

University of Colombo
Faculty of Arts

Third Year Examination in Arts – Semester 2 - 2017/2018

ESL 3245 – Second Language Assessment
2 hours

Answer **three** questions from **Part A** and **one** question from **Part B**.

Part A

Answer **three** of the following questions. (15 marks per question)

1. “Integrative testing of language elements promotes holistic learning of a language as opposed to discrete point testing.” Do you agree with this statement? Support your answer with examples of test items.

2. “Language tests are used to obtain different types of information about the learner.”
Select two types of tests and discuss them. Give examples where necessary.

3. Given below are three test techniques.

- (1) Multiple choice questions
- (2) Cloze test
- (3) Short answer items

Select any two test techniques and discuss the following:

- a) aspects that should be considered in formulating the test item
- b) advantages and disadvantages of the test technique

4. “Reliability is crucial in testing.”

- (a) Explain what is meant by “reliability” in testing.
- (b) Discuss with examples at least five steps that can be taken to ensure the reliability of a test.

5. Discuss at least four strengths and four drawbacks of *alternative assessment* with examples.

Part B

Select one question from Part B

6. You have been asked to design an oral test for students following a proficiency course in English.

- (a) Write a list of the sample language functions that can be tested at a level of your choice.
- (b) Select one of the language functions and design a task to assess it.
- (c) Design a marking guide to evaluate the students' performance.

7. (a) Select 3 micro reading skills from the list below.

List of micro reading skills:

- Ability to identify specific information
- Ability to recognise relations within the text through reference words
- Ability to deduce meaning of unfamiliar words
- Ability to recognise the main idea of a paragraph
- Ability to identify the gist of the text

Design 3 MCQ test items to test the selected skills. You may design 1 MCQ test item per skill. Make sure to indicate the skill you expect to test from each item. Use the reading passage titled "Garbage" given below.

- (b) Provide a marking guide.

Garbage

Garbage cans are not magical portals. Trash does not disappear when you toss it in a can. Yet, the average American throws away an estimated 1,600 pounds of waste each year. If there are no magic garbage fairies, where does all that trash go? There are two methods of managing waste: recycling and composting. Each method has its strengths and weaknesses. Let's take a quick look at each.

Recycling is the process of turning waste into new materials. For example, used paper can be turned into paperboard, which can be used to make book covers. Recycling can reduce pollution, save materials, and lower the energy use. Yet, some argue that recycling wastes energy. They believe that collecting, processing, and converting waste use more energy than recycling saves.

Composting is when people pile up organic matter, such as food waste, and allow it to decompose. The product of this decomposition is compost. Compost can be added to the soil to make the soil richer and better for growing crops. While composting is easy to do onsite somewhere, like home or school, it's hard to do after the garbage gets all mixed up. This is because plastic and other inorganic materials must be removed from the compost pile or they will pollute the soil. There's a lot of plastic in garbage, which makes it hard to compost on a large scale.

Usually, the community in which you live manages waste. Once you put your garbage in that can, what happens to it is beyond your control. But you can make choices while it is still in your possession. You can choose to recycle, you can choose to compost, or you can choose to let someone else deal with it. The choice is yours.

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