Un análisis de las diferentes clases de pruebas y las pruebas
sugeridas por el libro de texto "OW TE" y su aplicación
en la enseñanza - aprendizaje

UNIVERSIDAD TECNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA
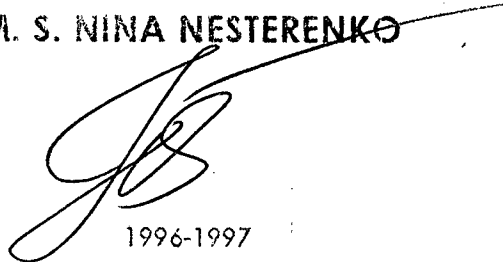MODALIDAD ABIERTA

Especialidad:
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THEME:

AN ANALYSIS OF THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF TESTS AND TESTS SUGGESTED BY THE TEXTBOOK "OUR WORLD THROUGH ENGLISH', BOOK ONE, AND THEIR APPLICATION IN THE TEACHING - LEARNING PROCESS OF EFL IN THE FIRST YEARS OF "OVIEDO" AND "LA SALLE" HIGH SCHOOLS FROM IBARRA CITY, DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 1996-1997.

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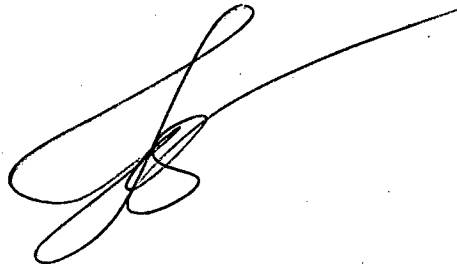
CERTIFICATION.

M. S. NINA NESTERENKO, professor of the Technical University of Loja and advisor of the research work on the theme

"An analysis of the different kinds of tests and tests suggested by the textbook "OUR WORLD THROUGH ENGLISH", book 1, and their application in the Teaching-Learning process of EFL in the 1st years of "OVIEDO" and "LA SALLE" high schools from Ibarra City, during the school year 1996-1997",

CERTIFIES

That the present work has been supervised and reviewed on all parts and, therefore, authorizes its presentation.

Loja, February, 1997

M. S. NINA NESTERENKO

ADVISOR

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The present research work on the theme

"An analysis of the different kinds of tests and tests suggested by the textbook "CUR WORLD THROUGH ENGLISH", book 1, and their application in the Teaching-Learning process of EFL in the 1st years of "OVIEDO" and "LA SALLE" high schools from Ibarra City, during the school year 199601997",

is of exclusive responsibility of its authors:

YOLANDA PATRICIA CADENA CHAFUEL

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

We express our acknowledgment to the Technical University of Loja, especially to the Language Faculty where we studied. In the same way, our thankfulness to all and each one of our teachers who gave us and continue giving their valuable help.

DEDICATION.

To my parents...

Yolanda Cadena

To my husband and my daughters...

Sonia Valenzuela

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INTRODUCTION.

The teaching-learning process, especially of the English language, presents different problematic aspects that must be discussed by educational authorities and by English teachers.

Among various problematic aspects which are themes that deserve constant and deep investigation, are the planning of educational work and the systematic evaluation of student's performance in the English language teaching-learning process.

Daily, we evaluate our activities to correct the errors in teaching in order to make this process more efficient and successful, and to form not only the students' knowledge, but also their personality.

The theme of evaluation in English language teaching has been treated by many pedagogues and teachers throughout the world, such as: David Harris, Robert Lado, David Baker, John Clark, Paul Goring, Pedro Lafourcade, Manuel Fermin. These last authors of Spanish language write about evaluation in general, have contributed powerfully to the modernization of educative evaluation. David Harris, for example, synthesizes many aspects of evaluation, especially referring to the kinds of tests and items, and their application in the educational work.

After analyzing the importance of these and many other aspects, it is necessary to study and choose an effective system of evaluation in any assignment, and, in our case, in the teaching of the English language.

The aim of the actual investigation is to describe, analyze and criticize the tests offered by the textbook "OUR WORLD THROUGH ENGLISH", Book One, by CRADLE Project, used in the first courses of the "Oviedo" and "La Salle" high schools of Ibarra city. Besides, the opinions of high schools' authorities and the English teachers about these tests will be suggested.

We hope the result of this hard work would be of great use for English teachers of this province and the whole country, in order to improve the English language teaching-learning process making it more systematic and efficient.

CHAPTER 1.

THEORETICAL FRAME.

1. 1. CONCEPT OF EDUCATIVE EVALUATION.

According to Manuel Fermin, "The educative evaluation is an integral, systematic, gradual and continuous process to evaluate the changes produced in the students' behavior, the efficiency of the used techniques, the scientific and pedagogic capacity of the student, the quality of the curriculum and everything that converges in the realization of educational fact". (1)

Lemus says, "For evaluation we understand the process to judge the value or the quantity of something by means of a careful measure, the activities that the teacher or any other person related with education used to measure the learning process. For academic evaluation we understand the appreciation of the results of action of programmatic teaching". (2)

According to Pedro Lafourcade (1973), "Evaluation is the interpretation of a measure(s) in relation to established rules" (3)

Alvaro Rodríguez says, "Evaluation is a systematic, continuous and integrated activity in the educative process whose objective is its improvement, through the precise knowledge of the student and also of each

1. Fermín, Manuel. La evaluación los exámenes y las calificaciones. Edit. Kapeluz, b. Aires, 1971, pag. 17.

2. Lemus, Luis Arturo. Evaluación del rendimiento escolar. Edit. Kapeluz, h. Aires, 1971, p. 39.

3. Lafourcade, Pedro. Evaluación de los aprendizajes. Edit. Kapeluz, B. Aires, 1973

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element of this process." (4)

Taking into account these criteria, evaluation is an act of valuation of qualities, an interpretation of the reality expressed by means of judges of value.

1. 2. IMPORTANCE OF EVALUATION IN TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS.

The evaluation is a fundamental part of the teaching-learning process; for this reason, it must be integral, objective, continuous, scientific; it must be useful to determine the difficulties; it must permit to know the level in which the objectives were reached; it must permit to make the reinforcement of knowledge identifying abilities, aptitudes, attitudes and skills of the students, and also their limitations in order to guide and/or improve teaching.

A well organized system of evaluation has a very important value for the teacher, if the teacher is able to use the data and experiences, these resources become powerful and help the students' formation.

According to Harold Madson, well made tests of English can help the students in at least two ways:

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4. Rodríguez, Alvaro. Fundamento y Estructura de la evaluación educativa. Anya, Madrid, 1978, pag. 9.

First of all, such tests can help to create positive attitude toward English class. Tests of appropriate difficulty, announced in advance and covering skills scheduled to be evaluated, can contribute to a positive learning.

A second way that English evaluation can benefit students is by helping their mastering language. They are helped when they study for exams and when exams are returned and discussed. Where several tests are given, learning can also be enhanced by students' growing awareness of teacher's objectives and the areas of emphasis in the course.

Evaluation confirms what each person has mastered, and it points up those language items that need further attention. Of course, a better awareness of the objectives and personal language needs can help students adjust the personal goals.

In summary, properly made English tests can help to create positive attitudes toward instruction by giving students a sense of accomplishment and a feeling that the teacher's evaluation matches what he has taught them. Good English tests also help the students to learn the language by requiring them to study hard, emphasizing course objectives, and showing them where they need to improve their knowledge. A good evaluation helps the English teacher, since he can use evaluation to diagnose his own effort as well as those of his students.

Tests can provide insights into ways that teacher can improve the evaluation process itself by answering these questions: "Were the test instructions clear?", "Was the time for this test enough?", "Did the test results reflect accurately how students have been responding in class and in their assigned work?"

Evaluation, then, can benefit students, teachers and even administrators, by confirming progress that has been made and showing how teacher can redirect best his future efforts.

1. 3. MAIN DIFFERENCES BETWEEN EVALUATION AND MEASUREMENT.

Evaluation is a group of operations without a finality by themselves. They obtain value when the results are used in making decisions to improve the teaching-learning process. However, this purpose only some teachers use to give evaluation a defined purpose, that is to "prove" the learning in order to give marks.

For most of the teachers, to evaluate is to do tests or to apply exams, to review the results and to give marks. With this attitude, they just measure learning. In this way, the grade only determines how much the student knows. But it does not determine what he knows, what he does not know and how he knows it. For this reason, a grade is of little use in education and in the orientation to improve the teaching process.

However, this problem is solved if the teacher, instead of giving grades, reviews and analyzes the results of the exams along with the students. Then the teacher will be able to value different aspects of the teaching-learning process, including his own performance as a teacher.

Evaluation is to judge and to value considering certain information that comes from reality. This information may be measurement of quantification of the data given by exams. To measure is to give grades and just steps before real evaluation.

According to what has been said, we are able to establish the main differences between evaluation and measurement:

- To measure means an activity of evaluation; it can exist by itself, but it does not represent any important aspect, while evaluation exists by itself and its reach is total, both in objectives and in contents.

- Measurement is quantifying; evaluation takes into account both ways to quantify, because it considers comparison, analysis, criticism and mainly due to its conclusions.

- Measurement is superficial, indifferent, while evaluation is deep, expressive, influential and even determining in the teaching-learning process.

- Measurement is applied to material things, and evaluation is applied to non-material things.

- Measurement is material attached to marks and magnitudes, while evaluation prefers comparison, discussion and analysis.

- Evaluation is wider than measurement.

- Measurement is objective, evaluation is subjective.

- Measurement tries to quantify and evaluation tries to qualify.

- While measurement is based on some pre-established objectives, evaluation considers the person more important , and taking him/her into account, it gives a valuation to the knowledge acquired through the teaching-learning process.

- The evaluation must be finished in the valuation of the knowledge acquired through the teaching-learning process.

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- The evaluation serves to diagnose individual problems.

- The evaluation can predict and serves as feedback.

In spite of the difficulties that evaluation includes, there is only one way to maintain the system. So the teacher must always evaluate, of course, with the help of the measurement, since there is no evaluation without measurement.

1. 4. KINDS OF EVALUATION.

INITIAL EVALUATION OR DIAGNOSTIC EVALUATION. - This evaluation is organized before the beginning of a teaching process; it permits to determine aims and goals before continuing with the treatment of new themes.

CONTINUOUS EVALUATION. - This evaluation functions in a permanent way during the teaching-learning process; this is the evaluation of the class plan that permits us to know the students' progress and, if necessary, it may oblige the teacher to make a new planning.

FINAL EVALUATION. - This evaluation is applied at the end of the academic year, and it allows us to know the following aspects:

1. Whether the final objective was attained and in what level.

2. To value the work made by the students.

3. It shows the quality of the planning, methods, techniques and procedures applied to the teaching-learning process.

1. 5. RELATION BETWEEN OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING EVALUATION.

If we consider that a teacher, in order to be successful in his work, must define the results that he wants to obtain, we will notice that teaching has become routinely and static, due to a complete subjection to a curriculum.

As a result, teaching has been limited just to the learning of the contents of the text and evaluation procedures have only tested whether students have learned what the teachers have taught them. The objectives must be basically guided to get a change in the students' behavior. It can be observed in a better information, in a wide level of knowledge, in the development of students' skills and increasing ability to appreciate and to face daily life situations.

For the first time, test scores are available at the instant the examination is over. And immediate reinforcement also can be supplied after each test item without fear of the student's altering his initial response.

Reinforcement may be provided by supplying the correct response immediately after the answers have been selected. This allows us to take advantage of the student's motivation and curiosity. It makes the test a genuine learning device from the student's point of view. As the test proceeds, the student learns from his mistakes and gains encouragement from verification of his correct responses.

No examination should be about the language, or concerned with the use of grammatical jargon. On the contrary, the examination should present practical language problems in which the student must use his knowledge of linguistic communication. No student's time should be wasted, it is very valuable. A test without reinforcement leaves the student's knowledge in exactly the same state as when he entered the examination room. But with reinforcement, the test becomes a learning instrument. The students leaves the room with more linguistic skill and knowledge than when he came in.

1. 6. LEGAL ASPECTS OF EVALUATION ACCORDING TO THE LAW OF EDUCATION.

Now we have to examine what the legislation of our educational system says in relation to evaluation. This brief study will help us to establish

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comparison with pedagogical basis and principles that were already analyzed.

In this country, the current Law and Rule of Education on its 6th Title of the Academical Regime, Chapter XIII, contains the orders that rule the evaluation in the national educational system.

We are going to divide the group of articles in two well defined parts:

a). - **General Rules.** These refer to the genuine pedagogical and wide objectives of the educational evaluation.

b). - **Behaviors Evaluation,** which refers to specific aspects of measurement, such as exams, tests, qualification scores, promotions, etc.

c). - **Learning Evaluation of the Students.**

The first group is formed by six articles (from Art. 290 to Art. 295), and after analyzing them, we may conclude that their context is largely related to the theorical basis of the evaluation presented by Pedagogy and Didactic. We can also examine the theorical basis which will permit us to distinguish the legislation and the actual teachers' practice in classes.

Such features of evaluation as permanent, systematic and scientific are noted in the contents, as well as the objectives. It must be mentioned that only one of them refers to the quantitative character of evaluation.

Art. 293 refers to the variety of procedures and techniques that the teacher uses to evaluate his students. Finally, the law reminds us of the sequence that the evaluation process must fulfill.

Parts b) and c) are very extensive, and their main interest is based on quantitative aspects to measure; it is the educational objective as to get scores or grades to evaluate the students.

Art. 301 determines that evaluation in middle level (high schools) "will let qualitative and quantitative evaluation of educational progress of the student". The following twenty articles refer to tests, exams and grades the Law is worried to give the teachers. They contain the directions about how and when apply the tests and exams, how they must be corrected and qualified. At the same time, the articles establish the scale of grades and the total score the students must get to pass the course.

According to the order 203 of November 1988, the global score that the high school students need to pass the course is changed. At the same time, the exam score is less incident in the final average.

These last modifications help to reinforce the quantitative focus of evaluation and consequently reinforce measurement instead of educational evaluation. This change in the Law was based on the fact of a high percentage of failures because the total sum required for the student in each subject was 45, the teachers gave much more importance to quarter exams. According to this idea, the quality of evaluation applied in our teaching is not the reason for such problems, but the high or low total score.

In English language teaching, oral performance counts as much as 25 to 35 % of the final grade. The teacher will grade the students in class, and will also bring the class to the laboratory for "monitoring". In this case, the teacher will play some of the regularly assigned tapes to the students at random to evaluate their performance.

In other words, according to the Law, the problem consists in numerical sources, but not in the way of evaluation itself.

CHAPTER 2.

STAGES OF EDUCATIVE

EVALUATION PROCESS.

2. 1. ELABORATING TESTS.

The construction of an educational tests includes the following steps:

2. 1. 1. Planning of the tests.

2. 1. 2. Review of the tests.

2. 1. 3. Final organization of the tests.

2. 1. 1. Planning the test.

Effective testing requires careful planning. Yet as reasonable and obvious as that statement may sound, all too many educational measures, and particularly those prepared by classroom teachers, are constructed without sufficient fore thought. It is just too easy for the amateur test writer to take pen in hand and turn out items without much consideration of the balance or adequacy of the resulting test content. Except by chance, such a test will not prove a very valid measure of the specific skills that the testing situation needs.

1. Determining the general course objectives.

In the preparation of the achievement test, one may base the test objectives directly on the objectives of the course; these objectives must be carefully formulated by the teacher. In other case, they are implicit in the method and the material of the course. For example, if the course content is the following:

(a) Short reading selection;

(b) Dialogue;

(c) Pronunciation drill;

(d) Grammar drill;

(e) Word study,

...so the general objectives of the course will be:

- To increase skills in listening comprehension;

- To increase skills in oral production.

2. Dividing the General Course Objectives into their Components.

The objectives we defined in step 1 were broad. So, it is necessary to break them down into their specific components; after that, we may determine which of these components we will measure in the examination.

The general skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing include five elements that must be considered when planning a test. These

elements are: Phonology, Orthography, Grammatical structure, Vocabulary, Rate and General Fluency. These elements will be studied in a specific chapter below.

3. Establishing the general design of the test.

At this point two important factors must be considered: the time to be provided for testing, and the degree of speed we wish to build into our test. Of the total time scheduled for the examination, the teacher should reserve at least five minutes for administration procedures and the rest of time for testing itself.

A satisfactory rate of learning should lead to 80% above accuracy. If the students' score is lower than this, the teacher may wish to reteach some sections, give additional supplementary exercises, to assign extra homework. The teacher can also informally check students' oral and written progress at the end of each unit.

When developing these tests, it is important to keep the following principles in mind:

- The principal goal is communicative competence. test items should reflect use of language in communicative context rather than in isolation.

- Test items should reflect the kind of practice activities used in a unit (I. e., test what has been taught and test in a similar format to that in which it was presented in the unit).

- Distinguish between items that were presented receptively and those that were presented productively. A productive way of testing should be applied only to the language that has been productively practiced by the students.

Here are some examples of possible test items:

1. Keeping a conversation going on a topic by asking follow-up questions.

2. Completing missing parts of a conversation focusing on the grammar, vocabulary or expressions in the unit.

3. Providing with suitable conversational expressions for different purposes (e. g., opening a conversation, expressing apologies, etc.)

4. Selecting an item from two or three choices, such as choosing an appropriate pronoun or adverb in a sentence.

5. Completing a sentence with the suitable form of a verb or the correct word.

6. Reordering scrambled sentences using the correct word order.

7. Choosing the correct lexical item to complete a sentence.

8. Supplying missing words in a passage, either by selecting from words given or using the close technique.

9. Completing a short writing task similar to the ones presented in the unit.

10. Answering questions or supplying with information following a model provided in the unit.

11. Reading a sentence aloud with correct pronunciation.

12. Reading a passage similar to the ones in the unit and completing questions or a task based on it.

Considering the objectives and the skills that we want to test, we should decide the type and number of items for each one of the skills. The number of items per each section (listening, speaking, reading and writing) will be different since the level of difficulty and, consequently, the required time will be different, too.

Supply items require less preparation time and less test writing proficiency than Multiple-Choice items.

When testing structure, fill-in items type is particularly useful in informal classroom situations. There are two types of supply items: completion and conversion, which will be explained in more details in a chapter below.

Such items require the student to complete or rewrite sentences in a prescribed manner. The timing will vary according to the complexity of the tasks.

Another aspect to be tested is vocabulary. For this purpose, the teacher may use the supply item type which consists in a sentence with an underlined test word. The students have to rewrite the sentence substituting other words for the underlined portion.

Another important aspect is phonology. Testing listening ability is relatively easy, while, in contrast, testing oral production is both difficult and

inexact. At this point, it would be important to test sound discrimination and auditory comprehension.

The teacher may also consider and include other aspects according to his annual plan.

The most important single thing that makes tests valuable is the structural understanding of the language. These tests evaluate linguistic problems.

The tests attempt to evaluate mastery of the units and the patterns that are different from those of the native language and constitute the learning problems. In the preparation of the new tests, therefore, the first consideration is not how to test, but what to test. We begin by considering the native and the foreign languages' systems to obtain a list of the learning problems which will be tested.

The comparison produces lists of problems of pronunciation, grammatical structure, vocabulary and cultural meanings related to language.

We then prepare tests that measure degree of mastery of these problems.

The next step in the construction of a test would be the selection of the specific problems on which to base the test items, for example:

- To determine the phonemic contrast that presented major difficulty to the students;

- To establish the grammatical structures that received the most emphasis in the course and required continue review;

- To choose the vocabulary items that would seem to have the greatest utility value to the students.

It is very important to write test directions. These should be brief, simple to understand, and free from possible ambiguities. Examples are necessary to ensure that all students understand the tasks.

2. 1. 2. Review of the tests.

After the items of the test have been written, the teacher must wait for some days before reviewing the test. Ultimately, the proof of tests' quality is in its performance. Revising the test again, the teacher should answer some questions: "Is the test too difficult or too easy? Is it too long or too short?", etc.

Only after revising the test once again considering some new aspects that might come to teacher's mind and some changes he can effectuate, the test is almost ready to be performed.

2. 1. 3. Final organization of the tests.

Familiar formats are much in evidence. Multiple-Choice questions are widely used because of the ease with which they may be machine-scored. Reading and writing tests employ the familiar completion and fill-in-the-blank. Reading comprehension in these tests is proved by the time-tested device of Multiple-Choice completion statements based on a printed selection for reading.

On the basis of pretesting, any necessary changes in the directions can be effected; and the selection of usable items can be made. In part the choice of items will depend on the overall level of the desired difficulty. In most testing situations it is advisable to begin with rather easy items, lead gradually to more difficult problems, and end with those items which only the best candidates can answer correctly. Tests with 60 - 70% of difficulty are recommended.

In assembling Multiple-Choice items in the final form, the teacher must take care not only to order the items according to increasing level of difficulty, but also to ensure that (1) each answer position uses about the same number of times, and (2) the answer positions do not form any observable pattern.

2. 2. TEST FORMAT.

Section I: Listening Comprehension.

Part A: Single sentences for which the student must choose another sentence in the test that means most nearly the same as the sentence he/she hears.

Part B: Short Conversations. The conversations are between two people. After the conversation, a third voice will ask a question about what was said. The students must find the answer to the questions in the test.

Section II: Structure and Written Expression.

Part A: Multiple-Choice to complete sentence. The students must choose the best way to complete the sentence in formal written English.

Part B: Sentences have four words or phrases underlined. The students must choose the one underlined part that is incorrect in formal written English.

Section III: Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension.

Part A: Vocabulary. The students must choose the one word or phrase among four choices which means most nearly the same as the underlined word or phrase in each sentence.

Part B: Reading Comprehension. The students must read selections in the text book and answer questions based on what is stated or implied in the readings.

2. 3. ADMINISTRATING THE TESTS.

Both the reliability and the validity of a test, and also its success, are highly dependent on the manner in which the test is employed. Improper administrations can cause entire groups to perform at less than their maximum effectiveness and thus invalidate inter-group comparisons. Or such administrations can impair the performance of individual examinees and thus cause them to compare poorly with the rest of the group because of factors outside the test itself. A "perfect" test administration would be one that allows all examinees to perform at their best under identical conditions. While perhaps this ideal is seldom attained, every effort should certainly be made to come to it as close as possible.

There are many factors that influence on the validity of results. Many times the teachers do not consider them, committing so the gravest error. These factors are:

- Student's health;

- His intelligence coefficient;

- His emotional personality;

- The social class he belongs to;

- His abilities to communicate.

The absence of knowledge about these factors has been the principal reason for making the tests real torture both for students and teachers.

There are many other rules and conditions that must be taken into account while preparing and administrating the tests. We are going to point out the most important of them.

2. 3. 1. Techniques and rules.

The techniques applied by the teacher can be as many as a number of teachers is: every specialist can have something special in administration of tests. But each teacher with his own technique must follow certain rules that will help him to reflect the attained knowledge as truly as possible, and will help to carry out the test satisfactorily. These rules are the following:

1. The test should be carried out as simply as possible, without giving it a solemn and extraordinary character. It must be an ordinary class activity.

2. It is a lack of pedagogical validity to apply different tests to students, that is, different tests within one group of students. It is recommended to apply the same test to the whole course, as the school environment is quite delicate as for individual differences.

3. The place destined for test performance should meet all required conditions. In this sense, the pedagogical norms should be respected as for physical and hygienical conditions of the room, its environment factors, etc. It is recommended to perform the test in the same room where the students have their lessons normally, if possible.

4. The instructions and directions should be explained clearly and concisely. It is better to write them before each item on a test sheet.

5. The examiner should promote an environment of reliance, trust and impartiality. Still it does not mean that the norms of professional tact and legal dispositions that rule test's performance will be violated. The thing is to make the students feel at ease, without pressure, during the test.

6. The examiner should answer all student's questions to clear up the task, in an amiable and gentle manner. It must be done without renitence and negative attitude.

7. The examiner should not use any deceitful movements or fraudulent attitudes. His position must be as clear as possible presupposing student's constant moral virtue.

8. Any conversation that might distract the student should be eliminated from the test.

9. The teacher should not leave the students alone for a long time. His presence is indispensable, but not just for "keeping guard".

10. The teacher should announce the test beforehand in order to let the student study and get ready for it.

In conclusion, the conditions must be favorable, the students must be properly motivated, the examiners must be sufficiently prepared, and all necessary material must be available. Taking into account these points we will help the student to perform a perfect test.

2. 3. 2. Environment conditions.

A smooth test administration depends in large part on thorough preparations. These are largely the responsibility of the examiner or test supervisor and should include the following steps:

1. Selecting the testing room.

As it has been already mentioned above, it is recommended to perform the test in the students' usual classroom. If it is not possible, the examiner must choose the most appropriate place for test performance. Testing must be conducted in a quiet, well-lighted room located where there will be a minimum of outside noise and interference. The room should be large enough to permit the seating of examinees at a reasonable distance from one another, but, on the other hand, it should not be so large that examinees cannot hear directions clearly, or the teacher cannot keep watch over all examinees.

Whenever the test includes the use of recordings, the size and acoustical characteristics of the testing room are of particular importance: If the room is large, the examinees will not all be hearing the recordings in the same way, and there may be interference from echo. For such tests, it is better to use two or more small or medium-sized rooms than one large auditorium, though it is rather difficult in our high schools.

The writing space, or a desk, must be large enough, especially for the tests that require the usage of a textbook for picture or text references and

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Multiple-Choice tasks. Individual tables or desks are obviously ideal. Having students hold all their materials on their laps is extremely unsatisfactory and will almost certainly negatively affect test results.

2. Exterior Distractions.

The distractions coming from other classrooms, street, school yard, etc., must be avoided as completely as possible, as they can alter the test's normal performance. Within testing room, only students and an examiner should be present. The presence of high school authorities is not desirable. Nobody can open the door or enter during the test. It is better to have a note on the door announcing the test's performance.

3. Students' conditions.

The teacher should know students' emotional and physical conditions before the test. We have already mentioned that satisfactory and comparable results can be obtained only if all the students work under the same circumstances. Unfortunately, it is not always possible, for example, if any student feels sick or has been absent from school for a long time. In such cases, it is better to quiz him later.

There are some students who feel extremely altered and nervous before and during the test. Such students must be treated smoothly

anticipating them about the future test, or even postponing the test till better opportunities.

The teacher must announce the test beforehand in an official form and simultaneously to all the students, in order to avoid wrong comments and misunderstandings. The students should think that the test will be performed under diagnostic and educational prognostic aims, to help them to know their "weak parts" and to better them, and not to punish them for their mistakes. And one more very important point: no test can be applied to punish the students for their bad behavior - a very popular "method" in this country.

4. Time of test's appliance.

It is preferable to perform the test in the morning, though there are some special cases when it must be done in the afternoon. In any case, the students must not be tired after some intensive physical, mental or emotional work, or immediately after lunch. It is better to perform only one test in a day.

5. Time of test's solving.

Generally, the standardized tests mention the time required for their performance. If not, the teacher must calculate this time considering its extension, his students' age, experience and conditions, and trying not to exceed forty-five minutes - an academic hour - within which the students' handicap is the highest.

After 75% of the students have finished the test, it must be suspended: the rest of the students will surely not finish their test and will keep sitting waiting for some exterior help that would help them to move forward a little.

2. 3. 3. Teacher's attitude while taking exams or tests.

First of all, the examiner should get ready for the test. It is widely criticized that many teachers abuse of improvisation during the test. The examiner should analyze the test beforehand, get ready to answer students' possible questions, to establish test's direct relation with unit's objectives, and to prepare the students for this test. The steps of students' preparation may be the following:

- To announce the date of the test beforehand;

- To perform a well-organized revision to clear up any doubts and reinforce the most important points;

- To orient the students about the most important aspects to be studied, and to point out the methods to do it;

- To capacitate the students in the test's specific mechanism;

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- To create a favorable environment for test's performance.

The examiner should be able to establish good immediate relations with the students during the test. He must inspire confidence and sympathy to avoid a nervous tension caused by the test itself.

Starting the test, the examiner should seat the students in an appropriate manner. All examinees should be assigned to their seats in a random in order to prevent friends from sitting near each other. It is better to prepare a cheating plan of seating the students beforehand.

When introducing the test, the examiner's calm, unhurried, yet businesslike manner can put the students at ease, while, at the same time, establishing a good working atmosphere. The examiner should emphasize the need for absolute quiet throughout the testing period, explain under what circumstances the examinees should summon him, and indicate what examinees should do if they complete the test before time is called. Then, the examiner distributes the materials, giving them individually to each examinee. After this, the examiner explains how to fill out the personal data portion of the answer sheet. If answer sheets are not used, instructions should be given on signing the test books, or whatever other materials the examinees will use for recording their responses. If the test requires any additional explanation, the examiner should give clear and complete instructions. But at the same time, the examiners should never improvise additional examples or add to items'

directions in any substantive way. No questions not directly related to the directions or sample problems should be permitted.

Then, the examiner announces the start of the test. The students begin to work. The examiner can sit or walk quietly among the students, offering brief instructions to the students who clearly have not understood how to answer the problems. This should be done in a soft voice. The examiner should try to be as unnoticed and unobtrusive as possible and never stand beside an examinee so long as to disturb or embarrass him. The examiner must be sure that examinees are not cheating. No latecomers should be allowed to enter the room once the actual test begins. Whenever an examinee requests to go to the toilet during actual testing, the examiner should collect his test materials and return them to him after his return. It is obviously inadvisable to allow more than one examinee to be gone at the same time.

When the testing time is exactly up, the examiner announces end of the test and begins to collect all the test materials.

The examiner's labor is appreciated better by the students when he acts energetically and impartially under any circumstances.

2. 3. 4. Student's attitude while giving exams or tests.

All the students must prepare themselves for the test beforehand. After the teacher has announced the date of the test and the topics to be applied

in it, the student begins these topics' revision at home, in order to remember and reinforce the past knowledge. If there is any doubt, the student must ask the teacher to clear it up beforehand.

During the test, the student should try to be calm and quiet having in mind that the teacher is his friend and not enemy. The student must be sure about the certainty of his knowledge. Attention is another very important detail during the exam: the student should listen to teacher's explanations and instructions attentively trying to understand them from the first time.

The student should write clearly: if his answer is not readable, it will be considered incorrect. The examinee should employ only those words the meanings of which he is sure of. The student can use a separate sheet of paper to write any possible answers or ideas that might be useful answering the items.

The examinee should study thoroughly every question before answering it. The instructions should be followed in a strict and perfect way. The student should better start answering those questions the answers of which he knows well. After he has finished doing this, he may proceed answering harder questions.

If the examinee has read the task carefully several times and still has some doubts that do not depend on his knowledge but on the test's organization, he can ask the examiner to explain him the task. Doing this, the

student should try to do it as quietly and smoothly as possible in order to prevent other students' disturbance.

The examinee should read his answer several times before passing to another item, in order to be sure it is correct. The students should try to finish answering all the items before the testing time is up. When all the items have been solved, the examinee should revise his answers again.

If an examinee is sure about his knowledge, if he feels at ease, if he considers his teacher a friend, if he is attentive during the test, the results will surely be satisfactory.

2. 4. INTERPRETATION OF TEST RESULTS.

2. 4. 1. Interpretation of scores.

In order to analyze the scores, the teacher has to form a so-called raw score first: that is, counting the number of right answers. However, this score alone does not give a real picture of students' knowledge.

The teacher must also consider a context score, that is a grade of difficulty of the test.

A final test score is determined by adding the total number of correct answers in each section and then changing these "raw score" into context

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score. A final score is called the converted score. It is different for each examination and is based on the difficulty of the test. For example, fifteen correct answers out of twenty in a test whose grade of difficulty is quite high, is worth of an excellent or very good mark.

2. 4. 2. Analysis of the results.

When the teacher has all data organized, the most important part of the investigation is the analysis of results, which is possible after having studied them. It lets us compare them in order to establish similarities, differences, adequation, inadequation. In short, this analysis will help the teacher to obtain the exact conclusions, determine whether the students' progress was good enough, whether the teacher's method was efficient, what aspects need to be reinforced and, may be, even retaught, etc.

A deep analysis of test's results will permit the teacher to plan his future activities taking into account his possible failures, and in order to make his work more efficient and profitable.

CHAPTER 3.

SKILLS, LINGUISTIC COMPONENTS AND KINDS OF EVALUATION TESTS IN ENGLISH.

3. 1. BASIC SKILLS.

Language exists in two forms: the spoken and the written, and the linguistic activities are associated with them through an encoding and decoding process. Speaking and writing themselves are the encoding and the decoding processes which we use to communicate our ideas, thoughts or feelings through one or another form of language. Listening and reading are the decoding processes by which we understand a spoken or written message respectively. In a summary we may say that language includes four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. In this order we originally learned our native language, and it is in the same order that a foreign language is taught.

During the teaching process the teacher must consider some important aspects about each of these skills, such as objectives, stages and elements; and having a general view about them, it will be easier to prepare and apply evaluation. So, at this point we are going to resume these aspects:

The importance of listening.

Listening situation and purposes:

- To engage in social rituals;

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- To exchange information;

- To share feelings;

- To enjoy oneself.

Objectives:

- Exposing students to a range of listening experiences;

- Making listening meaningful for the students;

- Helping students understand what listening entails and how they might approach it;

- Building up students' confidence in their own listening activity.

The pre-listening stage.

There are very few occasions when people listen without having some idea about what they expect to hear.

The while-listening stage.

This helps learners to develop the skill of interpreting messages from spoken language. Good activities on this stage help learners to find their way

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through the listening text and build upon the expectations raised by pre-listening activities.

The post-listening stage.

These activities embrace all the work related to a particular listening text and they are done after the listening is completed.

Important elements for listening work.

- The students understand very clearly what they are expected to do, so that they can carry out the planned activities being sure that they are doing the right thing.

- To make sure that each time a listening text is heard even for the second or third or fourth time, the students have a specific purpose for listening.

- To encourage the students not to worry if they do not understand every word.

Oral communication (speaking).

This is a two-way process between speaker and listener, and it involves the productive skills of speaking and the receptive skill of understanding.

The main goal of teaching the productive skill of speaking is oral fluency or to obtain the ability to express oneself intelligibly, reasonably, accurately.

The Presentation stage.

The teacher selects the material to be learned. Dialogues may be presented on this stage. The language of these dialogues should be relevant, appropriate, interesting and of an adequate length.

The Practice stage.

At this stage, it is the students' turn to speak, and the teacher must give each student a chance to participate and monitor their performance to make it more satisfactory.

For oral practice, there are some techniques such as:

- guessing drills;

- imaginary situations;

- right/wrong statements;

- expanding statements;

- giving reasons.

<u>Reading.</u>

Reading occurs when we want to get something from the writing fact, ideas, enjoyment even feelings of family community letter. It is to say, to get the message expressed by the writer.

The <u>objectives</u> of reading could be:

- To enable students to read without help unfamiliar authentic texts, silently and with an adequate understanding.

- To read without help of the teacher.

- To read with appropriate speed.

- To focus on comprehension.

- To read with adequate understanding of the whole text and not necessarily of every word.

The text must be selected adequately, considering the correct level of difficulty for the students, and the suitability of content according to students' tastes. In summary, to read is to grasp language patterns from their written representation. In a second language, reading is usually taught to students who are already literate in the source language.

<u>Writing.</u>

Writing is to put down the graphic symbols that represent a language one understands, so that others can read these graphic symbols if they know the language graphic representation.

The process of writing is divided into several stages: prewriting, copying texts, transcribing, composition, and literature.

<u>Prewriting.</u> - It refers to the task of preparing students to learn to write in a foreign language. The student is considered sufficiently prepared when he knows the symbols that can be used to express his ideas.

<u>Copying texts</u>. - The student must know the habits involved in writing until he is able to write at a sufficient speed for communication.

<u>Transcribing.</u> - It is a more advanced practice in learning to write since it involves to put down utterances in script without a written text as a model.

<u>Composition.</u> - It is a kind of writing to inform. It is the most advanced stage. The process of composing is the following:

- Start off with an overall plan;

- Think what to say and to whom;

- Draft sections of the writing;

- Constantly reviewing.

Since the object of writing is to communicate information with a point of view inside, the clarity and effectiveness are desirable, as well as a good organization.

Literature. - A literary piece is a unique expression of some content through language. The main objective in teaching a foreign literature must be to teach an appreciation of a foreign literature, and also to experiment artistically something of the target culture.

3. 2. LINGUISTIC COMPONENTS OF BASIC SKILLS.

The four language skills analyzed above share two very important elements: grammatical structure and vocabulary. Analyzing auditory comprehension and oral production, appears a third component: phonology. A component of the four skills is the rate and general fluency to perform these skills. The following chart illustrates the four components applied to the four language skills.

LANGUAGE SKILLS.

COMPONENTS	LISTENING	SPEAKING	READING	WRITING
Phonology/ Orthography	***	***	***	***
Structure		***	***	***

Vocabulary	***	***	***	***
Rate and General fluency	***	***	***	***

Although it may seem difficult to plan a test on all aspects of this chart (skills and components). It is possible to divide language tests into six types: listening, speaking, reading and writing, structure and vocabulary; and so evaluate these areas separately. Now, we are going to analyze briefly the linguistic components of the four skills.

Phonology and Orthography.

The first element refers to the sound system involved in listening and speaking a language. The second one refers to the graphic systems used in reading and writing.

Grammatical structure. The systems of grammatical patterns of a language.

Each language has its own distinct grammar structure. Grammar as the patterns of form and arrangement, including intonation, stress and juncture, is important because it is the structure by means of which the speakers of a language can communicate with each other, since if one uses a language, consequently he must use its grammar; otherwise communication is impossible. However, grammar as the simple memorization of rules, the use of terminology, or the analysis of sentences by the students,

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has been relegated by linguistics to a minor role in teaching English language. Nowadays, grammar is taught in context and so it is evaluated.

<u>Vocabulary.</u>

Vocabulary is the lexical items needed to function effectively in a language. In a foreign language there are words that the learner uses in speech but not in writing, and vice-versa. There are also words the learner recognizes in listening and/or reading, but these words are not employed when he speaks or writes. This mainly happens on advanced levels.

At the beginning and intermediate level, some stocks of lexical items in the reading materials, dialogues and writing exercises are used.

<u>Rate and General fluency.</u>

Rate and General fluency mean the ability to decode and encode messages in the foreign language. Students' aural/oral facility deserves a good deal of time and effort because at first the most important goal is to enable students for communication. Reading and writing activities as skills are introduced later.

3. 3. KINDS OF TESTS.

A general classification of the tests may be the following:

A. By their elaboration or origin:

    1. - Formal or Standardized tests;

    2. - Informal or Non-Standardized tests.

B. By their answer form:

    1. - Oral tests;

    2. - Written tests;

    3. - Verbal tests;

    4. - Non-Verbal tests;

    5. - Execution tests.

C. By their structure.

    1. - Composition tests;

    2. - Objective tests.

D. By the number of students to whom they are applied.

    1. - Individual tests;

    2. - Collective tests;

    3. - Mixed tests.

1. - Intelligence tests:

    a. General tests;

    b. Special tests.

2. - Character and personality tests:

    a. Attitudes and Inclinations tests;

    b. Interests and Vocational tests;

    c. Social adaptation tests;

    d. Emotional equilibrium tests.

3. - Educative tests:

    a. Diagnostic tests;

    b. Prognostic tests;

    c. Special aptitude test;

    d. Exercise tests;

    e. Performance tests;

    f. Motivation tests;

    g. Investigation tests.

At this point, we want to describe the most important types of tests used in English language evaluation.

3. 3. 1. FORMAL OR STANDARDIZED TESTS.

These are "standardized" instruments which are prepared by professional testing services to assist institutions in the selection, placement, and evaluation of students.

The students do know what is expected of them, and what is likely to be covered by the test questions, and what kinds of standards are likely to be applied in the scoring.

Obviously, few of above mentioned conditions are applied to the standardized tests, designed to be used with thousands and sometimes hundreds and thousands of subjects throughout any nation or the whole world, and prepared (and perhaps administered, scored and interpreted) by a team of testing specialists with no personal knowledge of the examinees and no opportunity to check on the consistency of individual performance.

3. 3. 2. Diagnostic Tests.

These tests generally consist of several short but reliable subtests measuring different language skills or components of a single broad skill. On the basis of individual's performance on each subtest, we can plot a performance profile which will show its relative strength in the various areas tested.

3. 3. 3. Performance Tests.

These are all those instruments applied with the purpose to determine the learning level of the students. Most of the tests applied by the teacher at the end of the school year, or at the end of a cycle, unit, are performance tests. Short-answer tests belong to this kind of tests.

CHAPTER 4.

KINDS OF ITEMS TO

EVALUATE DIFFERENT

LINGUISTIC COMPONENTS

ON THE ENGLISH

LANGUAGE.

4. 1. Auditory Discrimination.

It refers to the ability to discriminate between phonetically similar but phonemically different sounds in the language that is being learned. This is possible by including "minimal pairs". These are sets of words which differ from each other in just one phonemic contrast.

Example:

pat - bat

may - way

so - know

face - ace

lacy - lazy

best - bust

4. 1. 1. ISOLATED WORDS.

This is the simplest form to make a sound discrimination test. For this reason, this kind of item can be used at the earliest stages of language learning. When carrying out this kind of test, the examiner has to pronounce pairs of words, then the

examinees have to determine whether the two words in each pair are the same or different. However, this kind of item shows a weakness since the students may give correct answer just by pure chance. To avoid this situation, it is advisable to use word triplets, and the examinees have to choose the two words in each set that are the same .

Examples:

The examinee hears:

a. "feet - feet".

b. "seat - sit".

c. "bet - bet".

On his answer sheet, the examinee circles S for same and D for different:

a.   S   D;   b.   S   D;   c.   S   D.

4. 1. 2. WORDS IN CONTEXT.

In this kind of items the minimal pair problems are inserted into complete sentences which might be misunderstood because of the examinees' failure to perceive phonetic contrasts..

Sound discrimination tests are very useful on the beginning and intermediate levels of instruction.

Examples:

The examinee hears:

1. None of the people came to the party.

The examinee reads in the book:

1. None of the people came to the ...

A) parity (equality)

b) party (social).

1.   A   -   B

4. 2.   AUDITORY COMPREHENSION.

Auditory comprehension tests are designed to measure the accuracy with which the subjects are able to decode samples of speech in the target language, in this case, English language. These samples may be one sentence requests, questions, or statements of fact; they may be brief, a kind of conversation, or expository discourse.

To prepare this kind of tests, the teacher must decide if the utterances will be put on tape records or be read by himself.

The use of mechanical devices requires extra preparation, and in some cases it may be difficult to acquire and/or install this equipment in the testing area.

Moreover, the quality of recording and the tape recorder is also extremely important in order to have a good test performance. However, in foreign countries where native speakers of the test language are not available as examiners, the use of recording becomes the only acceptable method of administering a test.

4. 2. 1. COMMANDS.

In the testing of youngers, an effective test must be constructed using a series of oral directions or instructions, eliciting simple action responses.

This type of test does not require responses which involve another language skill such as reading or speaking; it is easily understood by children and does not require much explanations or testing materials. The items of this test are guided to the general grammatical type, it is to the imperative or request construction. However, the teacher must also use another type of test for auditory comprehension in order to have a valid appreciation of the test results.

Examples:

1. Please, let's take the escalator to the fourth floor.

2. Please, take off your hat.

3. Please, put the milk in the clean bucket now.

4. Please, take this coat when you go.

5. Please, put the clock on the shelf.

6. Please, sit down.

7. Please, go to the blackboard.

4. 2. 2. QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS.

This kind of exam is intended for students who are able to read easy English sentences. It is said that it is advisable to use verbal stimuli and printed alternatives on this type of tests.

While preparing items for this kind of test, it is important to keep in mind the following guidelines:

1. Focus on meaning. - The teacher must use vocabulary and grammar the students already know since the aim is to measure only the student's understanding of a particular sentence or a short dialogue.

Example:

The students hears:

"When Jack leaves, they'll hire you, won't they?"

The student has to choose one of these alernatives:

a. - Yes, you will.

b. - Yes, he's leaving.

c. - Yes, they will.

In order to answer correctly, students have to see what information is directly related to the question. Selecting the best response requires an understanding both of appropriate meaning and appropriate grammar.

2. Keep the options simple. - If we look through the three options above, we will notice that they are simple and brief, each one is only about three words long.

Students have to keep the stem in their memory, they will hear it only once, therefore, we use only three options, so the students will not become confused.

Moreover, the options are simpler than the example; the alternatives are all grammatically correct, however only one of them is the correct.

<u>3. Adjust the difficulty of items.</u> - The teacher can make items easier or more difficult than the previous example. The teacher can adjust the level of difficulty according to students' knowledge and by just changing any word for an easier or more difficult one.

<u>Example</u>:

The student hears:

"When Jack leaves, they will help you, won't they?"

The student has to select:

a. - Yes, you will.

b. - Yes, he is leaving.

c. - Yes, they will.

Advantages of Multiple-Choice Appropriate Response:

1. It is fast and easy to correct.

2, It can be scored consistently and reliably.

3. It is an integrative, communicative measure of listening.

Limitations of Multiple-Choice Appropriate Response:

1. It is more difficult to prepare it than tests for beginners.

2. Cheating is fairy easy, unless alternate forms are used.

3. Since the reading of Multiple-Choice options is required, students need to be literate in English.

4. 2. 3. DIALOGUES.

This type of test item uses oral stimuli and printed alternatives. It consists of a brief dialogue followed by a comprehension question asked by a third voice. The answer must be chosen from the alternative.

Dialogues items are of two general types:

a) Those which test comprehension and recall the explicit information given by the speaker.

b) Those which test the students' ability to draw inferences and conclusions from the oral exchange.

Depending on the level of the students to whom the test is intended, the teacher would use the appropriate vocabulary and grammar structure in the different items.

Examples:

1. The examinee hears:

(man's voice) - This is Sarah Winter.

(woman's voice) - She felt ill yesterday.

(third voice) - Where did she fall ill?

The examinee will read:

a. At the hospital.

b. At the tree.

c. In the book.

d. At the supermarket.

2. The student hears:

- Did you go to the movies yesterday?

- Yes, I did.

- Did you like the film?

- Yes, it was very hilarious.

The student will have the following alternatives:

a. the movie was boring.

b. the movie was funny.

c. The movie was interesting.

4. 3. GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURE.

Grammar tests are designed to measure students' proficiency in matters ranging from inflections to syntax. Syntax involves the relationship of words in a sentence including matters such as word order, use of the negative, question forms and connectives. Grammar tests seem to be the most popular. The reasons are:

- Much English language teaching has been based on grammar;
- Grammar items, such as auxiliary verbs, are easy to identify;
- Errors in grammar can be easily spotted and counted.

Moreover, grammar can be applied to beginners or advanced students.

However, we must remember that in testing grammar we do not pretend to measure actual communication. But we can do a good job of measuring progress in a grammar class, and we can diagnose students' needs in this area.

Selection of the structures to be included if an achievement test is relatively easy, since the class text can and should be used as the basis for this test, and as the rule, the test should include the full range of structures that has been taught in the course.

There are different types of items to test grammar. We are going to analyze some of them.

4. 3. 1. Filling or completing Sentences.

a. - Completion (Multiple Choice).

The most common types of Multiple-Choice structure items present a context in which one or more words are missing, followed by several alternative completions.

Examples:

The student chooses from several alternative completions:

a. *He studies hard (on) (in) (at) (around) Monday.*

$$a \quad b \quad c \quad d$$

A different style would be:

b. *He studies hard _____ Monday.*

    a. on   c. at

    b. in   d. around

c. "What time did she eat?" - "If _____ at the hospital yesterday".

    a. She were sick   b. She was sick

    c. She is sick   d. She sicken

These three types have been used with similar success, each one has its own advantages. The first version is the most economical in terms of space. The second one seems to be less confusing to the students because it does not interrupt the context with alternatives. The third one uses a dialogue form that provides more context and, therefore, may make the problem somewhat clearer.

Examples:

"Did she ask you to go with her?"

"No, she asked someone _____ instead".

    a. else;   b. another;   c. other.

b. - Completion (Supply type).

This item is very useful in informal classroom testing situations. They require a certain amount of students' imagination and knowledge.

Example:

Directions: *Complete the sentences below by using:*

DO - DOES - IS - ARE

_____ we studying English in class?

_____ they enjoy the clowns?

_____ she in the ring?

c. - Simple - Completion (Sentences).

These items used for testing grammar consist of a sentence from which a grammatical element has been removed.

There are three steps to follow in preparing Simple - Completion grammar tests:

1. Select the grammar points that need to be tested.

2. Provide an appropriate context.

3. Write good instructions.

Simple - Completion tests comprehend three types of tests. They are:

- *The option form.* - The easiest Simple - Completion items are like Multiple - Choice questions with only two options.

Example:

1. - He .... a lot of money last year.

2. - I always .... my best.

Answers:

1. He made a lot of money last year.

2. I always do my best.

This option form can easily be adopted from exercises in any textbook. Sometimes a new pair of options is given for each sentence.

Examples:

Directions: Fill in the blanks with the correct word:

1. The .... child was crying for her mother.

(lose, lost)

Answer: The lost child was crying for her mother.

2. The magician performed some .... tricks.

(astonishing, astonish)

Answer: The magician performed some astonishing tricks.

Another option is that students choose the best question word from the following: Who, Whom, How, Why, Where:

Question:	Answer:

1. - ..... did the clock stop running? At twelve o'clock.

Answer: <u>When</u> did the clock stop running?

2. - ..... were you late?   I had to buy some medicine.

Answer: <u>Why</u> were you late?

- *The inflection form.* - Testing the mastery of inflections provides a productive response. These vary from simple comparatives to verb tense questions.

<u>Examples:</u>

<u>Directions</u>: Write the correct form of the words in parenthesis:

He's .... (tall) person in the class.

<u>Answer</u>: He's <u>the tallest</u> person in the class.

They .... (be) in Quito last week.

<u>Answer</u>: They <u>were</u> in Quito last week.

To avoid misunderstanding when testing verb phrases, the teacher must give part of the verbs or add more context.

<u>Examples:</u>

"He is _____ (sing)". or "He _____ singing now".

(Add one word)

"What's Tom doing now?" - "He _____ (sing)".

Another technique is to use separate blank space for each word in the verb phrase:

Example:

He _____ _____ _____ (sleep) for an hour.

Answer: He has been sleeping for an hour.

It is recommendable to give an instruction like: "Rewrite the sentence using the present perfect continuous", since it would be better to accept my correct answer or to use Multiple-Choice questions instead.

- *The Free - Response form.* - It uses common terminology known by everybody in class.

Examples:

1. Directions: *Add a tag question to this sentence:*

"Mary was here, ... ?"

Answer: "Mary was here, wasn't she?"

2. Directions: *Write the missing part of the two-word verbs:*

               What time did he get ...... this morning?

Answer: What time did he get up this morning?

An example of free - response with a minimum amount of contextual control is the following:

"You would get better sooner if _____".

Many correct answers may fit in this sentence, so that it requires real productivity.

How Multiple - Choice Completion Grammar items must be prepared?

1. Choose the grammar points to be tested.

2. Prepare the right kind of sentence context for the grammar structure.

3. Select three logical alternatives.

4. Prepare clear, simple instructions.

4. 3. 2. Interpreting Sentences.

This type of structure items presents a stimulus and then asks for an interpretation.

Example:

Roger memorized the English and French sentences. On the test he remembered all of them. Which ones did he remember?

a. The French ones.

b. The English and French ones.

c. The English ones.

d. Neither the French nor English ones.

Answer: b.

4. 3. 3. Transformations.

This kind of structure test requires the students to convert or transform a series of sentences in a specified manner, by changing them from present to past tense, from active to passive voice, from singular to plural for, and so forth.

Examples:

The student changes a sentence according to precise instructions:

Cue: *Change to plural:*   "What's your name?"

Response: "What are your names?"

Cue: *Change to Information Question using "where":*

                                 "They are selling books?"

Response: "Where are they selling books?"

4. 4. VOCABULARY.

The purpose of vocabulary tests is to measure the comprehension and production of words used in speaking or writing. The selection of vocabulary test words is relatively easy in achievement tests: it can be drawn from the text books that have been used in class.

Deciding how to test vocabulary is related to how it is taught. Cradle Project in Ecuador does not recommend having students simply memorizing list of words. On the contrary, it teaches students to find the meaning of words through the context of the sentence; and teachers help to increase comprehension by teaching important affixes.

The teacher must decide if he is going to test the students' active or passive vocabulary; it is to say, the words they should use in their speech and

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writing or those they will need just to comprehend, especially in their reading. Vocabulary tests on an intermediate level will concentrate on the words needed in speaking or comprehending the oral language; but tests on an advanced level will deal with the lexicon of written English in newspapers, literature, textbooks, etc. After this decision, the teacher may choose the type of test he needs to use from the following kinds:

4. 4. 1. Completing (Multiple Choice).

This is a good vocabulary test type for students who can read in the foreign language. It makes the students depend on context clues and sentence meaning. This kind of items is constructed by deleting a word from sentence.

After reading the sentence, the student looks at the group of words and chooses which one completes it the best.

Example:

She quickly _____ her lunch.

a. drank   b. ate   c. drove   d. slept

Answer: b.

Steps for writing Multiple - Choice Completion items:

a. - Select the words to be tested.

b. - Get the right kind of sentence to put each word in (stem).

c. - Choose several wrong words to put the right word with (alternatives). Three options plus the right word are enough for a written item.

d. - Prepare clear and simple instructions.

Vocabulary Choice:

When selecting vocabulary items, it is necessary to remember the suggestions mentioned above, and also the teacher must realize that sentence - completion items are given as a chance to test passive vocabulary. Since students have to recognize these words but not necessarily produce them, this is a good way to test more difficult vocabulary items. However, these should be words or phrases that are useful to the students. These words can be chosen from students' reading materials, and from other sources, like newspapers, magazines and textbooks. Another point to remember is that generally only content words like nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs are included in vocabulary tests; while function words as articles, determiners, prepositions, conjunctions, pronouns, auxiliary verbs appear in grammar tests.

Context Preparation.

Once selected the words, the next step is to prepare contexts for them. Sometimes, more than one sentence is needed to help to classify meaning.

Example:

Directions: Fill in the blanks with the correct word.

"I want to paint, too."

"All right. Use that _____ over there".

a. brush   b. pencil   c. broom   d. spoon

Answer: a.

Another way is to find a passage in which the words appear. This passage must be according to the students' level.

Example:

Directions: Fill in the blanks with the correct word:

"Frank is very _____. He says, "Break a mirror, and you'll have a bad luck."

a. ambitious   b. optimistic   c. courteous   d. superstitious

Answer: d.

Finally, too difficult contexts must be avoided.

Preparation of Alternatives.

There are two ways to choose alternatives. First, experienced teachers often create their own. And second, students' errors may be used as alternatives. Teachers who create their own alternatives should remember these guidelines:

1. Make sure the alternatives are the same form of words as the correct answer, If the correct answer is an adjective, the group of alternatives must be also adjectives.

2. Be sure not to give the right answer through grammatical clues. For example, the sentence must not include an indefinite article (a - an) before the blank space to place the alternative. Any of these articles must be written with each alternative.

3. The context sentences should not be difficult for students, so the alternatives should be easy, too.

4. Be sure to include more than one alternative.

It was said that another way to prepare alternatives is to use students' errors. In this case, the sources of students' errors are the compositions and their speech. But a more efficient way to find vocabulary errors is to look through the homework and classroom exercises on vocabulary.

Instruction Preparation.

Instructions of the test must be brief, clear and written. Students should not have to spend a lot of time reading them. It may be helpful to give both oral and written instructions for students at the beginning level. These may also be given in the native language. Something important: teacher can use one or two examples to clarify instructions.

Alternate forms of Multiple - Choice Completion:

1. Definition. - The item consists of the stem containing the problem followed by several possible definitions or synonyms.

Examples:

1. Stem: **Lunch**

a. a trip

b. a kind of dress

c. a noon time meal

Answer: c.

2. To _____ someone means to save him or her from danger.

a. praise

b. injure

c. rescue

d. announce

<u>Answer:</u>   c.

2. <u>Phrase completion</u>. - Fill in the blank with the appropriate word. It places the problem words in a contextual setting.

<u>Examples:</u>

1. I eat three _____ every day.

a. lunch

b. dinner

c. meals

<u>Anwer:</u>   c.

(appropriateness to context)

2. The newspaper says, "A two-year-old girl _____ when struck by a bus".

a. nicked the bucket

b. a two-year-old girl

c. was killed

d. deported

Answer: c.

3. Phrasal Context (not sentence completion). - The
student has to select the word which can replace the
underlined one.

Examples:

He is upset right now.

a. happy

b. disappointed

c. evil

Answer: b.

4. 4. 2. Group of Words.

The student responds to the given cue using as many related words as
possible within a certain time.

Example:

Cue: classroom

Response: comfortable, blue, desk, picture, blackboard.
map, light, window, etc.

4. 4. 3. Morphological Change.

Word - formation items require students to fill in missing parts of words that appear in sentences. These missing parts are usually prefixes and suffixes. For example, the "un" in "untie" or the "-ful" in "thankful". A related task is to use words like the following in a sentence and have students to supply missing syllables of any kind, such as the "re-" in "relative", or the "-ate" in "deliberate". We can see, then, that there is a different emphasis in Simple - Completion tests than in those we have just looked through. Context is still useful, but the emphasis is on word building. Moreover, this is a test of active and not passive skills.

<u>Examples:</u>

The student must add prefixes to words to give them the opposite meaning:

legal	-	illegal
important	-	unimportant

4. 5. Reading Comprehension.

The reading test may be used in three abilities.

1. Language and graphic symbols: comprehending the lexical items, understanding the syntactcal patterns and morphological forms and using graphic symbols correctly, such as punctuation, capitalization, etc.

2. Ideas: identifying main and subordinate ideas and drawing conclusions and inferences.

3. Tone and style: recognizing the attitudes, methods, and stylistic devices of writer.

Tests of reading come in a wide variety of forms and evaluated broad spectrum of reading activities. These range from pre-reading concerns to reading comprehension, reading speed, and skimming techniques. Advanced and more specialized applications include translation, reading aloud, and reading literature.

Reading speed is especially important for students with lots of out-of-class reading to do. Skimming is handy for people who need to hunt for information in print; this includes reading a newspaper as well as doing research in a library. The advanced applications are helpful for translators as well as radio and television announcers. Many students at the advanced level can use skills of literary analysis for school and leisure.

But the heart of reading evaluation in most schools is reading comprehension, and that will be our main emphasis in this chapter.

4. 5. 1. Completing or Limited Response.

For those teaching beginning reading, informal techniques of evaluation are recommended such as exercises and individual practice. Early testing is often limited to reading. In addition, "word-attack" skills usually need attention on the beginning level. Here we see if the student can tell the difference fairly rapidly between various combinations of letters in English words.

The most typical test of this skill is the "same - different" technique, which is also used as a reading exercise in an occasional ESL text.

Examples:

sad	sat	S	<u>D</u>
red	red	S	D
meat	meet	S	<u>D</u>

This can also be used with phrases: Same - Different Phrases

from the mayor / for the mayor   S   <u>D</u>

with her brother / with her brother   <u>S</u>   D

       A similar testing arrangement has the student circle the odd item (notice that these are not necessarily minimal pairs).

Examples:

net   ten

span   naps

       A third form uses a key word. Working rapidly, students have to circle the matching word from a list of four items.

Examples:

pots: stop   pods   <u>pots</u>   spot

figure: <u>figure</u>   finger   fissure   ringer

       Directions for this kind of test should be very simple. They can be read aloud by the teacher to help those whose reading

is limited. If necessary, directions can even be given in the native language. Here are some sample instructions:

"Each item has two words. In some items the words are the same. But in other items the words are different. When the two words are the same, draw a circle around "S". When the two words are different, draw a circle around "D". Work quickly. You have only ten minutes."

Examples:

too	to	S	D̲
in	in	S̲	D

Alternate Forms of Completing or Limited Response items:

1. Advanced odd items.

The student still looks for the word that is different from the others. But now all three words can be different or all three words can be the same. If only one word is different, the student circles the odd word. If each word is different, he checks the "all different" column. If all three words are the same, he checks the "all the same" column.

Examples:

Items: All different   All the same

speak - peaks - seeks _____x____   _____

peace - peace - peace   _____   _____x____

into bed - in bed - in the bed ____x____   _____

2. Key word odd option.

There is only one difference between this alternate form and the original. Originally, we found the word that matched the key item, in short, the different word.

Example:

<u>Want to go</u>:   want to go   want to go   <u>won't go</u>

key word   different

                                                  word

Advantages of Limited - Response or Completing Items.

1. These are quite easy to construct and score.

2. Only the recognition of letters is required, making this a simple task for beginning students.

Limitations of Limited - Response or Completing Items.

1. This is not an integrative skill involving actual reading.

2. Overemphasis on this technique could reduce reading speed.

4. 5. 2. Reading.

General form of the Reading Test.

The Reading Test type has been used to measure the reading ability comparing the one of native speakers of English language with the effectiveness of foreign learner of the language. Such a test consists of a number of short passages of varying styles and contents; each one is followed by a series of Multiple - Choice Comprehension items, by a judicious selection of passages and a careful working of items. Thus, the reading comprehension test is somewhat parallel to advanced level auditory comprehension test, in which the student is given rather long stretches of oral language, perhaps in the forms of dialogues, from which he must shift out and interpret a multiplicity of phonological, grammatical and lexical signals occurring simultaneously.

Selection of the Test Passage.

1. Length. - In as much as the test writer will generally wish to include samples of various kinds of material, the

individual test passages should be kept brief. On the other hand, there should be sufficient content to yield at least six or seven comprehension items for pretesting. Passages of between 100 and 250 words are about the proper length.

2. Subject matter. - The specific purpose of the test will naturally dictate the subject matter of the passages selected. In a general screening test for foreign applicants to American universities, for instance, the selections should reflect the various kinds of reading material assigned in basic university courses. For this, the test writer may draw upon such works as biographies, prose fiction, encyclopedia entries, and non-technical articles on the natural and social sciences topics. The excerpts must be clear and meaningful when taken out of the context, and should not require outside subject - matter information to be fully comprehended. It can not usually be assumed, for example, that the examinees will have the same kind of knowledge of American history, traditions and cultural patterns as the American-born student. On the other hand, the passages should not deal with information that is universally known, for in this case the candidates may be able to answer the questions correctly without paying much attention to the passages.

3. **Style and treatment of subject.** - reading tests should generally include materials of various types and styles, though all should possess reasonable merit as pieces of writing. Paragraphs that make just one clear direct point, for instance, seldom make suitable passages for testing purposes, in as much as they do not yield a sufficient number of test items.

The reading passages should:

a. Deal chronologically with a series of events.

b. Compare or contrast two or more people, objects, or events.

c. Present an author's personal opinion on a familiar subject.

4. **Language.** - The passage in a reading test should approximate materials which the examinees are likely to encounter when they put their English to use. The test writer must always set realistic tasks for his test population, which consists, after all, of learners of a second, or foreign language. Therefore, passages that are overloaded with extremely difficult lexical items and/or complex syntactical structures may be adapted somehow to students' level. The simplification of reading passages, however, should be carefully controlled in order to avoid the excessive simplicity of the test.

Advice on Item writing:

1. The vocabulary and syntax of the items should be kept as simple as possible, so that the real problem is the interpretation of the passage, not of the questions that are asked about it.

Example:

Ann: "Mr. Martin never works in the garage".

Ken: "Yes, he does. He worked in the garage last Saturday".

- When was he working?

a. in the garage   b. Mr. Martin   c. last Saturday

Answer: c. last Saturday

2. Insofar as possible, the "stem" or "lead" of the item should establish the problem, that is, make clear what kind of information is being asked for.

Example:

"What played an integral part in fashioning folk music?"

a. work songs   b. jazz   c. Americans

d. a new environment

Answer: a. work songs

3. Selection of the correct answer should involve interpretation of the passage, not merely matching the words in the choices with the same words in the paragraph.

Example:

"Karate is a science of unarmed self-defense and counterattack. It is a sort of "weapon in an empty hand". In many US cities thousands of young people are developing their minds as well as their bodies by learning karate".

In this passage we learn that karate _____ .

a. is being taught to many young Americans

b. is training both mind and body

c. can remove a weapon from someone's hand

d. is used to start a fight

Answer: b.

4. All items should require a careful reading of the paragraph. It should not be possible to answer items correctly purely on the basis of outside knowledge or to eliminate some of the choices because they are clearly illogical or because they conflict with each other.

Example:

"Among American Negroes in the southern states, work songs played an integral part in fashioning a folk music which later became jazz. These had been part of the West American musical experience at home. And now they were transported to a new environment. In America they were found to be of little importance to the slaves output of work."

a. Jazz is related to the work songs of Americans.

b. Work songs were not helpful in getting more work done.

Answer: a.

4. 6. Writing Tests.

There are many kinds of writing tests, such as: pre-writing, guided writing, and free writing. Each stage tends to require different types of evaluation. A reason for the variety of writing tests in use is the great number of factors that can be evaluated:

mechanics, including spelling and punctuation;

vocabulary;

grammar;

appropriate content;

diction, or word selection;

rhetorical matters of various kinds(organization, cohesion, unity,

appropriateness to the audience, topic and occasion);

as well as sophisticated concerns, such as:

logic, and

style.

Beginning skills involving penmanship and use of the Roman Alphabet
can be evaluated informally in class exercises we will consider more common
things like testing letter writing and reports. Our discussion will present
techniques for evaluating writing in its various stages, from pre-writing to free
writing. The emphasis, however, will be on guided writing including
techniques such as dictation.

4. 6. 1. Completing. (Items to Fill In)

The examinee is required to select the best way of
completing a sentence in terms of grammar, diction, tone and
sense.

Example:

Complete the following sentence:

"During his last year in the office, his popularity with the voters

_____ ".

a. remained the same

b. increased

c. changed

<u>Answer:</u>   b.

This item type provides an excellent method relating to the effective use of written English. It is probably the most commonly used of the Multiple-Choice techniques for testing sensitivity to appropriate style in writing.

4. 6. 2. Pairing.

The examinee is required to select the best revision of an underlined portion of a sentence. If the sentence is acceptable as it stands, the examinee will select choice A., which is always identical to the underlined portion of the sentence.

<u>Example:</u>

"While watching from our window, the great ship slowly entered the harbor, whistle blowing and crew cheering."

Choose one of these alternatives:

a. while watching;

b. upon watching;

c. as we watched.

<u>Answer:</u>   a.

This item types combines features of types 1 and 2. The examinee is asked first to judge the acceptability of one feature (usually a structural point) of an existing sentence, and then, if he finds that feature inappropriate, to choose the best of several corrections. As such, this technique provides an interesting variation of the two foregoing types, though in practice it seems to lack the flexibility of type 2, which is used to test sensitivity to style as well as structure.

4. 6. 3. Dictation.

Another test is dictation. Most teachers know this technique, but few handle it properly. Actually, this is one of the easiest tests to use, and it gives very good information on the student's language ability. But this is true only if the teacher prepares it right, and evaluates it correctly. The teacher can get good results from a dictation if he follows the steps listed below:

Preparing a Dictation test.

First, choose a story or an article that is not too difficult for the students. The teacher can pick up a selection from a reader on a slightly lower level. The length of the dictation depends on whether it is used alone or with other language measures. If it is a part of a larger test, the teacher can use a dictation of 75 to 100 words long. If it is used by itself, he will want a passage about 125 to 200 words long.

Be careful to choose something that is unified and able to stand alone. In order to make the students to do their best, they must understand the meaning of the whole test. One way of helping to provide needed unity for a dictation takes form a longer passage is to write an introductory sentence or two. The student can also add a summary sentence or two at the end.

Unless the teacher is evaluating punctuation, it would be best to avoid a passage with much quoted material in it. Also avoid a passage containing a lot of names and dates and numbers, unless the teacher needs to test the ability of students to write out dates and numbers. Of course, the teacher can also edit the text and take out some troublesome words if the passage is suitable otherwise.

After the teacher prepares the modified version, the next step is to decide where the pauses should come. It is here where he will stop for students to write down what they have just heard. Aim for about seven or eight words between pauses. The teacher should very seldom go below five words. The structure of the sentence should serve as a guide. Longer sentences can be divided between clauses and phrase groups. It is better to put a slash (/) at each point that the teacher plans to pause. The passage should be marked in advance, and not at the time of administering the dictation.

If more than one teacher is using the same dictation, marking the pauses will help to make the test more uniform. The teacher also writes out a common set of instructions to read aloud to the students. These directions should be worded simply. For beginning classes in which all students speak the same native language, the teacher can even give the instructions in that language.

Administering the Dictation Test.

To help students do their best, the teacher must be sure that the students know how to take a dictation. He can assure that they do by giving a practice dictation during the regular class period. When administering dictation of a test, the

teacher must be sure that every student has a paper to write on and a pen. It is better to write out on the blackboard any unusual name or expression from the dictation passage that could possibly confuse the students. It is also helpful to explain the scoring procedure and to mention that the dictation will be read aloud three times. When the teacher reads it orally the first time, he should not pause during the passage. Students must not write anything at this time. They should simply listen carefully so they can understand what the entire thing is about. The second time, the pause should be made after every five to ten words, as previously marked. During each pause, the students have to write down what they have just heard. If they have not studied much about punctuation yet, the teacher can provide punctuation for them. No words should be repeated. The pauses should be long enough so that everyone has time to write down what he has heard. In fact, the teacher should watch the students to make sure that everyone has had an opportunity to finish writing, before the teacher continues with the next phrase. The third reading, without pauses and at normal speed, provides an opportunity for quick proofreading. No repetition of words or phrases is permitted.

Scoring the Dictation Test.

The best way to score dictation test is to deduct one point for each error. This includes omitted or added words, inverted word order, grammatical errors - everything.

An easy way to provide a numerical score for a dictation is simply to give a fixed number of points for it. If the dictation is not a part of a larger test, the teacher can use 100 points. Next, add up the number of errors on each dictation. If no one makes more than 100 errors, the teacher can subtract the number of errors from 100 for each person's score. If several students make more than 100 errors, the teacher can divide the number of errors on each sheet of paper with dictation by 2. The teacher should then subtract this from 100 for their score.

Example:

Count the number of errors that you find in the student's dictation below:

"Have you ever been_the West coat of Norway? Here are mountins with her green .... rise out of the sea, nar arms of the sea reach to back the mountins. We call those nar arms fjords. If you see these fjords from the sky, they look like arms with long fingers.

Some are many miles long. Water ... into a fjord from water falls. There is a ... land along the fjords.

Here we see small fish and beaches and sometimes a farm with beach."

A number of mistakes in this dictation Is 10. According to the scheme, the teacher will substruct a number of mistakes from 100. The result is 90 points.

Advantages of Dictation test.

1. They can measure general proficiency in English, including many of the integrative skills used in writing.

2. They are easy to prepare.

3. They can be scored with good consistency.

4. They are much harder to cheat on than Multiple-Choice, Completion, or Close tests.

Limitations of Dictation Tests.

1. They are difficult to use for diagnostic purposes. They combine listening and writing.

2. They are not usually helpful in measuring short-term progress.

3. They are not as easy to correct as Multiple-Choice, Completion or Close tests.

4. 6. 4. Writing answers to questions.

It is one thing to get the students to write. It is quite another matter to grade their writing skills. As mentioned earlier, the teacher needs to decide beforehand what to evaluate: such as, the use of complete sentences, agreement of subject and verb, proper inflections (including tense), and basic mechanics. It is good to limit these to only a few criteria.

<u>Example:</u>

Directions: *Write a paragraph of about seventy five words describing a store or business that you know very well. base your paragraph on answers to the following questions:*

1. What is it called?

2. When did it start to do business?

3. How many employees does it have?

4. What do the employees have to do?

5. Does it have many customers/clients? Why (not)?

6. Why do you choose to go there rather than somewhere else?

7. Is it a good example of what such a store business should be?

Begin your answer with the phrase: <u>In my neighborhood there is...</u>

4. 6. 5. Writing questions according to answer.

<u>Example:</u>

A. The report from Stradford that he "spent at the rate of a thousand pounds a year" is surely very far from the truth, being based no doubt on Stradford gossip.

B. On this income we may be sure that he lived well and comfortably in Stradford.

C. It is difficult to estimate Shakespeare's income in his last years.

D. Probably, Shakespeare received from all sources less than a quarter of this sum, say two hundred pounds.

Which sentence did you put first?	A	B	<u>C</u>	D
Which sentence did you put second?	<u>A</u>	B	C	D
Which sentence did you put third?	A	B	C	<u>D</u>
Which sentence did you put last?	A	<u>B</u>	C	D

4. 6. 6. Completing and Expanding sentences.

It is another kind of pre-writing evaluation. This can involve simply adding words such as adjectives and adverbs. Or it can require adding phrases and clauses.

Example:

1. The (   ) man hurried (   ) to the (   ) horse.

Answer: The old man hurried out to the frightened horse.

2. His decision (   ) surprised everyone (   ).

Answer: His decision to quiet his job surprised everyone that knew him.

4. 7. Oral Production.

The testing of Oral Production is widely regarded as the most challenging of all language exams to prepare, administer, and score. For this reason, many teachers do not even try to measure the speaking skills.

Speaking tests seem so challenging because the nature of the speaking skill itself is not usually well-defined. Understandably, there are some disagreements on just what criteria to choose evaluating oral communication. Grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation are often named as ingredients. But

matters such as fluency and appropriateness of expression are usually regarded as equally important.

Still other factors to be identified in oral communication include listening comprehension, correct tone or intonation, reasoning ability, and such things as initiative in asking for clarification.

The elements of speaking are numerous and not always easy to identify. Also, there is not very wide agreement on how to evaluate each factor (such as fluency or grammar).

Yet another complication is the range of oral communication. At the beginning level we find several pre-speaking activities, like pronunciation and vocabulary identification. We can test beginning-level students by using informal evaluation techniques.

There are, of course, numerous advanced applications of speaking: besides its use in professions like teaching business and law, there are specialized uses such as spoken translation by simultaneous translators, professional oral reading by radio newscasters, and dramatic roles on television. However, we will not discuss how to test very advanced and specialized students. Few students obtain this proficiency. Special tests, also called commercial tests, are available for such purposes.

4. 7. 1. Repeating sentences.

These sentences are useful for students who cannot read or write English, because they can simply listen to what the teacher says to them and then repeat it. Yet oral repetition also has an advantage for those who are literate: reading skills are not mixed with pronunciation skills. But oral repetition does have one major limitation: some beginning students can mimic or imitate quite well; therefore, results of an oral repetition test could indicate potential for learning English as much as present skill in using the language.

Repeating sentence is one of the easiest of all exams to prepare. No alternatives are needed, no clever sentence frames are required, and no drawing need to be prepared. Furthermore, every pronunciation feature can be tested. In fact, in one short sentence, such as "Did you say I stole the meat?", we can evaluate the pronunciation of key vowel, and diphthongs (/i/, /iy/, /uw/, /ey/, /ow/), important consonants, such as the troublesome "the". As we can see, a single sentence can provide a wealth of test items. Yet in preparing the test, we have to keep in mind the problem of scoring it. For example: the teacher can check final intonation on questions, including also cues and question tags. These can be mixed so that answers will not be given mechanically:

- Where did she put the broom?

- Is that near the door?

- Didn't she put it back in the closet?

- He cleaned the place quite well, didn't he?

It is a good idea to have a separate sentence for each point the teacher is testing, although this is not a firm rule. Many teachers are comfortable checking two things in one sentence. For example, it would be possible to listen to the main stress and rising intonation in the same sentence: "Did it come yesterday?"

Also, it is a good idea to say sentence only once. In scoring this type of test, listen only to the items marked on the key.

The instructions should be given orally, and be kept simple. For example, the teacher may say: "I will read some sentences to you. Listen carefully. I will read each one only once. After each one, I will stop; then you say it back to me."

4. 7. 2. Readings.

One of the most common ways of checking pronunciation is to have students read something aloud. This

kind of reading is o rather popular way to test the pronunciation of students who can read English.

These are three points to keep in mind when preparing reading-aloud items:

1. When using list of sentences, evaluate only one or two point sentence.

2. Use a natural language.

3. Avoid signaling to the students which pronunciation point is being tested.

Advantages of Reading tests.

1. They are easy to prepare.

2. They provide good control.

3. They test almost all pronunciation features.

4. They can test how to pronounce spelling combinations.

Limitations of Reading tests.

1. They are limited to those who can read English.

2. There is no direct relationship between ability to read aloud and pronunciation in normal conversation. For example, this sentence emphasizes the contrast between the voiced "the" pronunciation and the "d" pronunciation:

"My fa<u>the</u>r feels quite ba<u>d</u> about it". (Here, the student's copy will not be underlined).

And this sentence checks the use of rising intonation:

"Do you need any help?" (The student's copy will not have the intonation cue).

4. 7. 3. Changing Sentences.

The students are instructed to convert or transform sentences in specific ways: from affirmative to negative, from present tense to past or future tenses, etc. The student hears the voice on a tape which pronounces sentences one by one; and then he supplies the conversion during the pause that follows. This is according to each converted sentence on the basis of its correct grammar structure. Advantages or limitations of this type test are more difficult to determine since these sentences require grammar knowledge.

4. 7. 4. Making Sentence.

In this case, the voice on the tape asks the students to compose sentences appropriate to specific situations; each sentence is scored taking into account acceptable or unacceptable basis.

4. 7. 5. Answers according to picture.

The student is given time to study each of a series of pictures, and then he briefly describes what is going on in each scene. Student's pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and fluency are marked separately.

4. 8. Rhythm and Intonation.

Through these kinds of tests the teacher evaluates students' production and identification of the sounds, stress patterns and intonation of English sentences.

Tests devoted exclusively to pronunciation are rare, much less common than tests of vocabulary and grammar. These last aspects have deserved more dedication; however, it does not mean that pronunciation is unimportant; it simply means that this language component, pronunciation, is normally evaluated in conjunction with listening and speaking. Moreover, today's pronunciation items tend to incorporate context and meaning. On a

speaking test, pronunciation becomes important when it interferes with communication.

Pronunciation items by themselves are not very effective in measuring real communication, but they can, at least, measure progress made on specific points of pronunciation.

4. 8. 1. Rhyme in pairs of words.

The examinee is first presented a test word which he is instructed to read to himself, after which he is to select the one word from among several alternatives which rhymes with the test word. (He is cautioned to make his selection according to sound rather than spelling).

Example:

1. Could rhymes with: a. mud   b. food   c. put - (b)

2. Plays rhymes with: a. rose   b. raise   c. press - (b)

4. 8. 2. Distinction of stress in word.

The examinee is to decide which syllable in each test word receives the heaviest stress.

1. fre-cuent-ly (1)

2. in-tro-duce (3)

3. de-ve-lop (2)

4. 8. 3. Intonation in phrases.

The examinee is to decide which one of several numbered syllables in each utterance would receive the heaviest stress.

Example:

1. I know that Henry went to the movie, but where did John
                                                        2   3   4
go?
5
Answer: The heaviest stress is on the word John.

2. I'm certain professor Brown wants to see you, but he's in
                                                        1   2   3
class just now.
   4   5   6
Answer: The heaviest stress is on the word class.

CHAPTER 5.

ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH TESTS SUGGESTED BY THE TEXTBOOK "OUR WORLD THROUGH ENGLISH", BOOK ONE, USED IN HIGH SCHOOLS IN IBARRA (FIRST YEAR OF "OVIEDO" AND "LA SALLE" HIGH SCHOOLS).

All good tests must possess three principal qualities: validity, reliability and practicality. It means that any test must be appropriated for the stated objectives, depending on the actual environment of the students and applicable to the particular situation. To achieve these points, which make any test valid and useful, different aspects of test construction must be taken into account: structure of the test, its design, extension, items organization, and its contents, in general.

The textbook used in the first year in "Oviedo" and "La Salle" high schools is *Our World Through English* , Book One, the functional English language course for the Republic of Ecuador, of Ministry of Education and culture, designed by CRADLE Project and published in Quito in 1993. The textbook contains nine tests after each one of nine units, and six term tests - two variants per term.

5.1. Structure of the tests.

The structure of all the tests used in the textbook "Our World Through English" follows the scheme:

- Listening;

- Reading;

- Speaking and Writing;

- Grammar;

- Vocabulary and Spelling.

Listening and Reading imply the almost same vocabulary within a given test, the fact that makes the task somehow repetitive but easier for the student. Speaking and Writing, and Vocabulary topics are closely interrelated, too. All these items are based on a certain Grammar material, also checked in every test.

The term tests summarize the already learnt during the term material, and check the obtained student's knowledge.

5. 2. Kinds of tests.

The tests from the textbook under consideration are **formal and standardized** according to their elaboration or origin: the same tasks or items repeat several times varying just a little. There is hardly any task implying the student's personal criterion or demanding the use of his imagination. Notwithstanding, the tasks are clear, and the students are supposed to know what is expected of them.

As for their answer forms, all the tests from the given textbook are mixed, containing each of them different answer forms which may be classified as follows:

- **Written:** 113 items;

- **Oral:** 40 items;

- **Non-verbal:** 27 items.

The percentage of items containing these answer forms is the following:
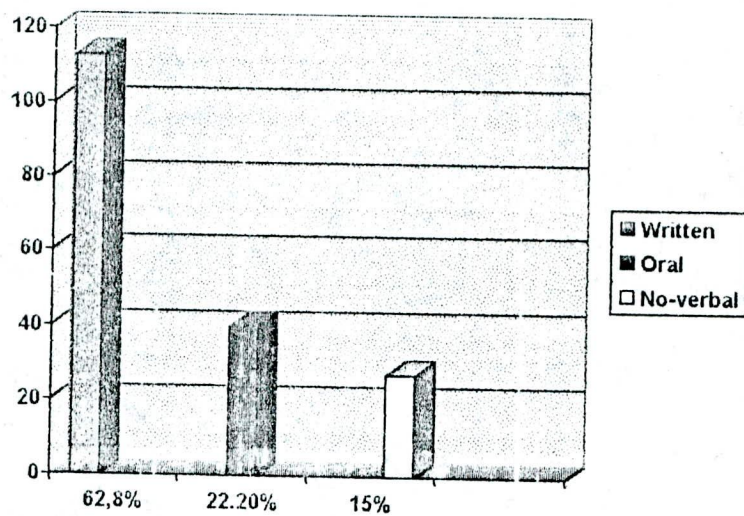
By the number of students to whom the tests are applied, the tests suggested by the textbook are also mixed, containing 153 items purely individual tasks, which correspond to 85 % of the whole number of items; and 27 items partly collective tasks, which correspond to 15 % of the whole number

of tasks and which imply the work following the scheme Student - Student and Student - Teacher. The percentage relation between individual and collective tasks is the following:
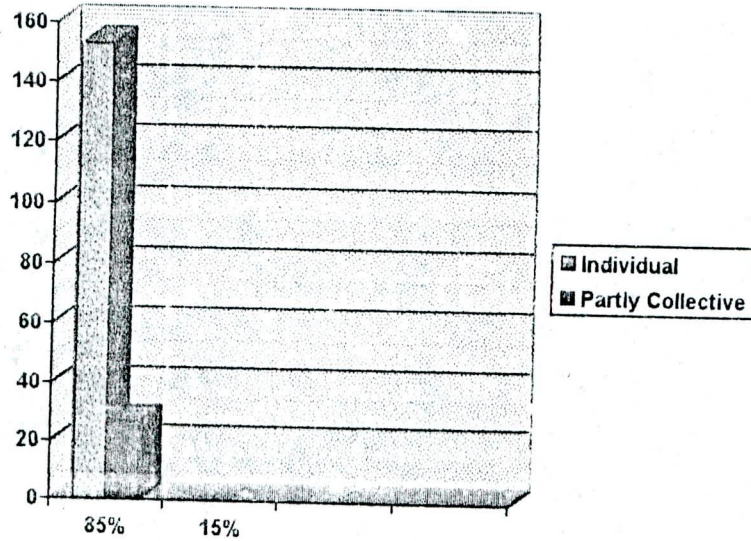
5. 2. 1. Design.

The tests from the textbook "Our World Through English" are designed considering the students' age - 12-13 years, and their national culture. Almost all the tests refer to actual environment: Ecuadorian culture, history, economy, Nature with its famous people, plants and animals.

100 % of the tests contain tables, and 100 % contain pictures or photographs. This makes the tests more interesting and less difficult for the students.

The tasks or items are interesting and quite varied, though sometimes repetitive. The quantity of items seems to be correctly calculated to be carried out in two academic hours, that is ninety minutes, for testing.

5. 2. 2. Extension.

As it has been already mentioned, the textbook contains nine unit tests corresponding to nine units, and six term tests, two variants per term. All the tests contain the same number of general topics:

1. Listening;
2. Reading;
3. Speaking;
4. Writing;
5. Grammar;
6. Vocabulary.

It should be mentioned that the units' tests are quite more extensive than the term tests. The term tests contain just six items - one per topic, while the units' tests include 11-16 items, two or three per each topic. Some items have two parts: a) and b), especially in Speaking and Reading items, suggesting the students first talking and later writing about the same material.

5. 3. Structure of the items.

The structure of the items in the textbook under consideration follows the same scheme in every test. The items' organization, instructions, items' value and number of items seem to be properly designed for better students' comprehension and, consequently, learning.

5. 3. 1. Organization.

Every test suggested by the textbook contains several items aimed to achievement of different aspects of checking students' level of knowledge, that is Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing, Grammar and Vocabulary. The items corresponding to each mentioned group can be classified according to their organization.

Items checking Listening skills:

A: Limited Response:

a) Match the pictures with words, two words, parts of a sentence or whole sentences: 10 items corresponding to 5.6 % of the whole.
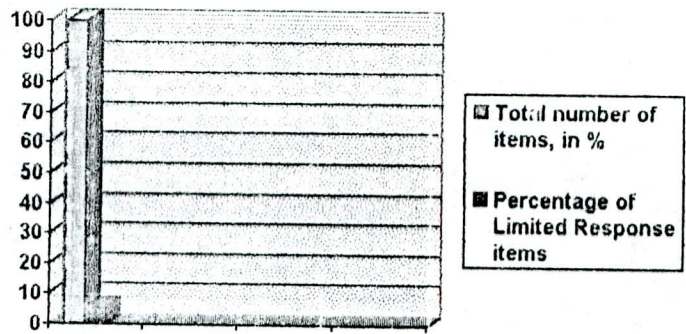
B: Multiple-Choice Appropriate Response:

a) Listen and fill in the blanks in the text or table: 14 items corresponding to 7.8 % of the whole;

b) Listen and underline or tick the correct word or sentence: 6 items, corresponding to 3.3 % of the whole;

c) Listen and order the sentences in the text: 1 item, corresponding to 0.6 % of the whole.

The total number of Multiple-Choice Appropriate Response items is 21, that is 11,7% of the whole.
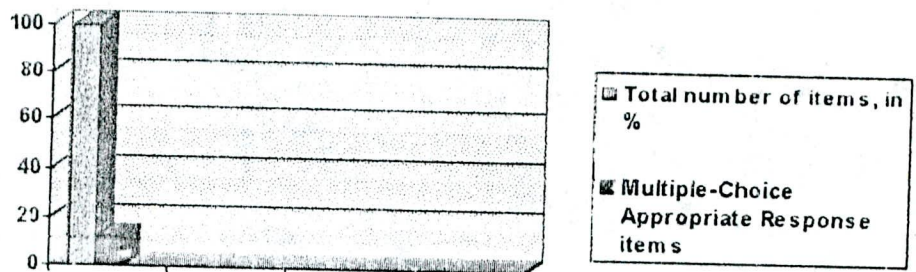
Items checking Reading skills:

A: Limited response:

a) Match the pictures with given information, or match the words or sentences in two columns: 13 items, corresponding to 7.2 % of the whole.
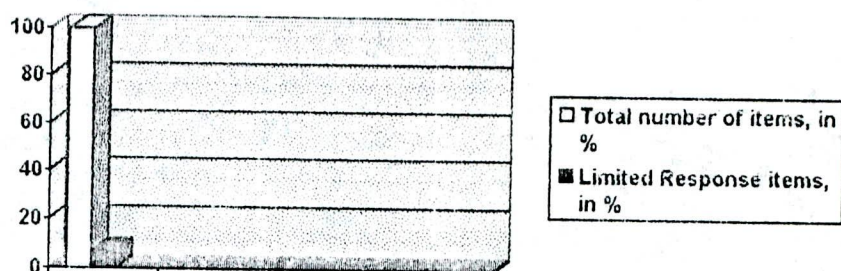
B: Passage or sentence comprehension:

a) Answer True or False: 1 item, corresponding to 0.6 % of the whole;

b) Complete the spaces in the text or in the table using the information from the given passage: 10 items corresponding to 5.6 % of the whole.

The total number of passage or sentence comprehension items is 11, or 6.2% of the whole number of items.
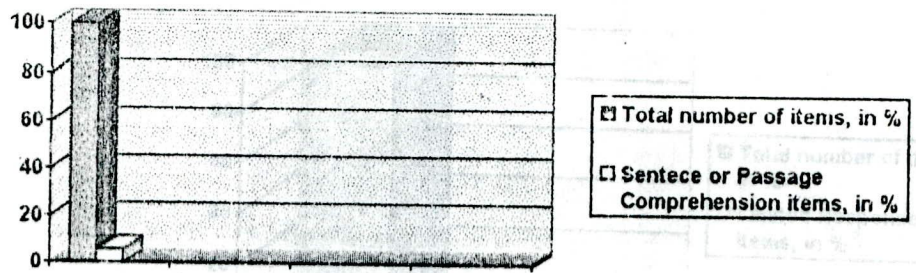
Items checking Speaking and Writing skills:

As the high school tests are usually written, in this textbook Speaking and Writing items go together, within the same topic. Each item is divided in two parts: a) and b), where part a) is usually spoken and then written in part b); or the student just writes down what he is supposed to say.

Speaking:

A: Limited response:

a) Match the words in the columns: 1 item, corresponding to 0.6 % of the whole.

Legend:
- Total number of items, in %
- Limited Response items, in %

B: Simple Completion:

a) Look at the picture or table and describe them: 11 items, corresponding to 6.1 % of the whole.

Legend:
- Total number of items, in %
- Simple-Choice Completion items, in %
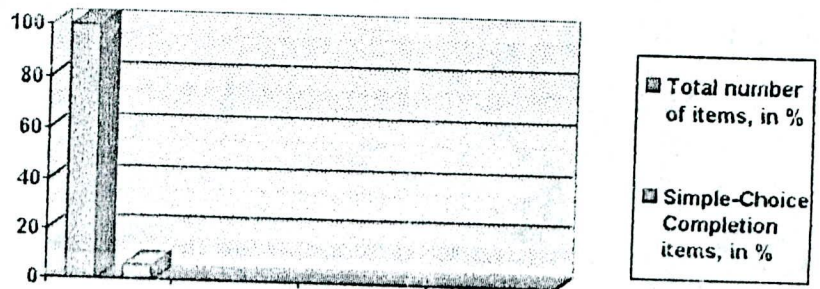
C: Multiple-Choice Completion:

a) Talk about the given topic: 9 items, corresponding to 5 % of the whole;

b) Complete the tables: 3 items corresponding to 1.7 % of the whole;

c) Tasks given by the teacher (especially in term tests): 4 items corresponding to 2.22 % of the whole.

The total number of Multiple-Choice Completion items is 16, that is 8,92% of the whole.
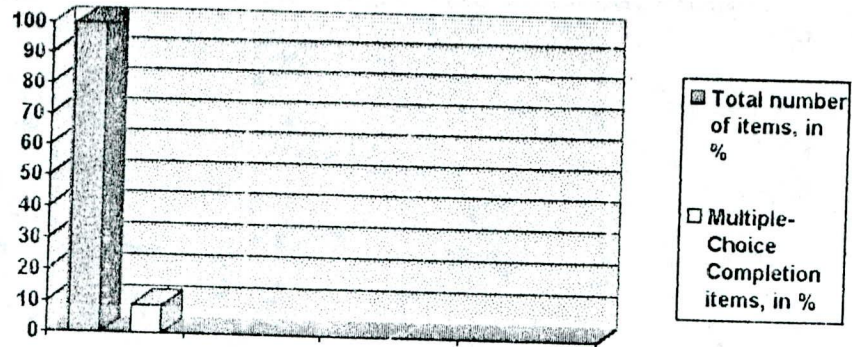
Writing:

As for writing, the majority of items imply writing on a given topic, sometimes after previous oral practice, using the pre-established vocabulary. That is guided writing. Free writing is used in a much smaller percentage. There is no any dictation items.

Items checking knowledge of Grammar:

A: Limited Response:

a) Order the words in a sentence: 3 items corresponding to 1.7 % of the whole;

b) Label the objects: 3 items, corresponding to 1.7 % of the whole;

c) Make a correct choice and underline correct words given in parenthesis: 3 items, corresponding to 1.7 % of the whole;

d) Make a list or underline a certain part of speech: 3 items, corresponding to 1.7 % of the whole;

e) Match sentence parts: 1 item, corresponding to 0.6 % of the whole.

The total number of Limited Response items is 13, which corresponds to 7,4% of the whole.
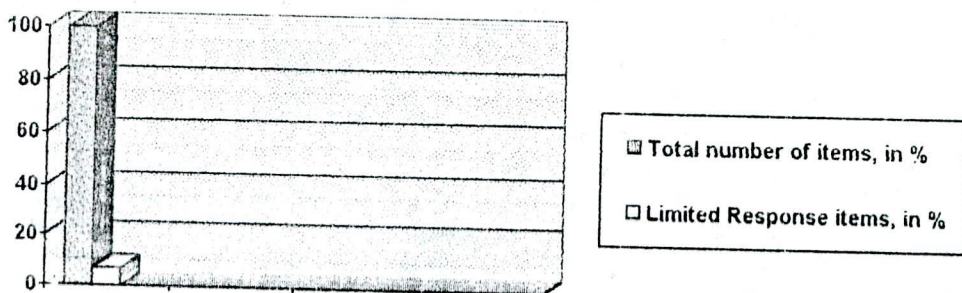
B: Simple Completion:

a) Complete the spaces in the text using the given words or pictures: 13 items, corresponding to 7.2 % of the whole.
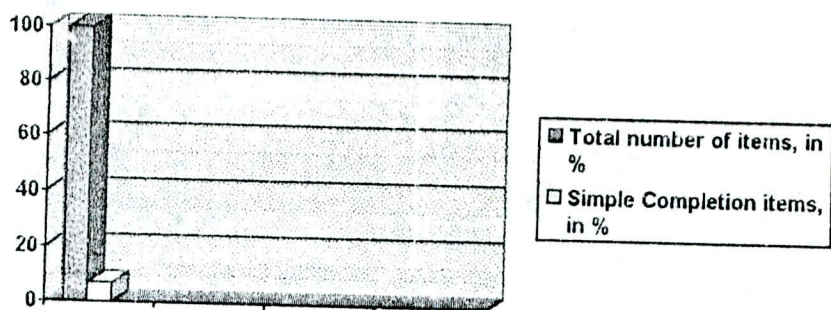
There are no items of Multiple- Choice Completion and Close Procedure.

Items checking the knowledge of Vocabulary:

A: Limited Response:

a) Match the objects to their names: 2 items, corresponding to 1.1 % of the whole;

b) Label the objects on the pictures using given words: 6 items, corresponding to 3.3 % of the whole;

c) Write the words for given pictures or numbers: 8 items, corresponding to 4.4 % of the whole.

d) Write the answers for addition calculation: 2 items, corresponding to 1.1 % of the whole;

e) Underline the words or numbers mentioned by the teacher: 1 item, corresponding to 0.6 % of the whole;

f) Color the objects according to the established color: 1 item, corresponding to 0.6 % of the whole;

g) Find the words in a "soup of letters": 1 item, corresponding to 0.6 % of the whole.

The total number of Limited Response items is 21, that is 11,7 % of the total number of items.
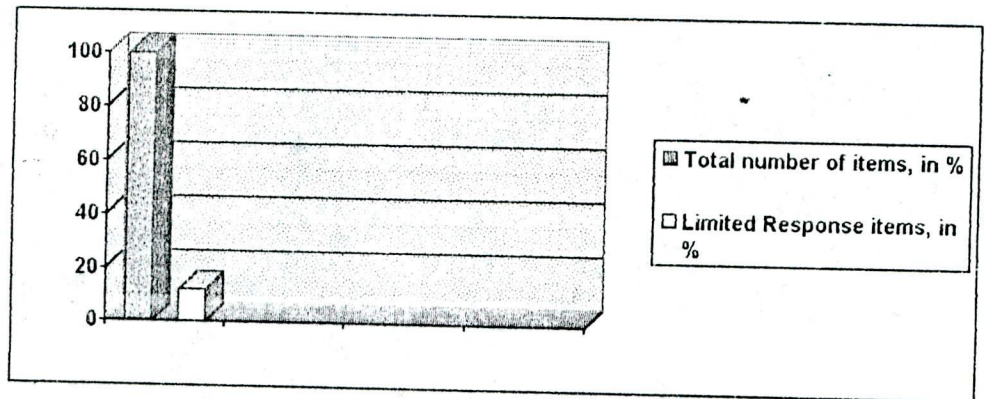
B: Simple Completion:

a) Complete the spaces with given words: 6 items, corresponding to 3.3 % of the whole.
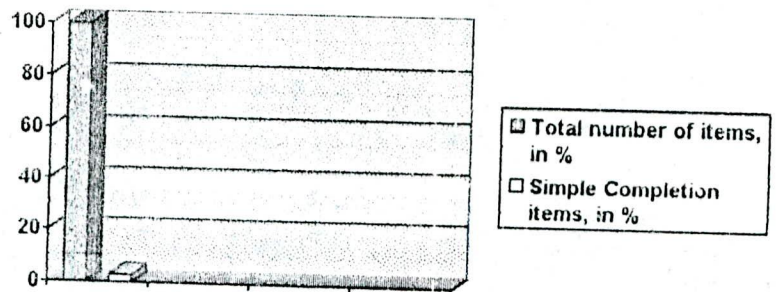
C: Multiple-Choice Completion:

a) Complete the spaces with the student's own information: 2 items, corresponding to 1.1 % of the whole.
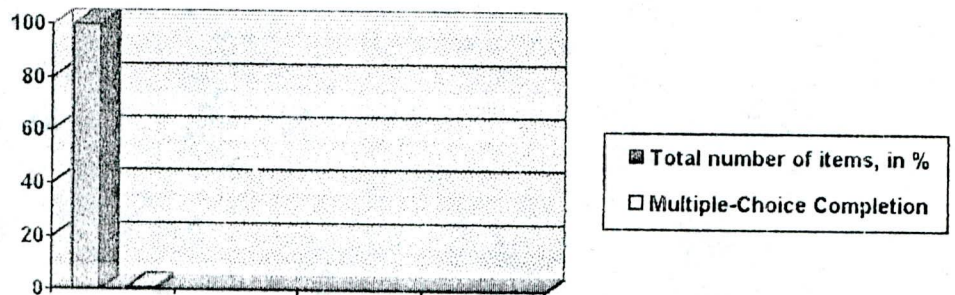
5. 3. 2. Instructions.

The instructions given in each item of the tests in the textbook under consideration, are expressed clearly from the point of view of both vocabulary and syntax. The problem establishing is proper and easily understandable. Almost all the tests suggest an example to follow, making so the whole task easier for students. The instructions are brief, the fact that minimizes the reading factor and does not require much time for its reading.

Example: Look at the information below. Talk about the people. For example: Lastenia Medina is from the Province of Esmeraldas. She lives in Quinindé. Quinindé is big. Lastenia's father is a farmer. (page 152)

5. 3. 3. Items value.

Every item "costs" or "marks", as they call it in the textbook "Our World Through English", 5 points. Some items, considered the most difficult ones, award 10 marks.

5. 3. 4. Number of Items.

The total number of items contained in the fifteen tests in the textbook under consideration is 153, but some of them consist in two parts, making so the total number of 180 items.

5. 3. 5. Vocabulary and Wording.

The vocabulary used in the tests is simple and corresponds to the vocabulary seen in each unit. Starting from the simplest phrases in Unit 1, like "Good morning", "My name is...", etc., the vocabulary becomes more and more complicated from unit to unit, including at the end of the course words and phrases referring to Ecuadorian geography, vacations, famous people's life, plants and animals, etc.

A successful combination of written and oral items permits the student to check and reinforce his knowledge easily and quickly.

5. 3. 6. Relation between objectives and evaluation.

The objectives stated by every unit of the textbook "Our World Through English" used by the students of the first courses of "Oviedo" and "La Salle" high schools, are reflected, checked and reinforced in the process of intermediate and final evaluation, that is in the tests. Many times the items from the units and the items from the tests coincide, with the only difference in arrangement of texts, tables and pictures. Therefore, the objectives stated by the teacher for every unit and achieved by the students at the end of each unit learning, are reinforced and repeated one more time in corresponding tests. The term tests contain the summarized material, the material of three units seen in a term per test. So, the objectives stated by term tests are combined.

We estimate the CRADLE Project textbook "Our World Through English" rather successful, quite modern and very functional for Ecuadorian high schools.

5. 4. Evaluated Aspects.

The aim of evaluation is to determine the achievement of proposed objectives. The evaluation is an integral, continuous, systematic and accumulative process. It requires the investigation and collecting of all those data that would permit to get acquainted with student's knowledge caused by the process of teaching-learning, his personality and ability to think and concentrate, and some psychomotor characteristics. These points oblige the teacher to carry out a constant observation and registering, which help him to

form a clear idea about the student's progress. Besides, it helps the teacher to orient his own teaching activities and correct probable failures on time.

Therefore, the evaluation must consider student's behavior change, his intellectual growth, new dexterities' acquirement within any determined subject, English in our case.

The tests suggested by the textbook "OUR WORLD THROUGH ENGLISH" are aimed to check the student's following aspects:

5. 4. 1. COGNOSCITIVE.

The whole textbook, with all its units, exercises and tests, contains the items aimed to cognoscitive abilities, student's acquired knowledge, in other words. The cognoscitive abilities can be divided as follows:

a. Terminology knowledge. The student should be able to demonstrate he understands the specific words used in instructions before each item and terminology used within the item.

Example:

- Look at the map. Match the locations and the names of provinces.

- Listen. Tick the information...

- Read the text. <u>Underline</u> the correct words...

- <u>Label</u> the pictures...

- Listen. <u>Fill in</u> the blanks with correct information...

- Look at the pictures. <u>Complete</u> the list...

- Read the text and <u>make notes</u>...

b. <u>Vocabulary knowledge</u>. It is checked in the items designed for vocabulary knowledge evaluation, and also in all other items as the proper vocabulary knowledge permits the student to carry out any task he is suggested to.

Example:

- Look at Patricia's family tree. Complete the tree. Use the words of family relationship.

- Tell your friends the instructions to make fruit salad.

- Label the pictures with correct names of the things.

c. <u>Phonetic rules knowledge</u>. The knowledge of these rules is checked in reading and listening comprehension test items. The knowledge permits the student to distinguish, recognize and use correctly certain phonetic matters.

Example:

- Listen to the description of these people. Write notes in the table...

- Listen. Complete these family tree...

- Listen. Look at the picture. Tick the objects you hear.

d. Grammar rules knowledge. It is checked in the items designed for grammar testing when the student is suggested to apply certain grammar rules.

Example:

- Order the words in the sentence.

- Read the text. Underline the correct verb forms.

- Read the instructions. Underline the verbs.

- Match these sentence parts...

- Read the text. Complete the spaces with correct pronouns.

e. Orthography knowledge. It is checked in writing testing.

Example:

- Look at the pictures. Write what people say.

- Make notes about yourself.

- Look at the pictures and the notes in the table. Write about each person.

- Look at the clocks. Write the time.

- Write the notes about your school day.

- Write notes about your best friend.

<u>f. Methods and techniques knowledge.</u> The student is supposed to know the methods and techniques applied by his teacher during the English teaching-learning progress, and carry out the suggested tasks easily and without any difficulty, as for items' technical arrangement.

Example:

- Write notes about... (the student is supposed to know how he should write notes).

- Read the text. Complete the table with the information...

The cognoscitive aspect is the most important one in English testing, as the perfect English language domination is the aim of teaching-learning process. But together with the cognoscitive aspect, which we consider the primary one, two other aspects considered secondary in this process can be evaluated:

5. 4. 2. NEUROSENSITIVE.

As it was mentioned above, during the English language teaching-learning process, the student acquires not only the pure "technical" knowledge, but also develops his neurosensitive dexterities, which can be checked during the tests suggested by the textbook "OUR WORLD THROUGH ENGLISH".

a. Dexterity to apply the knowledge. The student must demonstrate not only his cognoscitive abilities, but also his ability to apply them in practice.

b. Dexterity to interpret the information. The student should be able to understand the task and interpret it correctly.

c. Dexterity to apply methods and techniques. The student must apply correctly the methods and techniques which were followed during the previous teaching-learning progress.

d. Dexterity to generalize. The student must be able to generalize and abstract his knowledge applying it to any given task.

e. Dexterity to communicate. In the textbook there are some items that require student's ability to communicate: items containing dialogues. The student must be able to communicate with his partner or the teacher applying logic in his answers.

f. Imagination development. There are some items containing the necessity of student's imagination appliance.

g. Memory development. Some items from the tests require the appliance of some anterior events' descriptions, and this is not possible without good memory development.

h. Attention development. The student should be attentive during the test and consider all the details of it.

5. 4. 3. PSYCHOMOTOR.

This aspect is the least important in the English language teaching-learning process. In the textbook "OUR WORLD THROUGH ENGLISH" there is one item containing purely psychomotor task - geometrical figures' coloring, though it also demands the vocabulary knowledge, colors in this case. As for other psychomotor aspects, we could mention student's personal behavior during the test and his ability to coordinate mental and physical work.

We should point out again that the last two aspects: neurosensitive and psychomotor, are not principal in the English language teaching-learning process, it pursues the acquirement of cognoscitive knowledge. But at the same time, it can be hardly achieved if not based on neurosensitive and psychomotor dexterities, because the process of learning is integral and complex.

In our opinion, the textbook "OUR WORLD THROUGH ENGLISH" successfully combines the testing of the tree aspects, vital in the process of English teaching and learning.

Chapter 6.

CRITERIA ABOUT ENGLISH TESTS SUGGESTED BY THE TEXTBOOK "OUR WORLD THROUGH ENGLISH".

In order to have a wider and clearer view on the items used in the textbook *"Our World Through English"* by CRADLE Project used in the first courses of "Oviedo" and "La Salle" high schools, we decided to find out the opinion of the teachers who work with this textbook applying its tests into practice. So, we carried out an inquiry with the teachers of the high schools where this textbook is used. The results are interesting as the answers have been different and sometimes contradictory. The teachers' suggestions and advice can be taken into account to improve the tests' structure.

The inquiry has been carried out with three high schools authorities and twenty-six English teachers, separately. After all data have been processed, the final results are the following:

6.1. High schools Authorities.

1. What do you think about the structure of the tests from the textbook "OUR WORLD THROUGH ENGLISH" used in the first courses? Is it excellent, good or regular?

Excellent	%	Good	%	Regular	%
1	33,33%	1	33,33%	1	33,33%

2. Do you agree that such tests fulfill the objectives of each unit? Yes? No? How would you estimate tests' effectiveness?

Yes	%	No	%
3	100%	0	0%

3. *Do you think the items are rather repetitive? Yes? No?*

Yes	%	No	%
1	33,33%	2	66,66%

4. *Do you agree that the topics used in the textbook "Our World Through English" are purely Ecuadorian? Yes? No? Why?*

Yes	%	No	%
2	66,66%	1	33,33%

The reason expressed by the high schools authorities for answering "Yes" is that Ecuadorian reality is very important for Ecuadorian students and would help them to learn English better. The person who answered "No" thinks that Ecuadorian topics of the textbook do not reflect the title of it: "Our World Through English", but "Our Country Through English".

5. Do you agree that such tests wake up student's creativeness, imagination and interest? Yes? No?

Yes	%	No	%
3	100%	0	0%

6. What would you suggest to improve tests' structure, if necessary?

The interviewed high schools authorities suggested to make the tests from the textbook "Our World Through English" shorter, that would facilitate student's work and better his handicap.

6. 2. English Teachers.

The inquiry has been carried out with twenty-six English teachers from the high schools where the textbook "Our World Through English" is used.

1. What do you think about the structure of the tests from the textbook "OUR WORLD THROUGH ENGLISH" used in the first courses? Is It excellent, good or regular?
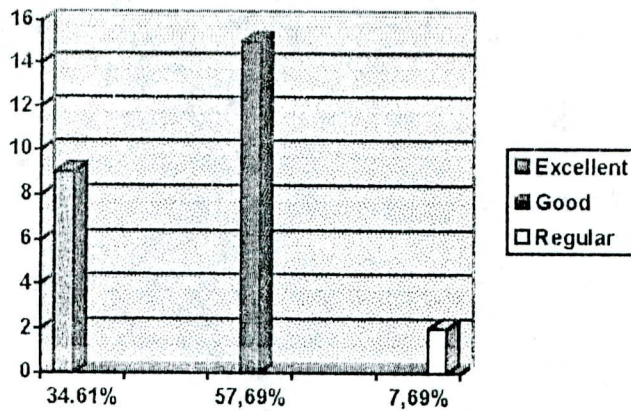
Nine teachers, a number corresponding to 34,61% of the total population, think that the textbook "Our World Through English" is excellent. The majority of interviewed teachers, that is, 15 or 57,69% consider this textbook just good. Two teachers' opinion is that the textbook is regular that corresponds to 7,69% of the total population.

2. *Do you agree that such tests fulfill the objectives of each unit? Yes? No?*

YES	%	NO	%
26	100%	0	0%

All the interviewed teachers, that is, 26 or 100%, agree that such tests fulfill the objectives of each unit of the textbook. They qualified the effectiveness of the tests in percentage as follows:
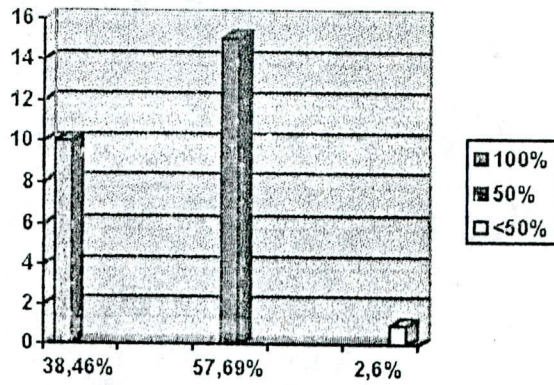
The majority of the interviewed teachers- 15 or 57,69%- think that the tests from the textbook "Our World Through English" fulfill the objectives of each unit at 50% rate. Ten teachers, corresponding to 38,46% of the total population, think that the tests do this task at 100% rate. And only one interviewed teacher, or 2,6%, thinks that the rate of effectiveness of the tests is below 50%.

3. Do you think the items are rather repetitive? Yes? No?
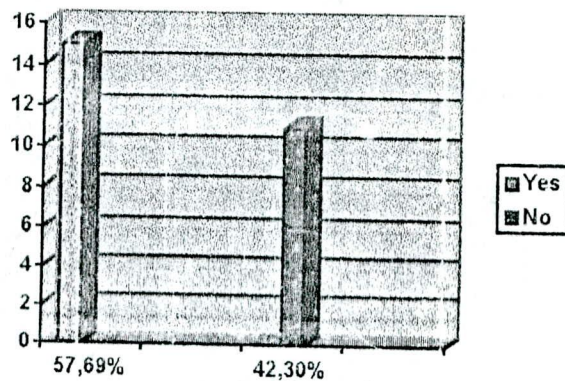
Fifteen interviewed teachers corresponding to 57,69% of the total population, consider the items used in the tests of the textbook "Our World Through English" repetitive. Eleven teachers, or 42,30%, do not think so.

4. *Do you agree that the topics used in the textbook "Our World Through English" are purely Ecuadorian? Yes? No? Why?*
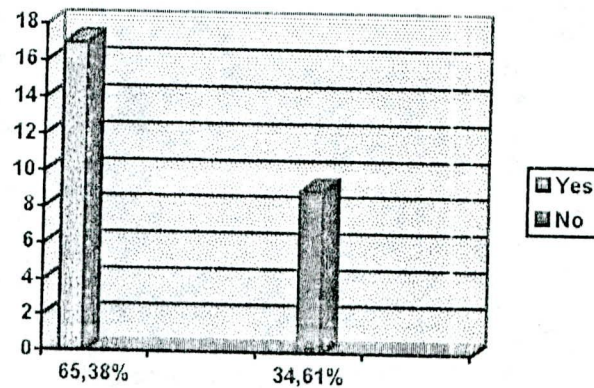
The majority of interviewed teachers, that is, 17 or 65,38% of the total population, do agree that the topics used in the textbook "Our World Through English" are purely Ecuadorian. They suggest the following reasons for their opinion:

- Because we should know better our own country, first of all;

- Because it is more interesting to learn any foreign language using the already known topics;

- Because it is easier for the student as he is already acquainted with the topics in his mother tongue;

- Because learning English using topics of Ecuadorian culture and traditions wakes up students' interest;

- Because it is easier for students to give and share the information they are acquainted with.

Nine teachers corresponding to 34,61% of the total population under consideration, do not agree the topics of the textbook are purely Ecuadorian. Their reasons are:

- Because we should develop students' general culture making them able to speak about any topic;

- Because we should teach the students to have a wide criterion about various topics and not only Ecuadorian ones, which make the students rather ethnocentric.

Some teachers think that while teaching and learning any foreign language, the way of doing this is more important than the employed topics themselves.

5. Do you agree that such tests wake up student's creativeness, imagination and interest? Yes? No?
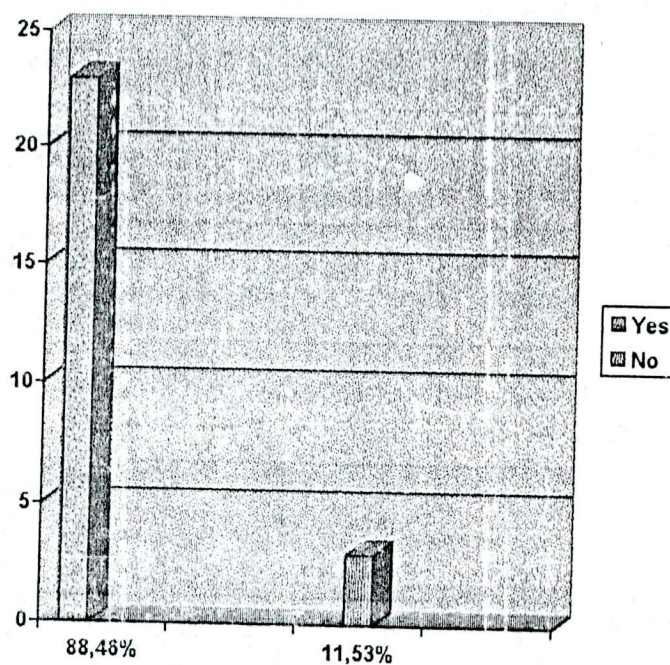
As it can be seen, almost all the teachers- 23 or 88,46% of the total population under consideration- do agree that the tests suggested in the textbook "Our World Through English" wake up student's creativeness, imagination and interest. Three interviewed teachers corresponding to 11,53%, do not think so.

6. What would you suggest to improve tests' structure, if necessary?

The interviewed teachers showed great interest in this question and suggested the following possible changes:

- To make the items more variable, eliminating so some their repetitiousness and monotony;

- To make the items more practical, real, using more dialogues;

- To use more pictures, diagrams and tables which would help the student to perform the test better;

- To revise the tests extension and the time required for their fulfillment: some of them seem to be quite long;

- To use more topics proper for students of this age; it would be more interesting for them;

For the following editions of the textbook "Our World Through English", these suggestions can be considered and taken into account, in order to make the textbook even better.

VERIFICATION OF

HYPOTHESIS.

Principal Hypothesis.

Adequate and proper tests applied to first year's students of "Oviedo" and "La Salle" high schools in Ibarra help to establish easily the level of knowledge of the language and the development of basic skills.

Verification.

A deep anallsis of the tests suggested by the textbook "Our World Through English" by CRADLE Project applied to first year's students of "Oviedo" and "La Salle" high schools in Ibarra permited to reveal their adequate structure and properly chosen vocabulary, which make them really functional and helpful in establishing the students' knowledge in listening comprehension, reading, speaking, writing and grammar.

Conclusion.

The tests from the textbook "Our World Through English" are ones of the most appropriate tests available for the high schools students as they fulfill the objectives of every unit of the textbook and permit to establish the level of students' knowledge.

Secondary Hypothesis.

1. Tests used by first year English teachers are not traditional.

Verification.

During the investigation we could prove that the tests suggested by the textbook "Our World Through English" used by the first year English teachers of "Oviedo" and "La Salle" high schools include a great variety of items the majority of which are not at all traditional.

Conclusion.

The CRADLE Project's textbook "Our World Through English" contains tests developed using new techniques of English language teaching and learning.

2. Teachers establish objectives in their plans, and when teaching, they apply them with the help of the tests.

Verification.

As it has been proved, every test corresponding to each unit, fulfills the objectives stated by the unit, making so the teacher's labor easier and permitting him to perform the teaching process more successfully.

Conclusion.

The CRADLE Project's textbook "Our World Through English" offers a complete test after each unit that helps to estimate student's improvement in the process of English language learning and to check the fulfillment of the objectives stated by the English teacher.

3. Tests are correctly made.

Verification.

After all the items contained in the tests have been analyzed, we could prove that the tests are correctly made as they include the most important aspects of language learning: Listening Comprehension, Reading, Speaking, Writing and Grammar.

Conclusion.

The textbook's tests' structure is well-organized and includes the most important parameters indispensable for successful teaching-learning process.

4. The items are clear and can be easily understood by the students.

Verification.

The items contained in the tests of the textbook "Our World Through English" are clear because every item suggests an example of task's performance, making so easier its fulfillment for a student.

Conclusion.

The items used in the tests of the textbook "Our World Through English" are clearly structured, containing each of them an example of how the task should be carried out.

5. Instructions are clear and so produce self-confidence in the students of English.

Verification.

Each item contains an instruction that indicates what the student should do and the way he should act. The instructions are not long and use simple words, known by the students. The way of explanation is simple and adequate for the students of given age. All this makes the instructions clear and easy for the student making him feeling self-confidence about his knowledge of material.

Conclusion.

The instructions preceding every item of the tests suggested by the textbook "our World through English" are clear due to their vocabulary and extension.

CONCLUSIONS.

After the analysis of the different kinds of tests and their application in the teaching-learning process of EFL in the first years of "Oviedo" and "La Salle" high schools from Ibarra has been carried out, we can conclude the following:

- The textbook "Our World Through English" is one of the most successful textbooks available on Ecuadorian market.

- Every test corresponds to one unit and fulfills the objectives stated by each unit.

- The tests' structure is well-organized.

- Every test includes the most important aspects of teaching-learning process, such as Listening Comprehension, Reading, Writing, Speaking and Grammar.

- The instructions for every item are clear and can be easily understood by the students.

- The items are modern and use a great variety of techniques.

- A wide use of pictures, diagrams and tables makes the tests easy and interesting for the students.

- The adequate structure of the tests permits the teacher to evaluate the student's knowledge correctly.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

Considering the conclusions made during the investigation, we permit ourselves to recommend the following:

- To use the textbook "Our World Through English" by CRADLE Project in Ecuadorian high schools.

- To capacitate the English teachers in the textbook's correct usage.

- To revise the texts and correct some orthographic, linguistic and grammar mistakes.

- To include non-Ecuadorian topics in the textbook in order to widen the students' general culture.

- To use tests' structures to develop other tests that can be applied in EFL teaching-learning process.

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ANNEXES.

UNIVERSIDAD TECNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA

(MODALIDAD ABIERTA)

INQUIRY CARRIED OUT WITH THE AUTHORITIES AND THE TEACHERS OF "OVIEDO"

AND "LA SALLE" HIGH SCHOOLS.

1. What do you think about the structure of the tests from the textbook "OUR WORLD THROUGH ENGLISH" used in the first courses? Is it excellent, good or regular?

EXCELLENT _____   GOOD _____   REGULAR _____

2. Do you agree that such tests fulfill the objectives of each unit? Yes? No? How would you estimate tests' effectiveness?

YES _____   NO _____

_____

_____

_____

3. Do you think the items are rather repetitive? Yes? No?

YES _____   NO _____

4. Do you agree that the topics used in the textbook "OUR WORLD THROUGH ENGLISH" are purely Ecuadorian? Yes? No? Why?

YES _____   NO _____

_____

_____

_____

5. Do you agree that such tests wake up students' creativeness, imagination and interest? Yes? No?

YES _____   NO _____

6. What would you suggest to improve tests' structure, if necessary?

_____

_____

Term one: a

your name_____ your class____ your school _____

1. Listening
Listen to description.; of three people. Write notes in this table. Use the
words in the box. There are some examples to help you. (10 marks)

Guayaquil/Marlene Lopez/a teacher/Salinas/a student

their names	*their towns / cities*	*their jobs*
1. Gerardo Fuentes	Salcedo	a doctor
3. Miguel García		

2. Reading
Read about Patricio and Helena. Tick (√) the correct information. There is
an example to help you. (10 marks)

Patricio and Helena
Patricio gets up at six thirty. He studies in the Benjamín Carrion school. He goes to his school in a bus. He starts his classes at seven o'clock. Helena gets up at six fifteen. She studies in the Rafael Larrea school. She walks to her school. She start her classes at seven thirty.

	Patricio	Helena
1. studies in the Rafael Larrea School	☐	√
2. gets up at 6:15	☐	☐
3. studies in the Benjamín Carrión School	☐	☐
4. gets up at 6:30	☐	☐
5. walks to her school	☐	☐
6. goes to his school in a bus	☐	☐

3. Speaking
Do the task (s) that your teacher gives you. (10 marks)

4. Writing
Look at the pictures and the notes. Write about, Teresa
and Xavier. There is an example to help you. (10 marks)

their names	*their towns / cities*	*their jobs*	*their places of wo.k*
Rosario	Pelileo	a hairdresser	a beauty salon
Teresa	Tulcán	a housewife	her house
Xavier	Azoguez	an electrician	a factory

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Rosario lives in Pelileo. She is a hairdresser. She works in a beauty salon.

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. Grammar

Look at the pictures. Order the words. Write the instructions under each pictures. Look at the example. (5 marks)
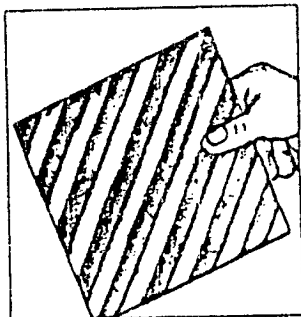
coloured paper/get/some
Get some coloured paper.
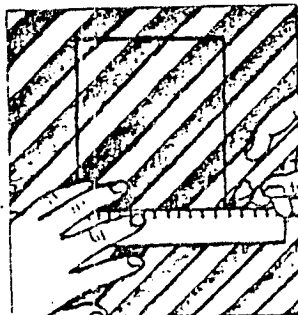
square/a/draw
_____
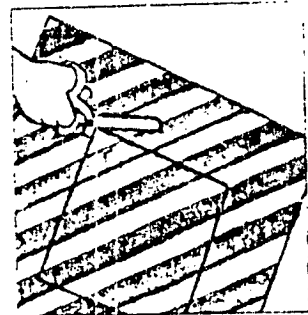
paper/cut/the
_____
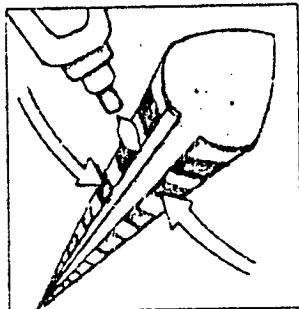
the/paper/stick
_____
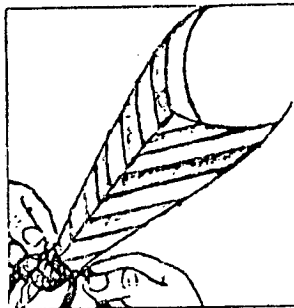
tie/end/the
_____
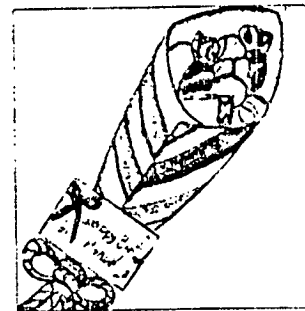
sweets/some/put in
_____

6. Vocabulary

Complete the addition calculations. Use the words in the box. There is an example to help you. (5 marks)

1. eleven and four = fifteen
2. ten and twenty = _____
3. ten and eighteen = _____
4. thirty and seven = _____
5. forty and eleven = _____
6. twenty and forty-five = _____

Term one: b

1. Listening

Listen to descriptions of two students. Write notes in this table. Use the
words in the box. There are some examples to help you. (10 marks)

14/Hector Andrade/ Saquisilí/Jacinto Guerra/12

their names	ages	their towns / cities	their fathers' names
1. Luis Andrade		Manta	
2. Gloria Guerra			

2. Reading

Read the instructions. Identify the pictures. Underline the correct
instruction. Look at the example. (10 marks)
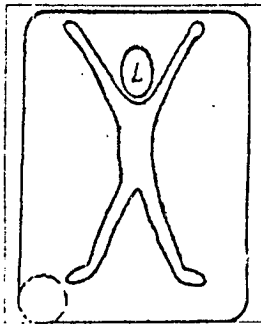
Touch your head.
Put your hands up.
Touch your feet.
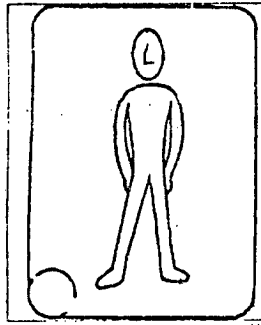
Put your hands down
Put your feet apart.
Put your hands up.
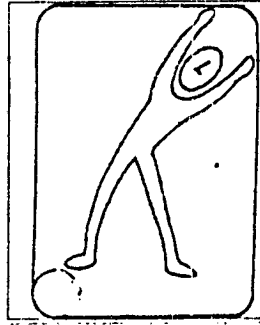
Put your hands up.
Touch your head.
Bend to the left.
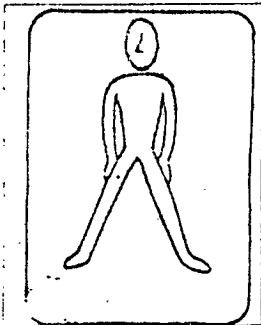
Put your feet apart.
Stand straight.
Bend to the right.

Touch your legs.
Bend to the right
Put your arms down
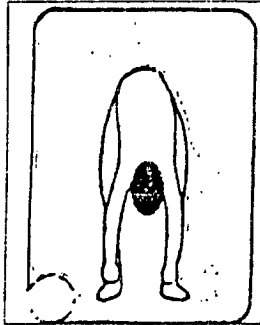
Touch your feet.
Put your feet apart.
Touch your head.

3. Speaking

Do the task (s) that your teacher gives you. (10 marks)

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Term one: b

4. Writing
Complete the spaces with your information. Write about yourself. (10 marks)

your name: _____

your age: _____

your city / town: _____

the time you get up:_____

your school _____

your transport to school _____

I am..._____

_____

_____

5. Grammar
*Look at the picture. Complete the text. Use these words: **near** or **on**.*
There is an example to help you. (5 marks)
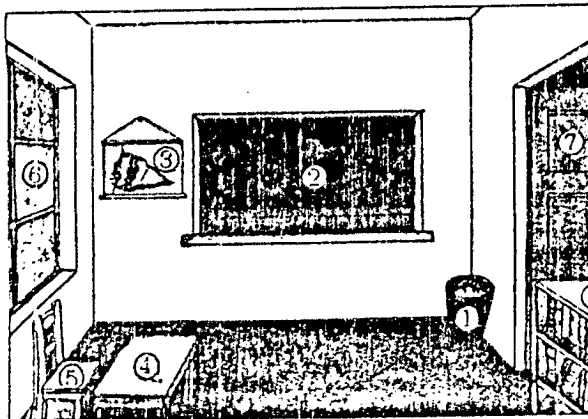
This is a picture of Ruth's classroom. There is a board. It is__on__ a wall. There is also a map of Ecuador. It is _____ the board. There is a table. It is _____ a window. There is a chair. It is also _____ the window. The window is big. There is a bin. It is _____ the table. There is also a a cupboard. It is _____ a door.

6. Vocabulary
Name these objects. There is an example to help you. (5 marks)

the key
( ) a bin
(2) a table
( ) some scissors
( ) a clock
( ) a door
( ) a rubber
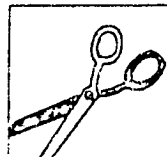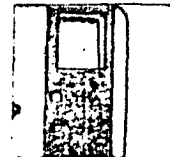
First term test your name_____ your class____

1. Listening
Listen to this description. Complete the information about José Pérez.
There is an example to help you. (10 marks).

his name: <u>José Pérez</u>
his age: _____
his city/town: _____

his family (the number): _____
his brothers (the number): _____
his sisters (the number): _____

2. Reading
Look at the pictures. Read the instructions How to prevent cholera. *Match*
them. There is an example to help you. (10 marks)
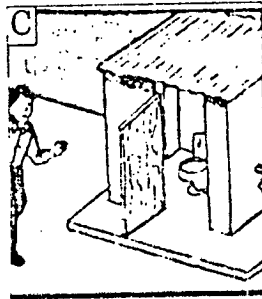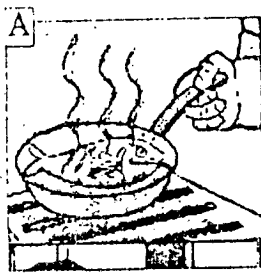
How to prevent cholera

( ) Boil water before you drink it.

( ) Cook seafood.

(C) Use a toilet or a latrine.
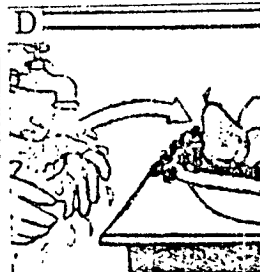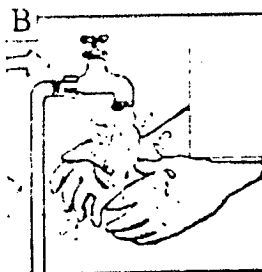
( ) Wash and peel fruit before you eat it.

( ) Wash your hands before you eat.

( ) Put your rubbish in a bin.

3. Speaking
Do the task (s) that your teacher gives you. (10 marks)

4. Writing
Read the information in the table about Lourdes and Martha. Write about
Martha Varela. There is an example to help you. (10 marks)
For example: Lourdes Varela is from the province of Los Ríos
She lives in Valencia. Her father is a farmer. He grows rice and coffee.

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Term two: a

the people	their provinces	their towns/cities	their fathers' jobs	their fathers' activity
Lourdes Varela	Los Ríos	Valencia	a farmer	grows rice and coffee
Martha Larco	El Oro	Jambelí	a businessman	works in his hotel

5. Grammar

Read about these towns and cities. Complete the descriptions with is, a, it, in, are, the. *There is an example to help you. (5 marks).*

Sangolquí is a town. It is big. Pifo is also a town. _____ is small.
Sangolquí and Pifo _are_ in _____ province of Pichincha. They are agricultural.

Manta is _____ port. It is in the province of Manabí.
Esmeraldas _____ also a port. It is _____ the province of Esmeraldas.
Manta and Esmeraldas are big. They are also commercial.

6. Vocabulary

Look at the pictures. Label them. Use these words: a secretary, a musician, a housewife, a farmer, a builder, an engineer. There is an example to help you. (5 marks)

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Term two: b

1. Listening

Listen to this description of towns in the Coast Region. Complete the information in the table. There is an example to help you. (10 marks)

the towns/cities	their sizes	their locations	opinions
San Vicente		Manabí	
Machala	big		commercial
Quevedo			agricultural

2. Reading

Read Two students. *Make notes in the table about them. There are examples to help you. (10 marks).*

their names	their ages	their hair	their eyes	their sizes
Cecilia Castillo		blond		
Eduardo Fierro	El Oro			tall

Two students

This is Cecilia Castillo. She is short. She is fifteen. Her eyes are brown. Her hair is blond. She likes listening to music.

This is Eduardo Fierro. He is tall. He is fourteen. His eyes are black. His hair is also black. He likes reading.

3. Speaking

Do the task (s) that your teacher gives you. (10 marks)

4. Writing

Read the notes below. Write a description of Mery Ruiz and Alfonso Ruiz.. For example: This is Andrea Zurita. She is 23. She is tall. Her hair is black. Her eyes are brown. She is a secretary. *(10 marks)*

her name Andrea Zurita	her name: Mery Ruiz	his name:Alfonso Tello
her age: 23	her age: 25	his age: 38
her size: tall	her size: short	his size: tall
her hair: black	her hair: blond	his hair: brown
her eyes:brown	her eyes: green	his eyes: black
her job: a secretary	her job: a journalist	his job: a teacher

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. Grammar

Look at the pictures. Order the instructions to prevent cholera. Write them under each picture. There is an example to help you. (5 marks)

drink/boil/before/water/ you/it Boil water before you drink it.

in a bin/your rubbish/put _____
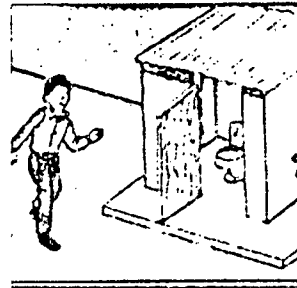
a latrine/or a toilet/use _____
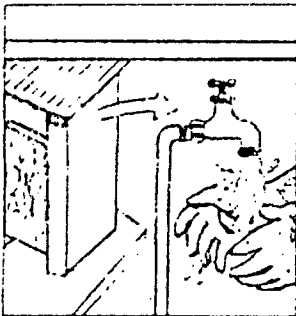
your hands/before you eat/wash _____
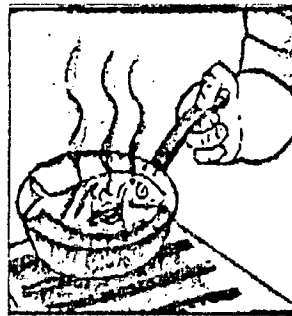
seafood/cook _____
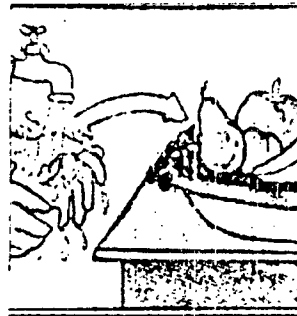
wash and peel/your fruit/before you eat it _____

6. Vocabulary

Label these pictures of food. Use these words. white, brown, white, green, yellow, red. There is an example to help you. There is an example to help you. (5 marks)
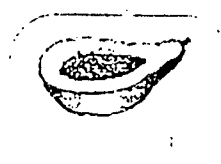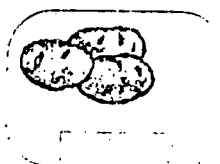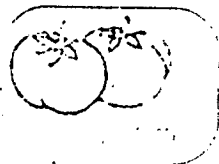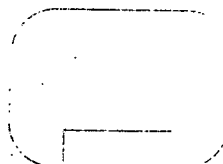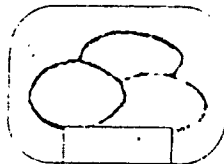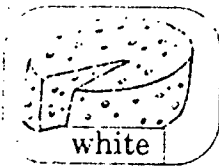
white

Term three: a

1. Listening

Listen to a story about a school trip. Number the pictures to show the order of the story. There is an example to help you. (10 marks).
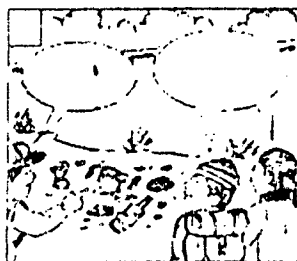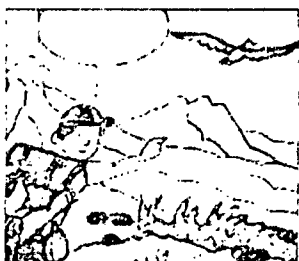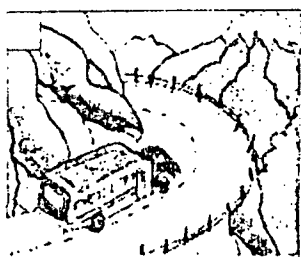
2. Reading

Read the instructions to make a kite. Match them with the pictures. There is an example to help you. (10 marks)

(3)Make a bow.
( )Paste the bow in the square.
( )Cut a square of paper.
( )Paste a stick in the square.
( )Paste wings and a tail on the kite.
( )Tie on some string.

3 Speaking

Do the task (s) that your teacher gives you. (10 marks)

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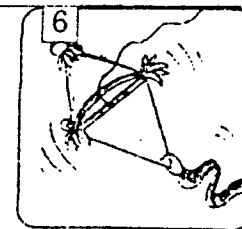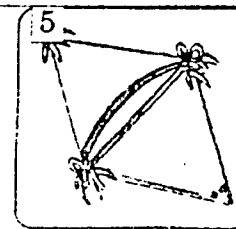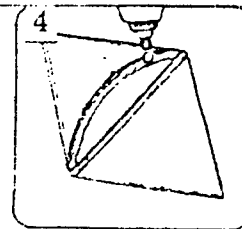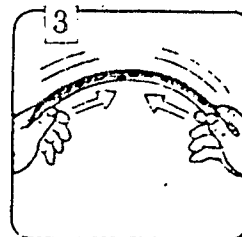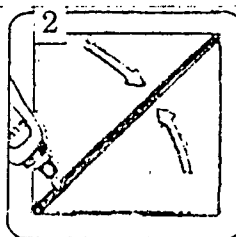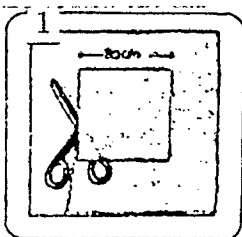
Term three: a

4. Writing
Read the information in the table. Write about Sonia and Marco, and their families. There is an example to help you. (10 marks)

the people	their provinces	their towns / cities	the fathers' job	the fathers' activity
Gustavo Torres	Morona Santiago	Gualaquiza	a farmer	grows manioc
Sonia Quiroz	Zamora Chinchipe	Zamora	an ecologist	protects Nature
Marco Mera	Manabí	Manta	a fisherman	catches tuna fish

Gustavo Torres and his family are from Morona Santiago. They live in
Gualaquiza. Gustavo's father is a·farmer. He grows manioc.

_____

_____

_____

5. Grammar
1. Read Fernando's picnic. Complete the spaces. Use these words:
his / in / to / a / they / in. There is an example to help you. (5 marks)

Fernando's picnic.
Fernando and his family live in Ibarra. On Friday evening Fernando talked
with _____ family about _____ trip. They organized a trip _____ San Pablo.
_____ travelled on Sunday morning. Fernando's mother and her husband
walked _____ the town. Fernando visited his friends.

6. Vocabulary
Look at the pictures. Complete the instructions. Use these verbs: hands,
boil, wash, stand, cook, touch. *There is an example to help you.(5 marks)*
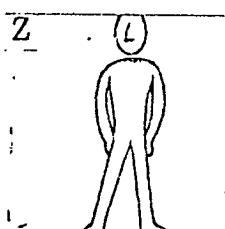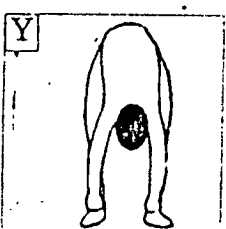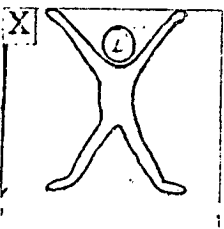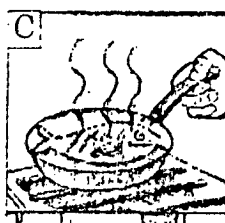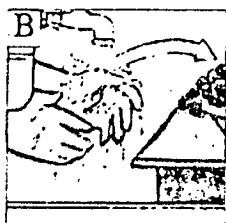
A. Boil water before
you drink it.
B. _____ your hands
before you eat.
C. _____ seafood.

X. Put your _____
up.
Y. _____ your feet.
Z. _____ straight.

Term three: b

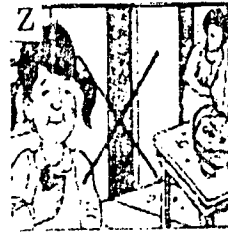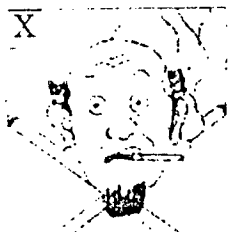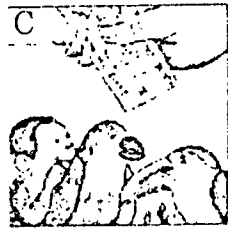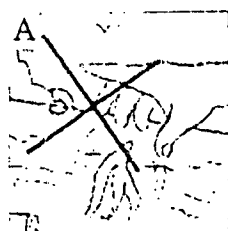your name_____ your class ____ your school _____

1. Listening

Listen to a story about a school trip. Number the pictures to show the order of the story.

2. Reading

Read the instructions. Match them with the pictures. (10 marks)

( ) Do not buy exotic animals.
( ) Do not eat food from the street.
( ) Do not cut down trees.

( ) Do not smoke.
(A) Do not throw rubbish anywhere.
( ) Do not remove plants.

3 Speaking

Do the task(s) that your teacher gives you. (10 marks)

4. Writing

Look at the pictures. Read the information in the table. Write about the places. There is an example to help you. (10 marks)

Term three:

4. Writing

Look at the pictures. Read the information in the table. Write about the places. There is an example to help you. (10 marks)

towns / cities	their location	their sizes	the writer's
Duran: a city	near Guayaquil	big	· commercial
Pasaje: a town	in El Oro	small	agricultural
Atacames: a town	in Esmeraldas	small	beautiful
Manta: a city	near Jipijapa	small	interesting

Duran is a city. It is near Guayaquil. It is big. It is commercial.

_____

_____

_____

5. Grammar

Complete this description of the Galapagos Islands. Use these words: the/they/there/in/is/are. There is an example to help you. (5 marks)

The Galapagos Islands.
The Galapagos Islands <u>are</u> in the Pacific Ocean. _____ are on the Equator. The capital of the islands _____ San Cristobal. _____ islands are volcanic in origin. _____ are a lot of volcanoes on the islands. The plants and the animals are unique. There is a great variety of classes of animals. _____ 1979 UNESCO declared the islands a Natural Patrimony.

6. Vocabulary

Complete this narrative about a trip to Atacames. Use these phrases: some fishermen, a bus, some fishes, the evening, football, their rubbish. *There is an example to help you.* (5 marks)

The Rivera family organized a trip to Atacames. They travelled in _____. In Atacames Rosita and Rafael played <u>football</u> on the beach. They talked to _____. They helped them in their canoe. Then they cooked _____. They picked up _____ before they started their journey to Santo Domingo. They returned to Santo Domingo in _____.