EVALUATION OF MULTIPLE-CHOICE AND FREE-RESPONSE FORMATS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TESTS : ARE THEY GENDER-BIASED?

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	i
LIST OF TABLES	ii
LIST OF APPENDICES	iv
ABSTRACT	vii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Statement of the Problem	1
1.2. Purpose of the Study	1
1.3. Importance of the Study	2
1.4. Limitations of the Study	2
1.5. Delimitation of the Study	2
1.6. Definitions of Key Terms Used	2
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	4
2.1. 'Sex' and 'Gender' : An overview	4
2.2. Gender vis - à - vis Verbal Ability	5
2.3. Gender vis - à- vis Modes of Assessment	6
CHAPTER THREE: THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	11
3.1. Design of the Research	11
3.2. Subjects of the Study	11

3.2.1. One the Selection of Colleges 11
3.2.2. On the Selection of Subjects 11
3.3. Data Collection and Research Procedures 12
3.3.1. Instruments 12
3.3.1.1. Tests 12
3.3.1.2. Questionnaires 12
3.4. Materials 13
3.5. Procedures 13
3.6. Statistical Information 13

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA AND ANALYSIS 14

4.1. Data Collected 14
4.2. Results of the Questionnaires 17
4.2.1. Results of the Male Students' Responses 18
4.2.2. Results of the Female Students' Responses 21
4.2.3. Comparative Analysis of Male and Female Students' Responses Towards the Two Modes of Assessment 25
4.3. Discussion 30

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS 32

5.1. Summary 32
5.2. Conclusion 34
5.3. Recommendations 34

BIBLIOGRAPHY 36

APPENDICES 39

LIST OF TABLES

Page

TABLE 1: Number and Percentage of the Students' Sample from the Two Colleges 11

TABLE 2: Summary of the Descriptive Statistics of Modes of Assessment Vis-à-vis Gender Differences..... 14

TABLE 3: A t-test Computed for the Mean Differences Between Male and Female Testees on the Multiple-choice Mode of Assessment 15

TABLE 4: A t-test Computed for the Mean Differences Between Male and Female Testees on the Free-response Mode of Assessment..... 15

TABLE 5: A t-test Computed for the Mean Score Differences Within the Male Testees on the Multiple-choice and the Free- response Modes of Assessment..... 16

TABLE 6: A t-test Computed for the Mean Differences Within the Female Testees on the Multiple-Modes of Assessment..... 16

TABLE 7: (a). Male Students' Responses to Their AttitudesTowards the Multiple-choice Mode of Assessment..... 18

TABLE 7: (b). Male students' Responses to their Attitudes Towards the Multiple-choice Mode of Assessment..... 19

Page

TABLE 8: (a) Female Students' Responses to Their Attitudes Towards the Multiple-choice Mode of Assessment 22

TABLE 8: (b). Female Students' Responses to Their Attitudes Towards the Free-response Mode of Assessment 23

TABLE 9(a): Responses of Male and Female Students to Their Attitudes Towards the Multiple-choice Mode of Assessment 26

TABLE 9(b): Responses of Male and Female Students to Their Attitudes Towards the Free-response Mode of Assessment 28

LIST OF APPENDICES

	Page
APPENDIX A : Test Specification for the Test.....	38
APPENDIX B (i) : Multiple - choice Test.....	39
APPENDIX B (ii) : Free - response Test	48
APPENDIX C (I) : Answer Key for the Multiple - choice Test.....	54
APPENDIX C (ii) : Answer Key for the Free-response Test	55
APPENDIX D : Male and Female Students' Raw Scores on the Multiple-choice and the Free-response Modes of Assessment	56
APPENDIX E : A Questionnaire to Be Completed by the Students	58
APPENDIX F : t - tests for Paired Samples	60

ABSTRACT

The choice as to which mode (s) of assessment to employ in constructing tests and/or examinations can affect the relative performance of male and female candidates. It has been said by scholars that multiple-choice format favours male candidates while free-response format is to the advantage of female candidates.

The present study was conducted on the basis of the data gathered from 114 (57 male and 57 female) candidates who were made to take multiple-choice and free-response versions of the same test.

The result of the t-tests conducted to assess whether the difference between the performances of the male and female candidates on the two versions of the test was statistically significant showed that female testees, compared with their male counterparts, performed better on the free-response test than they did on the multiple-choice mode of assessment, whereas the opposite is true for the male candidates.

Based on the findings, the necessary conclusions were drawn and recommendations made.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the following items: statement of the problem, purpose of the study, importance of the study, limitations, delimitation of the study and definitions of key words used.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Gender and language testing have become the interests of a number of scholars since recent years. It goes without saying that since language learning and testing are two faces of the same coin, learners' performance might be affected owing to certain factors such as gender-biased tests. This means that gender-biased tests, in terms of modes of assessment, are likely to favour either male or female testees.

From what has been stated, it seems that the gap that exists between male and female students may increase if tests and/or examinations are designed in merely one type of format since, according to a study, "... the m/c format interacted with gender to the effect that girls were put at a disadvantage" (Hellekant, 1994 : 349).

The present study thus seeks to answer the questions below.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

So far, studies concerning gender differences in relation to the testing of English as a foreign language are very limited in the Ethiopian educational set-up. The few studies conducted show only gender segregation which has resulted in girls' low educational opportunity all the way from elementary level through higher institutions of learning due to a negatively stereotyped female character representation in contents which, as a result, affected female learners' performance and achievement. Thus, the main purpose of the present study is an attempt to relate the view of 'sex' discriminating aspects to the modes of assessment employed in teacher-made English language tests and/or examinations in the Ethiopian educational context.

- Which format is more to the advantage of male test candidates and which one is more to the advantage of female test candidates? Is it multiple-choice or free-response?
- Which format favours both male and female candidates?

1.3. Importance of the Study

Given that gender-biased tests and/or examinations are to the advantage of either male or female candidates, the present study is hoped to be of much help since its findings could help teachers realise the use of and thus employ varied modes of assessment in fairly measuring candidates' language proficiency irrespective of gender differences. Furthermore, the study is hoped to serve as a springboard for those interested to conduct further studies or investigations on a related topic.

1.4. Limitations of the study

The present study focused only on a small and restricted sample of students who were enrolled in two government colleges in Addis Ababa during the 1999/2000 academic year. This was due to time and financial constraints.

1.5. Delimitation of the Study

This particular study was based on a sample of male and female students at the 1st year level of two colleges in Addis Ababa. College level students were the focus of the study as it is at this level that students are exposed to the two (that is, multiple-choice and free-response) formats of tests which are central to the present study.

1.6. Definitions of Key Terms Used

The meanings of some of the words are presented hereunder as used in the study. These definitions are provided by Gronlund (1976:146), Nitko (1983:141-142) and Harrison (1989:41-42).

Format - is the way in which the test material is organised in a form of multiple-choice, true/false, matching, interview and so on.

Specification - is a description of a test (or a series of tests) which states as exactly as possible what is required for it to fulfil its purpose.

Free-response Test - an essay type test which requires the testee or examinee to write a somewhat lengthy response to a question or problem. The classification of free-response test is based on the amount of freedom of response it allows a testee which include:

a - restricted response which restricts or limits both the substantive content and the form of the written response and

b - extended response test which permits the student to make fuller use of written verbal reasoning and writing skill.

The free-response test designed for this study thus, was on a restricted response where testees were required to respond to the tasks with few words or short phrases.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter attempts to review the literature of particular importance to the present study.

2.1. 'Sex' vis-a' - vis 'Gender': An Overview

The nature of males and females has been a debatable issue among various psychologists. However, no theory has given enough explanation about their social development. Many of the theoreticians seem to agree largely on physical and psychological similarities of men and women rather than on their differences. More importantly, it is the differences which, if any, attract most people's attention(Fontana, 1995).

Many, scholars have attempted to differentiate between 'sex' and 'gender' almost with similar views. Kessler and Mckenna (1978), cited in Archer and Lloyd (1995:17), for example, point out that men and women are distinguished as two genders on the basis of those criteria societies vested upon them while the word 'sex' is understood by the criteria of biological distinction. According to Archer and Lloyd, it is possible to say that ''when attribution is derived from social criteria, whatever differences are subsequently found between men and women are called gender differences. In fact, biological differences would be expected to contribute to gender differences'' (Archer and Lloyd, 2995:17).

Similarly, Sunderland (1992) regards 'gender' as a cultural concept which has an influence on the characteristics of each of the sexes. She further argues that whether a person is biologically female or male, it refers to 'sex'. She also defines the human 'gender' as a "culturally-shaped group of attributes and behaviour given to the female or to the male" (Sunderland, 1992:81).

Almaz Eshete also makes the distinction between 'sex' and 'gender' in the following way:

> *Gender is an analytical term to help to distinguish between the biological dimension (sex) and the cultural one (gender). Traditionally, society assumes that personality, behaviour or abilities are the result of differential socialization.... the socially learned patterns of behaviour that differentiate men from women in a given society are referred to as one's gender role. Gender is then a learned behaviour, usually related to one's sex; but sex status does not necessarily determine gender role.*

It is apparent that in most human societies, females are ill-treated in a number of ways. Attitudes toward them is derogatory. As Crystal (1987) and Fontana (1995) point out, fostering unfair sexual discrimination is downgrading the role of women in a society.

Some other studies on gender indenties also have shown that social (rather than biological) factors come into play in defining maleness and femaleness. According to evidence from cross-cultural research, various characteristics attributed to each gender differ when cultural influences themselves differ. These findings reveal the possibilities of some differences such as personality, ability, response tendencies, and so on which are genetically fixed differences between the sexes (Fontana, 1995).

On the whole, however, it seems that differences between females and males are debatable and it is difficult to precisely demarcate as to which differences are biological or cultural.

2.2. Gender vis-à-vis Verbal Ability

Many studies show minor and negligible differences in verbal ability between males and females. As a matter of fact, females are better in verbal ability such as reading than males who do better in solving mathematical and spatial problems (Fontana, 1995). However, there is no evidence in the literature to ascribe such differences possibly to environmental factors than to genetic elements. But, common sense has it that girls spend much of their time in the home. Then, it can be argued that the difference that may exist in verbal abilities of males and females is mainly ascribed to some environmental factors (Ibid).

Similarly, Maccoby and Jacklin (1974), cited in Beller and Gafni (1996:363), concluded that, on the average, girls show superior verbal ability and that boys outsmart girls in quantitative and spatial abilities.

These gender differences have also been reported by other scholars. The study conducted by Warrick and Naglieri (1993) on academic and intelligence tests shows gender differences in verbal ability between boys and girls. A substantial body of research by Burnett, 1986; Burnett and Lane, 1979; Deaux, 1984; Feingold, 1988; Fennema, 1985; Halpern, 1986:289; Linn and Petersen, 1985; Maccoby and Jacklin, 1974 cited in Warrick and Naglieri (1993:693) showed that there are differences in the areas of verbal abilities though the existing literature has not provided conclusive findings as regards the extent of gender differences and those reasons for them. Citing the review of related literature from some of the aforesaid researchers, Warrick and Naglieri argue that these scholars have failed to clearly define 'verbal abilities'. They (Warrick and Naglieri, 1993:693) state that:

> *In their review of the related literature Maccoby and Jacklin (1974) concluded that girls typically outperform boys on measures of verbal ability. Although a variety of verbal tasks have been used, including tests of receptive and productive language, Witting Petersen (1979) suggested that these studies are limited by a failure to produce a clear definition of verbal ability.*

2.3 Gender vis-a-vis Test Formats

A lot of studies have been conducted by a number of researchers to ascertain whether there are really gender differences between males' and females' academic achievements due to the type of test format employed. So far, there is a general consensus that a test may be invalid or unreliable in terms of the nature of the test items that male students tend to do better on multiple- choice tests than girls, but worse on free-response or essay type questions.

Those studies which focused particularly on tests and/or examinations in terms of gender show the tendency of a certain task to favour either boys or girls. It has been found from the studies that test formats themselves are likely to be potential sources of test biases. For example, the

tend to better on multiple- choice tests than girls, but worse on free-response or essay type questions.

Those studies which focused particularly on tests and/or examinations in terms of gender show the tendency of a certain task to favour either boys or girls. It has been found from the studies that test formats themselves are likely to be potential sources of test biases. For example, the literature on language testing indicates the very fact that boys do better on multiple-choice questions and that girls do better on free-response or essay-type subject.

Among the studies attesting to this phenomenon are Ferguson's (1977) on GCE O-level Biology Examination, Harding's (1979) on Nuffield and Conventional Chemistry, Physics and Biology GCE examinations, Murphy's (1980) on O-level Geography Examination, Murphy's (1982) 16 GCE examinations consisting of objective tests as well as other methods of assessment, Wood's (1980) on O-level English language examinations pass rates, and Hellekant's (1994) on National English Test for Swedish Upper Secondary School Students.

Despite the fact that these and other similar studies have tried to reveal that the multiple-choice format favours boys whereas the free-response format favours girls, these studies fail to answer the question why such tendencies occur. Hellekant (1994:351) is of the opinion that:

> *The suspicion that there is a fairly strong interaction between the multiple-choice method and certain personality traits may be less absurd than some testers think. A possible explanation for our results is, in fact, that the pupils with some personality traits are fovoured by the multiple-choice format and that these traits are more common in boys than in girls; what exactly these traits are like, we can only guess at.*

Bannister, in Blackmore and Kenway, (eds.) (1993), quotes Arzi (1986) who attributes girls' poor performance on multiple-choice tests in certain subjects to female personal

trait. Accordingly, Bannister (1993:110) states:

> *There is a tendency in some of the studies which look to the science or math's content of multiple-choice tests as the cite of gender differences in performance to draw on deficit explanations in accounting girls' inferior performance on such tests in science as a product of girls' lack of confidence which she conceived of as a learned sex-role behavior and, therefore, a female personal trait.*

Bannister also quotes Adams (1984) who is of the opinion that girls' lack of confidence pertaining to their success in the Australian Scholastic Aptitude Test is a factor that contributes to boys' superior performance.

According to Bannister (1993:103), those studies conducted on the use of different assessments within the same subject or similar areas provide the clues to gender differences that may exist between male and female testees. In this connection, Bannister cites a lot of studies but gives more emphasis to Harding's (1986) finding that more boys opted for factual description questions which approximate the nature of items in multiple-choice test, and more girls opted for over-arching explanatory questions which multiple-choice items cannot accommodate.

Although it is said that male students are likely to do better on multiple-choice tests than the female students, this does not necessarily mean that this always happens. As Sunderland (1995) says, achievement or proficiency tests are likely to favour either male or female candidates; not all male or all female candidates; but a majority. So, although test biases are likely, this is not necessarily always a case. For this reason, Sunderland says that "...that a test may be biased is a possibility that is not always considered as fully as it could be'' (Sunderland, 1995:25).

Wood (1978) carried out a study on the London Board pass rates in O-Level English language. The number of students varied from 20,462 in 1971 to 25,096 in 1977. The

analysis showed that in 1971 the pass rate for girls was 22.2% higher than the figure for boys. Later, the difference lowered to 10.0 % in 1977 with the biggest decline in 1972, according to him, was the introduction of multiple-choice questions into the examination. The conclusion reached by Wood is that the multiple-choice format favours boys and disadvantages girls (Wood, 1978:157).

Bolger and Kellaghan (1990) in Hellekant (1994:350) studied 15 year-old boys' and girls' performance in Irish school on multiple-choice and free-response tests in mathematics, Irish and English. From their study, the main conclusion was that males did significantly better than females on the multiple-choice format as opposed to their performance on the free-response items.

A similar research by Blackmore and Kenway (1993: 102), has also shown that there may exist results of language tests which are affected by their bias against either males or females. They concluded that multiple-choice questions benefit the boys. Moreover, Balackmore and Kenway (1993) support the view that gender differences can be attributed to the differences in the type of formats employed. They argue that:

> *There are evidences that when the same course is assessed by both multiple-choice tests and essays or other open-ended question forms, males do better on the multiple-choice form than they do on the other, whereas females tend to do better on the open-ended forms than they do on the multiple-choice form (p. 102).*

Another example which shows the possibility of gender bias is the finding by Hellekant (1994:351) which states that:

> *When Swedish boys and girls did an English test where the tasks were similar but when one part was of the m/c and one of the free-response format, the girls invariably did a little better than the boys on the free-response part, while the boys did considerably better than the girls on the m/c part. It is difficult to find another reason for this result than the testing method.*

Stumpf and Stanley (1996) also carried out research on 14 Main College Board high school Achievement tests administered from 1982 through 1985. They found that one variable that moderates gender-related score differences on the examinations is the format of the tests (multiple-choice versus open-ended) [Stumpf and Stanley,1996: 335].

In a similar study by Stumpf and Stanley (1996) it was found that in history courses, males and females got comparable grades and had almost equal scores on the Advanced Placement essays. The multiple-choice scores of male candidates were almost half a standard deviation higher than the female candidate's scores. The advantage that female students might have on open-ended tasks is attributed mainly to those tasks for which language is significant.

From the above discussion, it can be argued that examinations which employ merely one type format may affect the scores of either of the sex groups (Stewart, 1994). Nevertheless, studies related to gender differences in testing of English as a foreign language are almost non-existent in the Ethiopian educational setting. Even the very few studies conducted so far fail to explain why and how gender differences could have an impact upon students' language learning. Moreover, there is no trace of information concerning the effects of gender differences in terms of formats employed in English language tests or examinations in the Ethiopian context.

The present study is thus an attempt to fill the gap: to explore the possible effect of test formats on male and female learners of English in Ethiopian secondary schools.

CHAPTER THREE: THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Design of the Research

In order to conduct this study, a descriptive survey method was designed. The following subjects, instruments as well as techniques and procedures were thus employed for collecting and analysing the data.

3.2. Subjects of the Study

3.2.1. Selection of Colleges

Two colleges were made the target population for this study. These were Kotebe College of Teacher Education and Addis Ababa Commercial College, both under Region 14 Education Bureau. The number and percentage of students sampled are given in TABLE 1 below.

TABLE 1: Number and Percentage of Students Sampled from the Two Colleges

No.	NAME OF THE COLLLEGE	POPULATION SIZE	SAMPLE SIZE		
			f		
			M	F	%
1	Kotebe College of teacher Education	*524	40	17	10.88
2	Addis Ababa Commercial College	*734	17	40	7.77
	TOTAL	1258	57	57	9.06

***SOURCE: The archives of the two colleges.**

3.2.2. Selection of Subjects

From among the two colleges (Kotebe and Commerce), which had 524 and 734 students, respectively, a total of 114 college-level first year students were selected according to purposive sampling method. Having considered the ratio of females to males, the subjects taken for this study were 17 females and 40 males from the Kotebe

College of Teacher Education, and 40 females and 17 males from the Addis Ababa Commercial College.

Finally, the students were asked if they would consent to joining the study for which their responses were positive. They were also assured that the result of the study would by no means affect their course grades.

3.3. Data Collection and Research Procedures

3.3.1. Instruments

The instruments used in the study were two tests of the same content but of different formats (multiple-choice and free-response) and a questionnaire for the subjects.

3.3.1.1. Tests

Prior to preparing the two tests, test specification was designed so that the tests would assess content areas or portions covered in the high school English language textbooks (Grade 9-12). The two tests were judged for face and content validity by testing experts from the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature, as a result of which some modifications were made before the tests were put to actual use.

For possible further modifications and improvements, the tests were also piloted on thirty (15 male and 15 female) first year students who were enrolled at Addis Ababa University during the 1999/2000 academic year.

The necessary changes / modifications were accordingly incorporated in the final versions of the two tests before they were used for the main study.

3.3.1.2. Questionnaire

A questionnaire for both male and female students was designed in two main parts to determine the attitudes of the subjects towards the two test formats. The items in the survey were classified into two groups. The first group of items deals with subjects'

attitudes towards the multiple-choice mode of assessment, and the second group deals with their attitudes regarding the free-response mode of assessment (see APPENDIX E).

3.4. Materials

For the purpose of conducting this particular study, tests with two different formats but of the same content each of which consisted of 65 items were employed. A one-page answer sheet and a one-page answer key were also prepared and made use of in this study [see **APPENDIX B (i)** and **(ii)**; **APPENDIX C (i)** and **(ii)**]. Moreover, a questionnaire was designed for collecting data from subjects [see **APPENDIX E**].

3.5. Procedures

Before administering the tests, the subjects were asked to sit down and feel at ease. They were also requested to give genuine answers and / or responses to the tests. Having been given the necessary, both the male and female groups were then left to do the tests in the receptive colleges at the same time.

After the two tests had been administered, all of the answer sheets were collected. Then, the answer sheets - particularly of the free-response test-were coded by an assistant (who has the same academic qualification and profession with the present researcher) before the work of marking was embarked upon.

3.6. Statistical Information

The scores of the testees on the multiple-choice and the free-response tests were analysed by using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (**SPSS**) [see **APPENDIX F**].

CHAPTER FOUR: THE DATA AND ANALYSIS

4.1. The Data Collected

After preparing the two tests based on Grade 9-12 English language textbooks, the results were collected and organised into the table of raw data for analysis [see APPENDIX D].

TABLE 2: Summary of the Descriptive Statistics of Two Modes of Assessment vis-à-vis Gender Differences.

NUMBER OF OBSER.	SEX	MODE OF ASSESSMENT	MEAN SCORE	MINIMUM SCORE (out of 65)	MAXIMUM SCORE (out of 65)	STANDARD DEVIATION
57	M	Multiple-choice	42.58	22.0	54.0	6.32
		Restricted Free-response	41.50	21.5	57.0	7.68
57	F	Multiple-choice	42.47	25.0	53.0	6.82
		Restricted Free-response	44.34	5.0	59.0	8.60

($p<.05$; $df = 112$)

According to the data in TABLE 2, the multiple-choice test mean score of the male students (42.58) appears to be nearly the same as the female students' mean score (42.47).

On the other hand, the mean score of the female students on the free-response test (44.34) is higher than the mean score of the male ones (41.50).

Furthermore, it can be seen from the table that the female students, compared with their male counterparts, had relatively higher scores (59 out of 65) on the free-response test while the opposite is true for the males on the multiple-choice test (54 out of 65).

By simply looking at the figures in TABLE 2, one might conclude that the female candidates did better on the free-response test than their male counterparts. A test of statistical significance also confirmed the same. (This would be explained hereunder).

TABLE 3: A t-test Computed for the Mean Score Differences Between Male and Female Testees on the Multiple-choice Mode of Assessment.

NO. OF PAIRS	SEX	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
57	M	42.58	6.32
	F	42.47	6.82

(t = -.55, df = 112, p< .05)

According to TABLE 3, the observed t-value (-.55) for the mean difference between the male and female scores at the .05 level of significance was less than the tabulated value of 1.98 for the 112 degrees of freedom and so was insignificant. Thus, it can be said that there was no statistically significant difference between the male and female candidates' performances on the multiple-choice format of the test.

TABLE 4: A t-test Computed for the Mean Score Differences Between Male and Female Testees on the Free-response Mode of Assessment.

NO. OF PAIRS	SEX	MEAN SCORE	STANDARD DEVIATION
57	Male	41.50	7.68
	Female	44.34	8.60

(t = 7.13, df = 112, p<.05)

As can be seen from TABLE 4, the t-value for the mean difference between the performances of the males and females on the free-response test (7.13) was statistically significant at the .05 level of significance, which means that the performance of the female candidates on the free-response format excelled that of the male candidates.

TABLE 5: A t-test Computed for the Mean Score Differences Within the Male Testees on the Multiple-choice and the Free- response Modes of Assessment.

MODE OF ASSESSMENT	MEAN SCORE	STANDARD DEVIATION
Multiple-choice	42.58	6.82
Free-response	41.50	7.68

(t = 4.23, df = 56, p< .05)

TABLE 5 reveals that the mean difference on the two tests is statistically significant at the .05 level of significance. As can also be seen from the above table, the mean score of the male testees on the free-response test is lower than their mean score on the multiple-choice test. The result, thus, reveals that the performance of the male candidates on the multiple-choice test is greater than their performance on the free-response mode of assessment to a statistically significant level.

TABLE 6: A t-test Computed for Mean Score Differences Within the Female Testees on the Multiple-choice and the Fee-response Modes of Assessment.

MODE OF ASSESSMENT	MEAN SCORE	STANDARD DEVIATION
Multiple-choice	42.47	6.82
Free-response	44.34	8.60

(t = -4.46, df = 56, p<.05)

TABLE 6 above shows that the mean difference on the two tests is statistically

significant at the .05 level as the observed t-value of 4.46 is greater than the tabulated value of 2.00 for the same degree of freedom. In fact, the said value is significant even at the .01 level of significance. The result, thus, reveals that the female testees performed better on the free-response mode of assessment than they did on the multiple-choice mode of assessment to a statistically significant level.

4.2. Results of the Questionnaire

As regards their attitudes towards the two modes of assessment, the 114 test - takers who sat for both the multiple - choice and the free-response tests were asked to participate in responding to a questionnaire. However, eighteen of the students (12 males and 6 females) dropped out of this phase. So, the responses of 96 students were collected and organised into the table of raw data for analysis (see TABLE 7 below).

The questionnaire designed had eight five-point Likert items divided into "the Multiple-choice Mode of Assessment" and "the Free-response Mode of Assessment".

4.2.1. Results of the Male Students' Questionnaire

TABLE 7 (a): Male Students' Responses to Their Attitudes Towards the Multiple-choice Mode of Assessment

ITEM No.	STATEMENTS	MULTIPLE - CHOICE													
		STRONGLY AGREE		AGREE		UNDECIDED		DISAGREE		STRONGLY DISAGREE		NO RESPONSE		TOTAL	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	I like the multiple-choice mode of assessment since it is easier for me to get more marks.	9	20.00	20	44.44	6	13.33	7	15.55	3	6.66	-	-	45	100
2	I like the multiple-choice mode of assessment as I am able to guess no matter how difficult the question is.	10	22.22	16	35.55	4	8.88	8	17.77	7	15.55	-	-	45	100
3	I like the multiple-choice mode of assessment since the distracters do not cause any trouble to me for chossing the correct option.	5	11.11	16	35.55	12	26.66	9	20.00	3	6.66	-	-	45	100
4	I do not like the multiple-choice mode of assessment because it does not give me any opportunity to write in my own words, phrases or sentences.	3	6.66	6	13.33	6	13.33	17	37.77	12	26.66	1	2.22	45	100

NOTE:- f = frequency

Total percentage is rounded to the nearest percent.

TABLE 7 (b): Male Students' Responses to Their Attitudes Towards the Free-response Mode of Assessment

ITEM No.	STATEMENTS	FREE - RESPONSE													
		STRONGLY AGREE		AGREE		UNDECIDED		DISAGREE		STRONGLY DISAGREE		NO RESPONSE		TOTAL	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	I like the free-response mode of assessment because tests and / or examinations prepared in it are easy for me to answer.	4	8.88	15	33.33	12	26.66	8	17.77	5	11.11	1	2.22	45	100
2	I like the free-response mode of assessment since it gives me more opportunity to write whatever I have learnt.	22	48.88	13	28.88	3	6.66	6	13.33	1	2.22	-	-	45	100
3	I like the free-response mode of assessment in that I do not get confused to answer questions as there are no alternatives.	9	20.00	19	42.22	6	13.33	6	13.33	4	8.88	1	2.22	45	100
4	I do not like the free-response mode of assessment as it does not enable me to develop the ability to judge and decide.	3	6.66	6	13.33	6	13.33	17	37.77	12	26.66	1	2.22	45	100

NOTE:- f = frequency

Total percentage is rounded to the nearest percent.

Regarding the first statement in TABLE 7 (a), 29 out of the 45 male students (64.44 percent) were in favour of the multiple-choice mode of assessment confirming that the method was important for them to get more marks. Only 6.66% of the respondents strongly disagreed while 13.33% remained undecided.

As regards the second statement, 16 out of the 45 male students (35.55 percent) confirmed that they preferred the multiple-choice mode of assessment stating that they could guess the answers no matter how difficult the questions might be. Those who were not in favour of the method were 33.32% while 8.88% remained undecided [see TABLE 7 (a) above].

In the same table, the third statement was affirmed by 21 out of 45 male students (46.66 percent) whereas only 6.66% totally disagreed with this idea.

The last statement was not supported by the majority of the respondents 29(64.43 percent). In other words, the multiple-choice method did not give them the opportunity to write in words, phrases, and so on of their own. Only 3(6.6 percent) of them felt that the method helped them a lot [see TABLE 7(a)].

In addition to their attitudes towards the multiple-choice format, an assessment of the males' attitudes towards the free-response format was also made [see TABLE 7(b)]. The results are as follows:

As regards the first statement, TABLE 7(b) reveals that 19 out of 45 male students (42.21 percent) agree that tests and/or examinations prepared in the free-response format are easy to answer questions. However, the majority of the male candidates do not seem to be in favour of the free-response format.

The second statement was strongly supported by the majority of the respondents [see TABLE 7(b)]. Twenty-two out of the 45 students (48.88 percent) strongly agreed with the idea that the free-response format gives them more opportunity whatever they have learnt. On the other hand,

free-response format gives them more opportunity whatever they have learnt. On the other hand, only 1(2.22%) student strongly disagreed.

The third statement that the free- response format does not confuse students as there are no alternatives was supported by 28 students (62.22 percent). Only 4(8.88%) of the males strongly disagreed with the proposition.

The last statement which suggests that the free-response format could not help in developing the ability to judge and decide was disagreed by the majority (64.44%) of the respondents whereas only 6.66% strongly agreed with the proposition.

4.2.2. Results of the Female Students' Questionnaire

For the purpose of statistical analyses for the present study, the responses of 51 female students wee collected and organised into tables [see TABLES 8(a) and 8(b)].

A close look at the tables reveals the number and percentage of the female students who responded to questions raised regarding their attitudes towards the two modes of assessment. The results of their responses are given following each mode of assessment.

TABLE 8(a): Female Students' Responses to Their Attitudes Towards the Multiple-choice Mode of Assessment

ITEM No.	STATEMENTS	MULTIPLE-CHOICE													
		STRONGLY AGREE		AGREE		UNDECIDED		DISAGREE		STRONGLY DISAGREE		NO RESPONSE		TOTAL	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	I like the multiple-choice mode of assessment since it is easier for me to get more marks.	9	17.64	14	27.45	6	11.76	18	35.29	4	7.84	-	-	51	100
2	I like the multiple-choice mode of assessment as I am able to guess no matter how difficult the question is.	10	19.60	15	29.41	10	19.60	12	23.52	4	7.84	-	-	51	100
3	I like the multiple-choice mode of assessment since the distracters do not cause any trouble to me for chossing the correct option.	11	21.56	11	21.56	8	15.69	17	33.33	4	7.84	-	-	51	100
4	I do not like the multiple-choice mode of assessment because it does not give me any opportunity to write in my own words, phrases or sentences.	7	13.72	16	31.37	10	19.60	11	21.56	7	13.72	-	-	51	100

NOTE: Total Percentage is rounded to the nearest percent.

TABLE 8(b): Female Students' Responses to Their Attitudes Towards the Free-response Mode of Assessment

ITEM No.	STATEMENTS	FREE - RESPONSE													
		STRONGLY AGREE		AGREE		UNDECIDED		DISAGREE		STRONGLY DISAGREE		NO RESPONSE		TOTAL	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	I like the free-response mode of assessment because tests and/or examinations prepared in it are easy for me to answer.	9	17.64	22	43.13	9	17.64	10	19.60	1	1.96	-	-	51	100
2	I like the free-response mode of assessment since it gives me more opportunity to write whatever I have learnt.	20	39.21	24	47.05	3	5.88	3	5.88	1	1.96	-	-	51	100
3	I like the free-response mode of assessment in that I do not get confused to answer questions as there are no alternatives.	12	23.52	22	43.13	2	3.92	13	25.49	2	3.92	-	-	51	100
4	I do not like the free-response mode of assessment as it does not enable me to develop the ability to judge and decide.	4	7.84	2	3.92	9	17.64	26	50.98	10	19.60	-	-	51	100

NOTE: Total Percentage is rounded to the nearest percent

TABLE 8(a) shows that out of 51 female students, 22 (43.13 percent) considered that the multiple-choice method was difficult for scoring more marks while the majority, that is, 23 (45.09 percent) expressed their preference for the multiple-choice format.

As regards the second statement, 25 respondents (49.01 percent) had positive attitudes towards the method as it enables them to guess no matter how difficult the question might be while 16 (31.37 percent) students opposed to the idea.

Regarding the third statement, 22(43.13%) of the respondents had no trouble in choosing the right option. Those who suggested that the multiple-choice method of assessment would cause trouble to them were 21(41.17%).

As regards the final statement, the majority 23(45.09%) students had negative attitude towards the multiple-choice format since it would not enable them to write answers in their own words, phrases and so forth while 18 (35.29 percent) of the students responded positively towards the method.

In a similar way, the female students' attitudes towards the free-response method of assessment revealed the following results [see TABLE 8(b)]:

As regards the first statement, out of 51 female students 31(69.78%) were in favour of the free-response method since questions prepared in it would be easier for them to answer while 10(19.60%) disagreed. Only 1(1.96%) student strongly disagreed with the statement. Those respondents who remained undecided were 9(17.64).

Concerning the second statement, 44 out of the 51 students (86.27%) preferred this method because they found it more helpful for writing whatever they had learnt. Only 4 (7.84%) students responded negatively while 3 (5.88%) respondents remained undecided.

Regarding the third statement, the majority 34 (66.66%) of the respondents claimed that they did not have any trouble in answering questions prepared in the free-response mode of assessment. Only 15 (29.41%) of the students were not in favour of the method.

As regards the fourth statement, only 6(11.76%) of the respondents stated that the free-response format did not help them develop the ability to judge and decide, while the majority 36(70.58%) responded to the contrary, thus confirming that the free-response method was to their advantage in this regard.

4.2.3. Comparative Analysis of Male and Female Students' Responses Towards the Two Modes of Assessment.

The tables below show the comparative analysis of male and female responses towards the multiple-choice and the free-response formats.

TABLE 9(a): Responses of Male and Female Students to Their Attitudes Towards the Multiple-choice Mode of Assessment

ITEM No.	STATEMENTS	SEX	MULTIPLE - CHOICE													
			STRONGLY AGREE		AGREE		UNDECIDED		DISAGREE		STRONGLY DISAGREE		NO RESPONSE		TOTAL	
			f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	I like the multiple-choice mode of assessment since it is easier for me to get more marks.	M	9	20.00	20	44.44	6	13.33	7	15.55	3	6.66	-	-	45	100
		F	9	17.64	14	26.45	6	11.76	18	35.29	4	7.84	-	-	51	100
2	I like the multiple-choice mode of assessment as I am able to guess no matter how difficult the question is.	M	10	22.22	16	35.55	4	8.88	8	17.77	7	15.55	-	-	45	100
		F	10	19.60	15	29.41	10	19.60	12	23.52	4	7.84	-	-	51	100
3	I like the multiple-choice mode of assessment since the distracters do not cause any trouble to me for choosing the correct option.	M	5	11.11	16	35.55	12	26.66	9	20.00	3	6.66	-	-	45	100
		F	11	21.56	11	21.56	8	15.69	17	33.33	4	7.84	-	-	51	100
4	I do not like the multiple-choice mode of assessment because it does not give me any opportunity to write in my own words, phrases or sentences.	M	3	6.66	6	13.33	6	13.33	17	37.77	12	26.66	1	2.22	45	100
		F	7	13.72	16	31.37	10	19.60	11	21.56	7	13.72	-	-	51	100

NOTE : f = frequency

Total percentage is rounded to the nearest percent.

According to TABLE 9 (a), regarding the first statement about the multiple-choice mode of assessment, the majority (64.44%) of the male students indicated that it was easier for them. This view was shared by 45.09% of the female students, while 43.13% of them did not agree and expressed that the method was rather difficult to get more marks and 22.22% of the male student disagreed with the statement.

As regards the second statement, the idea that the multiple-choice mode of assessment would enable them to guess even though the question could be difficult was supported by the majority of the male (57.77%) and the female (49.01%) respondents.

With regard to the third statement, the majority of the female respondents (41.17%) felt that the distracters would cause trouble to them while choosing the correct option whereas, on the contrary, the majority of the male respondents (46.66%) were in favour of the proposition.

Concerning the last statement, the majority (64.43%) of the male students expressed their disapproval of the given statement : "I do not like the multiple-choice mode of assessment because it does not give me any opportunity to write in my won words, phrases or sentences", whereas the majority (45.09%) of the female students agreed with this proposition.

Generally speaking, according to TABLE 9(a) it appears that the majority of the male respondents are in favour of the multiple-choice format whereas the majority of the female respondents do not feel comfortable with it.

TABLE 9(b): Responses of Male and Female Students to Their Attitudes Towards the Free-response Mode of Assessment.

ITEM No.	STATEMENTS	SEX	FREE - RESPONSE													
			STRONGLY AGREE		AGREE		UNDECIDED		DISAGREE		STRONGLY DISAGREE		NO RESPONSE		TOTAL	
			f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	I like the free-response mode of assessment because tests and/or examinations prepared in it are easy for me to answer.	M	4	8.88	15	3..33	12	26.66	8	17.77	5	11.11	1	2.22	45	100
		F	9	17.64	22	43.13	9	17.64	10	19.60	1	1.96	-	-	51	100
2	I like the free-response mode of assessment since it gives me more opportunity to write whatever I have learnt.	M	22	48.88	13	28.88	3	6.66	6	13.33	1	2.22	-	-	45	100
		F	20	39.21	24	47.05	3	5.88	3	5.88	1	1.96	-	-	51	100
3	I like the free-response mode of assessment in that I do not get confused to answer questions as there are no alternatives.	M	9	20.00	19	42.22	6	13.33	6	13.33	4	8.88	1	2.22	45	100
		F	12	23.52	22	43.13	2	3.92	13	25.49	2	3.92	-	-	51	100
4	I do not like the free-response mode of assessment as it does not enable me to develop the ability to judge and decide	M	3	6.66	6	13.33	6	13.33	17	37.77	12	26.66	1	2.22	45	100
		F	4	7.84	2	3.92	9	17.64	26	50.98	10	19.60	-	-	51	100

NOTE: f = frequency

Total percentage is rounded to the nearest percent.

Responding to the first statement about the free-response mode of assessment given in TABLE 9 (b) above, the majority (42.22%) of the male students expressed their approval of the method, an idea which was shared by the majority (60.77%) of the female students also.

Concerning the second statement, the majority of both the female and the male respondents(86.27% and 77. 77%, respectively) were in favour of the free-response method indicating that it would give them more opportunity for writing. Only 1(2.22%) and 1(1.96%) of the male and the female students, respectively, strongly disagreed with the statement.

As regards the third statement, the majority (66.49%) of the female and the male (62.22%) students confirmed that they were in favour of the method as it does not create confusion while answering questions.

As regards the final statement, the majority of the male students (64.43%) and the majority of the female students (70.58%) expressed their disapproval of the statement : "I do not like the free-response mode of assessment as it does not enable me to develop the ability to judge and decide".

According to TABLE 9(b), therefore, one can see relative congruity between the views of the male and the female respondents as regards the free-response format of the test.

4.3. Discussion

As already stated, the main objective of the present study was to test whether or not the multiple-choice mode of assessment significantly disfavours female testees more than it does male test-takers, and alternatively, if the free-response mode of assessment favours female test-takers.

According to the present study, when male and female students sat for an English language test with similar content(s) or task (s) but with different formats, both the male and the female candidates' performance on the multiple-choice questions was almost the same. This shows that the diference was not statistically significant. It was also found out that the females scored better on the free-response items than they did on the multiple-choice questions. This means that compared with the male candidates, the female candidates had relative advantage on the free-response format than on the multiple-choice format. The difference was large enough to be statistically significant, thus being consistent with similar studies conducted by Wood (1978), Bolger and Kellaghan (1990), cited in Hellekant (1994:350), and Hellekant (1994:351).

With respect to the results of the subjects' attitudes towards the two modes of assessment, the attitudes of the majority of male students seem to differ from that of the female students on the multiple-choice method. The males preferred the method since it was easy for them to get more marks. However, for the majority of the female students, it was rather difficult to score more points. Nonetheless, both the male and the female candidates mentioned that the multiple-choice format was disadvantageous to them no matter how simple the questions might be.

They also indicated that they had difficulty with the distracters for choosing the correct option. The students' responses show that the multiple-choice test is more liable to cheating and guessing. Furthermore, there seems to be a tendency that both males and females are less comfortable with the multiple-choice method since it does not give them any opportunity to write.

As regards the free-response method, the majority of the male students' responses towards this format are almost similar to that of the female students. Both males and females mentioned that they liked this mode of assessment for some reasons such as its giving opportunity to write answers in one's words, phrases or sentences.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Summary

The present investigation studied the performance of male and female candidates on a school test in two separate modes of assessment (multiple-choice and free-response), which had 65 items each, but with the same content. The test was administered to 114 (57 male and 57 female) First Year college-level students during the 1999/2000 academic year in two government colleges in Addis Ababa. These students were selected with purposive sampling method from the records of the respective colleges. A questionnaire was also designed for collecting the attitudes of these students towards the two formats of the test.

After the actual administration of the test, the scores for the multiple-choice and the free-response formats were computed and analysed using a series of t-tests to determine whether there was any significant difference in the performance of the male and female candidates on the multiple-choice test, male and female candidates on the free-response test, male candidates on the multiple-choice and the free-response tests; and female candidates on the multiple-choice and the free-response tests at the .05 level of statistical significance.

As indicated in the preceding chapter of this study, the difference between the performances of the male and female candidates on the multiple-choice test was found to be statistically not significant as both sexes performed nearly the same on the said format of the test. However, the difference between the performances of the two groups on the free-response test was statistically significant. This means that the females did significantly better on the free-response format than did the males.

The results of the t-tests revealed also that the differences between the performance of the male group on the multiple-choice test vis-à-vis the free-response test as well as the difference between the performance of the female group on the multiple choice test vis-à-vis the free-response test were statistically significant.

The outcomes of the present investigation have provided the evidence to support the view that, in general, female candidates, in comparison with male candidates, perform better on on free-response test than they do on multiple-choice tests, although there was no significant difference between the performance of the two gender groups on the multiple-choice test.

So far as the intra-group performance is concerned, it was found that the males did significantly better on the multiple-choice test than on the free-response test, whereas the females performed significantly better on the free-response test than on the multiple-choice.

As regards the subjects' attitudes towards the two test formats, the majority of male candidates appear to differ from female candidates on the multiple-choice method as the males preferred the method for its being easy to get more marks. For the majority of female candidates, however, it was rather difficult to get more marks. Nevertheless, both the male and female candidates indicated that the multiple-choice method of assessment was to their disadvantage no matter how simple the questions might be. They also felt that the multiple-choice method of assessment is more liable to guessing. Therefore, it seems that both male and female candidates are less comfortable with this format.

Regarding the free-response format, the responses of the majority of male and female candidates are similar. Both males and females preferred this format because of its easiness to answer questions.

5.2. Conclusion

As indicated in the summary section above, although there was no significant gender bias regarding the multiple-choice test, a significant difference was evidenced on the free-response test. Significant difference was also observed in the individual group's performance. The male group performed better on the multiple-choice test than on the

the multiple-choice one. As repeatedly said by a number of researchers the causes of such variation in the results are due to the different test formats. It was also noted in the literature that females are better than males in language skills. This could be a reason why female candidates perform better than the male candidates in the free-response format as this format is a better manifestation of language skills than is the sole multiple-choice format.

This manifestation of gender bias as regards the two formats must help to indicate the type of corrective measures to be taken so as to improve the testing of English at the school level in the Ethiopian educational setting.

5.3. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the present study, the following recommendations are made:

1. A great deal of evidence in the literature of language testing on gender vis-à-vis methods of assessment emphasize that various formats of tests and/or examinations are to the advantage of different gender in a different way. Thus, it seems that the best solution to remove such gender bias is by introducing varied test techniques. Teachers should design their test specifications in such a way that they give equal opportunities to both male and female candidates. Attempt should be made such that every test teachers design or construct should include at least the multiple-choice and the free-response formats in a fair way so as to help minimize any unnecessary bias which could affect one gender group or the other. As Weir (1990) explains, ".... the format of a task can unduly affect the performance of some candidates.... This makes it necessary to include a variety of test formats for assessing each construct rather than rely on a single overall measure such as close" (P.5).

2. Workshops or seminars which are meant for improving English language teaching should by no means exclude a component on testing methods. More important, upgrading professional skills of teachers at all levels should be given primary importance.

3. The hypothesis of the present study may be well confirmed if it is substantiated by similar studies in future. Results may not be generalizable to the entire range of students in the country. So, more research to determine whether the observed differences in the present study can be replicated for other groups.

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Appendix B (i)

MULTIPLE-CHOICE TEST

SUBJECT: English
ACADEMIC YEAR: 1999/2000
TIME ALLOWED: 60 Minutes

GENERAL DIRECTIONS:
This test contains 65 questions. Follow each instruction before you attempt the questions. There is one best answer for each question or statement. Choose the best answer from the suggested alternatives.

PART 1
Reading Comprehension 1

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the text passage and answer the questions that follow.

Africa has some 10% of the word's population and 63% (21 million) of the world's HIV/AIDS cases. About 90% of all HIV transmission in Africa occurs via heterosexual sex. This is 10% preventable.

This underscores the need to spread public awareness, a critical aspect of prevention to all vulnerable groups. An average of 3,800 adults in Africa are affected daily. Older people are also part of this group. No part of Africa is untouched by the disease. Public awareness is a critical part of prevention and needs a serious boost.

An estimated 87% of the world's infected children live in Africa. This places the care givers at risk unless they know how to protect themselves.

AIDS has lowered average life expectancy levels by as much as 17 years in some African countries. Zimbabwe is the hardest hit. Life expectancy is reduced by more than 20 years. The expected increase in life expectancy for older people due to improved medical services may prove a fallacy if HIV/AIDS programmes on creating awareness do not target all groups at risk.

AIDS has overtaken malaria and other diseases as the leading causes of death for adults between the ages of 15-49. According to the World Bank report increased life risk of dying from AIDS shows the following statistics: Ethiopia 11%; South Africa 24%; Kenya 31%; Uganda 35%; Tanzania 39%; Malawi 43%; Botswana 44%; Zimbabwe 53%; Zambia 68%.

Ninety-five % of Africans infected with HIV/AIDS live in abject poverty. When the economically active breadwinners die, nothing is left for those giving care of orphaned children.

1. Another word that could replace the word 'lowered' in line (10) is
   A. moved excessively.
   B. went up.
   C. levelled.
   D. became less strong.
2. According to the passage, which one of the countries has the highest decrease in average life expectancy level due to HIV/AIDS?
   A. Ethiopia
   B. Botswana
   C. Zimbabwe
   D. Tanzania
3. How many African adults are infected per day on average?
   A. Around four million.
   B. Around four thousand.
   C. About twenty-one million
   D. It is difficult to estimate.
4. In line (5) the word 'vulnerable' could best be replaced by one of the following
   A. Open to attack
   B. Open to accident
   C. Open to danger
   D. Open to defeat
5. In line (7) 'critical' means:
   A. dangerous
   B. serious
   C. difficult
   D. essential
6. In line (6) the word 'this' refers to:
   A. adult people
   B. older people
   C. Africa
   D. infected children
7. The word 'overtaken' in line (15) means:
   A. exiled.
   B. increased
   C. showed
   D. begun
8. Who are 'the care givers' in line (8)?
   A. HIV infected children in the world
   B. HIV infected children in Africa
   C. HIV infected people over 15 yeas of age
   D. HIV infected people who know how to prevent themselves

PART 2

Completing a Dialogue

INSTRUCTIONS: Nuria is a new student who won a scholarship to Addis Ababa University. She would like to study English as a Foreign Language. Last September, when she got to the Main Campus at Sidist Kilo for registration, she found a lot of students there. She wondered what to do and where to go. At first, she stood with some other students in front of a notice board. On the notice board was a list of registration directory. She was going to ask the young man standing next to her for help, but he spoke to her first.

9. SMITH: Excuse me. _____ you help me, please? I'm a new student and I want English classes.
   A. Are
   B. Were
   C. Can
   D. Could
10. NURIA: So_____I.
   A. am
   B. was
   C. do
   D. did
11. SMITH: Oh! _____ you a foreigner, too?
   A. Are
   B. Were
   C. Will
   D. Would
12. NURIA: Yes, I'm Djiboutian You're Sudanese, _____ you?
   A. don't
   B. won't
   C. aren't
   D. can't
13. SMITH: No, I'm Kenyan, _____ I speak Swahili.
   A. and
   B. or
   C. so
   D. but
14. NURIA: Well, let's _____ to 'Information' in Room 102.
   A. go
   B. gone
   C. went
   D. will go
15. SMITH: _____ what about Room 110, 'New Students'? We are both First Year students.
   A. And
   B. But
   C. Or
   D. So
16. NURIA: Yes, You're right... No, wait_____. Let's look at the whole list first...
   A. for a minute
   B. for the minute
   C. for minute
   D. a minute
17. SMITH: What _____ Room 290, English? Do you think that's right?
   A. if
   B. about
   C. not
   d. else

18. NURIA: No. look farther down, near_____ bottom... English as a Foreign Language.
    A. a
    B. an
    C. the
    D. ---
19. SMITH: OK. Let's go to Room 310. _____, my name is Smith Joseph. What is yours?
    A. By the way
    B. To tell you the truth
    C. Anyway
    D. For the time
20. NURIA: I'm Nuria. Nuria Habib. _____ to meet you, Smith.
    A. Nice
    B. Good
    C. Thanks
    D. Fine
21. SMITH: Nice to meet you, _____.
    A. also
    B. too
    C. well
    D. to

PART 3

Spelling

INSTRUCTIONS: The following sentences are incomplete. Choose the word which is correctly spelt and complete each of the sentences.

22. Born in ____ 1932, Abebe Bikila was a member of the Imperial Body Guard as a holder of a marathon gold medal for the first time in Africa.
    A. August
    B. Agust
    C. Augest
    D. Aguste
23. He was also crowned the double win in two_____ marathon competition
    A. consicuteve
    B. consicutive
    C. consecuitive
    D. consecutive
24. In 1960 Rome Olympic Marathon, Abebe and his Moroccan rivals were running on equal pace right from the 18th km when Abebe_____ shifted the gear and finished the race in top place.
    A. final
    B. finally
    C. finaly
    D. fineally.
25. Abebe, more than anything, was very much_____ by the international community for the success he scored.
    A. appreciated
    B. appriciated
    C. apreciated
    D. apriciated
26. Abebe_____ the world in yet another competition which took place in Tokyo, in 1963, by clocking 2:12:11.
    A. serprised
    B. serprized
    C. surprised
    D. sarprised

27. In Mexico, in 1963, which was his third Olympic_____ he was forced to withdraw after 17 kms because of leg injury.
    A. appearance C. apearance
    B. appearence D. apearrance
28. The then Ethiopian government awarded him a car for his outstanding_____.
    A. achivement C. achievement
    B. achivment D. acheivement

29. Abebe, _____ handicapped following a car accident in 1968, remained wheelchair-bound until he died on October 26, 1973.
    A. later C. letter
    B. latter D. leter
30. More than a 100,000 fans paid a final _____ by attending his funeral.
    A. tribute C. tribuite
    B. trebute D. trebut

PART 4

Reading Comprehension 2

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow accordingly.

THE PACKAGE

Last week a friend stayed at my apartment. She arrived from Los Angeles on Tuesday morning, and she left San Francisco for Lake Tahoe on Thursday evening.

She wanted to do some shopping on Thursday morning. Before I went to work, I left her a message. I told her to meet me at half-past five at the newspaper stand across from Union Square. Then, I would help her carry her luggage.

I arrived at Union Square on time. I walked across the street to the newspaper stand. There were lots of people on the sidewalk. At first, I could not see Marie. I put my briefcase down. Then, I heard Marie's voice. "Hello, Dave!" she said. "Hi, Marie!" I answered. " We can walk to the bus station from here."

I picked up her suitcase and shopping bag. In her shopping bag, there was a big package wrapped in brown paper. It was very heavy. "Could you carry my briefcase, Marie" I asked. "Of course," said Marie. "Let's go!"

We walked down the street. The traffic was noisy. "The traffic is terrible," said Marie. "Yes, awful!" I shouted. "Thanks so much for helping me, Dave," said Marie. "Oh, that's all right,

Marie," I answered. "You are carrying my briefcase." "But your package looks very heavy!" said Marie.

I stopped. "My package?" I said. "It isn't my package. I thought it was yours. I thought it was what you bought shopping." "Oh no," said Marie. "I changed my mind. I didn't do any shopping. I didn't have time. It isn't my package, Dave," she said. "Then, whose package is it?" I asked. "I don't know!" answered Marie. We both laughed. "Let's open it and look," she suggested. We opened the package. Inside, there were fifty copies of a Los Angeles Magazine.

We took the package back to the newspaper stand. "I'm very sorry," I said to the man at the newspaper stand. "It was a mistake." He laughed, too. "Look," he said, "it's a great magazine. Why don't you buy one?" I bought one of the magazines and gave it to Marie. "Thanks," said Marie, "but you can keep it. I read it last week in L.A.!"

Taken from Task Reading by Davies, E. et al. 1990

Now, answer the questions according to the passage.

31. What is the expression used to show an opinion in paragraph 4?
    A. I picked up her suitcase and shopping bag.
    B. It was very heavy. C. Of course. D. Let's go.
32. In which paragraph can you find an example of apology given?
    A. paragraph 3 C. paragraph 6
    B. paragraph 5 D. paragraph 7

33. Marie and Dave arranged to meet at
    A. Union Square. C. Lake Tahoe.
    B. San Francisco. D. Los Angeles.
34. Why did Dave and Marie arrange to meet?
    A. Because Marie wanted Dave to help her carry the luggage.
    B. Because Marie wanted Dave to help her with the busy traffic.
    C. Because Marie Wanted to go shopping.
    D. Because Marie wanted to leave for lake Tahoe.
35. In the last paragraph, the abbreviation "L.A." stands for
    A. Luggage Apartment. B. Los Angeles.
    C. Lufthansa Airport D. Life in America.
36. What did Dave see when he arrived at Union Square?
    A. He saw the newspaper stand.
    B. He saw Marie.
    C. He saw a lot of cars.
    D. He saw many people.

37. Who is "I" mentioned everywhere in the story?
    A. Marie B. Dave
    C. The man at the newspaper stand
    D. An unknown person

38. In paragraph 2, line (3) "shopping" means
    A. buying goods for consumption.
    B. buying goods for sale.
    C. buying goods for production
    D. buying a shop.

39. The word "traffic" in paragraph 5, line (13) refers to
    A. a police officer who controls the movement of vehicles, people, etc.
    B. the movement of vehicles, people, etc. on a road
    C. a raised area in the middle of the road.
    D. the buying and selling of something illegal.

PART 5

Completion Items

DIRECTIONS: Read the paragraph below. Then complete each of the sentences by choosing the most suitable word from A,B,C, or D.

40. A. What B. How
    C. Why D. When

41. A. What B. how often
    C. why D. when

42. A. what B. how
    C. why D. when

43. A. what B. how
    C. why D. when

(40) do people read? For a variety of reasons. Some Some people read for pleasure; other because they have to. And (41) do people read? Well, some people don't read very often, but others read all the time, day and night. And (42) ? The answer is that anywhere and everywhere. But the question is (43) do people read? Advertisements? Stories? Books? Biographies?, Maps? or what? It could be anything! Ask your family and friends all these questions. Then make your own question of who reads what, why, when, and where!

Taken from Task Reading by Davies, E. et al. 1990.

PART 6
GRAMMAR AND USAGE

INSTRUCTIONS: Complete each of the following sentences by choosing. The most appropriate word or phrase..

44. The man would buy a house if he _____ a lottery prize.
    A. wins B. would win C. had won D. won
45. Your aunt has been here_____ last week.
    A. till B. since C. as D. or
46. ____ quickly you may walk, you cannot catch the train.
    A. However B. although C. But D. Despite
47. Sheraton Addis is _____ hotel in Ethiopia.
    A. a more expensive B. a most expensive
    C. most expensive D. the most expensive
48. Had she been in her office, I _____.
    A. could have talked to her B. could talk to her
    C. can talk to her D. could have talk to her
49. I wish my brother_____ still alive.
    A. is B. are C. were D. A,B & C above are permissible
50. Soldiers die so that their country _____.
    A. would live B. may live C. should live D. might have lived
51. The government must do some thing to improve water supply in the city; _____, they will lose the next election.
    A. moreover B. otherwise C. besides D. more or less
52. One morning, I saw a man throwing stones and ____ piece of wood at____ dog. ____ dog was afraid of _____ man.
    A. a/a/the/the B. the/the/a/a C. the/a/the/a D. ___/a/the/___
53. DIRECT: The guard said to the man. " Don't move!"
    INDIRECT: The guard warned the man_____.
    A. don't move B. to move C. not move D. not to move
54. The boy's hair has over grown; it needs_____.
    A. cut B. cutting C. to cut D. be cut
55. It's either he or she who_____ cheated in the examination.
    A. has B. have C. could D. might
56. The heavier it rains, the _____ erosion there is.
    A. more B. little C. lest D. lower
57. Addis Ababa is a city____ more than two million people live.
    A. which B. that C. whose D. where
58. If you pour oil on water, the oil always_____.
    A. floated B. float C. floats D. will
59. Nowadays, a number of young people are fond of____ expensive fashion clothes.
    A. wear B. to wear C. to wearing D. wearing

60. Ato Bekele usually lies in the garden admiring his roses, but yesterday he____ on the veranda.
    A. lied B. lay C. laid D. lain
61. We cannot do anything about what has been done to you except____ "Sorry!"
    A. say B. to say C. said D. saying
62. Meron is one of those girls who always____ hard.
    A. work B. works C. are working D. has worked
63. My hen_____ a big egg yesterday.
    A. lies B. lay C. laid D. lain
64. I was born____ Assela town___ July 20, 1982.
    A. on/in B. in/on C. on/on D. in/in
65. ACTIVE: The police is chasing the criminals.
    PASSIVE: The criminals _____by the police.
    A. are chased B. are being chased C. are to be chased D. are being to chase

Appendix B (ii)

FREE - RESPONSE TEST

SUBJECT: English
ACADEMIC YEAR: 1999/2000
TIME ALLOWED: 60 minutes

GENERAL DIRECTIONS:
This test contains 65 questions. Follow each instruction before you attempt the questions. There is only one best answer for each question or statement. Choose the best answer from the suggested alternatives.

PART 1
Reading comprehension 1

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the text passage and answer the questions that follow.

Africa has some 10% of the world's population and 63% (21 million) of the world's HIV/AIDS cases. About 90% of all HIV transmission in Africa occurs via heterosexual sex). This is 10% preventable.

This underscores the need to spread public awareness, a critical aspect of prevention to all vulnerable groups. An average of 3,800 adults in Africa are affected daily. Older people are also part of this group. No part of Africa is untouched by the disease. Public awareness is a critical part of prevention and needs a serious boost.

An estimated 87% of the world's infected children live in Africa. This places the care givers at risk unless they know how to protect themselves.

AIDS has lowered average life expectancy levels by as much as 17 years in some African countries. Zimbabwe is the hardest hit. Life expectancy is reduced by more than 20 years. The expected increase in life expectancy for older people due to improved medical services may prove a fallacy if HIV/AIDS programmes on creating awareness do not target all groups at risk.

AIDS has overtaken malaria and other diseases as the leading causes of death for adults between the ages of 15-49. According to the World Bank report increased life risk of dying from AIDS shows the following statistics: Ethiopia 11%; South Africa 24%; Kenya 31%; Uganda 35%; Tanzania 39%; Malawi 43%; Botswana 44%; Zimbabwe 53%; Zambia 68%.

Ninety-five % of Africans infected with HIV/AIDS live in object poverty. When the economically active breadwinners die, nothing is left for those giving care of orphaned children.

1. Another word that could replace the word 'lowered' (in line 10) is
2. According to the passage, which one of the countries has the highest decrease of average life expectancy level due to HIV-AIDS?
3. How many African adults are infected per day on average?_____
4. In line (5) the word 'vulnerable' can best be replaced by _____
5. In line (7) 'critical' means _____
6. In line (8) the word 'this' refers to _____
7. The word 'overtaken' in line (15) means _____
8. Who are 'the care gives' in line (8)? _____

PART 2

Completing a Dialogue

INSTRUCTIONS: Nuria is a new student who won a scholarship to Addis Ababa University. She would like to study English as a Foreign Language. Last September when she got to the Main Campus at Sidist Kilo for registration, she found a lot of students there. She wondered what to do and where to go. At first, she stood with some other students in front of a notice board. On the notice board was a list of registration directory. She was going to ask the young man standing next to her for help, but he spoke to her first.

9. SMITH: Excuse me. _____ you help me, please? I'm a new student and I want 'English Classes.'
10. NURIA: So _____I.
11. SMITH: Oh! _____ you a foreigner, too?
12. NURIA: Yes, I am Djiboutian. You're Sudanese, _____?
13. SMITH: No, I'm Kenyan, _____I speak Swahili.
14. NURIA: Well, let's _____ to 'INFORMATION' in Room 102.
15. SMITH: _____ what about Room 110, 'NEW STUDENTS'? We are both new First-Year students.
16. NURIA: Yes, you're right.....No, wait____. Let's look at the whole list first.....
17. SMITH: What_____ Room 290, English? Do you think that's right?
18. NURIA: No, look farther down, near_____ bottom..... 'English as a Foreign Language.'
19. SMITH: OK. Let's go to Room 310. _____, my name is Smith Joseph. What is yours?
20. NURIA: I'm Nuria. Nuria Habib. _____ to meet you, Smith.
21. SMITH: Nice to meet you, _____.

PART 3

Spelling

INSTRUCTIONS: Some of the words are SPELT wrongly. Read each line and write the words with CORRECT SPELLING (S).

22. Born in Augest 1932, Abebe Bikila was a member of the 'Imperial Body Guard' as a holder of a marathon gold medal for the first time in Africa. He was also crowned. _____
23. the double win in two consicutive marathon competitions. In 1960 Rome Olympic Marathon, Abebe and his Moroccan rivals were running on equal pace right. _____
24. From the 18th km when Abebe finaly shifted the gear and finished the race in top place. _____
25. Abebe, more than anything, was very much apreiated by the international community for the success he scored. _____
26. Abebe sarprised the world in yet another competition which took place in Tokyo in 1963 by clocking 2:12:11. _____
27. In Mexico in 1965, which was his third Olympic apearance, he was forced to withdraw after 17 KMS because of leg injury. _____
28. The then Ethiopian Government awarded him a car for his outstanding achivement. _____
29. Abebe, latter handicapped following a car accident in 1968, remained wheel chair-bound until he died on October 26, 1973. _____
30. More than a 100,000 fans paid a final trebute by attending his funeral. _____

PART 4

Reading Comprehension 2

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow accordingly.

THE PACKAGE

Last week a friend stayed at my apartment. She arrived from Los Angeles on Tuesday morning, and she left San Francisco for Lake Tahoe on Thursday evening.

She wanted to do some shopping on Thursday morning. Before I went to work, I left her a message. I told her to meet me at half-past five at the newspaper stand across from Union Square. Then, I would help her carry her luggage.

I arrived at Union Square on time. I walked across the street to the newspaper stand. There were lots of people on the sidewalk. At first, I could not see Marie. I put my briefcase down. Then, I heard Marie's voice. "Hello, Dave!" she said. "Hi, Marie!" I answered. "We can walk to the bus station from here."

I picked up her suitcase and shopping bag. In her shopping bag, there was a big package wrapped in brown paper. It was very heavy. "Could you carry my briefcase, Marie?" I asked. " Of course," said Marie. "Let's go!"

We walked down the street. The traffic was noisy. "The traffic is terrible," said Marie. "Yes, awful!" I shouted. "Thanks so much for helping me, Dave," said Marie. "Oh, that's all right, Marie." I answered. "You are carrying my briefcase." "But your package looked very heavy" said Marie.

I stopped. "My package?" I said. "It isn't my package. I thought it was yours. I thought it was what you bought shopping." "Oh no," said Marie. "I changed my mind. I didn't do any shopping. I didn't have time. It isn't my package, Dave," she said. "Then, whose package is it?" I asked. "I don't know!" answered Marie. We both laughed. Let's open it and look," she suggested. We opened the package. Inside, there were fifty copies of a Los Angeles Magazine.

We took the package back to the newspaper stand. "I'm very sorry," I said to the man at the newspaper stand. "It was a mistake." He laughed, too. "Look," he said "It's a great magazine. Why don't you buy one?" I bought one of the magazines and gave it to Marie. "Thanks," said Marie, "but you can keep it. I read it last week in L.A.!"

Taken from Task Reading by Davies, E. et al 1990.

INSTRUCTIONS: Now, answer the following questions:

31. What is the expression used to show an opinion in paragraph 4?
32. In which paragraph can you find an example of apology given?
33. Marie and Dave arranged to meet at _____.
34. Marie wanted Dave to help her because _____.
35. The abbreviation L.A. in the last paragraph stands for _____.
36. What did Dave see when he arrived at Union Square ?
    He saw _____.
37. Who is "I" mentioned everywhere in the passage ? _____.
38. In paragraph 2, line 3, "shopping" means _____
39. What do you think is the meaning of the word "traffic" in paragraph 5 line 13 ?
    _____.

PART 5

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the paragraph below. Then, guess the missing words.

(40) do people read? For a variety of reasons. Some people read for pleasure; others read because they have to. And (41) do people read? Well, some people don't read very often, but others read all the time, day and night. And (42)? The answer is that anywhere and everywhere. But the question is (43) do people read? Advertisements? Stories? Books? Biographies? Maps? or What? It could be anything! Ask your family and friends all these questions. Then make your own question of who reads what, why, when, and where!

PART 6

Grammar and Usage

INSTRUCTIONS: Complete each of the following sentences with a suitable word or phrase of your won.

44. The man would buy a house if he _____ a lottery prize.
45. Your aunt has been here _____ last week.
46. _____ quickly you may walk, you cannot catch the train.
47. Sheraton Addis is _____ Hotel in Ethiopia.
48. Had she been in her office, I _____.
49. I wish my brother _____ still alive.
50. Soldiers die so that their country _____.
51. The government must do something to improve water supply in the city;
    _____, they will lose the next election.
52. One morning, the children saw _____ man throwing stones and a piece of wood at _____ dog. _____ dog was afraid of _____ man. (use suitable articles)
53. DIRECT: The guard said to the man, "Don't move!"
    INDIRECT: The guard warned the man _____ .
54. The boy's hair has overgrown. It needs _____.
55. It's either he or she who _____ cheated in the examination.

56. The heavier it rains, _____ erosion there is.
57. Addis Ababa is a city _____ more than two million people live.
58. If you pour oil on water, the oil always _____.

59. Nowadays, a number of young people are fond of _____ expensive fashion clothes.
60. Ato Bekele usually lies in his garden admiring his roses, but yesterday he _____ on the verandah.
61. We cannot do anything about what has been done to you except_____ "Sorry!"
62. Meron is one of those girls who_____ hard.
63. My hen _____ a big egg yesterday.
64. I was born _____ Assela town_____ July 20, 1982.
65. ACTIVE: The police is chasing the criminals.
    PASSIVE: The criminals _____ by the police.

APPENDIX C (i)

ANSWER KEY FOR THE MULTIPLE-CHOICE TEST

1.	D	34.	C
2.	C	35.	B
3.	B	36.	D
4.	C	37.	B
5.	B	38.	A
6.	D	39.	B
7.	A	40.	C
8.	B	41.	D
9.	C	42.	D
10.	A	43.	A
11.	A	44.	D
12.	C	45.	B
13.	A	46.	A
14.	A	47.	D
15.	B	48.	A
16.	D	49.	C
17.	B	50.	B
18.	C	51.	B
19.	A	52.	A
20.	A	53.	D
21.	B	54.	B
22.	A	55.	A
23.	D	56.	A
24.	C	57.	D
25.	A	58.	C
26.	C	59.	D
27.	A	60.	B
28.	C	61.	A
29.	A	62.	A
30	A	63.	C
31.	D	64.	B
32.	D	65.	B
33.	A		

APPENDIX C (ii)

ANSWER KEY FOR THE FREE-RESPONSE TEST

1. decreased /reduced/
2. Zimbabwe
3. 3,800
4. exposed /in danger/
5. main /major/ important/serious
6. percentage of the world children
7. excelled /surpassed/
8. children infected with HIV
9. Can
10. am
11. Are
12. Aren't you? / I suppose
13. And/So
14. go
15. But/Why/Alright/Then
16. a minute
17. about
18. the
19. by the way
20. Nice / Glad
21. too
22. August
23. consecutive
24. finally
25. appreciated
26. surprised
27. appearance
28. achievement
29. later
30. tribute
31. Let's go
32. 7
33. Union Square
34. carry her luggage
35. Los Angeles
36. a lot of people
37. Dave
38. buying goods for consumption
39. movement of vehicles, people, etc. on a road.
40. Why
41. When
42. Where
43. What
44. Won
45. Since
46. However
47. the most expensive/attractive the most/he he latest
48. could /might/would/have talked to her
49. were
50. maylive
51. otherwise/or else
52. a, a, the, the
53. not to move
54. cutting/trimming/to be cut/to be trimmed
55. has
56. more
57. where
58. floats
59. wearning/ buying
60. lay
61. say
62. work
63. laid
64. in, on
65. are being chased

APPENDIX D

Raw Scores of 114 Males and Female Students on the Multiple-choice and the Free-response Test Formats.

Participant No.	MALE		FEMALE	
	Score on Multiple-choice (Out of 65)	Score on Free-response (Out of 65)	Score on Multiple-choice (Out of 65)	Score on Free-response (Out of 65)
1	54.0	57.0	53.0	59.0
2	54.0	56.5	51.0	54.5
3	52.0	54.5	51.0	54.0
4	51.0	54.0	50.0	54.0
5	51.0	52.5	50.0	53.5
6	50.0	52.5	50.0	53.5
7	50.0	52.0	50.0	53.0
8	50.0	49.5	50.0	53.0
9	49.0	48.5	50.0	52.5
10	49.0	48.0	49.0	52.0
11	48.0	48.0	49.0	51.5
12	48.0	48.0	48.0	51.5
13	48.0	48.0	48.0	51.0
14	47.0	46.5	48.0	50.0
15	47.0	46.5	48.0	49.5
16	47.0	46.0	48.0	49.0
17	46.0	46.0	48.0	49.0
18	46.0	45.0	48.0	48.5
19	46.0	45.0	48.0	48.5
20	46.0	45.0	46.0	48.0
21.	45.0	44.5	46.0	48.0
22.	45.0	44.5	46.0	47.5
23.	45.0	44.5	45.0	47.5
24.	44.0	44.5	45.0	47.5
25.	44.0	43.5	45.0	47.5
26.	44.0	43.0	45.0	47.0
27.	44.0	41.5	45.0	47.0
28.	43.0	41.5	44.0	46.5
29.	43.0	41.5	43.0	46.5
30.	43.0	40.5	43.0	46.5
31.	42.0	40.0	43.0	46.0
32.	42.0	40.0	43.0	45.0

APPENDIX D (continued)

33.	42.0	39.5	43.0	44.5
34.	41.0	39.5	42.0	44.0
35.	41.0	38.5	41.0	43.5
36.	41.0	38.5	41.0	43.5
37.	41.0	38.5	41.0	43.0
38.	41.0	38.5	41.0	42.5
39.	41.0	38.0	41.0	42.0
40.	41.0	38.0	40.0	41.0
41.	40.0	38.0	40.0	40.0
42.	40.0	37.0	39.0	40.0
43.	39.0	37.0	39.0	39.5
44.	38.0	37.0	37.0	39.5
45.	37.0	35.5	37.0	39.0
46.	37.0	35.0	36.0	38.0
47.	36.0	35.0	36.0	38.0
48.	36.0	34.0	34.0	38.0
49.	36.0	34.0	34.0	36.5
50.	35.0	34.0	34.0	36.0
51.	35.0	33.5	33.0	35.5
52.	34.0	33.5	32.0	35.0
53.	33.0	30.5	32.0	34.0
54.	33.0	30.0	30.0	33.5
55.	32.0	30.0	29.0	32.0
56.	32.0	22.5	27.0	26.0
57.	22.0	21.5	25.0	5.0
N=57	$\overline{X}_1$=42.58	$\overline{X}_2$=41.50	$\overline{Y}_1$=42.47	$\overline{Y}_2$=44.34

where,

N = sample size.

$\overline{X}_1$ = mean score of the males on the multiple-choice test.

$\overline{X}_2$ = mean score of the males on the free-response test.

$\overline{Y}_1$ = mean score of the females on the multiple-choice test.

$\overline{Y}_2$ = mean score of the females on the free-response test.

APPENDIX E

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE
A QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE COMPLETED BY STUDENTS

Dear Student,

This questionnaire is aimed at gathering information for the study leading to an M.A. Degree in teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). So, the researcher requests you to respond to each item as carefully as possible.

YOU ARE NOT REQUIRED TO WRITE YOUR NAME.
Thank you very much for your kind co-operation.

PART ONE

INFORMATION ABOUT YOURSELF

INSTRUCTION: To respond to the following items about yourself, Put a (✓) in the boxes provided.

1. Sex: Male ☐ Female ☐

PART TWO

YOUR ATTITUDES TOWARD MULTIPLE-CHOICE AND FREE-RESPONSE FORMATS.

INSTRUCTIONS: For the following items regarding your attitudes toward the examination you have already taken in the multiple-choice and free response mode of assessments put a tick mark (✓) against each statement and below the choice which shows the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement.

Appendix F
t-tests for Paired Samples

Variable	Number of Pairs	Corr	2-tail Sig	Mean	SD	SE of Mean
FEMC				42.4737	6.817	.903
	57	.979	.000			
MALEMC				42.5789	6.319	.837

Paired Differences					
Mean	SD	SE Of Mean	t-value	df	2-tail Sig
-1053	1.435	.190	-55	56	.582
95%CI (-.486,.276)					

Variable	Number of Pairs	Corr	2-tail Sig	Mean	SD	SE of Mean
				44.3421	8.602	1.139
FEFR	57	.938	.000			
MALEFR				41.5000	7.682	1.018

Paired Differences					
Mean	SD	SE Of Mean	t-value	df	2-tail Sig
2.8421	3.011	.399	7.13	56	.000
95% CI (2.043,3.641)					

Appendix F (continued)

Variable	Number of Pairs	2-tail Corr	Sig	Mean	SD	SE of Mean
MALEMC						
57		.981	.000	42.5789	6.319	.837
MAlEFR				41.5000	7.682	1.018

Paired Differences					
Mean	SD	SE Of Mean	t-value	df	2-tail Sig
1.0789	1.927	.255	4.23	56	.000
95% CI (.568,1.590)					

Variable	Number of Pairs	2-tail Corr	Sig	Mean	SD	SE of Mean
FEMC				42.4737	6.817	.903
FEFR	57	.942	.000			
				44.3421	8.602	1.139

Paired Differences					
Mean	SD	SE Of Mean	t-value	df	2-tail Sig
-1.8684	3.160	.419	-4.46	56	.000
95% CI (-2.707,-1.030)					

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my work and material used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name: Dessalegn G/Selassie

Signature : 

Place : Institute of Language Studies, Addis Ababa University

Date of Submission : 27/10/2000

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval.

Name : _____

Signature : _____