the activities.

Hulagu Khan (1217-1265), the grand son of Gengis Khan, was a Mongol ruler who conquered much of the South west of Asia. He probably always intended to take Baghdad, which the Mongols had been meaning to attack for over ten years. Hulago sent a message to the Caliph, Al-Musta'sim, containing the following: "when I lead my army against Baghdad in anger, whether you hide in heaven or in earth I will bring you down from the spinning spheres; I will toss you in the air like a lion. I will leave no one alive in your realm; I will burn your city, your land, yourself. If you wish to spare yourself and your venerable family, give heed to my advice with the ear of intelligence. If you do not, you will see what God has willed." The Mongol army, led by Hulagu Khan set out of Baghdad in November of 1257. He marched with what was probably the largest army ever fielded by the Mongols. On February 10, Baghdad surrendered. The Mongols swept into the city on February 13 and began a week of massacre, looting, rape, and destruction.

The Grand Library of Baghdad, containing countless precious historical documents and books on subjects ranging from medicine to astronomy, was destroyed. Survivors said that the waters of the Tigris ran black with ink from the enormous quantities of books flung into the river. Ian Frazier of The New Yorker says estimates of the death toll have ranged from 200,000 to a million. The Mongols looted and then destroyed. Mosques, palaces, libraries, hospitals – grand buildings that had been the work of generations were burned to the ground. The Caliph was captured and forced to watch as his citizens were murdered and his treasury plundered. Most historians believe that the Mongols rolled the Caliph up in a rug, and rode their horses over him, as they believed that the earth was offended if touched by royal blood. Baghdad was a depopulated, ruined city for several centuries and only gradually recovered something of its former glory.

(Encyclopaedia: allexperts.com)

- 1-The text is: a- descriptive b- narrative c-argumentative
- 2-What do the underlined words refer to in the text?
- 3-Answer the following questions according to the text.
 - A- Who sent the message to the Caliph?
 - B- Sum up in one sentence the sender's message to the Caliph.
 - c- What happened to the Caliph once the Mongols took Baghdad?
 - D- What happened to the city of Baghdad?
- 4- In which paragraph is it mentioned that the Mongols had planned for the invasion of Baghdad a long time before?

5- Are these statements TRUE or FALSE?

- A- At the time of the Mongol's invasion Baghdad was ruled by a King.
- b- Hulago sent the Caliph a menacing message.
- c- The Caliph was captured and well treated.

B- TEXT EPXLORATION

1- Find in the text words that are closest in meaning to.

- a- pay careful attention=... (§1)
- b- previous =... (§2)
- c- slowly =... (§2)
- d- carpet =... (§2)

2- What nouns can be derived from the following adjectives.

- glorious - angry -ruined - offended

3- Pick out from the text all the words that end in -s and classify them in the following table.

/s/	/z/	/iz/

4- Rewrite the second sentence so that it means the same as the one given.

- A1- " When I lead my army against Baghdad, I will leave no one alive in your realm."
- A2- Hulagu told the Caliph that.....
- B1- The Caliph was captured and forced to watch.
- B2- The Mongols.....
- C1- Most historians believe that the Mongols rolled the Caliph up in a rug.
- C2- Most historians believed that the Caliph...

5- Fill in the gaps using the words in the list: ponies- thirsd- army - were.

Genghis Khan (1167-1227), crowned the "emperor of emperors", and his ... 1... of fierce Mongol horsemen, known as the "Golden Horde", conquered two... 2... of the then known world. The Mongols... 3... a fast-moving, cavalry-based army that rode small sturdy ... 4... .

الموضوع الثاني

THIRD TERM EXAM

PART ONE. READING (15 points)
A/ COMPREHENSION (6 points)

Read the text carefully then do the activities

Why We Laugh

All of us like to laugh, but only some of us can explain the reasons for laughing. It seems that smiles, laughter and good human relationships go together. Laughter is unplanned, often unpredictable, and sometimes personal and idiosyncratic. It resists close analysis. Despite the difficulty of explaining all the causes of laughter, however, we may note a few common elements. There must be something to laugh at, whether a person, a thing, a situation, a custom, a habit of speech or dialect, or an arrangement of words.

Human beings normally know what to expect under given conditions, and anything contrary to these expectations is incongruous and may therefore generate a great deal of laughter. When the temperature is 100 F., for example, you expect people to wear lightly. But if you see a person who is dressed in a heavy overcoat, a warm hat, a muffler, and large gloves, and who is waving his arms and stamping his feet to keep warm, this person violates your expectations. Because his clothes and behaviour are inappropriate or incongruous, you would likely laugh at him. Seeing a person slipping on a banana peel and hurtling through the air will make nearly all of us laugh as long as we ourselves are not that person, for laughter depends on insulation from danger and pain. In farce, where much physical abuse takes place (such as falling through trapdoors or being hit in the face by cream pies) the abuse never harms the participants.

Finally laughter depends on seeing something new or unique, or on experiencing a known thing freshly. There will be very little or no laughter at all if the circumstances promoting laughter are not spontaneous. Perhaps you have had someone explain a joke or funny situation, only to find that the explanation killed your chance to indulge in a little laughter.

(Adapted from Edgar V. Roberts, *Writing Themes About Literature*, pp. 144-145)

- The text is taken from: a) a book b) a website c) a newspaper article
- Say whether these sentences TRUE or FALSE according to the text.
 - Most of us are able to explain why we laugh.
 - We don't plan to laugh.
 - We laugh at something we don't expect.
 - Only few of us laugh when we see someone slipping on a banana peel.
- Answer the following questions according to the text.
 - Why is it difficult to explain the reasons for laughing?
 - What are the elements that can make us laugh?
 - Why do we laugh at someone who wears heavy clothes in hot weather?
- In which paragraph is it mentioned that we laugh only at spontaneous circumstances?
- What or who do the underlined words refer to in the text?

B/ TEXT EXPLORATION (7 points)

- Find in the text words that are closest in meaning to the following.
 - common =...(\$1)
 - hardship =...(\$1)
 - relies on =...(\$2)

2/ Complete the following chart as shown in the example.

Verbs	Nouns	Adjectives
Example: to explain	explanation	Explicable/inexplicable
To laugh	laughter	
To warm		warm

- Classify the following words according to the pronunciation of final (-s)

Reasons – relationships – resists – circumstances – jokes – causes

/s/	/z/	/tʃ/

4/ Rewrite the second sentence so that it means the same as the first one.

- Sick humour can shorten our lives.
- Our lives.....
- It is advisable to smile and laugh every day.
- Youevery day.

5/ Fill in the gaps so that the text makes sense.

Some health specialists say that we should have a laugh ---1--- time to time. They consider laughter as the best medicine for getting ---2--- of stress. They regard it as one of the necessities of ---3---in society.

PART TWO. WRITING (5 points)

Choose one topic only

TOPIC ONE: use the following notes to write a composition of about 120 words on the following.

Life is difficult you should live it in an artistic way by:

- Live the present and treasure the satisfaction of helping a friend, read a good book
- Be positive. Positive people are successful
- Give priority to close relationships (parents, relatives, close friends...)
- Act happy: have a happy face, smile, laugh
- Do physical exercises to keep fit
- Don't forget your religious duties (pray, fast, respect others, and be self-effacing...)
- Don't put yourself in front of the TV for a long time

TOPIC TWO: write a composition of about 120 words on the following topic.

There are many proverbs in different languages that talk about friends.

Example: A friend in need is a friend indeed/ Two are friends, three is company. On what basis do you choose/make your friends?

SMILE THERE IS NOTHING WORTH TO BE ANXIOUS ABOUT

Part One: Reading:

A. Comprehension

Read the text carefully then do the following activities.

Since money came into use in the ancient world, there has been counterfeiting. Early money was in the form of coins with a specific content of gold, silver, or any other metal. Making counterfeit coins was relatively easy. A metal of equal weight could be gold or silver-plated and passed on to the public as genuine.

Counterfeiting paper currency is a highly technical skill that calls for a talented draftsman, photographer, plate maker and printer. Also necessary for the counterfeit money to be convincing are high quality rag paper and the proper kind of ink.

With such technological advances as high-speed cameras and engraving machines, the time needed to produce counterfeit money has been shortened and the quality of the work improved. To combat these problems, the United States government has attempted to make detection of fraud easier by the use of very high quality rag paper and ink. Other nations also use special paper and ink. In much foreign currency a distinctive watermark can be seen by holding the money up to the light.

Counterfeiting is a criminal offence in nearly every country. A convention signed by many nations in Switzerland in 1929, provided for the centralization and cooperation of international police action to combat counterfeiting.

Adapted from Wise Geek .com

- Circle the letter that corresponds to the right answer.
The text is taken from: a. a magazine b. the Internet c. a newspaper
- Are these statements true or false? Write T or F next to the letter corresponding to the statement.
 - Counterfeiting existed since the appearance of money.
 - Low quality paper and ink are necessary to counterfeit money.
 - Technological development helped counterfeiters.
 - Counterfeiting is legal in some countries.
- Answer the following questions according to the text.
 - Why was counterfeiting easy in the past?
 - What has the United States government done to combat counterfeiting money?
- In which paragraph is it mentioned how to fight counterfeiting money?
- Copy the title you think is the most appropriate.
 - The history of Counterfeiting
 - Money Laundering
 - Counterfeiting Money

15 points
08 points

07 points

Appendix 04

- Find in the text words or phrases that are opposites to the following.
 - late (§1)
 - more difficult (§3)

- Divide the following words into root and affixes.

Words	Prefix	Root	Suffix
international			
distinctive			
shortened			

- Rewrite sentence B so that it means the same as sentence A.
 - A convention was signed by many nations in Switzerland.
 - Many nations

- "Making counterfeit coins was relatively easy", a historian said.
- A historian said that

- Classify the following words according to the pronunciation of the final "ed".

passed - shortened - attempted - provided

/t/	/d/	/ɪd/

- Fill in the gaps with words from the list below.

hide - techniques - financial - and

Money laundering refers to the process of concealing(1)..... transactions. Various laundering(2)..... can be employed by individuals, groups, officials(3)..... corporations. The goal of a money laundering operation is usually to(4)..... either the source or the destination of money.

Part Two: Written Expression

05 points

Choose ONE of the following topics:

Topic One:

Counterfeit is something copied and passed as genuine. What should be done to fight this crime? Use the following notes to write a composition of about 80 to 120 words.

- Sensitize people: mass media / school programmes.
- Organize anti-counterfeiting associations.
- Government: pass legislation / protect consumers.

Topic Two:

Children and teens are often targeted by junk food advertisements.

Write a letter to the director of a fast food company to complain about their effects on those kids. Sign the letter: John Smith.

Part 1. Reading

(15 points)

Read the text carefully then do the activities.

Advertising is a message designed to promote a product, a service or an idea. In everyday life, people come into contact with many kinds of advertising. Printed advertisements make up a large part of newspapers and magazines. Poster ads appear in many buses, subways and trains. Neon signs along downtown streets flash advertisements. Billboards dot the roadsides. Commercials interrupt TV and radio programs...

The purpose of most advertising is to sell the products or services. Manufacturers advertise to try to persuade people to buy their products. Large business firms also use advertising to create a favourable 'image' of their company. Local businesses use it to gain new customers and increase sales. Advertising, thus, plays a key role in the competition among businesses for the consumer's dollar.

Advertising is also used by individuals, political parties and candidates, social organisations, special interest groups, and the government. Many people advertise in newspapers to sell used cars, homes, or other property. Political parties and candidates use advertising to try to win votes. Social organisations and special interest groups often advertise to promote a cause or to influence the way people think or act.

a) Comprehension

(08 points)

1. Say whether the following statements are true or false.

- a) Advertising is a part of people's daily life.
- b) The main purpose of advertising is to sell products and services.
- c) Advertising has no influence on competition between large firms.
- d) Advertisements make political parties lose votes.

2. Fill in the table with information from the text as shown in the example.

Kinds of advertising	Where advertised
Example: a) printed	Newspapers and magazines
b).....	buses, subways, trains
c) neon signs	.....
d).....	roadsides
e) commercials	.....

3. Answer the following questions according to the text.

- a) Who uses advertising?
- b) Why do social organisations and special interest groups use advertising?

4. In which paragraph are:

- a) the different kinds of advertising mentioned?
- b) the users of advertising in elections mentioned?

5. Choose the general idea of the text.

- a) Reasons for advertising
- b) The negative effects of advertising
- c) Consumer goods

b) Text Exploration

(07 points)

1. Find in the text words closest in meaning to the following:

- a) products (§1) - b) faulty (§2)

2. Complete the following chart as shown in the example.

Verbs	Nouns	Adjectives
Example: consume	consumerism	consumable
.....	loss	.....
economize	.....	.....
.....	safety	.....

3. Ask the questions that the underlined words answer.

- a) Consumerism promotes the interests of consumers.
- b) The movement is active in many countries.

4. Give the correct forms of the verbs in brackets.

- 1. Governments should (take) serious measures to fight counterfeiting.
- 2. After I (buy) the DVD, I found out that it was of a bad quality.

5. Match pairs that rhyme.

A	B
a) services	1) responsive
b) rise	2) package
c) effective	3) practices
d) damage	4) wise

6. Reorder the following statements to make a coherent paragraph.

- a) For example, they are entitled to products
- b) Consumers have several basic rights.
- c) They are also entitled to the protection against unsafe foods.
- d) whose quality is consistent with their prices.

Part 2. WRITTEN EXPRESSION (05 points)

Choose one of the following topics and write a composition of about 80 words.

Either

Topic 1:

After being influenced by an advertisement on TV, you bought a product. When you got it, you realized that you had been manipulated by the ad. Write a letter of complaint, in which you give information about the product and the place where you bought it, to the manufacturer telling him about the defects of the product, the consumers' rights to adequate advertising, compensation, etc. You can use ideas from the text.

Or

Topic 2:

In your city, you feel that consumers are not protected against the defects of the goods they buy. So you decide, with a group of friends to create an association of consumers. Write a composition in which you expose the reasons and objectives of this association.

You may use the following ideas:

- Reasons: counterfeit/cheap products, lower quality/harmful, not lasting
- Objectives: to sensitize the consumers, to protect them, to buy safe products

Part One: Reading
A/ Comprehension

(15 points)
(07 points)

Read the text carefully then do the activities.

Ethics is the set of moral rules that the professionals in any field are expected to respect when they deal either with each other or with the public. In business, ethics represents the attitudes that individuals and firms should comply with in the actions they perform and the decisions they take at every level of their realizations.

In societies where both political and cultural conditions exist for making every one obey this practice, the main principles engaged in the economic branches should involve a good number of the qualities that have always served as the basis of civilization. Among them we find the obligation to be honest and lawful in one's activities. It is also essential to act in conformity with the spirit of fair competition.

Next to these aspects, ethics requires from the various members and groups of economic sectors the payment of one's taxes and the necessity to treat one's employees with fairness.

To sum up, the moral values in use in modern societies necessitate from businessmen and companies alike a strict observance of the different precepts on which the efficiency and the prosperity of the whole community depends. As economy has become a system of interdependent structures, any mistake or wrongdoing involved in it disturbs its balance and penalizes its functioning. That's why misbehaviours get punished severely.

Adapted from Progress in English Practice.

1- Say whether the following statements are True or False according to the text.

- a) Ethical standards are important in all professions.
- b) Fair competition is a major quality in modern economy.
- c) The payment of taxes is not an aspect of ethics.

2- Answer the following questions according to the text.

- a) Mention three (3) aspects of ethics from the text.
- b) Why is ethics important in economy?
- c) How are unethical behaviours treated?

3- What or who do the underlined words refer to in the text?

- a) their (§ 1)
- b) them (§ 2)
- c) it (§ 4)

4- Choose a title to the text.

- a) Ethics in Business
- b) Ethics and Politics
- c) Modern Economy

B/ Text Exploration

(08 points)

1- Find in the text words or phrases closest in meaning to the following:

- a) behaviours (§ 1)
- b) demands (§3)
- c) complete (§ 4)

2- Complete the following chart as shown in the example.

Verb	Noun	Adjective
Example: to differ	difference	different
to respect	.....	.....
.....	decision	.....
.....	.....	various

3-Rewrite sentence (b) so that it means the same as sentence (a).

- 1. a) Services are provided to the community.
- b) They
- 2. a) "You must be fair with workers," the manager told me.
- b) The manager told me

4- Ask the questions that the underlined words answer.

- a) Businessmen must always respect new comers.
- b) Honesty and loyalty are the basic features of ethics.

5- Classify the following words according to the pronunciation of their final"s".

aspects	societies	actions	taxes
/s/	/z/	/tʃ/	/s/

6- Reorder the following words to make a coherent sentence.

promoting / play / values / business / an / moral / in / role / important /

Part Two: Written Expression

(05 points)

Choose one of the following topics.

Either Topic 1: What do you think of the social responsibility of businessmen?

Write a composition of about 100 words using the following notes:

- conformity to laws
- interest in profits but also in social actions
- responsibility towards all stakeholders (government, employees, social associations, etc)

Or Topic 2: Do you think that people who do illegal business help their country? Why or why not? Justify your opinion.

**PART ONE: READING
A/ COMPREHENSION**

Charities are independent organizations that help the poor, the homeless, children, old people and animals. They are involved with human rights, education, medical research and conservation of the environment.

In 1997, there were about 180 000 charities in Britain, with a total income of £18 billion. Many charities that are now well known throughout the world, such as "Oxfam" and "Amnesty International", began in Britain. Americans are also enthusiastic supporters of charities. In 1995, they gave over \$ 116 billion.

"Oxfam" has aid programmes to help poor people overseas, especially the victims of natural disasters. Other well-known charities working in Britain include "Barnado's", which helps children, and "Age Concern" and "Help the Aged" which support old people. "Shelter" provides food and a place to stay for the jobless and the homeless.

In recent years, the "Telethon" has proved effective method of fund-raising. During an evening of popular television programmes, television stars ask the public to telephone and promise money to the charities involved. Other fund-raising activities include f6tes and jumbles sales.

(From Oxford Guide to British and American Culture, p.100)

1. The text is about:

- a- Natural Disasters
- b- Charities
- c- The Oxfam Charity.

2. Answer the following questions according to the text.

- a- Where are "Oxfam" and "Amnesty International" charities found?
- b- How many charities were there in Britain?
- c- What does the "Barnado" charity do?

3. Are the following statements True or False?

- a - Charities are governmental organizations that provide aid to people in need.
- b - American don't like charities.
- c - "Shelter" charity gives jobs and homes to the jobless and the homeless.
- d - The "Telethon" is another way of charity.

4. In which paragraph is this idea mentioned?
- Each charity has specific activities.

5. Is this text:

- a- a dialogue.
- b- an article.
- c- a letter.

6. What or who do the underline words refer to in the text?

B/ TEXT EXPLORATION (7 points)

1. Find in the text words that are closest in meaning to:
a- famous = ... (§2) b- the unemployed = ... (§3)

2. Rewrite the second sentence so that it means as the first one. (1pt)

a- They say, "The Telethon has proved an effective method of fund-raising"

* They say:

b- They told us that charities were involved with human rights, education, and conservation of the environment.

* They told us:

3. Classify the following words according to the pronunciation of their final 'y'. (1.5pt)
disasters - rights - charities - victims - programmes - provides

/ɪ/	/i:/	/ʊ/

4. Complete the following chart.

verb	noun	adjective
To help
.....	advisable

5. Re-order the following sentences in order to get a coherent paragraph. (1.5pt)

- a- Volunteers stand in busy streets asking members of the public to put money in a collecting tin.
- b- The traditional method of raising money is to organize a flag day.
- c- In exchange they are given a sticker to be put on coat lapels.

PART ONE: READING A/ COMPREHENSION

Charities are independent organizations that help the poor, the homeless, children, old people and animals. They are involved with human rights, education, medical research and conservation of the environment.

In 1997, there were about 180 000 charities in Britain, with a total income of £18 billion. Many charities that are now well known throughout the world, such as "Oxfam" and "Amnesty International", began in Britain. Americans are also enthusiastic supporters of charities. In 1995, they gave over \$ 116 billion.

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- a- They say, "The Telethon has proved an effective method of fund-raising"

* They say:

- b- They told us that charities were involved with human rights, education, and conservation of the environment.

* They told us:

3. Classify the following words according to the pronunciation of their final 'y'. (1.5pt)

/ɪ/	/i:/	/ʊ/

4. Complete the following chart.

verb	noun	adjective
To help		advisable

5. Re-order the following sentences in order to get a coherent paragraph. (1.5pt)

- a- Volunteers stand in busy streets asking members of the public to put money in a collecting tin.
- b- The traditional method of raising money is to organize a flag day.
- c- In exchange they are given a sticker to be put on coat lapels.

Choose ONE of the following topics

Topic One

Read the following text carefully then answer the given activities:

Babylon (Bah- illim), in Arabic 'the gate of knowledge' was the most important city of the ancient world. It was located in what is now southern Iraq. Records have been found of highly developed region, history, literature and science, including medicine, chemistry, alchemy, botany, zoology, math and astronomy in the third millennium BC. The Babylonian's way of life was so effective that it exerted influence on all the neighbouring countries.

In 586 BC, Nebuchadnezzar II, who had inherited the empire of Babylon, restored Babylon and built the legendary Hanging Gardens of Babylon, one of the seven wonders of the world. The ancient Hanging Gardens of Babylon is an achievement that shows the level of ancient Babylonian art, engineering and architecture. A series of terraces with trees planted on top of stones arches 23 metres above ground were watered from the Euphrates by a complicated mechanical system.

The gardens were built to cheer up the queen Amyitis, who felt homesick after she had left green native land to live in the flat, sun-baked land of Mesopotamia. The King decided to recreate her homeland by building an artificial mountain with rooftop gardens.

After Nebuchadnezzar died, Babylon declined and became part of the Persian Empire in 539 BC. Then it was conquered by Alexander the Great in 331 BC and remained under Greek rule until 652 AD.

(Adapted from the Internet; Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia)

A. Reading Comprehension: (8pts)

1. Say whether the following statements are "TRUE" or "False":
 - a- The Babylonians developed many fields
 - b- The neighbouring countries were not influenced by Babylon
 - c- The hanging Gardens were naturally watered by the Euphrates
 - d- The Greeks ruled Babylon for more than four centuries
2. Answer the following questions according to the text:
 - a- Why were Babylon gardens called the Hanging Gardens?
 - b- How did Queen Amyitis feel? Why?
 - c- How long did Babylon remain under Greek rule?
3. Put the following ideas in the order they appear in the text:
 - a- The reason for building the Hanging Gardens
 - b- The collapse of Babylonia
 - d- The greatness of the Babylonia empire
 - e- The description of Babylon gardens

4. What do the underlined words in the text refer?
 It → (§1) that → (§2)

B. Text Exploration: (7pts)

1. Find in the text words whose definitions follow:
 - a- Facts, evidence or information (§1):
 - b- Fill with gladness and hope (§3):
 - c- Taken by force (§4):
2. Classify the following words in the table:
 - effective - recreate - achievement - hanging - declined

Prefix	Root	Suffix

3. Rewrite sentence "b" so that it means the same as sentence "a":
 - A/ a- After Nebuchadnezzar had died, Babylon declined and became part of the Persian Empire.
 - b- until
 - B/ a- Babylon exerted influence on all the neighbouring countries.
 - b- Influence
 - C/ a- Babylon was a very important city; however, it declined and was conquered by Alexander the Great.
 - b- Though

4. Classify the following words according to the pronunciation of final "ed":
 restored, located, developed, sun-baked, decided, declined

/d/	/t/	/ed/

5. Fill in the gaps with words from the list:
 Traditional - everyone - technologies - trade - modern - another - much

Trade has always meant more than trading goods. Through trade, new ideas have passed from one civilization to(1)..... . Because, for example, the Phoenicians traded with(2)....., their alphabet quickly became known in the West and in(3)..... of Asia. Trade brought new(4)..... too. Paper making was very important one.

C. Written Expression: (5pts)

Topic One: Using the following notes, write a composition about Maya civilization:
 -Maya civilization once occupy a vast geographical area in Central America
 -begin around 2600 BC
 -The people build temples and pyramids
 -Develop mathematics and hieroglyphic writing
 -Be also skilled farmers and craftsmen
 -Maya civilization flourished for more than 2000 years
 -Collapse in fifteen century/ civil war

Topic Two: Counterfeiting and piracy lead to negative effects. Write a composition of 120 to 150 words

LEVEL: 1 ASS+L
TIMING: 2 HOURS

FIRST TERM EXAM OF ENGLISH

PART ONE: READING. Read the text carefully then do the activities.

<p>Mr Michael Armstrong Horton Bay Summer Camp 2187 Mountain Street, N.W Miami, Florida 60306</p> <p>Re: Camp leader</p> <p>Dear Mr Armstrong,</p> <p>I have read your advertisement for camp leader in USA TODAY and would like to apply for the job.</p> <p>I am a junior at Thomas Jefferson High School with good marks in arts and philosophy. I am a member of the photography and music clubs, and I enjoy meeting people. I often volunteer to work in infant hospital wards. So I think that I am suitable for the job.</p> <p>I was born in Columbus and I am sixteen years old. I have lived at the address above for the past ten years. I usually look after my brothers and sisters when my parents are at work. So I think that I have quite a good experience in dealing with children.</p> <p>I am ready to start work at the end of June, when the school summer vacation begins. I have asked two of my teachers, Mr John Clark and Miss Emma Smithson, to send you two letters of reference for me.</p> <p>Yours sincerely, Joy J. Parfit</p>	<p>46 Regent Street Madison 15026 Wisconsin May 20, 2005</p>
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------

A- READING and INTERPRETING (8 pts)

1- Is the above passage: a- an invitation b- a letter of inquiry c- a letter of application

2- Answer the following questions according to the text.

- a- Where was the job advertised?
- b- What are Joy's interests?
- c- Where was she born?
- d- How often does she take care of her brothers and sisters?

3- Are these statements TRUE or FALSE. Correct the FALSE ones.

- a- Joy Parfit works as camp leader.
- b- She is a senior at a high school.
- c- She is an American.
- d- She has experience in dealing with children.

4- In which paragraph she talked about her interests

B- TEXT EXPLORATION (8pts)

1- Find in the text words that are closest in meaning to:

- a- take care =... (§3) b- starts =... (§4)

2- Fill in the gaps using one of these words: mustn't – must – had to – don't have to – so as to

- a- Learners.....put on uniforms when they are at schools.
- b-complete your registration; you have to pay the fees before September 12.
- c- Wesmoke in the schools.
- d- Yesterday, I..... walk to school because I missed the bus.
- e- Learners..... cheat at exams to get good marks. They have to work hard to do so.

3- Classify the following words according to their number of syllables.

Browser – plays – protect – windows – rain – dance

One syllables	Two syllables
1	

4- Write four sentences using these reflexive pronouns: myself – ourselves – themselves – itself.

5- Reorder the following telephone conversation using these names: John and Carol

- My name is Carol Richards.
- Hello!
- Hold on, please, I'll see if he's in ... I'm sorry, he's out for the moment. Can I take a message?
- Goodbye.
- Who's calling, please?
- Could I speak to Mr Smith, please?
- Thank you. I'll call him up this evening. Goodbye.
- Hello, 4155587

PART TWO, WRITTEN EXPRESSION (4 pts)

You made a mistake to someone you respect. Write a short letter of apology.

GOOD LUCK

FIRST TERM TEST

Read the text carefully then do the following activities.

Appendix 11

5, Rue 5 July, El- Kantara, Biskra
May 17, 2012

Sybous Hotel, Rue Cinq clous, Annaba

Dear Sir,
Your address has been given to me by Zaatcha Tourist Board. I would be grateful if you could give me some information about your accommodation.
We are a family of five with three children aged 4, 10 and 12 years. Our young son could share our room while the two girls could share a room with twin beds.
We would like one of the bedrooms to have a bathroom and toilet. I would also like to know your rates for full board for the month of June.
Yours faithfully
Djafer Elgantry

- 1- The above passage is : a) a letter of application b) a letter of reference c) a letter of inquiry
- 2- Answer the following questions according to the text.
 - a) Who is the sender of the above letter ?
 - b) What did s/he ask for ?
 - c) How old is the eldest child ? Is it a boy or a girl ?
- 3- Match the words with their definitions .

WORDS	DEFINITIONS
A- Grateful	1- a type of accommodation in a hotel that includes all meals.
B- Accommodation	2- a place rented temporary to stay in.
C- Full board	3- feeling or showing thanks because somebody has done something kind for you.

- 4- Put the frequency adverbs between brackets in the appropriate place.
 - a- I am ready to help. (always)
 - b- I tell lies. (never)
 - c- I arrive late at school. (hardly ever)
- 5- Rewrite the following newspaper headlines using extreme adjectives instead of ordinary ones.
 - a- Very Nice Places to Visit in the Sahara.
 - b- Very Funny Clowns at Primary Schools in Biskra this Weekend.
 - c- Very sad accident in the High Way.
- 6- Write three sentences using : **from....to** and three others using : **until**
- 7- Ask questions that the underlined words answer.
 - a- They rarely practise sport.
 - b- El-Kantara is situated in the Southeast of Algeria.

PART ONE: Reading (15 points)
 Read the text carefully then do the activities

The term Aztec refers to the empire of the Mexicas. In *Nahuatl*, the native language of the Mexicas, it means "someone who comes from Aztlan", a place commonly believed to be situated in northern Mexico or the southwest of U.S. It is applied to all the people linked by trade, custom, religion and language.

The society traditionally was divided into two social classes; the *Macehualli* (people) or peasantry and the *Pilli* or nobility. In the later days of the empire, the concept of *Macehualli* had changed: only 20% of the population was dedicated to agriculture and food production. The other 80% of the society were not only warriors, but also skilled artisans and aggressive traders. Eventually, most of the *Macehuallis* were dedicated to art and crafts. Their works were an important source of income of the city.

The Mexica, one of the Aztec groups, were one of the first people in the world to have mandatory education for nearly all children. There were two types of schools: the *tlpochcalli*, for practical and military studies, and the *calmecac*, for advanced learning in writing, astronomy, statesmanship, and theology. Until the age of 14, the education of children was in the hands of their parents, but supervised by the authorities. Periodically, they attended their local temples to test their progress.

Adapted from Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia

A- COMPREHENSION (07 points)

- 1- Is the text above: a- expository b- narrative c- argumentative
- 2- Answer the following questions according to the text.
 a- What were the things that related the Aztecs?
 b- What were the two classes of the Aztec society?
 c- How was education supervised by the authorities?
- 3- Order the following ideas according to their occurrence in the text.
 a) Schooling of the Aztec children.
 b) The financial importance of craftwork.
 c) Social classes and economic activities.
 d) Location of the empire.
- 4- What or who do the underlined words refer to in the text?
- 5- Are these statements TRUE or FALSE?
 a- The Aztec was a kingdom in the southwest of U.S.
 b- The majority of the *Macehualli* were artists and craftsmen.
 c- Education was compulsory for children in the Mexica.

B- TEXT EXPLORATION

1- Find in the text words or phrases closest in meaning to the following:

- a) corrected (§1) b) qualified (§2) c) advance (§3)

2- Ask questions that the underlined words answer.

- a) The term Aztec refers to the empire of the Mexicas.
 b) There were two types of schools.

3- Complete the following chart as shown in the examples.

Verb	Noun	Adjectives
Example: to produce	production	productive practical
	education	
To believe		

4- Fill in each gap with one word from the list.

God-famous-would-of

By AD 1500, the leading groups of people in central Mexico were the Aztecs. They were for their ferocity and warfare was extremely so important for them. The blood the captured prisoners was a gift offered to their . This, they believed, bring them god's satisfaction.

5- Classify the following words according to the pronunciation of their final "-ed".
 believed- situated- linked- applied- divided- advanced

SECOND TERM TEST

Part One: Reading

A/ Comprehension

Read the text below carefully then do the activities that follow.

Astronomy is the science of celestial objects such as stars, planets, comets, and galaxies and phenomena that originate outside the Earth's atmosphere such as auroras and cosmic background radiation. **It** is concerned with the evolution, physics, chemistry, meteorology, and motion of celestial objects, as well as the formation and development of the universe. The word astronomy literally means "law of the stars" and is derived from the Greek astronomia, from the words astron, "stars" and nomos, "law".

Astronomy is one of the oldest sciences. Astronomers of early civilizations performed methodical observations of the night sky, and astronomical artifacts have been found from much earlier periods. However, the invention of the telescope preceded the development of astronomy into a modern science.

Since the 20th century, the field of professional astronomy has split into observational astronomy and theoretical astrophysics. Observational astronomy is concerned with acquiring data, **which** involves building and maintaining instruments, as well as processing the results. Theoretical astrophysics seeks to understand the birth, evolution, and end states of celestial objects and systems in terms of the physical laws that govern them. **The two fields** complement each other. Astronomical observations can be used to test fundamental theories in physics, such as general relativity.

(Wikipedia.org)

1. Write the letter which corresponds to the right answer.

A/ The text is: a) descriptive b) expository c) argumentative.

2. Put the following ideas in the order they appear in the text.

- a) Astronomy has two major branches.
- b) Astronomy existed since early times.
- c) Astronomy studies the formation and development of the universe.

3. Answer the following questions according to the text.

- a) How did ancient astronomers carry out their observation?
- b) Was modern astronomy the reason for the invention of the telescope?
- c) What are the two branches of astronomy?

4. What or who do the underlined words refer to in the text?

- a) It (§1) b) which (§3) c) the two fields (§3)

B/ Text Exploration

1. Match words and definitions.

Words	Definitions
a) stars	1) long tube-shaped instrument with lenses, for making distant objects
b) meteorology	appear bigger
c) telescope	2) study of the weather and the earth's atmosphere
	3) small bright lights that you see in the sky at night

2. Give the singular form of the following words.

- a) galaxies b) phenomena c) sciences d) data

3. Complete sentence (b) so that it means the same as sentence (a).

- 1(a) "Do you want to be an astronaut?" he asked me.
- (b) He asked me
- 2(a) No other science is as fascinating as astronomy.
- (b) Astronomy is

4. Write the silent letter(s) in each of the following words.

- a) night b) which c) understand d) two

5. Fill in the gaps with words from the list.

with - positions - not - share - both - that - orbit

Modern astronomy is **.1.** to be confused **.2.** astrology, which claims **.3.** human affairs are correlated with the **.4.** of celestial objects. Although the two fields **.5.** a common origin, most thinkers in **.6.** fields believe they are distinct.