

***ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
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DEPARTEMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND
LITERATURE
(GRADUATE PROGRAMME)***

***THE WASHBACK EFFECT OF GRADE TEN ENGLISH
LANGUAGE (EGSEC) EXAMINATION***

MELKAMU ABATE

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***The Washback Effect of Grade Ten English Language
(EGSEC) Examination***

***By
Melkamu Abate***

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Department of Foreign Languages and Literature
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Approved By Examining Board:

Adviser

Signature

Examiner

Examiner

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

NAME: Melkamu Abate Beyene

SIGNATURE: _____

PLACE: Addis Ababa University, DEFL

DATE OF SUBMISSION: August 6, 2007

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EGSECE: Ethiopian General Secondary Education Certificate Examination.

TPTC: Table for Program Test Comparison (Source= Morris, L. L Fitz-Gibbon, C.T., and Lindheim,E. ,1987).

G.A.: Grand Average: an index for deciding which of the test items is appropriate to a program (ibid.).

I.C.: Index of Coverage: an index to reflect to the degree to which the test covers the instructional objectives (ibid.).

I.R.: Index of Relevance: a measure that tells what proportion of a test fits the set of objectives (ibid.).

ABSTRACT

This study addresses the issue of 'washback' effect of language testing. What is 'washback'? What does it look like in practice? It has been widely asserted that tests influence language learners who prepare to take them (the tests), and teachers who try to help the students to prepare, thereby influence learning and teaching in schools. 'Washback' effect refers to these influences of the testing especially in language education (Alderson and Wall, 1993; Hughes, 1988).

Although professionals have written about the concept, and definitions from the professionals' perspective exist, as yet little is known about how 'washback' actually functions, whether it really exists and (if it at all exists) what its nature looks like in the day-to-day school operation.

How do the Grade 10 students and their English language teachers react to (the nature and/or the effects of) the EGSEC English Language Examination? Has the exam any 'washback' effect on their perceptions of what the students do when they go about it? How well does the exam reflect the syllabi objectives, their content and method? By finding out answers to these and related questions, the researcher in this study attempts to examine the 'washback' effects of the existing Grade 10 EGSEC English Language Examination in six representative schools in Addis Ababa. An attempt is also made to determine the nature of the washback effect of the examination.

In the study, the researcher employed various methodologies such as questionnaires and checklists. Two questionnaires were used to collect views concerning the examination from 248 candidates and 13 English language teachers. From the 248 participant students, 131 were males and 112 were females. Of the total, 131 are from government-maintained schools, 50 from public and 62 from private schools. Among the 13 teachers, 4 were females. From the total 8 were from government-maintained schools and 3 from public, the rest from private schools.

And two checklists were employed to aid a detail analysis of two academic years (2004/05 and 2005/06) examinations. A total of 18 raters who represents the viewpoint of the program constituency, participated in selecting representative sample objectives for the analyses. Other five teachers also participated in making precise decision about the closeness of the items content and format to the syllabi objectives that the exam items attempt to measure.

The findings of both investigations revealed that the examination has washback effect on the students' as well as their English language teachers' perception of the students' learning and/or language use. And when seen from the point of view of coverage, relevance, and appropriateness, the examinations are found to have negative 'washback' effect on the learning /teaching process.

Based on the findings, relevant conclusions were drawn and implications for future test design were discussed.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Because of the great values of knowledge, skills and attitudes, in schools for survival and development of a society, today the demand for education is so great and so great will it be in the years to come (Kajubi,1973 cited in G. Bishop,1989). In fact, as educators agree, this education involves teaching. And the work of teaching requires a number of rigorous activities, of which evaluation takes the lead.

As defined by Pilliner (1982:97) evaluation is described as judging the worth or value of something.

In education, evaluation is concerned with the determination of the value of a programme in the educational setting as objectively as possible. The value of the programme is established by considering the values of the various activities within the programme which were designed to bring about behavioral changes in the target population (ibid.).

In a foreign /second language education, Davies (1990), as cited by Teshome (1998:264), pointed out that tests and/ or examinations, being integral components, play prominent roles in evaluating programmes by providing pertinent information.

In this case, the dependability of the test data is of prime importance (Madsen, 1983:178). To trust the data that the exams provide, one needs to be confident enough about the quality of the examinations themselves as instruments.

And this confidence can be built by evaluating the measuring instruments, the tests and/or examinations against the pre-requisites established (i.e. the lists of requirements which the instructional programme has identified).

It is, therefore, conceivable that the better the quality of the instruments (the tests), the higher the dependability of the data to be obtained.

Apart from being used to provide relevant data for evaluation, tests and /or examinations, as scholars like Heinemann and Ransom (1992:105) in NOE annual magazine(2000) suggest, have the capacity of meaningfully reshuffling the essence of education especially when done genuinely and precisely.

In their own words as cited in NOE annual magazine (2000:51).

Examinations can be powerful, low cost means of influencing the quality of what teachers teach and what students learn in schools...they can act not only as evaluators of educational achievement but also take responsibility for making good teaching learning happen (ibid.).

In the literature on language testing, this capacity of language examinations- the influence of the tests on the language teaching /learning process in schools is known as the 'washback' or 'backwash' effect of language tests (Alderson and Wall, 1992:2).

Although the notion of 'washback' or 'backwash' (the impact of tests on teaching and learning) is widely held and its existence is commonly asserted by educators (for example, see Hughes, 1989, Heaton, 1988 etc.), due to the perplexing nature of the phenomenon, no or very little empirical evidence has been established so far.

Regarding this Prodromou (1995:13) argues:

Although examinations and tests play a dominant role in the educational scene, the impact they produce on teaching and learning, particularly, in language education remained more complex to investigate and hence has yet not been adequately explored.

In the Ethiopian educational context, examining the outcomes of examinations and tests is still in a rudimentary stage. And the phenomenon is even worse in the country's English

language education (Teshome, 1998: 263), perhaps because of the difficult process it involves.

In almost all the high schools in the country, assessment in language education is accomplished with the help of language test and examinations which involve more difficult activities in their real selection and development. The English language examination which are offered at the different grade levels as part of the national examinations, such as the 8th grade examination, the grade10 EGSEC Examination, and the University Entrance Examination at grade 10+2 are cases in point.

Decision about the students' progress onto the high schools, preparatory (pre-university) levels, or about the students' further studies are made on the basis of these examinations.

Thus, to make appropriate decisions about the students' future, and to minimize the constraining effect which would result from their poor quality, tests and or examinations are worthy of the most careful attention from concerned educators.

In this connection, it is important to notice what Norris (2000:22) offers:

To keep our language assessment purposeful, we therefore need to evaluate the extent to which the language testing tools we select and use are actually helping to accomplish the job of language assessment in our classrooms and programs.

Thus, it is this area that the present researcher proposes to study.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Language, perhaps more than any aspect of our life, enables us be the social beings that we are. To everything that occurs in education, be it in schools or elsewhere, language proficiency plays a crucial role in one way or another (Oller, 1979). As it provides a good

access to new communities, proficiency in another language is a key that opens the gate way to a new world of understanding (ibid.).

Having a foreign /second language status, the English language assumed a significant role in Ethiopia for more than half a century (Teshome, 1998:268). It is used both as a language of world wide communication and as a language of instructions at the secondary and tertiary levels.

In schools, being compulsory in the students' academic career, the English language as a subject is given due consideration by the Ministry of Education. For the high schools throughout the country new textbooks that encourage communicative language learning and teaching have been published and distributed. And for the teacher educators, so as to enable them to cope with the demands of the textbooks, intensive in-service trainings have been launched for years.

However, as Shenkute (1998: 249) pinpointed, the testing practice has been given a scant attention in the reform effort despite the vital role it plays in the curriculum implementation.

Of course, as indicated earlier, following the implementation of the New Education and Training Policy of Ethiopia (1994), students in the high schools sit for a national examination at the end of grade 10. This exam has been meant as a transition to the pre-university education at grades 10+1 and 10+2.

It appears, among the most determinant factors for deciding students' continuity on to the pre-university courses or whether (if they couldn't continue to the pre-university) they fit (are eligible) for certain job recruitments in the world of work, their grades in English language matriculation (EGSEC) Examination are important just as the former ESLCE English Language Examination results were important in screening candidates for the few places in the universities.

Viewed from the development of communicative and academic abilities of the students, there is dissatisfaction with the quality of the national examinations among educators in the country (for example see, Dejenie, 1993:23, Teshome, 1998). This is partly due to the objective nature of the examinations (Dejenie, 1993).

In fact, as these national examinations do not seem to reflect the nature of the textbooks prepared and the changing approach of the teaching /learning process, which give more credit to fluency than accuracy, they might not be adequate to serve the purposes they were hoped to (i.e. certifying completion of high school -as an achievement test and serving as a selection criterion for pre-university admission -as a proficiency test).

Thus, as scholars like Alderson and Wall (1991), cited in Brown (2000: online) pointed out, the situation in the examination might result in redirecting the essence of the language education in the country.

In Ethiopia, studies on tests' washback are extremely rare. The studies to be cited were Dejenie's (1990, 1993) and Dereje's (2002).

As indicated in the study entitled, "Language Testing and its Washback Effect on Teaching: The ESLCE English Language Examination in Focus", Dejenie in his former work investigated the washback effect of the Grade 12 English language Ethiopian Secondary Leaving Certificate Examination (ESLCE) on the teaching of the language and on the instructional materials used. And in the later, he scrutinized and redressed the deficiencies of the mentioned examination.

Dereje also assessed the washback effect of the Grade 12 English language (ESLCE) examination of the years 1995/6 and 1997. His findings reported that the examinations were found to have negative impact upon the learning/teaching process; particularly, on the teaching content and methodology, on students' study techniques and on the way teachers design classroom language tests. The examination was found to have the negative

effect, for it urges the participants; teachers and students to concentrate on contents and tasks similar in nature and appearance to those that appeared in the earlier examinations.

Therefore, as little is done so far, investigating the washback effect of examinations (such as the present EGSEC English Language Examination) in light of the requirement of the curriculum (objectives in the syllabus) is vital to promote quality education for the learners at the secondary schools.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

The central purpose of this study was to explore and understand the washback effect of the grade ten EGSEC English language examination on the learning teaching process. Specifically, in the study attempts were made to:

1. explore the washback effect of the grade 10 EGSEC English language examination on the students' and their English language teachers' perception of the students' learning and/or use of the language.
2. investigate whether the grade 10 English Language Examination has any washback effect on the learning teaching process with respect to the syllabi objectives.
3. identify the nature of the washback effect of the grade 10 EGSEC English Language Examination.
4. find out implications of the washback effect on the teaching of English in the secondary schools.

1.4. Research Questions

To achieve the purposes of the study, the present researcher formulated the following research questions to be answered in the study:

Major Research Questions:

1. Has the EGSEC English Language Examination any washback effect on the students' and their English language teachers' perception of the students' learning and /or use of English?
2. Has the EGSEC English Language Examination any washback effect on the learning teaching process vis-à-vis the syllabus objectives?
3. What does the nature of the washback effect of the EGSEC English Language Examination looks like? -positive or negative?

Minor research questions:

1. How do the grade 10 students and their English language teachers react towards (the nature of) the EGSEC English Language Examination?
2. Has the EGSEC English Language Examination any effect on the students' perception of their language learning and/or proficiency?
3. What does the nature of the effect looks like? - Positive or negative?
4. Has the EGSEC English Language Examination any effect on the grade 10 English language teachers' perception of the students' language learning and/or proficiency?
5. What does the nature of the effect looks like? - Positive or negative?
6. How do the grade 10 students' and their English language teachers react to (the effects of) certain aspects of the EGSEC English Language Examination?
7. What proportion of the items contained in the examination addressed the most important objectives of the syllabi (the programme)? - appropriateness
8. What proportion of the syllabi objectives is covered/measured by the examination? -coverage.
9. What proportion of the examination items is relevant to the syllabi objectives? – relevance.

1.5. Significance of the Study

A study on test impact is very crucial in that it helps us to find out the accomplishment of the programme objectives.

Thus, the successful achievement of this research is hoped to help teachers, test experts, planners and researchers in the following ways:

- High school English teachers could be helped to put a clear idea of just how the English language examinations are functioning within their classrooms and programmes.
- Test experts and other people concerned may be provided with information on the actual academic effect of the English Language EGSEC Examinations.
- It may also provide interested researchers a beginning for further in- depth studies in the future so as to maximize the positive washback effect of the examination.

1.6. Delimitation of the Study

Since investigating all the various possible washback effects of a test (or examination) is beyond the span of a single study, the scope of the study is delimited to exploring the washback effect of the grade ten EGSEC English Language Examination on students' and their English language teachers' perceptions of the students' English language performance, and the effect of the examination on the learning teaching process with respect to the syllabi objectives.

In order to make the research manageable, the study area is delimited to six purposely-selected schools (two private, two public and two government-maintained schools) in Addis Ababa.

1.7. Operational Definitions of Important Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following research terms are operationally defined:

-*Washback/backwash*/: as Alderson and Wall (1992) defined, it is the influence of testing (examination) on teaching and learning; on teachers' and students' perception of what students do.

- *Perception*: attitude to, opinion about and /or reaction to (effects of) examinations.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. An Overview of the English Language Education in Ethiopia

To fully apprehend the impact of the examinations, it is very essential at the outset to have a good understanding of the English language education and its development in the educational history of the country. In this section, a brief outline of the history and status of the English language education in Ethiopia will be presented.

The full-fledged introduction of English language teaching in Ethiopia has direct connection with the history of modern education in the country. The beginning of modern education in the country dates back to approximately a hundred years, when the first government school was opened in 1908 in Addis Ababa (Bender, et al., 1976).

The teaching of English is believed to have begun in response to the quest of the time for a language that could help young Ethiopians to cope with the various political requirements of foreign affairs (Ministry of Education and Fine Arts, 1965 in Bloor and Wondwosen, 1990: online).

Ever since its commencement in the beginning of the 20th century, English has played very important roles for the country both as the second official language and as medium of instruction.

In the education sector the teaching of English has been made compulsory starting from grade one and as medium of instruction from the secondary school onward (ibid.).

Due to political and technological changes in the country, the teaching of English seems to have taken different positions in the country's education system, at different times.

With the spread of education throughout the country, today many Ethiopians particularly young Ethiopians are exposed to English language though the question of standard is worth considering.

2.1.1. The English Language Curriculum in Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, as stated earlier, English language has begun to be offered prior to the Italian occupation. As explained in the Country's Educational Policy Document (1994), the teaching of English as a foreign language is highly decisive, for the language is an international language and a means of creating effective link between the national community and the international community in other parts of the world.

However, while implementing the teaching for years, there were no written documents until the first book-form curriculum appeared in the late 1940's which was prepared with the aim of providing uniform and adaptable education to every community member throughout the country (Bender, et al.,1976:381).

As researchers like Bloor and Wondwosen (1990:online), and Bender, et al. (1976) indicated, since then there have been a number of developments in the country's language curricula especially with respect to the English language education at the different levels of schooling. These developments can be viewed under two broad categories in time as: the previous and the new English language curriculum:

2.1.1.1. The Previous English Language Curriculum

Despite some inconsistencies in implementation, the English language had served (being declared to serve) as a medium of instruction from 1958 to 1974 in all the schools (Bloor and Wondwosen, 1990).

With this, there were special recommendations in some cases. For example, "the teaching of English was to be delayed until grade 3 because large numbers of children have

Amharic (the national official language) as a second language and the burden of a third language (English) is too much for the great majority so early in school life” (Bender, et al., 1976).

Roughly looked, this curriculum adhered a 6+2+4 educational pattern.

The following table indicates the prevailing curriculum pattern prior to 1991:

Table1. The previous curriculum

Level	Years	Medium
University	4	English
Secondary	4:Grades 9-12	English
Junior Secondary	2:Grades7and8	English
Primary	6:Grades 1-6	Amharic (English as a subject)

As the table depicts, there was a sudden switch to Amharic (in the curriculum later in 1958) as a medium of instruction in the primary school, but it was criticized for being hasty and ill prepared (Tesfay ,1976 in Bloor and Wondwosen ,1990).

2.1.1.2. The New English Language Curriculum

The New Education and Training Policy Document which became official since 1994 states that English should be taught from grade one as subject and be used as medium of instruction for the secondary and higher education except for the teacher training institutions which would be in the medium of the nationality language of the region.

As the country’s Education Sector Strategy Document (1994: 15) publicizes the teaching of English should be strengthened so that students can not only have good grounding in

English from early on but also be able to tackle problems when English is used as a medium of instruction at the higher levels.

As can be seen in the table below, there is a change in the structure of the curriculum. The two junior secondary years (grade 7 and 8) have been pushed into the primary school, and the two Years of English medium has been replaced with the vernacular.

Table 2. The new curriculum

Level	Years	Medium
University	4	English
Secondary 2: Senior high school	2: Grades 11 and 12	English
Secondary 1: General Education	2: Grades 9 and 10	English (Amharic as a subject)
Primary 2: General education	4: Grades 5-8	Vernacular (English as a subject)
Primary 1: Basic Education	4: Grades 1-4	Vernacular (English as a subject)

2.1.2. The English Language Syllabi Goals of the Ministry of Education in Ethiopia

Today in Ethiopia, the English language is taught as a subject from grade one. The primary aim of teaching English in schools is basically to enable the students to learn, understand, speak, read and write the English language.

As indicated in Bender, et al. (1976), the objectives of English language teaching in the previous curriculum were to:

- increase the oral as well as written proficiency of the students.

- improve the learners' pronunciation.
- acquaint the pupils with the literature; and
- insure automatic control of the spoken aspects of the English language.

Based on the new education and training policy, the objectives to be attained at the different levels of the programme are provided in the accompanying syllabi. These new objectives are briefly set forth as follows:

In the elementary schools the objective of teaching English in the first cycle is to contribute for the all-round development of the child.

In the second cycle and in the junior high school, the objective is to prepare students for further general education and training.

During grades nine and ten where English becomes the medium of instruction, the students are expected to develop their general language skills of listening and speaking, reading and writing and the basic study skills which they will need in order to function effectively in further educations or at work. Moreover, at these levels it is said that the students will continue to develop the general communicative skills which will enable them to use English effectively in school, in everyday life and in the world of work.

The objective in the newly established pre-university level is to promote the students ability to express themselves with ease, in speech and in writing on a wide range of topics or situations and, especially in their own subject areas for a variety of purposes.

Developing autonomous learning in the students is also a common objective that the curriculum adheres to almost at all levels.

In TEIs (Teacher Education Institutes) the objectives are two fold: one is to improve the English language proficiency of student teachers and build their confidence in using it.

And the other is to equip them with the appropriate pedagogical proficiency in teaching the language at the different levels.

If one examines the content of the new English curriculum, one easily notices the attempts made to make the courses as holistic and realistic as possible when compared to the previous curriculum. However, it should not be denied that there are certain elements, in the previous curriculum which have been carried over to the new and certainly contributes to the development of the new programme.

When seen from the point of view of the universal aims and the general principles which are indicated in Curriculum Matters 1 (1986:1-6), it can be said that these objectives approximate the expected standard.

With these objectives, it was hoped that the standard of English would improve rapidly so as to meet one of the millennium development goals of the education sector by the 2015. Unfortunately, since the establishment of the new language curriculum, the standards of English of the learners at almost all levels within the educational system have not improved (Teshome, 1998).

2.1.3. Secondary Schools and National Examinations in Ethiopia

In this section, a brief description of the main types of schools and the resources (human as well as non-human) will be discussed. And to have a general picture of the examination, the purpose, the construction and the administration of the English language examination as part of the EGSEC examinations will be treated in the sub-sections. I shall also try to point out certain criticisms labeled against the national examinations.

2.1.3.1 Secondary Schools in Ethiopia

In Ethiopia in the present education system, as can be seen in Table 2 in section 2.1.1.2 above, the secondary education is divided into two distinct levels, secondary 1 (high

school) where general education is offered and secondary 2(senior high school)where the two-stream secondary education (art and science)begin.

At both levels approximately ninety-nine percent of the students attend government-maintained schools. This means that the Ministry of Education prescribes the curriculum and provides the schools with most of the operating costs: the teachers, school equipments, and text books....

The remaining students attend either public or private (including charity and/or church organization) schools which are mainly located in the major urban centers.

In almost all the schools throughout the country five days (Monday to Friday) are set as the working days of the week. And a working week is divided into 30-35 teaching sessions (periods) of 40-45 minutes each. From this, five to six periods are allocated to the English language course.

A point to be made clear at this spot is that all government- maintained schools in the country provide Plasma Satellite Television Education for most subjects' including the English language course. However, the private and public schools students do not have the access to this programme.

These differences may create a gap between the language performance of the students attending government-maintained schools and public or private ones. And hence the degree of the examination influence might vary from one school to another.

2.1.3.2. The Secondary School National Examinations

Currently, there are two National Examination administered every year at the end of each of the two cycles of the secondary schools. They are the EGSECE and the University Entrance Examination. The former is taken at the end of grade 10 by all students and by

any private candidate who can meet the requirements laid down by the Ministry of Education, and the later is taken at the end of the second cycle (grade 10 + 2). At both levels the English language examination is compulsory.

As mentioned in the National Organization for Examinations annual magazine (May, 2001: 35), the EGSEC Examinations serve two purposes- selection and certification.

Primarily, the exam is used to select entrants for the second cycle of the secondary school (i.e. preparatory level). And secondly, it certifies achievement. The certificate is awarded to all the students who sat in the exam. What is important is that the English language exam result plays a vital role.

The nature of the EGSEC English language examination is, just as all the other subjects, purely objective type. Every year 75 questions are set for the examinees. Machine- scored multiple choice item formats is used each year since the commencement of the exam six years ago.

The items preparation is the responsibility of (the National Organization for Examination section of) the Ministry of Education. Every year new items have to be written and administered without piloting.

As explained in the Country's Educational Policy Document (1994), the students are expected to grasp at least 50% of the skill and knowledge they have learned in the classrooms. This indicates that the examination is criterion- referenced and hence requires the candidates' mastery of the educational objectives set at the secondary school level (grade 9 and 10).

2.1.3.3. Criticisms Labeled against the Secondary School English Language National Examinations

The major criticism against the currently used English language examination stems from its purely objective nature. It is widely held that in language education, objective tests do not adequately measure actual performances, for they often do not help the candidates to produce enough of the target language.

Supporting this, Heaton (1988) argues that objective tests:

can never test the ability to communicate in the target language, nor can they evaluate actual performance. ...the process involved in the actual selection of one out of four or five options bears little relations to the way language is used in most real-life situations (p.27).

Dejenei (1993) citing Hughes' argument summarized the drawbacks in the use of multiple choice tests by saying that "The multiple choice format tests only the recognition of knowledge.... It encourages guessing and/or cheating. Furthermore, it severely restricts what can be tested and it is often very difficult to write successful items" (p. 26).

Ballinger (1972) in an article entitled 'Of Testing and Its Tyranny.' pinpoints the effect of multiple choice formats on the language learners by stating that "Multiple choice tests favor the superficially brilliant and penalize the student who has depth, subtly, and critical acumen" (p. 63).

It is therefore, necessary to check whether or not the EGSEC English Language Examination has an effect on the students learning. And it is this inspiration that urges the writer to work on the evaluation of the examination so as to see the 'washback' effects of the current EGSEC English Language Examination.

2.2. Testing, Teaching and Learning

In all educational settings, testing, teaching and learning are viewed as quite close together. However, as Prodromou (1995:13) pointed out, in language testing, teachers and students do different things from the things they perform when teaching and learning.

While explaining the impracticability of working in each without involving the other, Heaton (1988:5) states:

Both testing and teaching are so closely interrelated that it is virtually impossible to work in either field without being constantly concerned with the other.

Similarly, Lado (1961) argues on how principles in language testing should relate to principles in language leaning. In his own words:

The same basic understanding of the facts of language learning applies to language testing. What the student has to learn constitutes the corpus of what we have to test. Since the student has to learn language, it is language that we must test (p. 20).

In defining the relationship between testing and teaching, Davies (1968:5) mentioned that "a good test is an obedient servant since it follows and apes the teaching".

However, educators like Hughes (1989:2) are of the opinion that "the proper relationship between teaching and testing is surely that of partnership.", rather than that of servant and boss. As for him, testing should not be anticipated to occur by merely following the teaching. What is quite important is that "testing should be supportive of good teaching and, where necessary, exert a corrective influence on bad teaching"(ibid.).

This inseparable relationship of testing with the teaching /learning process, particularly in language education has further been elaborated by Charles Alderson (2004: online) who has an immense contribution in the field. In his argument on how much central testing

should be to the teaching learning process, he discussed and pointed out the fundamental aspects and instances as follows:

I am, of course, not the first to advance the argument that testing should be close-indeed central to-language education. Not only as a means by which data can be generated to illuminate issues in language education... and not only as an external control of curricular achievement, or as a motivator of students within classrooms, but also, and crucially, as contributing to and furthering language learning.

Thus, from this interdependent nature of testing, learning and teaching, one can see how powerful testing is in redirecting the focus of education to its essence of good teaching and learning. And it is this effect of testing on language education particularly on learning and teaching that educators like Hughes (1989:1) designate "Washback" effect of testing. In the following section, I shall discuss the issue of "washback" effect in language testing.

2.3. Language Testing and Washback

In this section, the available literature with respect to the definition and scope of washback, the mechanism by which it operates, the nature of washback, and certain ways scholars suggested for achieving beneficial washback, will be discussed.

2.3.1. The Definition and Scope of Washback

Several distinct definitions of washback ranging in difficulty from simple and straightforward to very complex ones have been provided by many different writers. Among these definitions, the following are most common:

Buck (1988: 17) as quoted in Messick (1996:257) describes washback as:

A natural tendency for both teachers and students to tailor their classroom activities to the demands of the test, especially when the test is very important to the future of the students, and pass rates are used as a measure of teacher success. This influence of the test on the classroom (referred to as washback by language testers) is, of course very important; this washback effect can be either beneficial or harmful.

Citing as examples the introductions of new English speaking tests in Israel and the ACTFL Guidelines and oral proficiency interview in the USA as driving forces to the change in the behavior of teachers and students, Shohamy (as indicated in Messick, 1996: 258) described washback as “the utilization of external language tests to affect and drive foreign language learning in the school context” (Shohamy, 1992: 513).

Messick (1996), following Alderson and Wall (1993), referred to washback as “... the extent to which the test influences language teachers and learners to do things they would not otherwise necessarily do” (p. 24).

In an article entitled “The Backwash Effect: From Testing to Teaching”, Prodromou (1995:13) defined backwash as “the direct or indirect effect of examinations on teaching methods.”

As quoted in Brown (2000: online), for Shohamy, Donitsa-Schmidt, and Freeman (1995:298) who reviewed Shohamy’s work, washback is “the connection between testing and learning.”

In short, this washback, also sometimes called backwash as Hughes (1989:1) put it is “the effect of testing on teaching and learning.”

Most of the definitions discussed above refer to washback in terms of the effect of testing or examination only on the teaching and learning process in language classrooms. However, taking the view that examination, particularly external-to-school examination

can have a more far-reaching effects within the field of education, different writers offer a much broader interpretation of the notion of washback.

For example, as quoted in Bailey (1999: online), Shohamy (1993b) annotates that:

External tests have become most powerful devices, capable of changing and prescribing the behavior of those affected by their results-administrators, teachers and students. Central agencies and decision makers, aware of the authoritative power of external tests, have often used them to impose new curricula, textbooks, and teaching methods. Thus, external tests are currently used to motivate students to study, teachers to teach, and principals to modify the curriculum. The use of external tests as a device for affecting the educational process is often referred to as the washback effect or measurement driven instruction.

While elaborating the notion of washback, Shohamy (1993:online) offered the following four basic and distinct definitions:

1. Washback effect refers to the impact that tests have on teaching and learning.
2. Measurement driven instruction refers to the notion that tests should drive learning.
3. Curriculum alignment focuses on the connection between testing and the teaching syllabus.
4. Systemic validity implies the integration of tests into the educational system and the need to demonstrate that the introduction of a new test can improve learning.

In an article that discussed the relationship between washback and curricular innovation, Andrews (2004: 37) as cited in Caine (2005: on line), describes washback as “the effects of tests on teaching and learning, the educational system, and the various stakeholders in the education process.”

Similarly, Bailey (1999: online), citing Pierce (1992), states that “the washback effect, sometimes referred to as the systemic validity of a test refers to the impact of a test on classroom pedagogy, curriculum development, and educational policy.”

Still there are writers (like Weir, 1998) who consider washback or backwash as a complex and ill defined phenomenon in language testing.

It is the writer’s belief that although it deserves further empirical exploration, as Messick (1996), Prodromou (1995), and Alderson and Wall (1993) argue, within the available literature, there seems a general consensus reached among educationalists in the field of second language testing about the basic definition of washback regardless of the various nomenclatures used.

Thus, the definitions clearly denotes that washback, is the impact of tests/on the learning and teaching process and its scope extends from affecting classroom activities onto bringing innovations both in the language curriculum and in the society.

2.3.2. How Washback Functions

In the field of second language testing, though the concept of washback has been on discussion for more than three decades (Cheng, 2004: online), many of the assumptions about washback and how it operates are not empirically verified for a variety of reasons (see Alderson and Wall, 1993 and Prodromou, 1995).

However, there are attempts made by scholars. For example, Alderson and Wall (1992:8) have developed about fifteen hypotheses to let practitioners and researchers possess better understanding of how it (washback) works. As they explained these untested but more refined assumptions were from their reading of the literature on language testing and from their own extensive work in Sri Lanka. These potential washback hypotheses (WHS) include:

1. A test will influence teaching.
2. A test will influence learning.
3. A test will influence how teachers teach; and
4. A test will influence what teachers teach and therefore by extension from (2) above:
5. A test will influence what learners learn; and
6. A test will influence how learners learn.
7. A test will influence the rate and sequence of teaching; and
8. A test will influence the rate and sequence of learning.
9. A test will influence the degree and depth of teaching; and
10. A test will influence the degree and depth of learning.
11. A test will influence attitude to the content, method, etc of learning and teaching.
12. Tests that have important consequences will have washback; and conversely
13. Tests that do not have important consequences will have no washback.
14. Tests will have washback on all learners and teachers.
15. Tests will have washback effects for some learners and some teachers, but not for others.

Similarly, in unpublished paper, Hughes (1993) cited by Messick (1996:262) identified three levels to clarify the mechanisms by which washback functions. These levels include participants (such as language learners and teachers, administrators, material developers, and publishers) process-any action taken by the participants which may contribute to the process of learning (It may include materials development, syllabus design, change in teaching methods or content, learning and /or test-taking strategies, etc.) and product (what is learned; the facts, skills etc.) .

While explaining the trichotomy of participants, process and product, Hughes (1993:2) as quoted by Messick (1996:262) said:

The nature of a test may first affect the perceptions and attitudes of participants towards their teaching and learning tasks. These perceptions and attitudes in turn may affect what the participants do in carrying out their work (process), including preparing the kind of items that are to be found in the test, which will affect the learning outcomes, the product of that work.

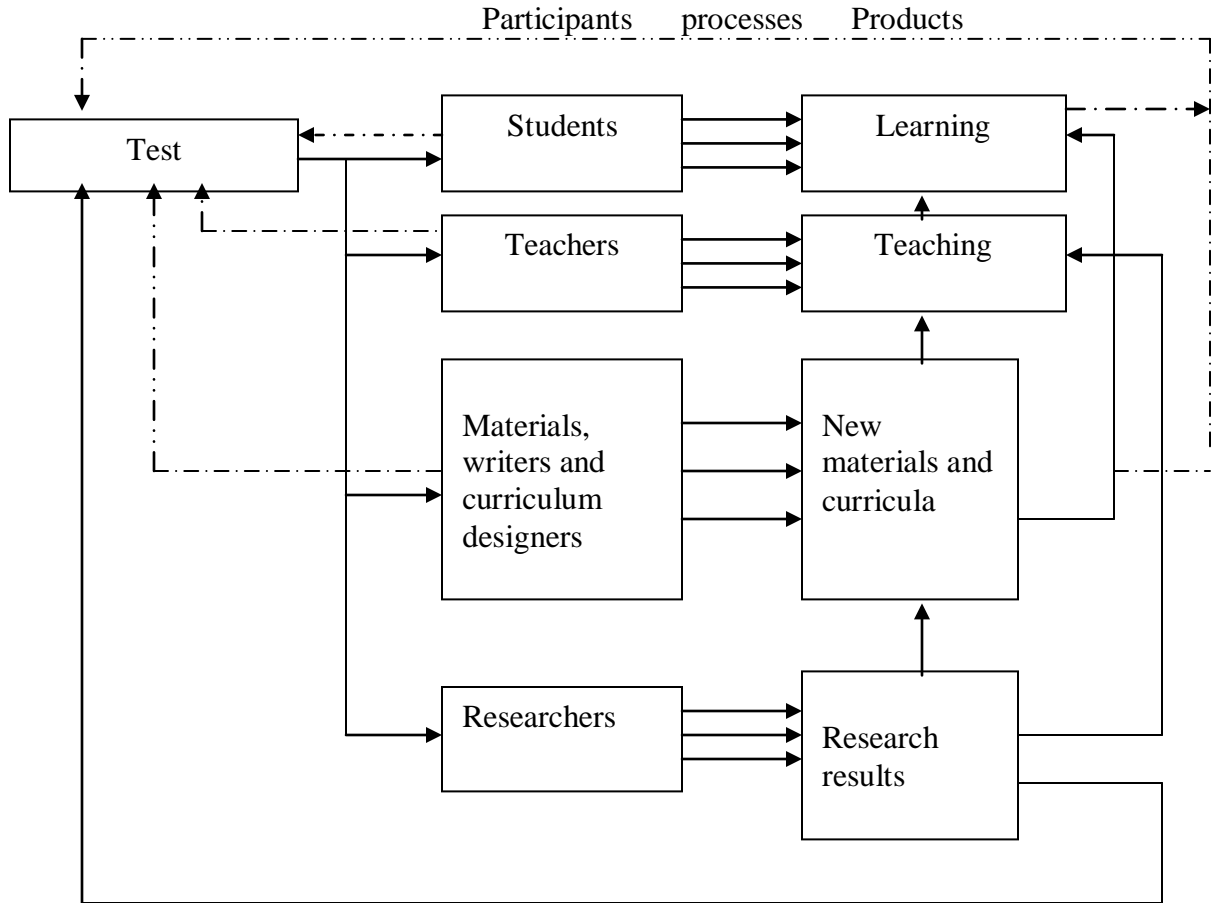
Thus, from this idea of Hughes we can understand that perceptions and attitudes of participants in the language education are among the key factors that can affect what the participants perform in relation to what they encountered in the testing.

Taking this into account, in this present research an attempt is made to see whether there have been impacts of the EGSEC English language examination on the language learners' and teachers' perceptions and attitudes and on what they do just by considering their reactions towards (certain aspects of) the examination.

Combining the ideas from Hughes (1993), and Alderson and Wall (1992), Bailey (1996: 263-8) simplified the mechanism of washback by making a further classification into "Washback to the learner"- the effect of test driven information provided to the test-takers and having a direct impact on them and "washback to the program' -results of test driven information provided to teachers, administrators, etc.

And based on a frame work suggested by Hughes (1993), Bailey (1996: 264) constructed the following basic model of washback to further clarify the content:

Figure 1.A Basic Model of Washback.



This basic model shows how a test directly influence the participants who are engaged in the various processes, which in turn produce a result specific to each category of participants.

Moreover, the dotted lines in the diagram represent what Bailey (1996: 263), citing Van Lier (1989), called “washforward”-a term which is used to designate possible influences from the participants on the test.

Carefully examining the model, one can envisage the interdependent relationship between the three components: participants, process and product, and the test; and at the same time he/ she can clearly understand how this important but intriguing concept works in the educational setting.

2.3.3. Negative and Positive Effects of Washback

In spite of playing a dominant role in second/foreign language education, as many educationalists agree, the issue of washback effect has not been fully explored yet. And perhaps due to this, most of the time language tests are believed to have a harmful effect on teaching and learning.

Consider the following assertion from Anderews and Fullilove (1994) in Bailey (1999: online):

Not only have many tests failed to change, but they have continued to exert a powerful negative washback effect on teaching.... Educationalists often decry the ‘negative’ washback effects of examinations and regard wasback as an impediment to educational reform or ‘progressive’ innovation in schools (P.59).

Nevertheless, this is not always the case, tests can have either negative or positive effect on learning and teaching as well as on the educational system and the society as a whole (i.e. washback can be harmful or beneficial).

In his book ‘Testing for Language Teachers’, Hughes (1989:1) citing instance from his own work, put it in a nut shell saying: “. . . backwash need not always be harmful; indeed it can be positively beneficial.” As for him, washback can be positive or negative depending on the quality of the test used.

In fact, this idea is also confirmed rationally by Alderson and Wall (1992):

It has often been observed that washback need not be negative: the term ‘washback’ implies influence, of any sort. If the test is ‘poor’, then the washback is felt to be negative. Logically, if the test is ‘good’, then its influence could be positive (p. 5).

However, as they noted as yet little evidence is available to support the assertions of existence either positive or negative washback (ibid).

2.3.4. Promoting Positive Washback

Scholars anticipate language tests to have a much more positive effect on learning and teaching and to generally result in improved learning habits.

Heaton (1988) for example, believes that:

A language test which seeks to find out what candidates can do with language provides a focus for purposeful, everyday communication activities. Such tests will have a more useful effect on the learning of a particular language ... (p.1)

Similarly, being aware of this, Hughes (1989) devoted a chapter about achieving beneficial washback and bid for the following core suggestions:

1. Test the abilities whose development you want to encourage.
2. Sample widely and unpredictably.
3. Use direct testing.
4. Make testing criterion- referenced.
5. Base achievement tests on objectives.
6. Ensure [that the] test is known and understood by students and teachers.
7. Where necessary, provide assistance to teachers.

Messick (1996) too, pinpoints that tasks or tests that promote positive washback are likely to be: “authentic and direct sample of the communicative behaviors of listening, speaking, reading and writing of the language to be learned” (p. 241).

Reviewing the available literature, Bailey (1996) suggests the importance of incorporating certain features which promote positive washback. The features are: clarity of the language learning goals, authenticity, learner autonomy, self-assessment, and detailed score reporting.

Furthermore, Bailey's (1996) remarks on how to promote positive washback relates what is to be tested to what a certain programme intends to teach.

In his own words:

...a test will promote beneficial washback to programme to the extent that it measures what the program intends to teach. If teachers and administrators can look at their students' performance on an external-to-programme measure that clearly relates to the programme, they will have confidence in the positive results (where students succeed), and they will take seriously the negative results (where students fall short of mastery (p. 275).

Therefore, although it demands a great deal of sacrifice (of time, effort and resource), it is vital to decide to test in a way that will promote beneficial backwash; in order to produce potentially competent people in the language, who will be proficient users of the language.

2.4. Validity and Washback in Language Testing

As scholars (like Ebel, 1979) suggested, the most important quality designed in any measurement procedure is validity; the extent to which the instrument measures what one wants to measure.

Depending on the purpose, this measure of appropriateness (validity) can take various forms: construct validity, content validity, face validity, etc.

According to Morris, Fitz-Gibbon and Lindheim (1987:99) content validity refers to "the representativeness of the sample of questions included in the instrument." And construct

validity of a test is “the extent to which you can be sure it represents the construct whose name appears in its title” (p. 94).

As they argued construct validity in a criterion-referenced test means: “How well the test matches the objectives it is supposed to measure” (ibid).

Logically, if the relationship between the test/ examination contents and the specific curriculum objectives is apt, then the test is said to have a good content validity.

In other words, the extent of match between the content of the test item and the delineated objectives ascertains the value of the particular test for that application.

From this point of view of testing, washback and test validity are interlaced (Brown, 2002: online). Thus, provided that the definition of validity is the extent to which a test measures what it claims to measure, washback become negative if there exist a mismatch between what is taught (based on the course objectives) and what is tested (the test content) (ibid).

Hughes (1989:1) is also of the opinion that “if the test content and testing techniques are at variance with the objectives of the course, then there is likely to be harmful backwash.”

On the other hand, as to Buck (1988: 17) cited in Messick (1996: 298), the washback effect on the classroom becomes positive when the exam ascertains the accomplishment of the educational goals held in the programme.

More interestingly, in an article entitled “Examining Washback: The Sri Lankan Impact Study.” Alderson and Wall (1992:P.6) suggest how quality of a test relates to washback:

...a test on its own would make all the difference. If it was a ‘good’ test (i.e. if it reflected the aims of the syllabus, and its content and method), then it would produce positive washback; if it was a bad test (if it did not) then it would produce negative washback.

In the language education, this seems well grounded, in that if syllabus is to have credibility, as many educators like Johnson (1998:6) as cited in Caine (2005: online) argue, “subsequent test items must be related to the content of that syllabus, and the item types in the examinations need to be selected and constructed with this ‘washback effect’ in mind.”

In this respect, so as to determine the nature of the washback effect (positive or negative) of the examinations, it is advisable to examine the value of the test/examination, for example, by considering the appropriateness, representativeness, and/ or relevance of the test items to the educational objectives set for that corresponding level.

And as Morris, Fitz-Gibbon, and Lindheim, (1987) suggest, to show the degree to which the test/ examination may be considered to be a valid tool in accomplishing its purpose, several indicators can be employed.

According to these authors, there are three indices which can accomplish this job (i.e. which can be used to evaluate the appropriateness of a test for measuring the program objectives.). These indices are discussed below:

The first and the most important index is what they called "Grand Average". The grand average “is the best index as a summary value for judging the relative appropriateness of a test for measuring the programme's most important objectives” (P.63).

High G.A means that a large proportion of items addressed to the programme's highest priority objectives are contained in the test. On the other hand, low G.A implies that the test contains items which are less important to the programme (ibid).

They argued that "the test with the largest grand average covers your most important objectives most adequately”. However, as it is a relative judgment high grand average doesn't necessarily mean that the test measures all the important objectives. It may rather

leave some most important objectives unmeasured. Yet this can easily be verified by working and looking at the other indices.

The maximum G.A value of a given test can be found by multiplying the maximum number of points in column 3 (importance of objectives) of the TPTC by 4. And the smallest value that the G.A can assume is of course 0.

The second index to provide numerical value with respect to the content coverage- the extent to which the test covers the programme objectives is what is known as the “Index of Coverage.” Index of coverage tells the proportion of program objectives measured by the test (P.64).The maximum possible IC value is 1 and the minimum 0.

In analyzing a test, if the index of coverage is high, say .75 or better, and if the test ranks well according to the other indices, then it can be said that the test represents the programme fairly (ibid).

The third index, “Index of Relevance” tells “the proportion of the test that fits the set of objectives and conversely it allows seeing how much of the test is irrelevant to the programme” (ibid). The value of the index can range between 0 and 1.

In addition to these three indices, one can obtain data about uncovered and poorly measured objectives just by looking at the number of items per objectives in the TPTC.

2.5. Studies on Washback

In this section, the researcher will discuss research method, issues and suggestions for washback studies and will cite some examples of washback research works.

Citing studies by Shohamy (1993) in Israel, and by Alderson and Wall (1993) in Sri Lanka, Messick (1996: 273) pointed out the appropriateness of making use of classroom observation and questions to participants in undertaking washback studies.

Similarly, Alderson and Wall (1993) put forward methodological suggestions (like observation, and triangulation- the use of two or more perspectives- data sets, informants etc.) to conduct washback studies.

Recently, Bailey (1999: online) citing examples, presented a thorough discussion of possible methodological opportunities for investigating washback in language testing. Observing classrooms and asking participants about washback, various kinds of triangulations (such as data triangulation, investigator triangulation...), and the uses of quantitative and qualitative data were among the appropriate washback research methods he discussed.

The pioneering research work conducted on washback effect of English language examination in Ethiopia is Dejenie's (1990). Dejenie investigated the washback effect of the Grades 12 English language ESLCE on the teaching of English in the Ethiopian context. In his work, he used both qualitative and quantitative data gathering tools which include: examinations, questionnaire, interviews, academic records and candidates' university grades.

Dejene's work surveyed the major weaknesses of the English language examination and the possible sources for the weakness. However, none of the English language ESLCE were analyzed and validated in his investigation.

The other research on washback is Dereje's (2002). In his work, Dereje employed questionnaire as a major data gathering tool. To cross-check the result obtained through the questionnaire, he made use of interviews and classroom observations. However, his analyses of the exam papers do not seem complete when seen with respect to the tests coverage, appropriateness, and relevance to the programme objectives.

Thus, apart from being conducted at different grade level with a newly introduced exam, the present study will attempt to redress this gap by employing different research tools, which are discussed in the following section.

CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Description of the Study Design

The main purpose of this study was to explore the washback effect of the grade ten EGSEC English Language Examination.

To achieve this objective satisfactorily, the researcher formulated three major research questions:

One central research question addresses the issue of whether there existed any perceived washback effect of EGSEC English Language Examination on the students' learning in a specific context of the study, which considered representative cases of government-maintained, public, and private schools in Addis Ababa.

And the second basic research question concentrates on the issue of whether the EGSEC English Language Examination has any washback effect on the learning teaching process vis-a -vis the syllabi objectives, which involve content analyses of the examination.

The third research question probes the issue of what the nature of the washback effect of the EGSEC English Language Examination looks like.

In this study, therefore, the content analysis of the examination complemented with a descriptive survey research design was employed to explore the washback effect of the EGSEC English Language Examinations in six selected schools.

3.2. Subjects of the Study

In order to answer these major research questions, 16 grade 10 English language teachers and more than 2500 grade 10 regular students of the academic year 2006/7 in six purposely selected high schools in Addis Ababa were used. The schools chosen were St. Mary's Catholic Senior Secondary School, Del Bir Senior Secondary School, Yekatit 12 Senior Secondary School, W/ro Kilemewerk Secondary School, Lasariest Secondary School and New Era Secondary School. From the 16 teachers, 6 were females and 10 were males. And from the total number of students about 980 were females and the remaining were males.

Moreover, four grade 10 EGSEC English Language Examinations which were administered since the academic years 2003/4 were used as subjects.

3.3. Samples of the Study and Sampling Technique

In selecting the schools, purposive sampling method was used so as to include representatives from all kinds of schools (i.e. Private, Public, and Government-maintained schools.)

To build up the representatives of the sample, from the four examinations, two were selected for the analyses using the same technique, for these two examinations were relatively fresh and timely. These were examinations administered during the academic year 2004/5 and 2005/6. The booklet of each of the two examinations contains 75 items.

In order to obtain an accurate data, the entire grade 10 English language teachers of the academic year 2006/7 in all the six schools were selected for the study.

From the total number of students, 248 were selected using simple random sampling technique. In determining the size of the sample, the researcher used Alen, G. Bluman's (1999:293) sample size formula:

$$(n) = \frac{p(100-p)z^2}{E^2}$$

With the proportion of the population experiencing the effect of the examination assumed to be 50%, as the researcher doesn't have information regarding the actual data.

Where: p - the proportion of the students who may experience the effects of the examinations from the academic year 2006/7.

z - the corresponding confidence interval (90%) is given to be 1.65.

E -the margin of error (or limit of accuracy) which the researcher will tolerate (i.e. 6%).

From the 248 sample students 112 were females and 133 were males.

3.4. Data Collection Instruments

3.4.1. Checklists

To achieve the basic research purpose, two rating scales or checklists (Appendix A and B/C) were employed.

The checklists were used to aid the detailed analysis of the examinations. They were utilized while computing the validity indicator indices namely; G.A, I.R. and I.C from the Table for Program Test Comparison (TPTC). The TPTC and the checklist formats were adapted from what was proposed by the Center for the Study of Evolution in CSE Test Evaluation Series cited in Morris, L., Fitz-Gibbon, G., and Lindheim, E. (1987:45-65).

3.4.2. Questionnaire

To complement the result obtained through the content analysis, two questionnaires were employed in obtaining data from grade 10 English language teachers and students of the academic year 2006/7. In this kind of exploratory studies, scholars (like, Bailey, 1999: online) annotate, a questionnaire is basic to produce a general picture from teachers' and students' reactions to the existing examinations. Moreover, during a preliminary observation the researcher came across teachers and students working on past examination papers in almost all the classrooms. And hence, as they have got the chance to see similar examination, it was felt that these participants can have perception about the nature and /or effect of the examination.

A structured questionnaire with 26 items was developed on the basis of the research questions and the related literature for the teacher respondents. The questionnaire consisted of two sections. The first section asked background information such as sex, school type, and qualification. The second part composed of 26 items, was organized under two separate directions. The first twenty-two items were structured in a form of five point-Likert scale. In this part, the teachers were invited to weigh their own reactions towards the EGSEC English Language Examination and the effects of the examination on the students' learning according to the degree of agreement. In the remaining four items, the teachers were asked to respond to a particular question by choosing or scaling and/or explaining their own views with written answers.

And for the students, a questionnaire with 24 items on the basis of the research questions and parallel to the teachers' questionnaire was designed. It was issued with the primary aim of investigating students' reaction towards the examination and the role of the examination in their own learning. The questionnaire for the students was translated into Amharic (the common language in the state) to minimize the language barrier in understanding and responding to the questions.

3.5. Data Collection Procedure

The teachers' questionnaires were administered through vice directors of the schools and was returned a week later after the teachers had had time to think and respond completely.

However, the students' questionnaires were administered to students by the researcher and two assistant field workers. This was done deliberately so as to control extraneous variables (like copying others' opinion) that might affect the credibility of the data collected.

To answer three basic research questions formulated in this study at the beginning, the following three-step detailed procedure, which was outlined in Morris, Fitz- Gibbon, and Lindheim (1987: 47), was followed:

Step 1: Refining and reducing the size of the set of objectives

First, a complete list of the significant English language course objectives was obtained from the accompanying syllabi of the two grades- grade 9 and 10. There were 156 specific course objectives obtained at this stage.

Having obtained a complete set of the specific programme objectives, the researcher reduced the size of the set into a manageable size of 60. In reducing the set of objectives the following activities were undertaken:

A total of 18 raters who represent the view points of the program's constituency were chosen by the researcher. From them, 8 were high school English language teachers and 10 post graduate attendants in TEFL who have taught in high schools.

Having got instructions from the researcher to base their decisions on what they think the students should learn in grades 9 and 10, the raters were asked to examine the pool of objectives and then rank-order them into categories with a 5-points scale. The points scale reads: 5= Very important, 4=Above average importance, 3= Average,

2= Below average importance, and 1=Unimportant.

The checklists were administered to the raters by the researcher in person, and were collected a week later, after the raters had had time to think and examine the whole set objectively.

Then, a mean per objective was computed for the whole set of objectives by the researcher. And the 60 highest ranked objectives were chosen. To avoid opinion polarization, a mean rating was conducted upon the 60 objectives by five post graduate students. Finally, a mean per objectives with the chosen objectives was calculated and the result was kept as a base for the analysis with the code number from 1-60.

This method of refining and reducing the whole set of objectives was preferred, for it is a good means of selecting representative objectives for the evaluation.

Step 2- Obtaining the examinations and assigning codes

Two EGSEC English Language Examination booklets of the academic years 2004/5 and 2005/6 were collected from the National Organization for Examinations.

Both examinations were coded as booklet number 78 and 78. These two were chosen randomly, for, as cited in the specification document, there is no significant difference in difficulty among the different booklet items of the examination. The items number, assigned to each, was kept as it was just as a code for the analysis. In this research, these two booklet codes were addressed as Exam 1 and Exam 2 with respect to the year they were used.

The total number of items of the two examinations was 150 of which 75 were the items in each examination. The analysis of the examinations was made separately.

Step 3-Estimating the relative match of the examination items to the syllabi objectives.

For each item of the examinations under consideration, the researcher examined and estimated the relative match between the knowledge or performance required by the item and the stated specific syllabi objective disregarding the closeness of the relationship.

And then, a checklist (appendix Band C) with three points scale was developed and given to five grade 10 English language teachers. They were instructed in advance by the researcher to analyze the test item's content, format and make more precise decisions about the closeness of the item's content and format, to the syllabi objectives that the test item tries to measure.

The strategy reads 0, 1, and 2. The raters were told to consider the following sort of questions:

- What specific learning does the item seem to measure?
- Do item formats on the exam correspond to those that are learned by the students in grades 9 and 10?

In the strategy, the teachers were told to allow the rating to be 1 if the match between the item and the objective is so-so (average). If they have doubts about the appropriateness of the fit, they were told to reduce the rating to 0. However, if the item seems to fit the objective well, then they could increase the rating to 2.

After that, a mean per objective for the rating was calculated by the researcher. Decimals were kept to the nearest. Then, the final result was registered in a three column format. It was used later while computing the TPTC.

Completing the TPTC also requires judging the appropriateness of the examination items to the students. Therefore, to decide the appropriateness of the items of the two examinations to the students, the researcher collected the corresponding difficult level values of each item from the National Organization for Examinations. Then, using the following strategy, the appropriateness of the items for the target students were determined:

If $DL \leq 20\%$ or $\geq 80\%$, the $IAP = 0$

If $DL > 20\% \leq 40\%$ or $\geq 60\% < 80\%$, $IAP = 1$

If $DL > 40\% < 60\%$, then $IAP = 2$

Where DL =Difficulty level and IAP =Item appropriateness for participants.

Then, the result was recorded in a three column format (appendix D and E) for later use when working out the TPTC.

Finally, the data collected through this rigorous procedure were made available for the final analysis.

3.6. Data Analysis Procedures

3.6.1. Questionnaire

To observe the effect and/or the role of the EGSEC English Language Examination in the students' and the English language teachers' perceptions of the students' learning and to discover the implication of the washback effect on the teaching of English as a foreign language in our high schools, the researcher, depending on the nature of the data, analyzed the result of the questionnaire using basic descriptive statistical technique mainly

percentage. It was used to aid the descriptive interpretation of the results obtained through both questionnaires.

The results of the questionnaires were examined and analyzed, based on the following three areas:

- i. Participants' reaction towards the nature of the examination.
- ii. Participants reaction about the role of the examination on students' learning and /or language use.
- iii. Participants' reaction towards (effects of) certain aspects of the examination on the students' learning.

3.6.2. Test/ Exam/ Analysis

To determine the appropriateness of the examinations for measuring the program's highest priority objectives and to investigate the degree to which these objectives were met through the examination, the researcher computed the three test validity indicator indices namely the Grand Average, the Index of Relevance and the Index of Coverage using the TPTC.

To obtain the numerical values while analyzing the examination using the TPTC, a step-by-step procedure was followed. The procedure was (slightly) adapted from what was proposed by the Center for the Study of Evaluation in CSE Test Evaluation Series which is cited in Morris, Fitz Gibbon, and Lindhiem (1987). The procedure runs as follows:

Step A: A TPTC with seven columns (appendix F) was prepared.

Step B: At the top of the table, identifying information such as the name of the exam and the grade level was supplied.

The total number of syllabus objectives used for the evaluation (appendix A) was filled in a box at the right top of the table (Box A).

Step C: A numerical identifier (code) for each item was registered in column 1 from 1 through 75.

Step D: Objectives that seem addressed at all by the corresponding test item were recorded in column 2. Where there were two or more objectives that seem addressed by a single item, all were recorded but the closest one was selected and its entry was marked (*).

Step E: A value (1-5) that refers to the importance of each objective chosen was recorded in column 3 (from appendix A).

Step F: A value (0, 1, or 2) that represents the closeness of the item's content and format to the objective selected in column 2 was registered in column 4(from appendix B and C)

Step G: A value (0, 1 or 2) that indicates item's appropriateness for the examinee was recorded in column 5 (from appendix D and E)

Step H: The three numbers in columns 3, 4 and 5 were multiplied and the product of these values was recorded in column 6.

Step I: Summary figures such as:

- the total number of items on the exam
- the sum of the different objective listed in column 2,
- The grand tally- the sum of the products in column 6 and
- The number of products in column 6 that do not equal zero were recorded in boxes B, C, D and E respectively

Step J: The numerical values the grand average (GA), the index of converges (IC) and the index of relevance (IR) were calculated and the values were recorded in boxes in column 7.

The formulas used to compute these index values were attached in appendix G (Please see).

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.1. Presentation of Results

This research was designed with the primary aim of observing whether the grade 10 EGSEC English language examination has any washback effect on the learning teaching process and what the nature of the washback effect looks like.

To fully achieve these purposes of the study, the following basic research questions were formulated at the very beginning:

1. Has the EGSEC English Language Examination any washback effect on the students' and their English language teachers' perception of the students learning and / or language use?
2. Has the EGSEC English Language Examination any washback effect on the learning teaching process vis-à-vis the syllabus objectives?
3. What is (if it has) the nature (positive or negative) of the washback effect of the EGSEC English language examination?

In order to answer these basic questions of the research, two distinct approaches were employed: one was analyzing the content and format of the examination, and the other was collecting grade 10 students' and their English language teachers' views about the examinations, using a structured questionnaire.

On the basis of these considerations, the results of the study are summarized as follows:

4.1.1. Questionnaire

Table 3. Student Respondents by Sex and School Type

School Type	Sex				Valid Total		Grand Total	
	Male		Female		No	%	No	%
	No	%	No	%				
Government -maintained	103	78.6	28	21.3	131	52.8	131	52.8
Public	24	48	26	52	50	20	50	20
Private	4	6.5	58	93.5	62	25	62	25
Unspecified	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	2
Total	131	53.9	112	46	243	97.8	248	100

Key: Valid Total=Total number of students who actually responded to the questionnaire.

Grand Total=Total number of students who participate in responding to the questionnaire.

It can be seen from Table 3 that 131 (53.9%) of the respondents are male and 112 (46%) of them are females. Regarding their school type, the table indicates that 131 (52.8%) of the respondents were from government-maintained schools, and 50 (20%) and 62 (25 %) of them were from public and private schools respectively. From the total number (248) of respondents, 5 (2 %) did not specify their school type and sex (missing).

As for the teachers, out of the total of 13, 8(61.5 %) teachers were from the government – maintained schools and 3 (23 %) were from the public, and the remaining 2(15.4%) were from the private schools. From the 13,only 4 were females.

In the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to reflect on a set of statements about reactions towards the EGSEC English language examination. There were about 8 statemens which invited them to weigh their reactions according to the degree of their agreement. The results of the responses are illustrated through the use of percentage and are presented in Table 4 below along with the 8 statements.

Table 4. Respondents' Reactions to the (nature of the) Examination

Item	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Valid Total		
	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	
It is possible for the students to do well in the EGSEC English language examination with out much preparation.	N	99	10	52	2	22	-	19	2	53	-	245	13
	%	40.4	76.9	21.2	15.4	9	-	7.8	15.4	21.6	-	98.8	100
It is important for the students to do well in the EGSEC English language examination.	N	32	-	4	-	2	-	27	1	180	12	245	13
	%	13.1	-	30.8	-	15.4	-	11	7.7	73.5	92.3	98.8	100
It is not necessary for students to practice for the EGSEC English Language Examination	N	116	9	48	2	26	-	26	2	18	-	234	13
	%	49.6	69.2	20.5	15.4	11	-	11	15.4	7.7	-	94.4	100
Getting a pass mark in EGSEC English Language Examination is a matter of opportunity.	N	94	9	58	3	43	1	15	-	29	-	239	13
	%	39.3	69.2	24.3	23.1	18	7.7	6.3	-	12	-	96.4	100
Doing well in the EGSEC English Language Examination does not grant for having good command of English.	N	75	-	67	2	40	1	17	2	45	-	244	13
	%	30.7	-	27.5	15.4	16.4	7.7	7	15.4	18.4	-	98.3	100
It is not necessary for the students to study for the EGSEC English language examination in their own time.	N	128	10	50	2	23	-	12	1	24	-	237	13
	%	54	76.9	21.1	15.4	9.7	-	5.1	7.7	10	-	95.6	100
There is no need to make additional effort to get pass mark in the EGSEC English Language Examination.	N	129	10	53	2	19	-	11	1	33	-	245	13
	%	52.7	76.9	21.6	15.4	7.8	-	4.5	7.7	13.5	-	98.8	100
Students show positive attitude towards the EGSEC English Language Examination.	N	13	-	17	2	23	2	54	9	138	-	245	13
	%	5.3	-	6.9	15.4	9.4	15.4	22	69.2	56.3	-	98.8	100

Key: S=Student T=Teacher Valid Total=Total number of respondents who actually responded the particular item

(-)=Not chosen by the responde

As indicated in Table 4, when asked their reaction about the examination, the majority of the students 192 (78.4%) agreed that their attitude towards the examination is positive and 23 (9.4%) were neutral and another 20 (12%) disagreed to the statement.

And encouragingly, more than 206 (84.4%) of them agreed that it is important to do well in the examination (Q.2) and, in turn, about 62% (151) agreed that it was difficult to do well in the examination without much preparation (Q.1). In the same table, although some 44 (18.4%) agreed, a large number of the respondents 152 (63.6%) disagreed to the idea that getting a pass mark in the EGSEC English language examination is a matter of opportunity.

These facts indicate that the students have positively perceived the examination, probably believing that it has at least something to do with ability rather than opportunity.

These straight forward sentiments about the examination were supported by reactions to many of the statements which more or less reflect the same issue (for example, see number 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7).

On the other hand, 9 (69.2%) of the teachers confirmed that their students display positive attitudes towards the EGSEC English language examination (Q. 8) while only 2 disagreed to the claim. And surprisingly, (100%) of them agreed that it is vital for the students to do well in the examination. At the same time, almost all the teachers (92.3%) believe that it is totally hard for students to succeed in the examination without much preparation (Q.1), and that is why all of them except one rejected the idea which states that it is not necessary to practice for the EGSEC English language examination during class period as well as in ones own time (Q 3 and 6).

In general, the above responses suggest that the examination has been favorably received by majority of the students and the teachers.

Respondents were also asked to reflect on their opinion or perception about statements that invite them to decide on the issue of whether they consider the examination as an agent for the practices the students perform in their attempt to learn (study) and/or use the language. This was done to find out whether any washback effect had occurred in the participants' perception of the students' learning and/or language use in connection to the presence of the examination. And the result of this is presented as follows:

Table 5. Respondents' Reactions to the Role of the Examination in the Students' Learning and/or Language Use

Item	Strongly Disagree			Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Valid Total	
	N	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T
Studying for the EGSEC English Language Examination improves students' English.	N	17	-	32	-	29	2	93	9	74	2	245	13
	%	6.9	-	13	-	11.8	15.4	38	69.2	30.2	15.4	98.8	100
The presence of the examination enables students to make the necessary preparation for the pre-university course requirements.	N	12	-	13	-	24	2	64	11	131	-	244	13
	%	4.9	-	5.3	-	9.8	15.4	26.2	7.7	53.7	-	98.3	100
The EGSEC English Language Examination does not motivate the students to learn/study English.	N	138	8	46	1	29	2	11	2	21	-	245	13
	%	6.2	61.5	18.8	7.7	11.8	15.4	4.5	15.4	8.6	-	98.8	100
Students have changed their studying/learning habits (styles) to meet the examination requirements.	N	17	-	18	-	31	2	68	9	111	2	245	13
	%	6.9	-	7.3	-	12.7		27.8		45.3		98.8	100
The EGSEC English Language Examination does not play any role in the students' learning.	N	69	10	57	3	56	-	28	-	34	-	244	13
	%	28.3		23.4		23	-	11.5	-	13.9	-	98.3	100
The EGSEC English Language Examination adds good pressure to the students to give more attention to the English course.	N	24	-	17	1	59	1	65	3	80	8	245	13
	%	9.8	-	6.9	7.7	24	7.7	26.5	23.1	32.7	61.5	98.8	100
The examination enables the students know what they should achieve to be promoted to the preparatory level.	N	15	-	22	-	29	1	74	10	105	2	245	13
	%	6.1	-	9	-	11.8	7.7	30.2	76.9	42.9	15.4	98.8	100

Key: S=Student T=Teacher Valid Total=Total number of respondents who actually responded the particular item.

(-)=Not chosen by the respondent

It can be seen from Table 5 that while 49 (20%) of the students disagreed, and another 29 (11.8%) remained neutral, the majority 167 (68.2%) of them agreed that their English had improved as a result of their studying for the examination (Q.1).

According to 195 (59.9%) of the students, their making the necessary preparation for the pre-university course requirements is attributed to the presence of the EGSEC English Language Examination (Q.2). Only 25 (10.2%) believe that the examination didn't help them make the necessary preparation for the pre-university course requirements.

More than eighty four percent of the teachers are also of the opinion that students' English language ability improves as they prepare for the examination.

The same number of teachers attests to the contribution of the examination for their students in making the necessary preparation for the pre-university level education (Q. 2).

In the same table, quite a large number of the respondents, 184 (75.1%) students and 9 (69.2%) teachers believe that EGSEC English Language Examination motivates the students to study or learn English.

Similarly, as large as 179 (73.1%) of the students admitted that they had made change in their studying/learning habit (style) so as to meet the examination requirements (Q. 4).

Eleven (84.6%) of the teachers believe in the existence of a change in the students' learning style following the direction of the style of the examination.

A possible explanation for this could be that a change in the students' and teachers' perception of the students' studying habit (style) is attributed to the perception of the style of the examinations.

In general, the responses indicate that students and their English language teachers are aware of the role of the EGSEC English Language Examination in the students' learning of the language, and it clearly shows that the contribution of the examination is positively welcomed by the majority of the students (see also responses to Q.5, 6 and 7).

Table 6. Respondents Reactions towards (the Effects of) Certain Aspects of the Examination

Item		Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Valid Total	
		S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T
The format of the EGSEC English Language Examination inhibits students from making the necessary effort to improve their English.	N	108	2	49	3	35	1	18	7	34	-	244	13
	%	44.2	15.4	20	23	14.3	7.7	7.4	53.8	13.9	-	98.3	100
The content of the examination strengthens the students' effort to improve their English proficiency.	N	16	-	25	2	16	1	84	3	100	7	241	13
	%	6.6	-	10.4	15.4	6.6	7.7	34.6	23	41.5	53.8	97.2	100
The tasks and the activities in the EGSEC English Language Examination urges students to concentrate on selected classroom language activities.	N	84	-	61	-	24	1	29	5	41	7	239	13
	%	35.1	-	25.5	-	10	7.7	12.1	38.5	17.2	53.8	96.4	100
The items in the EGSEC English Language Examination don't match the materials covered in the classrooms.	N	94	9	58	4	42	-	25	-	22	-	241	13
	%	39	69.2	24.1	30.8	17.4	-	10.4	-	9.1	-	97.2	100
The format as well as the content in the EGSEC English Language Examination are contradictory to what students learn in class.	N	113	5	46	7	34	-	31	1	17	-	241	13
	%	46.9	38.5	19.1	53.8	14.1	-	12.9	7.7	7.1		97.2	100
There are advantages that I observe from the presence of time limit for the EGSEC English Language Examination.	N	21	-	7	-	11	1	79	7	114	5	232	13
	%	9.1	-	2.9	-	4.7	7.7	34	53.8	49.1	38.5	93.5	100
There are disadvantages that I observe from the presence of time limit for the EGSEC English Language Examination.	N	87	2	49	7	33	1	22	2	50	-	241	13
	%	36.1	15.4	20.3	53.8	13.7	7.7	9.1	15.4	20.7	-	97.2	100

Key: S=Student T=Teacher Valid Total=Total number of respondents who actually responded the particular item.

(-)=Not chosen by the respondents

As Table 6 reveals, about 184 (76.4%) of the students consider the tasks and activities they encounter in the EGSEC English language examinations as good stimuli which strengthens their effort to improve their English language. Moreover, it can be argued that for majority of the students, the foci of the activities (Q.3), the time allotment (Q.6, 7), and even the tasks and /or content in each item (Q. 4) do not create any negative impression.

This shows that students have a more positive opinion about, the tasks, the format, the content and the timing of the examination, and about the effect these aspects (factors) have on their learning.

However, the teachers' reactions do not accord with this. As Table 6, indicates, more than half of the teachers (i.e. 53.9%) view the format of the examination as restraining factor which inhibits the learners from making the necessary effort to improve their English (see Q. 5)

As the data in the Table depicts, although students didn't admit, for majority of the teachers (about 92.3%) the activities and tasks in the examination urge the students to concentrate on tasks and activities that resemble those appearing in the exam. Thus, as for the teachers, the activities and tasks that frequently appear in the examination are driving forces for the students to do things and cover materials which they wouldn't have attempted to do (cover).In other words, this means students do not give more attention to those areas which do not appear in the examination.

With respect to the adequacy of coverage, all the teacher respondents didn't agree on the existence of a match between the test item content and the materials covered in class.

Therefore, it is worth noticing from Table 6 that the teachers' and students' perceptions of the effects of certain aspects of the examinations are incompatible.

4.1.2. The Test /Exam/ Analysis

To investigate whether the examinations reflect the aims, contents and methods provided in the accompanying syllabi of the grades 9 and 10, and to observe how well the examinations reflect the contents, method and the objectives, two EGSEC English Language Examinations of two academic years were analyzed.

The results of these items analyses are presented as follows:

table 7. Table for Program Test Comparison (TPTC) of the 2004/05 EGSEC English Language Examination

Type CRT NRT UNCLEAR

Academic Year= 2004/05/1997

Participate Level: Grade 10

Box A= 60

1 Test Item	2 Objectives that Match Item	3 Importance of Objective					4 Item Content and Format Analysis			5 Item Appropriateness for Participants			6 Product of Columns 3.4 and 5	7 Summary Figures
		1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	0	1	2		
1	1					5			2		1		10	Grand Average 7.96
2.	1					5			2		1		10	
3	1					5			2		1		10	
4	1					5			2		1		10	
5	1					5			2		1		10	
6	1					5			2			2	20	
7	21					5			2			2	20	
8	4					5			2			2	20	
9	4					5			2		1		10	
10	*3, 31, 32				4				2			2	16	
11	30			3					2		1		6	
12	7			3					2		1		6	
13	19			3					2		1		6	
14	40			3				1			2		6	
15	None	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
16	37			3				1		0			0	
17	31					5	0				1		0	
18	*3, 31								2		1		9	
19	52		2					1			1		2	
20	*3, 31, 32				4				2		1		8	
21	*3, 31, 32				4				2		1		8	

22	50				4				2		1		8	Index of Coverage 0.43	
23	51			3				1		0			0		
24	*52, 31, 3		2					1				2	4		
25	*3, 31				4			1				2	8		
26	19			3					2			2	12		
27	26			3					2		1		6		
28	28				4				2		1		8		
29	None	-	-	-			-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
30	*3, 31				4				2		1		8		
31	48				4				2		1		8		
32	4					5			2		1		10		
33	4					5			2		1		10		
34	4					5			2		1		10		
35	4					5			2		1		10		
36	4					5			2			2	20		
37	9				4				2		1		8	Index of Relevance 0.81	
38	9				4				2			2	16		
39	9				4				2		1		8		
40	6				4		0					2	0		
41	* 25 60				4		0				1		0		
42	* 22, 60				4				2			2	16		
43	* 38, 60				4			1			1		4		
44	34				4		0				1		0		
45	* 15, 60					5	0				1		0		
46	*23, 60				4		0				1		0		
47	*23, 60				4		0					2	0		
48	*25, 60				4			1				2	8		
49	*54, 60					5	0					2	0		
50	31					5	0				1		0		
51	None				-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
52	33					5		1			1		5		
53	12			3					2		1		6		
54	4					5			2			2	20		

55	* 56, 4				4				2		1		8	
56	*56, 4				4				2			2	16	
57	1					5			2		1		10	

58	1					5			2		1		10
59	1					5			2		1		10
60	1					5			2		1		10
61	21				4				2		1		8
62	1					5			2		1		10
63	21				4				2		1		8
64	21				4				2		1		8
65	35				4			1				2	8
66	1					5			2		1		10
67	1					5			2		1		10
68	1					5			2		1		10
69	10				4				2		1		8
70	10				4				2		1		8
71	10				4				2			2	16
72	59					5		1				2	10
73	59					5		1				2	10
74	59					5		1			1		5
75	59					5		1			1		5

Box
B= 75

Box = C 26

Box D= 597

Box E= 61

Key :(*) =Objectives that seem closely addressed at all by the corresponding test item.

(-)=An item which entered a zero value in the raw.

As the Table (Table7) indicates, test one has a grand average value of 7.96. Comparatively seen, this value is far below the maximum possible grand average value the test /exam can attain, which is 20. This shows that the exam omits more than half of the highly prioritized objectives of the syllabi. In other words, this test includes items that tend to measure attainment of only few of the most important objectives in the syllabi, perhaps giving greater emphasis to more of the less important ones.

Table 7 also shows that the index of coverage (IC) value calculated from the TPTC equals 0.43, which is still a low value. This indicates that only low proportion of the syllabi objectives are measured/ covered by the examination. This index of coverage value further shows that a larger set of the syllabi objectives were either left out unmeasured or were poorly measured by the examination.

Examining these two (GA and IC) values closely, one can find that the examination probably concentrates on measuring the less important objectives, ignoring the more important ones.

As seen in the Table, the index of relevance value of the examination is found to be as high as 0.81. This means that high proportion of the exam fits the syllabi objectives. However, when seen vis-à-vis the grand average value obtained, this high index of relevance value reveals that a large portion/part of the exam is doing a good job of measuring the attainment of only few of the most important objectives of the syllabi.

A similar items analysis was carried out on the 2005/6 academic year EGSEC English language examination. The analyses together with the summary figures are presented in Table 8.

Table 8 . Table for Program Test Comparison (TPTC) of the 2005/06 EGSEC English Language Examination

TYPE CRT NRT UNCLEAR

Box A=
60

Academic Year= 2005/06/1998

Participate Level: Grade 10

1 Test Item	2 Objectives that Match Item	3 Importance of Objective					4 Item Content and Format Analysis			5 Item Appropriateness for Participants			6 Product of Columns 3.4 and 5	7 Summary Figures
		1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	0	1	2		
1	9				4			2			2	16	Grand Average 6.88	
2.	9				4			2			2	16		
3	9				4			2		1		8		
4	1					5		2		1		10		
5	1					5		2			2	20		
6	1					5		2		1		10		
7	1					5		2		1		10		
8	1					5		2			2	20		
9	1					5		2		1		10		
10	4					5		2	0			0		
11	4					5		2			2	20		
12	21				4			2			2	16		
13	21				4			2		1		8		
14	4					5		2		1		10		
15	4					5		2		1		10		
16	4					5		2		1		10		
17	4					5		2		1		10		
18	4					5		2			2	20		
19	None					-		-		-		-	Index of Coverage 0.45	
20	None					-		-		-		-		
21	52		2				1				0	0		

22.	None					-		-		-	-	
23	31					5		2		1		10

24	24				4			1			1		4
25	30				4				2			2	16
26	7			3					2		1		6
27	39			3					2		1		6
28	24				4				2		1		8
29	*38, 60				4			1				2	8
30	* 25, 60				4				2		1		8
31	*15, 60					5	0				1		0
32	60					5		1			1		5
33	60					5		1			1		5
34	* 41, 60			3				1			1		3
35	* 41, 60			3				1			1		3
36	* 15, 69					5		1			1		5
37	* 23, 60			3				1			1		3
38	* 22, 60			3					2		1		6
39	55				4			1			1		4
40	19			3			0					2	0
41	* 3 ,31				4				2		1		8
42	37			3				1				2	6
43	24			3				1				2	6
44	None					-			-			-	-
45	31			-		5				0			0
46	*3, 31, 32								2			2	20
47	50				4				2		1		8
48	* 3, 6, 28				4				2		1		8
49	40			3					2		1		6
50	* 42, 31				4		0				1		0
51	12			3			0					2	0
52	* 39, 31, 3			3					2			2	12
53	* 52, 3, 31		2					1			1		2
54	*3, 31				4			1				2	8
55	* 52, 3		2					1				2	4

Index of Relevance

0.82

56	51			3				1				2	6
57	*3, 31				4			1				2	8
58	3				4			1			1		4
59	59					5		1		0			0

60	59					5		1			1		5
61	59					5		1			1		5
62	59					5		1				2	10
63	21				4			1				2	8
64	21				4			1				2	8
65	4					5		1			1		5
66	4					5		1			1		5
67	4					5		1			1		5
68	1					5		1			1		5
69	1					5			2	0			0
70	1					5		1			1		5
71	1					5		1			1		5
72	1					5		1			1		5
73	* 35, 1				4			1			1		4
74	1					5		1			1		5
75	21				4			1			1		4

Box
B= 75

Box C= 27

Box D= 516

Box E= 62

Key :(*) =Objectives that seem closely addressed at all by the corresponding test item.

(-)=An item which entered a zero value in the raw.

Table 8, demonstrates the analysis and the final numerical values calculated from the TPTC. As can be seen from the Table, the grand average value of exam 2 becomes 6.88. This value is found to be lower than the grand average value of exam 1. It can still be argued that the exam is not helping to measure the attainment of the most important objectives of the programme.

Similarly, the index of coverage and the index of relevance values of this exam approximate the values obtained from the TPTC analysis of the first exam (exam 1). For example, the index of coverage value of this exam is 0.45, which is more or less the same as the index of coverage value of exam 1. This value, as already pinpointed, depicts that a larger proportion of the syllabi objectives were left uncovered (unmeasured) by the items in the exam.

It can also be observed that the index of relevance value of the exam still remained as high as the value in exam 1 (i.e. 0.82). When seen in connection with the grand average value obtained, this high figure reveals that the greater part of the exam leaves much of the most important objectives untapped while concentrating on those very small important objectives of the syllabi and larger irrelevant and/or less important ones.

4.2. Discussion

The principal objectives of this study were to examine whether any washback effect occurs owing to the presence of the grade 10 EGSEC English Language Examination, and to find out the nature (positive or negative) of the washback effect (if it occurs).

Questionnaire and checklists were used to collect relevant data to answer the basic research questions formulated to achieve these objectives.

The data collected were synthesized and the results obtained were analyzed. And the findings of the study were high lightened in the first part of this chapter. In this part, discussion of the major findings of the study will be presented in light of the related literature reviewed.

Scholars (like Alderson and Wall, 1992:4) suggest that before embarking on the investigation of the existence of washback effect and its nature, it is at least conceivable to consider the influence of tests/examinations on the participants' attitude to, or opinion about the examinations themselves.

In line with this suggestion, the findings (as indicated in Table 4) show that the reactions (the attitudes, opinions, precipitations) of teachers and students to the examination were positive. That is the examinations were perceived as fair and essential to the students.

Recent literature on washback (see for example, Bailey: 1999: online) revealed that tests/examinations were commonly assumed to bring about changes in the participants' action and /or perceptions, and such perceptions may have a wide ranging consequences.

In this respect, the findings from this study proved that the EGSEC English language examinations were believed to have brought about a change in the students' learning. Thus, there is a washback effect of the examination on the participants at least at the perception level which can account for the presence of the examination.

According to the washback hypothesis a test influences participants' attitude to the content, method etc, of teaching and learning.

Similarly, Bailey (1996: 264) suggests that students are likely to engage themselves in practicing items similar in format to those appearing on the test particularly when they are faced with an important test.

However, the finding in this research is partially not consistent with these assertions. The results show a discrepancy between teachers' and students' reactions to (the effects of) certain aspects of the examination.

When they were asked how much the format, the tasks, and the activities in the test have influenced the students' English learning, the teachers claimed that the existence of certain trends seem to go in line with the examination. Students, on the contrary, viewed the presence of these aspects of the examination as stimuli that strengthens their effort to improve their English.

At this juncture, it can be logically argued that the teachers, as facilitators and participant observers of the students' learning, were able to notice the changes that the students were making to cope with the examinations requirements though the students were not aware of the changes they were making in their learning or study of English the way their teachers did.

Therefore, keeping in mind Messick's (1996) note of caution which says, "It is problematic to claim evidence of test washback if a logical or evidential link can not be forged between the teaching or learning outcomes and the test properties thought to influence them.", it can be concluded that the examination has had undesirable washback effect on the teachers' perception of students learning, though the students didn't perceive it that way.

However, there is no evidence to prove whether this participants' perception and / or attitude would necessarily bring about positive changes in the students' actual language performance.

And, it is the writer's belief that more research is needed to see whether and how the examination produces washback effect in the attitudes and behaviors of the language learners.

As most educators (like Buck, 1988; 17 as cited in Bailey, 1996; 268) would agree, washback can be either positive or negative depending on the degree of accomplishment of the educational objectives held in the curriculum (in our case syllabi). It is therefore, suggested that examinations are supposed to ascertain this accomplishment of the goals in the educational setting.

Thus, when examinations are prepared with this purpose in mind, they are likely to produce positive washback effect, for they force teachers and students to concentrate on tasks and procedures pertinent to the achievement of the educational goals held in the syllabi.

However, the finding in this study shows that the examinations didn't ascertain the accomplishment of the goals held in the syllabi. This was verified through the low grand average and index of coverage values obtained from the two examinations analyzed.

As discussed in the review part of this study, 'good' language tests are anticipated to reflect the objectives, contents and methods of the syllabi set for the level.

When viewed from this corner, as revealed in the test exam analysis data (through the summary figures from the TPTC), the examinations were found to be inefficient to appropriately measure the most important objectives and adequately cover the content areas held in the accompanying syllabi of the grades. Thus, this leads us to claim the existence of negative washback effect of the examinations.

In general, the findings in this study seem to confirm Messick's (1996) claim that washback is related to construct validity of the test. The fact that there is an obvious under representation of the constructs and/or the most important objectives of the courses account for the dependability of the claim that the washback can hardly be positive.

This also goes hand in hand with Hughes (1989) argument of the existence of harmful backwash effect, as long as the techniques and contents in the examinations are at variance with the objectives of the courses.

CHAPTER FIVE SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1. Summary of the Findings

As has been indicated elsewhere in this paper, the major purposes of the study were to investigate whether the grade 10 EGSEC English Language Examination has any washback effect, and detect the nature (if it occurred) of the washback and then to suggest ways of maximizing the positive effects of the examination on the learning/teaching process at the secondary level.

For these purposes, the following basic research questions were formulated:

1. Has the EGSEC English language examination any washback effect on the students' and the English language teachers' perception of the students' learning?
2. Has the EGSEC English Language Examination any washback effect on the learning teaching process vis-à-vis the syllabi objectives?
3. What is (if it has) the nature (positive or negative) of the washback effect of the EGSEC English Language Examination?

To answer these leading questions, two approaches were employed. One involved item analysis of two Grade 10 EGSEC English Language Examinations using a strategy adapted from a procedure suggested by the Center for the Study of Evaluation in the CSE Test Evaluation Series. And another one involved the use of questionnaires to collect data (views) from Grade 10 students and their English language teachers about the role and/or effect of the examinations.

The results of the data collected through these different approaches and instruments have been analyzed above. After the necessary data analysis, the investigator came up with the following major findings:

1. The reactions of the Grade 10 students and their English language teachers to the EGSEC English Language Examinations were positive.

2. The Grade 10 students and their English language teachers welcomed favorably the role and/or effect of the examination in the students' learning.
3. There is a perceived washback effect of certain aspects (format. . .) of the EGSEC English Language Examination on the students' learning by the Grade 10 English language teachers.
4. There is a perceived washback effect of certain aspects (formant. . .) of the EGSEC English Language Examinations on the students' learning by the Grade 10 students.
5. The Grade 10 EGSEC English Language Examinations were found to have inadequate coverage of the contents (objectives) of the courses.
6. High proportion of the examinations items was found to be relevant to few most important objectives of the programme.
7. Only low proportion of the items contained in the examinations were found pertinent in measuring the programme's highest priority objectives.

5.2. Conclusions

The study has clearly shown the instances of washback effect of the EGSEC English Language Examinations.

The study also shows the complexity of the washback phenomena. In that it is entirely impossible to claim an overall positive or negative washback effect of examinations on the teaching / learning process without considering the people that participate in the educational processes, the actual classroom events and activities, and the product of the processes in a particular context.

However, with respect to the context of this study; based on the findings obtained, the following conclusions were reached:

- The Grade 10 students and their English language teachers have positive perception of the EGSEC English Language Examinations.
- The EGSEC English Language Examination has positive washback effect on the Grade10 students' as well as their English language teachers' perception of the students' learning.

- Certain aspects of the examination (format...) have washback effect on the students' and the English language teachers' perception of the students' learning.
- The examination is not appropriate to measure the most important objectives of the syllabi.
- The examination fails to adequately cover or sample the skills and contents set at the corresponding grade levels.
- There is no close fit (relevance) between the items or tasks constituting the test and the major objectives of the curriculum (syllabi).
- More specifically, the Grade 10 EGSEC English Language Examination does not reflect the syllabi objectives, their contents and methods with respect to coverage, relevance and appropriateness.

Thus, the examination is likely to produce negative washback effect on the learning /teaching process.

5.3. Implications

Based upon the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made to different parties in the educational setting.

1. Further empirical data need to be collected

Regarding the students' and the English language teachers' perception of the effect of certain aspects of the examination (the format, the kind of task . . .), it is hopefully recommended that further empirical data need to be collected to provide more insights into the nature of the washback effect of the examinations.

2. A detailed blueprint ought to be developed

In order to appropriately define the types of skills and contents to be contained in the items of the examinations, the test designers should develop a detailed blue print. Hence, just as any construction, the more detailed the plan, the better the value.

3. Field test and /or evaluate the items or tasks

In order to verify that the test items are appropriate to measure the skill or knowledge required, they must either be tried out with sample respondents or should be evaluated so that based on empirical information about their performance; modification can be made in their actual use.

4. Test experts and curriculum designers should work jointly

If the examination to be used is hoped to reflect the programme's major emphasis, test experts and curriculum designers should work jointly in designing or selecting the appropriate tests.

5. Work for positive washback

Above all, and more generally, as far as the students' English language examination results continue to play their compulsory role in their future career, the examination's washback will remain as it is unless certain sacrifices are paid in developing tests and examinations that sample the most important objectives delineated in the curriculum.

Thus, in order to maximize the positive effects, the examinations should be selected or designed with the washback effect in mind.

APPENDX A
ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
OBEJCTIVE IMPROTANCE RATING FORMAT

Dear Teacher/ Rater,

This format has been designed for the purpose of helping determine which English language educational objective our high schools should be pursuing. Please read and then rate each of the objective presented below according to its importance (that you think the students should learn). Your genuine response will contribute a lot to the study so that the results may help enhance effective language education.

Thank you in advance!

Use the following 5- points scale where:

5= Very important

3= Average

2= Below average importance

4=Above average importance

1=Unimportant

Please tick [✓] in the appropriate box.

Objectives		Points Scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
N o	Students should be able to:					
1.	read for gist and specific information.					✓
2	tell a story by putting pictures in the correct order.					✓
3	complete sentences using correct verb forms.				✓	
4	deduce meanings of new words using contextual clues.					✓
5	tell a simple and short story to the class.					✓
6	ask if someone is sure, say whether they are sure or not with reasonable fluency.				✓	
7	combine two contrasting sentences using the conjunctions although, though, even though e.t.c.			✓		
8	write down some words and phrases while listening to the text and tell the story using the notes			✓		

9	arrange sentences in the correct sequence to make a paragraph.				✓	
10	identify the main parts of social letters				✓	
11	write a report using information given in note form.					✓
12	use the comparative + than and the + superlative to compare personas and things.			✓		
13	take dictation of unseen paragraph.				✓	
14	write a composition based on the four steps.					✓
15	ask for and give directions in English with reasonable fluency.					✓
16	narrate stories from pictures.				✓	
17	pronounce words correctly.				✓	
18	use sequence words correctly in writing instructions.			✓		
19	use adverbs in sentences in their correct positions.			✓		
20	introduce themselves to their teacher and to other students.			✓		
21	identify word references in a passage				✓	
22	use expression for asking, offering and accepting help			✓		
23	ask for and give advice with reasonable fluency.				✓	
24	make correct sentences that show purpose and past habit				✓	
25	ask some one to lend something to some one else			✓		
26	use 'because', 'since' and 'as'to make compound sentences expressing reason		✓			
27	look at a visual image to extract information.				✓	
28	use statements, questions and commands in reported speech correctly			✓		
29	listen to a story and write the story using the plan.				✓	
30	use relative pronouns correctly.			✓		
31	use the appropriate tenses to describe activities.					✓
32	use the simple present tense to express facts.				✓	
33	identify phrasal verbs and use them in sentences.					✓
34	say that you do not understand /know something				✓	
35	relate information from the text to their own experience.				✓	
36	change direct speech into reported forms				✓	

37	use the passive voice to express reason and result correctly.			✓		
38	make a private phone call and answer the phone in English.			✓		
39	use time clauses (when, by the time) correctly			✓		
40	use words and phrases which show result in sentences correctly.			✓		
41	ask for and give permission .			✓		
42	say what might happen using expressions like I think /am sure/ expect and words like probably, may be, might or perhaps in sentences				✓	
43	practice dialogues based on a given language patterns.					✓
44	use appropriate prefixes and suffixes to make words showing relationships with root words.			✓		
45	transcribe paragraphs as they listen to the teacher.				✓	
46	put sentences and paragraphs in the correct order and write story.					✓
47	make sentences of their own using defining and non-defining clauses.				✓	
48	join two sentences using present and perfect participle phrases.				✓	
49	report orally what they have decided to the class.				✓	
50	use the correct order of adjectives in sentences.				✓	
51	use adjectives of quantities to show their difference.			✓		
52	make sentences using the conditional .		✓			
53	write the last part of a story.				✓	
54	give an opinion on topical issues already covered					✓
55	express their intentions with reasonable fluency.				✓	
56	find synonyms/antonyms of words from the reading text.				✓	
57	study conversations and act them out in front of the class.				✓	
58	increase their knowledge of vocabulary by studying word families.					✓
59	punctuate a given text correctly					✓
60	produce meaningful sentences in context.					✓

APPENDX B
ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
FORMAT FOR RATING ITEM CONTENT AND OBJECTIVE MATCH OF EXAM 1

Dear Teacher/Rater,

This format has been designed for the purpose of helping determine the match between test item content and format, and specific course objectives. Please read and then rate the closeness of the relation ship between the content and the format in the test, and the indicated objective. Your genuine response will contribute a lot to the study so that the result may help enhance effective language testing.

Thank you in advance!

Use the following strategy:

If the match between the item and objective is so –so (fair), allow the rating to be 1.

If you have doubts about the appropriateness of the fit, then reduce your rating to 0.

If the item seems to fit the objective well, then increase your rating to 2.

Please tick [✓] in the appropriate box.

Item No	List of objectives that match the test items	0	1	2
1	read for gist and specific information.			✓
2	read for gist and specific information.			✓
3	read for gist and specific information.			✓
4	read for gist and specific information.			✓
5	read for gist and specific information.			✓
6	read for gist and specific information.			✓
7	identify word references in a passage.			✓
8	deduce meanings of new words using contextual clues.			✓
9	deduce meanings of new words using contextual clues.			✓
10	complete sentences using correct verb forms.			✓
11	use relative pronouns correctly.			✓
12	combine two contrasting sentences using the conjunctions although, though, even though e.t.c.			✓
13	use adverbs in sentences in their correct positions.			✓

14	use words and phrases which show result in sentences correctly.		✓	
15	None			
16	use the passive voice to express reason and result correctly.		✓	
17	use the appropriate tenses to describe activities.	✓		
18	complete sentences using correct verb forms.			✓
19	make sentences using the conditional .		✓	
20	complete sentences using correct verb forms.			✓
21	complete sentences using correct verb forms.			✓
22	use the correct order of adjectives in sentences.			✓
23	use adjectives of quantities to show their difference.		✓	
24	make sentences using the conditional .		✓	
25	complete sentences using correct verb forms.			
26	use adverbs in sentences in their correct positions.			✓
27	use 'because', 'since' and 'as'to make compound sentences expressing reason.			✓
28	change direct speech into reported forms.			✓
29	None			
30	complete sentences using correct verb forms.			✓
31	join two sentences using present and perfect participle phrases.			✓
32	deduce meanings of new words using contextual clues.			✓
33	deduce meanings of new words using contextual clues.			✓
34	deduce meanings of new words using contextual clues.			✓
35	deduce meanings of new words using contextual clues.			✓
36	deduce meanings of new words using contextual clues.			✓
37	arrange sentences in the correct sequence to make a paragraph.			✓
38	arrange sentences in the correct sequence to make a paragraph.			✓
39	arrange sentences in the correct sequence to make a paragraph.			✓
40	ask if someone is sure, say whether they are sure or not with reasonable fluency.	✓		
41	ask some one to lend something to some one else.	✓		
42	use expression for asking, offering and accepting help.			✓
43	make a private phone call and answer the phone in English.		✓	
44	say that you do not understand /know something.	✓		
45	ask for and give directions in English with reasonable fluency.	✓		
46	ask for and give advice with reasonable fluency.	✓		
47	ask for and give advice with reasonable fluency.	✓		
48	ask some one to lend something to some one else.		✓	
49	give an opinion on topical issues already covered.		✓	
50	use the appropriate tenses to describe activities.	✓		
51	None			
52	identify phrasal verbs and use them in sentences.		✓	
53	use the comparative + than and the + superlative to compare personas and things.			✓
54	deduce meanings of new words using contextual clues.			✓
55	find synonyms/antonyms of words from the reading text.			✓

56	find synonyms/antonyms of words from the reading text.			✓
57	read for gist and specific information.			✓
58	read for gist and specific information.			✓
59	read for gist and specific information.			✓
60	read for gist and specific information.			✓
61	identify word references in a passage			✓
62	read for gist and specific information.			✓
63	identify word references in a passage.			✓
64	identify word references in a passage.			✓
65	relate information from the text to their own experience.		✓	
66	read for gist and specific information.			✓
67	read for gist and specific information.			✓
68	read for gist and specific information.			✓
69	identify the main parts of social letters.			✓
70	identify the main parts of social letters.			✓
71	identify the main parts of social letters.			✓
72	punctuate a given text correctly.		✓	
73	punctuate a given text correctly.		✓	
74	punctuate a given text correctly.		✓	
75	punctuate a given text correctly.		✓	

APPENDX C
ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

**FORMAT FOR RATING ITEM CONTENT AND OBJECTIVE MATCH OF
EXAM 2**

Dear Teacher/Rater,

This format has been designed for the purpose of helping determine the match between test item content and format, and specific course objectives. Please read and then rate the closeness of the relationship between the content and the format in the test, and the indicated objective. Your genuine response will contribute a lot to the study so that the result may help enhance effective language testing.

Thank you in advance!

Use the following strategy:

If the match between the item and objective is so –so (fair), allow the rating to be 1.

If you have doubts about the appropriateness of the fit, then reduce your rating to 0.

If the item seems to fit the objective well, then increase your rating to 2.

Please tick [✓] in the appropriate box.

Item No	List of objectives that match the test items	0	1	2
1	arrange sentences in the correct sequence to make a paragraph.			✓
2	arrange sentences in the correct sequence to make a paragraph.			✓
3	arrange sentences in the correct sequence to make a paragraph.			✓
4	read for gist and specific information.			✓
5	read for gist and specific information.			✓
6	read for gist and specific information.			✓
7	read for gist and specific information.			✓
8	read for gist and specific information.			✓
9	read for gist and specific information.			✓
10	deduce meanings of new words using contextual clues.			✓
11	deduce meanings of new words using contextual clues.			✓
12	identify word references in a passage.			✓

13	identify word references in a passage.			✓
14	deduce meanings of new words using contextual clues.			✓
15	deduce meanings of new words using contextual clues.			✓
16	deduce meanings of new words using contextual clues.			✓
17	deduce meanings of new words using contextual clues.			✓
18	deduce meanings of new words using contextual clues.			✓
19	None			
20	None			
21	make sentences using the conditional .		✓	
22	None			
23	use the appropriate tenses to describe activities.			✓
24	make correct sentences that show purpose and past habit		✓	
25	use relative pronouns correctly.			✓
26	combine two contrasting sentences using the conjunctions although, though, even though e.t.c.			✓
27	use time clauses (when, by the time) correctly			✓
28	make correct sentences that show purpose and past habit			✓
29	make a private phone call and answer the phone in English.		✓	
30	ask some one to lend something to some one else			✓
31	ask for and give directions in English with reasonable fluency.	✓		
32	produce meaningful sentences in context.		✓	
33	produce meaningful sentences in context.		✓	
34	ask for and give permission .		✓	
35	ask for and give permission .		✓	
36	ask for and give directions in English with reasonable fluency.		✓	
37	ask for and give advice with reasonable fluency.		✓	
38	use expression for asking, offering and accepting help			✓
39	express their intentions with reasonable fluency.		✓	
40	use adverbs in sentences in their correct positions.	✓		
41	complete sentences using correct verb forms.			✓
42	use the passive voice to express reason and result correctly.		✓	
43	make correct sentences that show purpose and past habit		✓	
44	None			
45	None			
46	complete sentences using correct verb forms.			✓
47	use the correct order of adjectives in sentences.			✓
48	change direct speech into reported forms			✓
49	use words and phrases which show result in sentences correctly.			✓
50	say what might happen using expressions like I think /am sure/ expect and words like probably, may be, might or perhaps in sentences	✓		
51	use the comparative + than and the + superlative to compare personas and things.	✓		
52	use time clauses (when, by the time) correctly			✓
53	make sentences using the conditional .		✓	
54	complete sentences using correct verb forms.			✓

55	make sentences using the conditional .		✓	
56	use adjectives of quantities to show their difference.		✓	
57	complete sentences using correct verb forms.			✓
58	complete sentences using correct verb forms.			✓
59	punctuate a given text correctly		✓	
60	punctuate a given text correctly		✓	
61	punctuate a given text correctly		✓	
62	punctuate a given text correctly	✓		
63	identify word references in a passage.			✓
64	identify word references in a passage.			✓
65	deduce meanings of new words using contextual clues.			✓
66	deduce meanings of new words using contextual clues.			✓
67	deduce meanings of new words using contextual clues.			✓
68	read for gist and specific information.			✓
69	read for gist and specific information.			✓
70	read for gist and specific information.			✓
71	read for gist and specific information.			✓
72	read for gist and specific information.			✓
73	relate information from the text to their own experience.			✓
74	read for gist and specific information.			✓
75	identify word references in a passage.			✓

APPENDX D

EXAM 1 ITEM APPROPRIATENESS FOR PARTICIPANTS (IAP)

Item No	D. L	IAP
1.	.33	1
2.	.39	1
3.	.31	1
4.	.26	1
5.	.22	1
6.	.45	2
7.	.57	2
8.	.42	2
9.	.36	1
10	.52	2
11	.37	1
12	.37	1
13	.40	1
14	.46	2
15	.51	2
16	.15	0
17	.40	1
18	.38	1
19	.33	1
20	.32	1
21	.72	1
22	.34	1
23	.19	0
24	.41	2
25	.44	2
26	.53	2
27	.63	1
28	.28	1
29	.40	1
30	.32	1
31	.32	1
32	.30	1
33	.35	1
34	.25	1
35	.22	1
36	.59	2
37	.62	1
38	.59	2
39	.30	1
40	.57	2
41	.64	1
42	.43	2
43	.29	1
44	.78	1
45	.31	1
46	.32	1
47	.56	2
48	.56	2
49	.20	0
50	.26	1
51	.28	1

52	.39	1
53	.27	1
54	.46	2
55	.35	1
56	.54	2
57	.24	1
58	.24	1
59	.24	1
60	.26	1
61	.37	1
62	.27	1
63	.26	1
64	.39	1
65	.51	2
66	.39	1
67	.28	1
68	.31	1
69	.32	1
70	.35	1
71	.50	2
72	.52	2
73	.47	2
74	.30	1
75	.37	1

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
OBEJCTIVE IMPROTANCE RATING FORMAT

This format has been designed for the purpose of helping determine which English language educational objective our high schools should be pursuing. Please read and then rate each of the objective presented below according to its importance (that you think the students should learn). Your genuine response will contribute a lot to the study so that the results may help enhance effective language education.

Thank you in advance!

Use the following 5- points scale where:

5= Very important

3= Average

2= Below average importance

4=Above average importance

1=Unimportant

Objectives		Points Scale				
No	Students should be able to:	5	4	3	2	1
1.	read for gist and specific information.					
2	narrate stories from notes.					
3	read the text silently and extract the main ideas.					
4	deduce meanings of new words using contextual clues.					
5	match the new words with their definitions.					
6	make adjectives by adding the suffixes '-less' & '-ful' to some nouns.					
7	combine two contrasting sentences using the conjunctions although, though, even though.					
8	express necessity using 'must' and 'have to'.					
9	express permission using 'allow' and 'permit'.					
10	use the conjunctions although, though, even though in sentences in the correct position.					
11	write short answers to the questions while the second reading of the text is heard for a second time.					
12	use the comparative + than and the + superlative to compare personas and things.					
13	take dictation of unseen paragraph.					
14	write a composition based on the four steps.					
15	ask for and give directions in English with reasonable fluency.					
16	narrate stories from pictures.					

17	pronounce the words correctly.					
18	read a description of a picture and label the parts.					
19	use adverbs in sentences in their correct positions.					

20	read the text silently in order to infer the writer's ideas.					
21	understand the forms and uses of the past perfect tense and use them in sentences correctly.					
22	express themselves by making a dialogue.					
23	ask for and give advice with reasonable fluency.					
24	complete sentences using words while listening to the text.					
25	study how personal letters are written and write a letter.					
26	use the words 'steal' and 'robe' correctly in a sentences.					
27	look at a visual image to extract information.					
28	listen to a text and answer comprehension questions.					
29	listen to a story and write the story using the plan.					
30	label a diagram based on a given written information.					
31	add the correct negative prefixes to make the opposites of words ('un-' 'in-' and 'dis).					
32	participate as speakers and listeners in group activities.					
33	identify phrasal verbs and use them in sentences.					
34	make lists of phrasal verbs.					
35	relate information from the text to their own experience.					
36	listen to a text and follow directions on a map.					
37	use the map to give information.					
38	make a private phone call and answer the phone in English.					
39	discuss in pairs/groups to find the advantages and disadvantages of letters and emails.					
40	categorise ideas into advantages and disadvantages.					

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

OBEJECTIVE IMPROTANCE RATING FORMAT

Dear Rater/ Teacher,

This format has been designed for the purpose of helping determine which English language educational objective our high schools should be pursuing. Please read and then rate each of the objective presented below according to its importance (that you think the students should learn). Your genuine response will contribute a lot to the study so that the results may help enhance effective language education.

Thank you in advance!

Use the following 5- points scale where:

5= Very important

3= Average

2= Below average importance

4=Above average importance

1=Unimportant

Objectives		Points Scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
No	Students should be able to:					
1	write a CV.					
2	write a simple letter of application.					
3	organise paragraphs to make stories.					
4	use present participle and perfect participles phrases in sentences to express time.					
5	transcribe paragraphs as they listen to the teacher.					
6	put sentences and paragraphs in the correct order and write story.					
7	re-order pictures to make a story.					
8	make sentences of their own using defining and non-defining clauses.					
9	join two sentences using present and perfect participle phrases.					
10	put pictures in the correct order to solve a puzzle.					
11	be aware of arguments for and against actions for overcoming social problems.					
12	use appropriate prefixes and suffixes to make words showing relationships with root words.					
13	report orally what they have decided to the class.					
14	use the correct order of adjectives in sentences.					
15	use adjectives of quantities to show their difference.					
16	make sentences using the conditional .					
17	complete sentences using correct verb forms.					

18	write an application letter in reply to a vacancy advertisement in a newspaper.					
19	write the last part of a story.					
20	write a letter of complaint using the situation supplied.					

21	give an opinion on topical issues already covered.					
22	find synonyms of words from the reading text.					
23	express their intentions with reasonable fluency.					
24	study conversations and act them out in front of the class.					
25	write interview questions.					
26	scan to find answers to the comprehension questions.					
27	read a text silently to predict the content of paragraphs.					
28	skim the text and remember the main details.					
29	retell a story in outline.					
30	present what they have learnt from a story.					
31	prepare a project on women's work and how to help them.					
32	realize that a word can be used with different meanings and different ways.					
33	increase their knowledge of vocabulary by studying word families.					
34	use 'feel' + adjective in present and past tense.					
35	use 'feel' + adjective in present and past tense.					
36	match animal with the correct verb for the noise it makes.					
37	produce meaningful sentences in context.					
38	find compound nouns from the text.					
39	write compound words correctly.					
40	say what they did when they had the illnesses.					

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
 SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
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Thank you in advance!

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5= Very important

3= Average

2= Below average importance

4=Above average importance

1=Unimportant

Objectives		Points Scale				
No	Students should be able to:	1	2	3	4	5
1	make lists of words followed by infinitives, object + infinitive –ing forms of verbs					
2	express purpose using 'to' and 'in order to'.					
3	use 'unless' correctly in sentences instead of 'if not'					
4	change active sentences into passive forms					
5	make correct sentences that show purpose and past habit using 'used to'					
6	ask some one to lend something to some one					
7	use 'because', 'since' and 'as'to make compound sentences expressing reason					
8	make and complete sentencesusing so . . . that to express result					
9	change direct statements into reported forms					
10	make conclusions using 'must be' and 'must have' in sentences					
11	use the passive voice, express reason and result correctly.					
12	use correct expressions of time in reported speech					
13	identify different reporting verbs					
14	use the verbs in reported speech correctly					
15	change direct question and commands into reported forms					

16	use that clauses in sentences correctly					
17	use 'ago' and 'for' in sentences correctly					
18	use 'for' and 'since' in sentences correctly.					
19	give answers using adjectives of quantity.					
20	use time clauses (when, by the time) correctly.					

21	use words and phrases which show result in sentences correctly.					
22	use statements, questions and commands in reported speech correctly.					
23	identify the forms and uses of the present perfect tense and use them in sentences correctly.					
24	study the form and uses of the present perfect continuous and use them in sentences correctly.					
25	use the simple present tense to express facts.					
26	identify non-continuous verbs and use them in sentences correctly.					
27	make sentences with defining relative clauses.					
28	use relative pronouns correctly.					
29	discriminate defining and non-defining relative clauses.					
30	use the tenses to describe their activities.					
31	say that they do not understand something.					
32	ask someone how to do something.					
33	ask someone to repeat something.					
34	ask for and give permission .					
35	refuse permission .					
36	say what might happen using expressions like I think /am sure/ expect and words like probably, may be, might or perhaps in sentences.					
37	ask for someone's opinion.					
38	practice dialogues based on a given language patterns.					
39	ask someone to do something.					
40	give replies to requests.					

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SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
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Thank you in advance!

Use the following 5- points scale where:

5= Very important

3= Average

2= Below average importance

4=Above average importance

1=Unimportant

Objectives		Points Scale				
No	Students should be able to:	1	2	3	4	5
1	tell a story by putting pictures in the correct order.					
2	use question tags appropriately.					
3	answer questions in a questionnaire in groups and participate in class.					
4	act out conversations in front of the class.					
5	tell a simple and short story to the class.					
6	ask if someone is sure, say whether they are sure or not with reasonable fluency.					
7	match descriptions with pictures of insects.					
8	talk about harmful insects.					
9	match days of the week with their meaning.					
10	inquire using 'I wonder...?'.					
11	listen to a text and be able to label buildings on a map.					
12	listen to a text and match questions and answers.					
13	write down some words and phrases while listening to the text and tell the story using the notes.					
14	look at tables while listening and find days of the week on which events occurred.					

15	arrange sentences in the correct sequence to make a paragraph.					
16	write instructions by looking at pictures.					
17	make notes from a passage.					
18	arrange paragraphs in the correct sequence.					
19	say a word that begins with the last letter of the first student's word.					
20	write a report using information given in note form.					
21	arrange notes in the correct order and write a story.					
22	punctuate direct speech correctly.					
23	answer questions in full sentences.					
24	use sequence words correctly in writing instructions.					
25	introduce themselves to their teacher and to other students.					
26	use conjunctions 'and' and 'but' in sentences correctly.					
27	use pronouns and possessive adjectives in their written work.					
28	obtain information from the teacher's oral introduction.					
29	practice using functional expressions for advising some one what to do.					
30	use 'May' and 'Might' + past participle to express possibility in the past.					
31	proof read (their) writings.					
32	use expression for asking, offering and accepting help.					
33	use 'a few' and 'few', and 'a little' and 'little' with plural count nouns and uncountable nouns respectively.					
34	organize topics in chronological sequence.					
35	identify syllable stress of given words.					
36	divide words in to syllables.					

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

FORMAT FOR RATING ITEM CONTENT AND OBJECTIVE MATCH

Dear Teacher/Rater,

This format has been designed for the purpose of helping determine the match between test item content and specific course objectives. Please read and then rate the closeness of the relationship between the content in the test and the indicated objective. Your genuine response will contribute a lot to the study so that the result may help enhance effective language testing.

Thank you in advance!

Use the following strategy:

If the match between the item and objective is so –so (fair), allow the rating to be 1.

If you have doubts about the appropriateness of the fit, then reduce your rating to 0.

If the item seems to fit the objective well, then increase your rating to 2.

Please tick [✓] in the appropriate box.

Item No	List of objectives that match the test items	0	1	2
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ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
 SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
 DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
 FORMAT FOR RATING ITEM CONTENT AND OBJECTIVE MATCH

This format has been designed for the purpose of helping determine the match between item content and objectives. Please read and then rate the closeness of the relationship between the content in the test and the indicated objective. Your genuine response will contribute a lot to the study so that the result may help enhance effective language testing.

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Use the following strategy:

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Item No	List of objectives that match the test items	0	1	2
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ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
 SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
 DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
 FORMAT FOR RATING ITEM CONTENT AND OBJECTIVE MATCH

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Item No	List of objectives that match the test items	0	1	2
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ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

ITEM APPROPRIATENESS FOR PARTICIPANTS (IAP)

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ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
 SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
 DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
 FORMAT FOR RATING ITEM CONTENT AND OBJECTIVE MATCH

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Thank you in advance!

Use the following strategy:

If the match between the item and objective is so –so (fair), allow the rating to be 1

If you have doubts about the appropriateness of the fit, then reduce your rating to 0

If the item seems to fit the objective well, then increase your rating to 2

Item No	List of objectives that match the test items	0	1	2
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No		5	4	3	2	1
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5	Forming a pronunciation of 'nationality' words					
6	producing a simple table					
7	Form and use of past perfect tens and past perfect continuous					
8	the use of 'as. . . as' and 'not as/ so . . . as' to say that persons or things re similar or not					
9	Using 'May' and 'Might' + past participle to express possibility in the past					
10	Identifying transitive phrasal verbs and position of the object					
11	Using 'either. . . or' , neither. . . nor' and both . . . and' as a co-ordination conjunction					
12	Contrasting state verbs and ordinary verbs					
13	Revising verbs followed by infinitive of '-ing' forms					
14	Comparing 'a few' and a 'little' and 'little					
15	Using two adjectives in a suitable order before noun					
16	Using 'had to' as past form of 'must'					
17	Expressions for asking for a giving direction politely					
18	Practicing functional exponents for saying your are sure or note sure but something					
19	Arguing for and against					
20	Exponents for expressing intention					
21	Practice in explaining a logical intention					
22	Listening compels ions					
23	Understanding street directions					
24	Understanding the apostrophe to show that letters have been omitted					

25	Using the systematic procedure to write a composition					
26	Proof reading on (their) writings					
27	Writing a semi:- formal letter					
28	Using verities of punctuation marks					
29	Responding appropriately to a personal letter					
30	Writing a story based on a given out line.					

No	Objective					
1	Grouping related ideas in to paragraphs	5	4	3	2	1
2	Choosing synonyms as suitable alternatives					
3	Identifying syllable stress of given words					
4	Syllabication words					
5	Demonstrating relation ship of nouns. Adjectives, and verbs with a common root					
6	Using present participle phrase to introduce two simultaneous actions which have the same subject					
7	Using present participle phrase to introduce the first of two action which the same subject when one action closely follows another					
8	Revision of defining and non-defining relative					
9	using a perfect participle phrase to intrude the first of two action which have the same subject when one action closely follows another					
10	using 'a few' and 'few', and 'a little' and 'little' with plural count nouns and uncountable nouns respectively					
11	Revision of the forms and uses of conditional sentences					
12	Using 'unless' instead of 'if - - - not- - - '					
13	Revising direct and report speeches					
14	Expressions for you don't know where a place is politely					

15	Practicing functional exponents for suggesting and responding suggestions					
16	Practicing functional exponents for suggesting and responding suggestions					
17	Practicing functional exponents for saying what they would like					
18	Expression for asking, offering and accepting help					
19	Re-arranging given main points in the correct sequence					
20	Listing to and responding to spoken questions					
21	Simple note taking and guided note taking					
22	Writing a personal letter					
23	Writing a personal letter					
24	Using commas with words which give extra meaning, but which are not part of the main sentence					
25	Listening for the main idea					
26	Responding to a given situation					
27	Exponent for advising some one what to do					
28	Using apostrophe to show possession					
29	Writing a story based on a given outline					
30	writing a narrative.					

20. He always eats at -----restaurant in town.

- A. The best B. the better C. good D. better

21. the guests ----gradual the school by the director

- A. were taken B. took C. was D. has been taken

22. ----- I don't agree with him, I think he is honest

- A. since B. even though C. because D. no matter

23. He walks ----- I can never keep up with him

- A. so quickly that B. such quickly that
C. very quickly D. too quickly

24. You don not know when 'romhay' Hotel' is. Ask some body

- A. you ought to direct no Romhay Hotel

B. tell me how to get Romhay Hotel?

C. Excuse ma, can you tell me where Romhay Hotel is ?

D. you have been to soma, haven't you?

-----25. When I arrived at the hall, I found that the exam ----- A. is straying B. has started
C. started D. has started.

-----26. I have a bad cold. I -----it from Ali.

A. might catch B. may aught C. might have caught

D. may have atch

-----27 Which of the following sentence is correct?

A. she is beau fuller than her mother is.

B. she is beautiful than her mother is.

C. she is more beautiful than her mother is

D. 'A' and 'B' are correct

-----28. The foot ball match has been -----fill next month

A. put out B. put on C. put up D. put off

-----29. The teacher-----in this school for most of his life

A. a will have served B. will be served

C. will be served D. has served.

-----30 This is the place-----the accident happened

A. where B. when C. why D. who

-----31. I am very tired. I -----to bad now.

A. am going B. will go C. will be going D. shall be going

-----32 -----could you tell me how to get to the airport from here?

A. I'm sorry C. excuse me

B. that can I help your D. I'm afraid

33. This pen doesn't work. It is -----.

A. use full B. helpless. c. helpful D. usless

----34. He worked hard. -----, he passes all the test.

A. as result B. there fore C. so D. how ever

-----35. I wanted to join the Ethiopian air lines but my application

was A. turned up B. touch down C. turner down D.

touch up.

- 36. by using prefixes. Which one is the opposite meaning of the word A. dislike
B. in lucky C. un lucky
E. a lucky
- 37. Either you accept the punishment or ask excuse means-----. A. you should do both of them.
B. you should do neither of them
C. the punishment nor asking the excuse is advisable
D. you should do one of them.
- 38. Ethiopia is a land liked country means:-
A. surrounded by water B. surrounded by land
C. surrounded by mountains C. surrounded by trees
- 39. He would have come to the meeting if he had heard the message means:
A. He heard the message, but he didn't come to the meeting.
B. He didn't hear the message and he didn't come to the meeting
C. He heard the message and he come to the metting
D. He come to the meeting, but he don't hear the message
- 40. If you like-----, briefness until you buy anew one.
A. I' ll lend you new C. I'll borrow you my.
C. You'll borrow me your D. you'll lend me your
- 41. Genet and I are not speaking to each other. Weve -----.
A. fallen out B. fall for C. fallen through D. make up.
- 42. The rain is a ----- . Then we want to have a picnic.
A. deep B. noisome C. sharp D. deny.
- 43. He was -----of stealing 2000 Birr.
A. innocent B. confess C. quality D. deny
- 44. I awit can't run as fast as Haile. This can be expressed as:-
A. Dawit can run faster than Haile does
B. Dawit and Haile runes equally.
C. Haile isn't fast
D. Haile can run faster than Dawit does.
- 45 The students who went out were punished means:-

- A. All the students were punished
- B. Some of the students were punished
- C. Only those students who went out were punished.
- D. None of the students were punished

iii. The following five questions are on punctuation. Choose the best answer for the questions.

----46 in which one of the following is the comma used incorrectly?

- A. We visited Kartum, which is the capital of Sudan
- B. She was beautiful, Claver and honest
- C. It was, in my opinion, every foolish thing to do.
- D. In my opinion foot, ball is more interesting, then valley ball.

_____47 Which of the following is correctly punctuated?

- A. " have you seen him"? Asked john.
- B. "Have you seen him." asked John.
- C. "Have you seen him?" asked john.
- D. "Have you seen him" Asked john.

-----48 Which one of the following sentence is wrongly punctuated?

- A. Have you been to Mekele B. I what to become a teacher.
- C. What a cleaver boy your are
- D. Have they own the match

_49. In which one of the following is the comma used incorrectly?

- B. If she would come with me, I should be very gradually
- C. Unless you study hard, you will not pass
- D. When you go to Afghanistan, you should visit 'Torabora'
- E. You should bisit Toprabora, When you go to Afghanistan.

_____50. In which one of the following; sentence is the comma used correctly?

- A. He failed to finish his work, although he started really
- B. She don't, like parties. t here fore there's no point investing her
- C. Most of the students passed t he test. As a result, out teacher was very happy.
- D. I studied very hard, consequently I passed.

APPENDIX V

ITEM APPROPRIATENESS FOR PARTICIPANTS (IAP)

First Semester final examination items

Item	D. L	IAP
1	0.63	1
2	0.783	1
3	0.65	1
4	0.8	1
5	0.516	2
6	0.683	1
7	0.7	1
8	0.216	1
9	0.63	1
10	0.2	0
11	0.85	0
12	0.23	1
13	0.81	0
14	0.86	0
15	0.75	1
16	0.81	0
17	0.88	0
18	0.25	1
19	0.15	0
20	0.8	1

Table 1. Table for Program Test Comparison (TPTC) of the EGSEC English Language Examination

Type CRT NRT UNCLEAR

BOX A
60

Participate Level: Grade 10

1 Test item	2. Objectives that Match item	3 Importance of objective					4 Item content and format analysis			5 Item appropriateness for participants			6. Product of columns 3.4 and 5	7. Summary Figures
		1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	0	1	2		Summary Figures
1														
2.														Grand Average <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>
3														
4														
5														
6														
7	2* 14				4									
8	2* 14			3										Index of Coverage <input style="width: 80px; height: 40px;" type="text"/>
9	2* 14		2				0				1		0	
10	14 2 34			3				1		0			0	
11	3* 45			3					2	0			0	
12	37			3				1		0			0	
13	12* 75				4				2		1		8	
14	43			3			0			0			0	
15	3* 45				4		0				1		0	
16	None			3					2	0			0	Index of Relevance <input style="width: 80px; height: 40px;" type="text"/>
17	11										1			
18	9			3					2		1		6	
19	17* 76			3				1		0			0	

20	None					5			2		1		10	
21	9		2				0						0	
22	7 34 76		2					1			1		2	

Natural Approach

Introduction

Language teaching came into its own as a profession in the last century. Central to this process was the emergence of the concept of approaches and methods of language teaching. The approaches and methods concept of language teaching is a systematic set of teaching practices based on a particular theory of language and language learning.

With in language teaching approaches is language teaching philosophies that can be interpreted and applied in a variety of different ways in classroom. In line with this view, different linguists are still seeking to establish better alternative methods and approaches natural approach, of language teaching. Among these teaching approaches which is established in 1983, is the widely known approach.

The purpose of this paper is, thus, to provide an insight into the concept of natural approach. The paper gives an over view about the concept and definition of natural approach, its heoretical base, principles, procedures and finally its limitation.

The Concept and Definition of Natural Approach

The natural approach outlined as ‘a new philosophy of language teaching by Tracy Terrell in 1977. This was an attempt to establish “naturalistic” principle of second language acquisition studies. Then after, Terrell along with Krashen proposed natural approach in 1983 (Richards and Rodgers 1986:128).

The Natural approach as defined by Krashen and Terrell (1983:9) is believed to conform to the naturalistic principles found in successful second language acquisition. And the approach is called natural, psychological, phonetic, new reform, direct, analytic, imitative and so fourth.

In line with this, natural approach, unlike the direct method, gives less emphasis on teacher monologues, direct repetition, formal questions and answer and less focus on accurate production of target language sentences. On the contrary, emphasizes on exposure, or input, optimizing emotional

preparedness, attention to what learner hear before produce language (Richards and Rodgers 1988:129).

Theoretical Base of Natural Approach

Natural approach is based on theory of language and theory of language learning to develop its principle and procedure.

According to Krashen and Terrell (1983), in Natural approach, communication considered as a primary function of language, so language teaching focuses on teaching communicative abilities. In addition, language is viewed as vehicle for communicating meaning and message, therefore acquisition can only takes place when people understand message and meaning in target language. And the approach give emphasis for meaning and vocabulary teaching.

Similarly, natural approach (Richards and Rodgers, 1986) ground on Krashen's views of language acquisition, which collectively refers to as Krashen's language acquisition theory in second language learning. These five hypothesis have the following obvious implications for language in which the natural approach use as a base for its principles and procedures.

1. As much comprehensible input as possible must be presented.
2. Visual aids are use full a long with compressible input to a wide range a vocabulary rather than grammar study.
3. The focus in the classroom should be on listening and reading, speaking should emerge later .
4. To lower the affective filter, meaning full communication and interesting input are necessary. (1986:133).

Principles of Natural Approach

Krashen and Terrell (1983:20) put the main principle of natural approach as follows:

1. Comprehension precedes production. i.e. Listening (or reading) comprehension precedes speaking or (writing) abilities.
2. Production is allowed to emerge in stages. In other word, students can start with responding in

non-verbal communication, and then response with incomplete, ungrammatical sentences, and finally with complete sentences and more complex discourse.

3. The course syllabus consist of communicative goals, which means that the class room activity is organized by topic used to develop communication, not grammatical structure.
4. Classroom activities should focus on interesting and relevant to students and encourage them to express their ideas, openions, desirers, emotions and feeling to lower the affective filter of the students.

Roles of Students and Teacher in Natural Approach

Student's Role

In national approach, the extent of students involving in meaning full communication will determine the amount and kind of acquiring experience. Therefore, students are considered as the processor of compressible in put (Richards and Rodgers 1986:136-137).

Learners' roles are seen to change according to their stages of linguistics development. Richard and Roger put the three stages of linguistic development and the responsibilities as follows:

Stages of Linguistic Development

1. The Pre- Production stages: students part in the activities with out responding in target language.
2. In the early production Stage: Students respond to either or questions, use single word and short phrase.
3. In the speech emergent phase: students involves them selves in role play and games , contribute personal information and open ions, and participate in group problem solving (1986:139) .

Learner's Responsibilities

1. Provide information about their specific goals
2. take an active role in ensuring comprehensible input
3. Decide when to start producing speech and when to upgrade it.
4. where grammar study are to be a part of the program, decide the time to devote and complete and correct independently. (1986:137)

Teacher's Roles

The natural approach teacher has three central roles:

1. The Primary generator of comprehensible input in target language;
2. Creating a good classroom atmosphere that is interesting, friendly, and allow affective filter for learning.
3. Choosing and Orchestrating a rich mix of classroom activities, involving a variety of group size, content and context (Richards and Roger 1986: 137-138).

Classroom Procedures of Natural Approach

Natural approach (Richard and Rodgers) adopts techniques and activities freely from various method sources and be regarded as innovative only with respect to the purpose for which they are recommended and the way they are used (Richard and Rodgers 1986:139).

On web site, Bai (1996) also summarize the classroom procedure of natural approach as follows:

1. The Teacher chose a topic of interest for the students
2. The teacher speaks only in the target language
3. The students are not forced to respond but required to understand what is said.
4. The teacher attempts to maintain a constant flow of comprehensible input by using repetition or paraphrase to increase comprehension.
5. Students may respond in either broken target language or first language. Student's errors are ignored, unless there is some communication failure.
6. Students are grouped for communication activities. The focus on meaning is certainly desirable.

Limitation of Natural Approach

Although natural approach recognizes principles related to the natural development of language, it has limitation in their application.

On web sit, Bai (1996) summarized the limitation as follow:

Natural approach ignores some of the instructional principle and individual learner's differences. For instance, presenting the language without reference to any grammar at the very first meeting may not work well with adult learners.

It also involves too much guessing on too many things such as the words, the syntax etc and it may, to some extent, confuse and frustrate the learners.

It would make the input more compressible if we rely on some grammatical explanation. Since some adult such as university students already posses the ability to use grammar to aid comprehension.

An other limitation is the absence of correction of errors both research and logical analysis show that the errors can become fossilized over time with out adequate correction.

Finally the selection, reproduction, and collection of materials place a considerable burden on the natural approach teachers.

Conclusion

The natural approach, a focus on compression and meaning full communication as well as the provision of the right kind of comprehensible input which provide the necessary and sufficient conditions for successful classroom second and foreign language acquisition. Like communicative language teaching, the Natural Approach is hence evolutionary rather than revolutionary in its procedures. Its greatest claim to originality lies not in the techniques it employs but in the method emphasizes

comprehensible and meaning full practice activities, rather than production of grammatically perfect utterances and sentences.

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ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE
GRADUATE STUDIES PROGRAMME

Natural Approach

Course: Language Teaching Theories and Approaches (TEFL-601)

Submitted to:

Dr. Alemu Hailu

By:

Tadesse H/Mariam (GSR/0356/99)

January 2007

Addis Ababa

The Test /Exam/ Analysis

To investigate whether the examinations reflect the aims, contents and method. Provided in the accompanying syllabi and to observe how well the examinations reflected the content, method and the objectives, (if they did), two EGSEC English language examinations of two academic years were analyzed. The result of these items analyses are presented as follow:

Table 7. Table for program text comparison (TPTC) of the 2005 EGSEC English language examination

As the table indicates, test one has a grand average value of 7.96. comparatively seen, this value is far below the possible grand average value the text learn can attain which is 20. This shows that the exam omits more than half of the highly prioritized objectives of the syllabi. In other words, this test includes items that tend to measure attainment of only few of the most important objectives in the syllabi, perhaps giving greater emphasis to more of the less important ones.

Table 7 also show t hat the index of coverage (IC) value calculated from the TPTC equals 0.43, which is still low value. This indicates that only low proportion of the syllabi objectives are measured/ covered by the examination. This index of coverage value further shows that a larger set of the syllabi objectives were either left out unmeasured or were poorly measured by the examination.

Examining these two (GA and IC) Values closely, one can find that, the examination probably concretes on measuring the less important objectives, ignoring the more important ones.

As seen in the table, the index of relevance value of the examination is found to be as high as 0.81. This means that high proportion of the exam fits the syllabi objectives. However, when seen vis-à-vis the grand average value obtained, this high index of relevance value reveal that a large portion/part of the exam is doing a good job of measuring the attainment of only few of the most important objectives of the syllabi.

A similar items analysis was carried out on the 2006 academic year EGSEC English language examination. The analysis together with the summary figures the presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Table for program test comparison (TPTC) of the 2006 EGSEC English language examination

Table 8, demonstrates the analysis and the final numerical values calculated from the TPTC. AS can be seen from the table, the grand average value of exam 2 become 6.88. This value is found to be lower than the grand average value of exam 1. It can still be argued that the exam is not helping to measure the attainment of the most important objectives of the program.

Similarly, the index of coverage and the index of relevance values of this exam approximates the values obtained from the TPTC analysis of the first exam (exam 1). For example, the index of coverage value of this exam is 0.45, which is more or less the same as the index of coverage value of exam 1. This value, as already pinpointed, depicts that a larger proportion of the syllabi objectives were left uncovered unmeasured by the items in the exam.

It can also be observed that the index of relevance value of the exam still remained as high as the value in exam 1(i.e.0.82). This high figure reveal that the greater part of the exam leaves much of the most important objectives untapped while concern the most important objectives untapped while concentrating on those very small important objectives if the syllabi and larger irrelevant and/or less important ones.

Discussion

The principal objectives of this study were to examine whether the grade 10 EGSEC English language examination had had only wash back effect and to find out the nature (positive or negative) of the wash back (if it occurred).

Questionnaire and checklists were used to collect relevant data to answer the basic research questions formulated so as to achieve these objectives.

The data collected were synthesized and the results obtained were analyzed. And the findings of the study were high lightened in the first part of this chapter. In this part discussion of the major findings of the study will be presented in light of the related literature reviewed.

Scholars (like Alderson and Wall, 1992:4) suggest that before embarking to investigate the existence of wash back effect and its nature, it is at least conceivable to consider the influence of tests/examinations on the participants' attitude to, or opinion about the examinations themselves.

Recently literature, on wash back (see for example, Cailey: 1999: online) revealed that tests/examinations were commonly assumed to bring about changes in the participants' action and /or perceptions, and such perceptions may have a wide ranging consequences.

In line with this suggestion the finding (as indicated in Table 4) showed that the reactions (the attitudes, opinions, perceptions) of teachers and students to the examination were positive. That is the examination was perceived as far and essential to the students.

According to the wash back hypothesis a test influences participants attitude to the content, method etc, of teaching and learning.

Similarly, Bailey (1996: 264) suggested that students are likely to engage themselves in practicing items similar in format to those appearing on the test particularly when they are faced with an important test.

However, the finding in this research is contrary not consistent with these assertion. The result revealed a discrepancy between teachers and students reaction to (the effects of) certain aspects of the examination.

When they were asked how much the format the tasks and the activities in the text have influenced the students English learning, the teachers claimed the existence of certain trends that seem to go in since with the examination. Students, on the contrary viewed the presence of these aspects of the examination as a stimuli to strengthen their effort to improve their English.

At this juncture it can be logically argued that the teachers as facilitators and participant observers of the students' learning, were able to notice the changes the students have made to cope with the examinations requirements though students were not able to perceive their changes they have made in their learning or study of English the way their teachers did perceive.

Therefore, keeping in mind Missick's (1996) note of contain which says. "It is problematic to claim evidence of test washback if a logical or evidential link can not be forged between the teaching or learning outcomes and the test properties thought to influence them", it can be concluded that the examination has had undesirable wash back affect on the teacher perception of students learning though didn't perceive it that way for they would still find it difficult to put their need into practice.

However, it is the writers belief of that more research is needed to see whether and how the examination produces wash back effect in the attitudes and behaviors of the language learners.

However, there is not evidence to prove whether this participants position perception and / or attitude would necessarily bring about positive changes in the students' actual language performance.

As most educators (like Buck, 1988; 17 as cited in Baily, 1996; 268) would agree, wash back can be either positive or negative depending on the degree of accomplishment of whether it impedes or promotes) the educational objectives held in the curriculum (in our case syllabus).

It is, therefore, suggested that examinations are supposed to ascertain this accomplishment of the educational goals in the ad setting.

Thus, when examinations are prepared with this purpose in mind, they are likely to produce positive wash back effect, for they enforce teachers and students to concentrate on tasks and procedures pertinent to achieving the educational goals held in the syllabus.

However, the finding in this premises. This was verified through the low grand average and index of coverage values obtained from the two examinations analyzed.

As discussed in the review part of this study, 'good' language tests are anticipated to reflect the objectives, contents and methods of the syllabus set for the level.

When viewed from this corner, as revealed in the test exam analysis data (through the summary figures from the TPTC), the examinations wore found to be inefficient to appropriately measure the most

important objectives and adequately cover the content areas held in the accompanying syllabi of the grand's. Thus, this necessitates all instance of negative wash back effect of the exams.

The finding in this study seem to confirm Messick's (1996) claim that wash back is related to construct validity of the test. The fact that there is can obvious under representation of the constructs and/or the most important objectives of the courses account for the dependability of the claim that the wash back can hardly be positive.

This also goes hand in hand with Houghes argument of the existence of harmful back was effect provide that the techniques and contents in the examinations are to variance, with the objectives of the courses which is found to be the dry fact in the analysis.

Chapter Five

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Summary of the findings

As has been indicated elsewhere in this paper, the major purposes of the study were to investigate whether the grade 10 EGSEC English language examination has had any wash back effect, and find out the nature (if it occurred) of the wash back and then to suggest ways of maximizing the positive effects of the examinations on the teaching learning process of the language at the secondary level.

For these purposes, the following basic research questions were formulated:

To answer these leading questions two approaches were employed. One involves items analysis of two grade 10 EGSEC English language examinations using a strategy adapted from a procedure suggested by the center for the study of evaluation in the CSE Test evaluation series. And another's involves the use of questionnaire to collect data (views) from grade 10 students and their English language teachers about the role and/or effect of the examinations

Appendix –F

Sample Table for Program Test Comparison

Type CRT NRT UNCLEAR

Academic Year _____

Participate Level: _____

BOX A

1 Test item	2 Objectives that Match item	3 Importance of objective					4 Item content and format analysis			5 Item appropriateness for participants			6 Product of columns 3.4 and 5	7 Summary Figures
		1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	0	1	2		
														G.A
														I.C
														I.R

BOX B

BOX C

BOX D

BOX E

48	* 3 6, 28				4				2		1		8
49	40			3					2		1		6
50	* 42, 31				4	0					1		0
51	12			3		0						2	0
52	* 39, 31, 3			3					2			2	12
53	* 52, 3, 31		2					1	1		1		2
54	*3, 31				4							2	8
55	* 52, 3		2									2	4
56	51			3								2	6
57	*3, 31				4							2	8
58	3				4						1		4
59	59					5				0			0
60	59					5					1		5
61	59					5					1		5
62	59					5						2	10
63	21				4							2	10
64	21				4							2	8
65	4					5					1		5
66	4					5					1		5
67	4					5					1		5
68	1					5					1		5
69	1					5				0			0
70	1					5					1		5
71	1					5					1		5
72	1					5					1		5
73	* 35, 1				4						1		4
74	1					5					1		5
75	21				4						1		4



The data collected through these different approaches and instruments have been analyzed above

The results of the data collected through these different approaches and instruments have been analyzed above.

After the necessary data had been synthesized and analyzed, the investigator came up with the following major findings:

1. The reactions of the grade 10 students and their English language teachers to the EFSEC English language examinations were positive- The examinations were perceived to be important and fair.
2. The grade 10 students and their English language teachers were well concerned favorably the role and/or effect of the examination in the learning teaching process- This is one instance of positive washback effect of the examinations on the participant's perceptions.
3. There is a perceived effect of undesirable influences of certain aspects (format. . .) of the EGSEC English language examinations by the grade 10 English language teachers
4. There is a perceived effect of desirable influence of certain aspects (format. . .) of the EGSEC English language examinations on the students' learning by the grade 10 students- positive wash back of the examinations on the students perception.
5. The grade 10 EGSEC English language examinations were found to have inadequate coverage of the contents (objectives) of the courses. Negative wash back effect.
6. High proportion of the examinations items were found to be relevant to few most important objectives of the program- an instances of negative wash back effect
7. Only low proportion of the items contained in the examinations were found pertinent in measuring the program's highest priority objectives.
 - an instance of negative wash back effect.

Conservations

The study has clearly come out with identification of critical instance of wash back effect of the EGSEC English language examinations.

Having achieved its objectives satisfactory, the study also shows the complexity of the wash back phenomena in that it is entirely impossible to claim on over all positive or negative wash back effect of examinations on the teaching learning process without considering the poplar that participate in the educational processes, the actual classroom events and activates, and the product of the processes.

However, with respect to the content of this study; based on the findings obtained, the following tentative conclusions were reached

- the grade 10 students and their English language teachers have positive perception of the EGSEC English language examinations
- The EGSEC English language examinations had had positive washback effect on the grade 0 students and as well as their English language teachers' perception of the role the presence of the examination plays in the students learning
- However, regarding the students and the English language teachers' perception of the effective of certain aspects (the format, the kind of task . . .) of the examination, further empirical data need to be connected to provide more insights into the nature of thee wash back effect of the examinations.

And more importantly the grade 10 EGSEC English language examinations do not reflect the syllabic objectives, their contents and methods with respect to their coverage, relevance and appropriateness. Thus, the examinations are likely to produce negative wash back effect on the learning teaching process.

APPENDEIX –G
FORMULAS USED

G.A. = the value in Box D ÷ the value in Box B

I.C. = the value in Box C ÷ .the value in Box A

I.R. = the value in Box E ÷ the value in Box B

Where Box A= Total number of text book objectives.

B = Total number of items on the test.

C= Number of text book objectives listed in column 2 that do not enter a zero in the raw.

D= Grand tally –the sum of values entered in to column 6.

E =The number of values entered in to column 6.

APPENDIX H

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear teacher,

This questionnaire has been designed to obtain first hand information on teachers' reaction towards the grade 10 Ethiopian General Secondary Education Certificate (EGSEC) English Language Examination and its role/effect in the learning teaching process in our high schools. Your genuine response to each of the items in the questionnaire will contribute a lot to the study so that the result may help enhance effective language testing.

Thank you in advance!

Part one: Background Information

Please tick [✓] in the appropriate box.

1. Sex Male Female
2. School Type Government- maintained Public Private

Part Two: Main Questions

Direction I: The following is a set of statements about (your) reactions towards the EGSEC English language examination and its role/effect in the learning teaching process. For each statement please say whether you **agree strongly, agree, are neutral, disagree or disagree strongly** with it and tick [✓] in the appropriate box.

Use the following 5- points scale where

1= strongly disagree

4 = Agree

2 = Disagree

3 = Neutral

5 = strongly agree

No	Statement (Reaction)	Point scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Studying for the EGSEC English Language Examination improves students' English.					
2	It is possible for students to do well in the EGSEC English Language Examination without much preparation.					
3	It is important for students to do well in the EGSEC English language examination.					
4	It is not necessary for students to practice for the EGSEC English Language Examination during class period.					
5	Getting a pass mark in EGSEC English Language Examination is a matter of opportunity.					
6	Doing well in the EGSEC English Language Examination does not grant for students' having good command of English.					
7	The presence of the examination enables students make the necessary preparation for the pre-university course requirements.					
8	It is not necessary for students to study for the EGSEC English Language Examination in their own time.					
9	Students do not need to make additional effort to get a pass mark in the EGSEC English Language Examination.					
10	The format of the EGSEC English Language Examination inhibits students from making the necessary effort to improve their English.					
11	The content of the examination strengthens the effort the students make to improve their English proficiency					
12	The tasks and the activities in the EGSEC English Language Examination urges students to concentrate on selected classroom language activities.					
13	The EGSEC English Language Examination does not motivate me to learn/study English.					
14	Students display positive attitude towards the EGSEC English Language Examination.					
15	Students have changed their studying/learning habits (styles) to meet the examination requirements.					
16	The items in the EGSEC English Language Examination don't match the materials covered in the classrooms.					
17	The format as well as the content in the EGSEC English Language Examinations are contradictory to what students learn in class.					
18	There are advantages that I observe from the presence of time limit for the EGSEC English Language Examination.					
19	The EGSEC English Language Examination does not play any					

	role in students' learning.					
20	There are disadvantages that I observe from the presence of time limit for the EGSEC English Language Examination.					
21	The EGSEC English Language Examination adds good pressure for students to give more attention to the English course.					
22	The examination enables students know what they should achieve to be promoted to the preparatory level.					

Direction II: The following is a set of statements about reactions towards the EGSEC English Language Examination and its role/effect in the learning-teaching process. Please read each statement and respond according to your reaction. Tick [✓] in the appropriate box and provide explanations whenever needed.

23. Do you think the EGSEC English language examination has influenced the students' learning?

Yes No Not sure

24. If your answer to the above question is 'Yes' what evidences of the influence have been observed on what and how they learn (please mention the major ones)?

25. What do you think is the implication of the effects of the EGSEC English Language Examination to the teaching of English as a foreign language ?-----

26. What do you think should be done to improve the effect of the EGSEC English language examination on the students' learning?-----

Please feel free to add what you think is important to the study -----

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

APPENDIX-J

STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE/ AMHARIC VERSION

በአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ

የድህረ ምረቃ ትምህርት መርሀ ግብር

የውጭ ቋንቋዎችና ሥነ-ጽሑፍ ጥናት ተቋም ትምህርት ክፍል

በተማሪዎች የሚሞላ የጽሑፍ መጠይቅ

የመጠይቁ ዓላማ:-

የዚህ ለድህረ ምረቃ ማሟያ ጥናታዊ ጽሑፍ መረጃ ለመሰብሰብ የተዘጋጀ ጽሑፍ መጠይቅ ዋና ዓላማ በአገራችን የሚሰጠው የኢትዮጵያ አጠቃላይ ሁለተኛ ደረጃ ትምህርት ማጠናቀቂያ ስርትፍኬት (የ10ኛ ክፍል ሀገር አቀፍ) የእንግሊዝኛ ቋንቋ ፈተና በተማሪዎች ትምህርት የመቀበል ብሎም ቋንቋውን በመማር ማስተማሩ ሂደት ላይ የሚያሳድረውን ተፅዕኖ መፈተሽና የመፍትሄ ሃሳብ መጠቀም ነው። በመጠይቁ ውስጥ ለተካተቱት ነጥቦች የምትሰጡት ምላሽ ትክክለኛነት ለጥናቱ መሳካት ከፍተኛ አስተዋጽኦ ስላለው ሁለንም ነጥቦች በፅኑና በማንበብ ለምትሰጧቸው መልሶች ከወዲሁ ምስጋና አቀርባለሁ።

አጥኝው።

ክፍል አንድ: የግል ሁኔታ

በሳጥኑ ውስጥ የራይት «✓» ምልክት በማድረግ መልስ (ሽ)።

- 1. የትምህርት ቤቱ አይነት
 የመንግስት የህዝብ የግል
- 2. የታ ወንድ ሴት

ክፍል ሁለት:- ፈተናውን የሚመለከቱ

መመሪያ አንድ:- ቀጥለው ተማሪዎች በ10ኛ ክፍል ማገባደጃ በሚሰጠው ሀገር አቀፍ የማጠቃለያ ፈተና ላይ ያላቸውን አመለካከት የሚያንፀባርቁና ፈተናው በተማሪዎች የእንግሊዝኛ ቋንቋ ትምህርት መቀበል ሂደት ላይ የሚኖረውን ጉልህ ድርሻ የሚገልጹ ሃሳቦች ቀርበዋል።

እያንዳንዱን አረፈተ ነገር በማንበብ:-

በጣም እስማማለሁ (5)

እስማማለሁ (4)

መልስ የለኝም (3)

አልስማማም (2) ወይም

በጣም አልስማማም (1)

የሚሉትን አማራጮች በሚወክሉት ቁጥሮች ስር ባለው ሳጥን ውስጥ የራይት «√» ምልክት በማድረግ መልስ (ሽ)::

❖ በዚህ መጠይቅ «ፈተና» የሚለው ቃል የሚወክለው የ10ኛ ክፍል ሀገር አቀፍ የእንግሊዝኛ ቋንቋ ፈተናን ነው::

ተ/ቁ	ጥያቄ	1	2	3	4	5
1	ለፈተናው ያደረኩት ጥናት የእንግሊዝኛ ቋንቋ ችሎታዬን አሻሽሎልኛል::					
2	ያለብዙ ዝግጅት በፈተናው ጥሩ ውጤት ማምጣት ይቻላል::					
3	ፈተናውን በደንብ መስራት ይጠቅማል::					
4	በክፍል ውስጥ ለፈተናው ልምምድ ማድረግ አያስፈልግም::					
5	በፈተናው የማለፊያ ውጤት ማግኘት የአጋጣሚ ጉዳይ ነው::					
6	ፈተናውን በደንብ መመለስ ጥሩ የእንግሊዝኛ ቋንቋ ችሎታ መኖርን አያመላክትም::					
7	የፈተናው መኖር ተማሪዎች ለቅድመ የኒቨርሲቲ ትምህርት መቀበል አስፈላጊ የሆኑ ዝግጅቶችን እንዲያደርጉ ያስችላል::					
8	በግል ጊዜ መድቦ ለፈተናው ማጥናት አያስፈልግም::					
9	በፈተናው የማለፊያ ውጤት ለማምጣት (ለማግኘት) ተጨማሪ ጥረት ማድረግ አያስፈልግም::					
10	የፈተናው በምርጫ መልክ መቅረብ የእንግሊዝኛ ቋንቋ ችሎታዬን ለማሻሻል አስፈላጊውን ጥረት እንዳላደርግ ገድቦኛል::					
11	በፈተናው የሚቀርበው የትምህርት ይዘት የእንግሊዝኛ ቋንቋ ችሎታዬን ለማሻሻል የሚደርገውን ጥረት ያጎለብትልኛል::					
12	የፈተናው መኖር በክፍል ውስጥ ለተወሰኑ የትምህርት ክፍሎች ብቻ ትኩረት እንድንሰጥ ያስገድደናል::					

13	ፈተናው የእንግሊዝኛ ቋንቋ ትምህርትን እንድማር (እንዳጠና) አያነሳሳኝም።				
14	በፈተናው የሚጠበቅብኝን ለማግኘት ወይም ለመስራት ያጠናን ወይም የትምህርት አቀባበል ስልት ለውጥ አድርጌያለሁ።				
15	በፈተናው ላይ ጥሩ አመለካከት አለኝ።				
16	በፈተናው የሚጠየቁ ጥያቄዎች በክፍል ውስጥ ከተማርነው ትምህርት ጋር ተዛማጅነት (ግንኙነት) የላቸውም።				
17	ፈተናው በክፍል ውስጥ ከተማርነው ትምህርት ጋር ይቃረናል።				
18	በፈተናው የግዘ ገደብ መኖር ጥሩ ኅኞች አሉት።				
19	ፈተናው በትምህርት አቀባበሌ ወይም አጠናኔ ላይ ምንም አይነት አስተዋጽኦ አያደርግም።				
20	የፈተናው መኖር የእንግሊዝኛ ቋንቋ ትምህርትን እንድማር ግፊት የሚያደርግ ሆኖ ይለማኛል።				
21	ወደ ቅድመ ዩኒቨርሲቲ የትምህርት ደረጃ ለማለፍ በእንግሊዝኛ ቋንቋ ትምህርት ማስመዘገብ የሚጠበቅብኝን ውጤት ተገንዝቤአለሁ።				
22	በፈተናው የግዘ ገደብ መኖር ጥሩ ያልሆኑ ገጽታዎች አሉት።				

መመሪያ ሁለት፡- ቀጥለው የቀረቡ ሃሳቦችን በማንበብ የኔን አመለካከት ያንፀባርቃል የምትለውን (ይውን) በመምረጥ ከስሩ ለቀረቡ ጥያቄዎች የሚኖርህን /ሽን/ መልስ ስጥ/ጭ/።

23. ፈተናው በትምህርትህ/ሽ ላይ ተጽእኖ አለው ብለህ/ሽ ታምናለህን/ሽን?

አዎ የለውም እርግጠኛ አይደለሁም

24. ለተራ ቁጥር 23 ጥያቄ መልስህ/ሽ አዎን ከሆነ በፈተናው መኖር አለ ምትላ/ያቸውን ተጽእኖዎች ግስጥ/ጭ/-----

መጠይቁን በትክክል በመሙላት ላደረክልኝ /ግሽልኝ/ ትብብር በጣም አመሰግናለሁ።

