Annexure-2

A Critical Evaluation of the Efficacy of the Testing Practices in English Compulsory at the Undergraduate Level in Some of the Universities of Gujarat

Checklist-cum-Questionnaire
[For a Doctoral Work on the Subject]

by
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To my fellow teachers

This inquiry is meant strictly for research purposes. There should be no misapprehension in your mind that the data may be misused. Do not, therefore, suppress any vital information you can provide in your response through this Checklist-cum-Questionnaire.

The researcher pledges never to compromise the confidentiality of your response. The personal details are required only for the classification of the data. The page carrying it will be removed after being given a coded number that will also figure on the first page of this booklet when it is sent for computing your responses.

It is in our mutual interest that you provide your native responses to the items on this Checklist-cum-Questionnaire.

Please use a ballpoint pen to fill in all the particulars and answers to all the queries. Thank you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Instructions</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. &quot;Language testing&quot; or &quot;language tests&quot; are phrases used throughout this Checklist-cum-Questionnaire to mean, &quot;the testing of English language&quot;.</td>
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<td>2. There are 30 items on this Checklist-cum-Questionnaire with each having a number of statements listed under it.</td>
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<td>3. The Checklist-cum-Questionnaire requires you at certain places specifically to rank them in the order of your choice the statements, as you deem fit.</td>
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<td>4. In the rest of the items, however, you are requested to put a tick mark in the appropriate square brackets at the beginning of each item, selecting any or as many of them as you feel help you answer the question to your satisfaction.</td>
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<td>5. You may make a note of your response at the end of the page if none of the alternatives given are acceptable to you.</td>
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<td>6. Please do not strike out any response once you have made an entry. Also, kindly do not overwrite. It would make it difficult for us to understand what your actual response is.</td>
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<td>7. Ascertain whether or not the responses you are entering represent your personal opinions and beliefs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Do not write any comment or add any statement of your own to those listed under the items in this standardised Checklist-cum-Questionnaire.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Kindly follow the instructions, both general and those built into the items.</td>
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Name:_________________________________________

Designation:_________________________________________

Teaching experience:_________________________________

Educational qualifications:_________________________________

Mailing addresses

Institutional: ____________________________________

Phone number: ______________________ E-mail address: ______________________

Residential: ____________________________________

Phone number: ______________________ E-mail address: ______________________

All the relevant particulars provided above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief. The response to items in this Checklist-cum-Questionnaire reflect my personal opinions and beliefs. I have no objection to the data being used for research purposes if confidentiality is maintained as promised.

Place:___________________ Signature

Date:____________________
1. The following statements represent the major objectives in the testing of English as a foreign language. Kindly rank them in the order of your choice to represent your priorities.

[ ] To check the general progress of the students.

[ ] To evaluate one’s own effectiveness as a teacher.

[ ] To fulfill the institutional requirements for promotion.

[ ] To help in grouping students according to their respective levels for group work.

[ ] To identify problem areas for remedial work and for designing strategies for improving upon the quality of teaching and learning.

[ ] To measure the impact and effectiveness of the course as a whole.

[ ] To ensure reinforcement of student-motivation and of learning.

[ ] To test the attainment of the level of a predetermined linguistic competence fixed externally.

[ ] To verify the level of linguistic competence attained.

2. Kindly help identify the objectives involved in the testing of English at the undergraduate level from those given below.

[ ] To decide upon the candidates’ eligibility for using English as a library language.

[ ] To judge the suitability of candidates for a specific job or a few jobs requiring certain language skills.

[ ] To measure the level of language proficiency the candidates might have attained.

[ ] To examine for ourselves whether or not the candidates have aptitude for higher studies.

[ ] Others not listed here.

3. Why does testing of English, in your opinion, lay major emphasis on the attaining of refinement in writing skills? Kindly choose any/as many options as you like from those given below to indicate your response.

[ ] Writing, the concretised realisation of knowledge on paper, is a slow process indicative of progress.

[ ] Writing assumes freedom from any immediate context and subsumes expertise in several skills at the same time.

[ ] Writing involves a systematic organisation of content that helps ensure clarity, correctness and appropriateness.

[ ] Writing has no false starts like those of speech and implies the ability to make informed judgements.
The testing of written expression or composition takes into account certain basic skills involved in the process. Rank them in the order of your choice in terms of their relative importance to you.

[ ] Graphic or visual skills involving the use of script, spelling, punctuation, and format.

[ ] Grammatical skills demonstrating the correct and felicitous use of function words and sentence patterns.

[ ] Expressional or stylistic skills involving the use of appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic expressions.

[ ] Rhetorical skills demonstrating the ability to use devices of cohesion like the connectives, ellipsis etc.

[ ] Organisational skills involving the sequencing of ideas and the ability to accept or reject information.

Which of the two items from the following do you feel must form a part of the answers examinees have to offer in their language papers?

[ ] Appropriate content demonstrating coherence, cohesion and acceptable style.

[ ] Lucidity and clarity of expression.

[ ] Evidence showing sufficient understanding of the text.

[ ] Demonstration of a sound linguistic competence involving felicitous use of language.

[ ] Inclusion of all the necessary information on a given topic.

[ ] Responses suggestive of independent thinking and offering evidence of the candidate's ability to choose appropriate words and structures.

Most of the statements below refer to the criteria involved in the selection of questions. Check whether or not our language tests in use today take care of at least some of these criteria.

[ ] All questions should be clearly worded and unambiguous.

[ ] Short answer-type of questions should have limited scope of answer.

[ ] Instructions, irrespective of whether these precede the questions or are built into them, should be clear and unambiguous.

[ ] Each question set must be related to an important content area and must cover abilities like analysis, synthesis etc.

[ ] Both the tester and the testees should be able to interpret the questions in the same way.

[ ] Objectivity in marking should be made possible in short-answer type of questions.

[ ] No question should depend on another for its meaning. All questions should have their own independent meaning.

[ ] There should be no overlapping of questions in the test paper.
7. Please tick the appropriate items from those below to give your assessment of the fulfilment or otherwise of the objectives in the testing practices in vogue.

[ ] None of the is framed with any clear sense of purpose.
[ ] There is obviously no correlation between the objectives of the course and the actual test based on it.
[ ] Not a single test makes a serious attempt at helping assess linguistic competence.
[ ] The tests are framed haphazardly as a matter of routine.

8. Tick any or as many of the following statements that appear to represent your reason(s) for the response you might have given to Item 8 above.

[ ] No test measure what it purports to measure.
[ ] These tests are reliable measures of linguistic competence.
[ ] There is hardly any element of challenge in them as they lack proper planning and administration.
[ ] Most of these tests would lead to the same scores on repeated use as those secured by the testees on their first administration.
[ ] All tests partially measure the extent of learning that might have taken place and show the teacher in poor light.
[ ] Obviously, teachers lack the necessary training in the framing of language tests.
[ ] The tests provide irrefutable evidence of the lack of pedagogical orientation on the part of the teachers who might have set them.

9. Please check one of the following statements that you feel helps bring out the distinction you make between the terms test and examination.

[ ] A test measures the skills acquired by the learners, whereas an examination measures their skills of practical application.
[ ] A test concerns itself with a part of the course, while an examination takes into account the whole of it.
[ ] A test implies a selective probe making a diagnosis of problems in learning, whereas an examination implies a deeper and wider probe to measure attainment.
[ ] A test subsumes a certain degree of objectivity in evaluation, while an examination, though broad-based, cannot escape a subjective element.
[ ] A test involves competence in a single skill, whereas an examination must obviously involve the testing of competence in all skills.
[ ] A test can be administered in a classroom situation, while an examination requires a massive mobilisation of manpower and money.
10. What could be the reasons for the general belief among the teachers of English that the testing of English as a foreign language has failed?

[ ] Almost the whole lot of our testing material is outdated and irrelevant to our present needs.

[ ] One finds evidence of a lot of guesswork or irrelevant responses in the answerscripts in modern times.

[ ] Most of the answers are written hopelessly and show a serious attempt on the part of the examinees to mislead their examiners.

[ ] Massive copying on the part of the examinees, and hurried assessment, on the part of either the examiner(s) or the university have contributed to making a mockery of the exercise as a whole.

[ ] Our tests betray a certain lack of originality and sincerity on the part of those who are given the responsibility of setting them.

[ ] Stress is laid on content to the detriment of expression.

11. Essay-type questions are an indispensable part of the language tests at the undergraduate level because

[ ] they are the only valid test-tasks for assessing the necessary competence to communicate in written expression on the part of the examinees.

[ ] they are helpful in measuring the genuine worth of the students as they provide the examiner(s) with an overall idea of the examinees' linguistic competence.

[ ] they are useful in testing coherence and cohesion as well as the lucidity of thought and expression.

[ ] they help determine the examinees' ability to think, and present their ideas logically.

[ ] they encourage the examinees to be creative in the expression of ideas and enable the examiner(s) to measure the extent to which learning might have taken place.

12. There is a strong feeling among teachers today that we need to introduce objective-type of questions in the testing of English in a big way. How do you think this would help? [Please move on to the next item if you do not subscribe to such an idea.]

[ ] Although objective-type questions are difficult to set, they are not only easy to assess but also help ensure objectivity in assessment.

[ ] Objective-type tests help evaluate the candidates' first-hand knowledge of the text and experience in the use of language.

[ ] Objective-type tests discourage the tendency on the part of the students to be selective about the topics in their syllabi in their preparation and revision for a test or an examination.

[ ] Objective-type tests are useful in evaluating the overall attainment of the students.

[ ] Objective-type tests ensure a wider coverage of the syllabi in the papers set for an examination.

[ ] Objective-type tests ensure the same answer to a given question.
13. How do we tackle the possibility of guesswork and copying becoming easier if we were to switch over to objective-type tests (to whatever degree it might be) as some sections among the teaching profession fear?

[ ] A carefully panned seating arrangement with some gap between two seats would help.

[ ] The entire quantum of the syllabi, not just what are popularly called important questions, should be covered in the test papers set.

[ ] Multiple-choice questions should have distracters chosen carefully so as to avoid giving any clue, either in terms of individual items or those set on a passage for testing reading comprehension.

[ ] At least invigilators should be assigned the job of supervising the conduct of examinations per block so as to help reduce the possibility of copying.

[ ] A viva-voce aimed at ascertaining whether or not the response of a given student matches with his or her knowledge of the subject would validate our examinations.

[ ] Essay-type tests also involve guesswork and their prevalidation before administration would help a good deal to make these reliable.

14. What do you think is the logic behind the fact that test papers set in English (Compulsory) in all faculties show a heavy tilt toward text-based questions?

[ ] The prescribed text is the only means of understanding language in practical use in day-to-day life.

[ ] No learning of language takes place if there is an element of guesswork involved.

[ ] Papers in English (Compulsory) must obviously focus on linguistic competence rather than the learners' literary competence for students other than those offering English (Special).

[ ] Dependence on stray sentences to test linguistic competence is undesirable. The need for a context increases dependence on the text.

[ ] Linguistic competence is tested better through contextualised situations and passages.

15. Please help us identify the nature of questions to be incorporated into a paper set in English (Compulsory) so as to test adequately the learners' linguistic competence. [Feel free to choose as many alternatives from those below as you think will help reflect your response.]

[ ] Questions aimed at testing both the learners' linguistic competence as well as their familiarity need to be set.

[ ] Questions that are neither too long nor too complex to be easily understood by even our average learners are ideal.

[ ] Only such questions need to be set as are unambiguous and as are based on a significant part of the content.

[ ] Questions that have only one possible, though differently worded answer, are very useful indeed.
Setting questions based on quotations need to be avoided because such questions are non-questions in real terms.

Questions that are clearly worded are our best bet for reliable testing.

Simple Wh-questions are ideal for testing language content in ESP courses at the undergraduate level.

16. How would you react to the charge that our language tests do not fulfil the criteria of validity, reliability, usability, administerability, and scorability?

Our language tests do fulfil these criteria.

The tests in vogue may be valid, reliable, and usable but are neither easily administerable nor scorable.

Since most of our tests in use today are essay-type, these criteria are inapplicable.

The language tests in vogue are neither valid nor reliable.

17. It is possible to make our material for testing of English fulfil these criteria by ensuring that

they measure what they are designed to measure.

they cover the entire quantum of a syllabus on a given course.

they limit themselves to the testing of one skill at a time.

they are used repeatedly at regular intervals with identical results.

they are made easy to administer by dividing them into smaller sections.

they are not too costly to administer, and are neither too long nor too difficult nor too complex to be scored.

18. Choose any/as many from amongst the following statements you feel would help curb lap-up-and-vomit exercise that goes on in the name of examinations.

We need to ensure that our tests should help measure all skills without depending heavily on the writing skill.

Giving tests at regular intervals would keep the students alive to the need to be prepared all the time.

A viva-voce given toward the end of the examination process would help examiner(s) to measure the real extent of learning that might have taken place.

Dependence on stereo-type questions needs to be done away with as so does the treatment of a given structure of the question paper, treated as sacrosanct.

19. What is the standard procedure involved in the testing of English (Compulsory) today at the undergraduate level in your university?
20. The existing system in language testing, has failed because

- having become more or less a formality, it has ceased to influence the final marking.
- it has been encouraging adventurism and risk-taking behaviour among the students.
- our question papers normally stick to a predictable pattern with hardly any attempt at innovating them, making them leaked papers in essence.
- courses are obviously kept limited, or are manipulated to be kept so with the result that the testees find it easy to anticipate the type of questions that are likely to figure on the question paper.
- there is a feeling among the students in institutions affiliated to universities continuing with the system of internal evaluation that the deficiency in the internals can be made up in the university examination or in reassessment thereafter.

21. Choose any of the following suggestions that you think would help set right the anomalies in our language testing.

- Each test paper should be thoroughly objective.
- Testing should be a continuous process, not limited to a day or a few days.
- Test papers should be structured and set in such a way as would prevent the testees from preparing only selective portions of the syllabi.
- The test set should have a provision for negative marking to penalise testees hazarding a guess.
- The tests should carry clearly worded and unambiguous questions requiring pinpointed answers.
- The test papers should contain instructions insisting on relevance, preciseness, and correctness of responses.

22. Which of the following, in your opinion, are the reasons for variance in the way the answerscripts in English (Compulsory) are marked by two or more teachers of English acting as examiners? [Please feel free to choose any or as many as would suit your purpose.]
23. In what way does a common marking scheme given by the paper-setter(s) or agreed upon by the examiners make a difference?

[ ] It would ensure uniformity in evaluation.
[ ] Examiners' individual prejudices can be kept out effectively.
[ ] Evaluators would get a clear idea about what the paper-setter(s) expect(s) of the examinees.
[ ] Impartiality and fairness will be maintained in evaluation.

24. What points out of the following list do you think should be kept in mind by the examiners while evaluating the answerscripts in English (Compulsory) Paper? [Kindly choose any or as many as would suit your purpose.]

[ ] Grammatical correctness
[ ] Correct use of cohesive devices
[ ] Appropriateness of style
[ ] Punctuation and mechanics of writing
[ ] Appropriateness of vocabulary
[ ] Adequacy of the content
[ ] Proper organisation
[ ] Felicity of expression

25. Please help us identify the ratio of marks out of 100 for content and expression that you feel is ideal.

[ ] 70:30
[ ] 60:40
[ ] 50:50
[ ] 40:60
[ ] 30:70
[ ] None of these.

26. We need to make our language tests in English (Compulsory) more reliable. Which of the following options do you feel would help us do that?

[ ] A common marking scheme would certainly help a great deal.
[ ] Objective-type questions should have the provision for negative marking.
[ ] Equal emphasis should be laid on content and expression.
[ ] Coherence, logical argumentation, and lucidity of thought and expression should be given more weighting.
The tilt toward grammar or composition must be checked, and a judicious mixture of all the elements needs to be insisted upon.

All of language testing should be based on contextualised paragraphs.

27. What do you expect from the examinees in English (Compulsory) Paper at the undergraduate level irrespective of the faculty involved?

- A fair knowledge of the text prescribed for study.
- Linguistic competence and maturity of thought.
- The ability to organise, argue, and cohere one's ideas.
- All of these.
- Others including these.

Please list them in the space below if there be other expectations

28. What do you think is wrong with the compilation of marks in test papers related in English language?

- The total performance of the candidate in the whole of the academic year is not taken into account.
- It is based on unequal proportion of marks set aside for internal and external examinations.
- Most of the times, it is done too hastily to be foolproof.
- Fears and occasional evidence of tampering and manipulation seem to render the outcome null and void.

29. Please mark the statements from the following that you think would be helpful in making the testing of English a reliable barometer of linguistic competence.

- By bringing in a judicious mixture of all types of questions.
- By changing the pattern of questions frequently so as to encourage the use of reference books.
- By ensuring the inclusion of questions on specifics rather than generalities.
- By figuring out and nullifying the chances of hazarding a guess.
- By giving the testees a chance to express themselves freely without any fear or favour.