

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA

B. A IN ENGLISH & ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING - LEVEL 5
FINAL EXAMINATION - December 2012
THEORY & PRACTICE OF LANGUAGE TESTING - LSU 3205
DURATION - THREE HOURS (03 hours)



DATE: 11. 12. 2012 TIME: 9.30 am. - 12.30pm

ANSWER FOUR (04) QUESTIONS CHOOSING AT LEAST ONE EACH FROM EACH PART.

Part A

1. Language tests differ in terms of their purpose. List the types of tests you know and explain the purpose of each type giving examples.
(25 marks)
2. What is test validity? What are the most important aspects of validity for a teacher/tester? How can a teacher/tester improve the validity of a test where each type of test is used?
(25 marks)

Part B

3. Reading comprehension of your students can be measured using a variety of testing techniques. Give examples for five (05) of these techniques and discuss their advantages and disadvantages.
(25 marks)
4. What do you understand by the terms 'holistic marking' and 'analytic marking'? Discuss the importance of establishing appropriate criteria for assessing written production.
(25 marks)

Part C

5. a) What factors do you need to consider when setting tasks for testing listening skills of university students who need to understand lectures?
- b) Discuss the suitability of the following passage to be used in testing extended communication.

Before the British occupation of the Falkland Islands in 1833 most of the sailors who went there were mainly interested in collecting oil and skins from the whales, seals and penguins which flourished in the South Atlantic. The British introduced sheep farming, but since this became less profitable after the 1960s the islanders have been forced to pay more attention to the contents of the island waters.

These waters are rich in squid, and the sale of fishing licences for this harvest has funded research to allow the stocks to be managed efficiently. There are two kinds of squid around the Falkands; Illex is eaten in East Asia, while Loligo is popular in Spain. The latter was found to breed at two periods in the year; one season is from May to July and the other is October and November. This second period, which is summer in the South Atlantic, coincides with the local penguin breeding season and makes the baby squid more vulnerable. As a result, the scientists suggested that the fishing season for Loligo should be postponed for a few months to allow the stock to recover, and when this was done the fishermen found they had a better catch than before.

The other squid, Illex, was found to have a different pattern, swimming south from Brazil to the Falklands in summer, and then back north again. To deal with a species that migrates through the waters of several countries it has been necessary to set up an agreement between the governments concerned to restrict the fishing season in order to allow squid numbers to build up.

6. a) Compare and contrast the following information gap methods of testing speech of ESL learners at a pre-intermediate level.
- Information gap student-student
 - Information gap student-examiner

b) What aspects of speech do you need to consider when preparing a rating scale for testing speaking skills of ESL students? Give reasons for your answer.

7. If you were to construct a speaking test for intermediate level ESL students, which 2 of the following techniques would you choose? Justify your answer.

- Verbal essay
- Free interview
- Role play