

TELT November 2012

Examiners' Report

1. Introduction

141 candidates sat for the TELT November 2012 examination session. The distribution of final results and percentage details are listed below:

Results		
	Part 1	Part 2
<u>ABSENT</u>	0	1
<u>UNCLASSIFIED</u>	0	0
<u>FAIL</u>	16	0
<u>NARROW FAIL</u>	28	4
<u>PASS</u>	73	33
<u>PASS WITH MERIT</u>	24	41
<u>DISTINCTION</u>	0	18

In conclusion, **92 candidates** were awarded Pass grades or higher. This is the equivalent of **65.25%** of the candidates who sat the examination, an improvement of just under 25% on the March 2012 session.

2. General Remarks

The TELT November 2012 session was the fourth sitting using the newly revised syllabus. The paper followed rigorously the format, recommendations and sample sections of the new syllabus. The team of examiners once again agreed that the use throughout the paper of the

exact rubric suggested in the new syllabus document seems to have benefitted the majority of the candidates in that it eliminated doubts as to what was exactly required of them in any given part of the paper.

However, there seems to be an issue with the marking in Part 1 Section E. With the present system, candidates are awarded one mark if they select the correct answer in the 'Odd One Out' exercise, even if the reason they give for their choice is either incorrect, irrelevant, superficial or imaginative. The team of examiners will, in due course, make a recommendation regarding this within the framework and timeframes of the TELT Examination policy.

A good number of candidates were generally well-prepared for this exam with candidates once again generally performing well in the sections for which they are able to study. In this session, moreover, candidates also demonstrated adequate writing skills in a variety of genres in Part 2 Section E: the essay writing section. However, the team of examiners once again noted that a considerable number of candidates found a certain amount of difficulty in those exercises which required skill at the manipulation of lexis, vocabulary formation and language transformation within the given parameters.

3. Section Analysis

Part 1 Language Description, Sensitivity and Awareness

Section A - Language Terminology

The team of examiners is pleased to note and confirm that successful candidates once again prepared well for this section. Many demonstrated a clear understanding of language terminology and an improved familiarity with English grammar.

Sections B, C and D (Phonology and Sound Patterns)

The examiners noted that in spite of some improvement over the performance in the Phonology section in the previous examination, this is an area which continues to be problematic for many candidates. Candidates generally scored well in the sections on Word Stress (Part 1 Section B) and very well in the recognition of words transcribed phonemically (Part 1 Section C), but the phonemic transcription exercise (Part 1 Section D), once again, proved to be a major stumbling block for a great number of candidates. Once again, the examiners have to report that a good number of candidates opted to ignore this exercise and did not tackle it at all.

It is also regrettable that precious marks were lost because of careless spelling mistakes. Unfortunately, improbable spelling versions of a number of quite commonly used words still abound.

These negative factors point to important lacunae in the formation of current EFL teachers. Once again, all examiners feel they need to reiterate that candidates and TELT preparation course providers should focus much more sharply on this section, and that candidates need to be convinced that Phonology is not an optional addition to their classroom techniques but a useful and effective classroom tool.

Section E - Odd one out

Candidates were generally adequately prepared for this section and approached the task methodically. In particular a number of candidates showed quite a good awareness of language pattern differences in grammar, but were less prepared to identify other differences, e.g. in the meaning of vocabulary items, an area for which they are unable to study.

The team of examiners sometimes felt that candidates were making ‘wild’ guesses, throwing in complicated terminology but then failing to distinguish between simple and continuous tenses, for example. TELT Exam Preparation course providers would do well to ensure that the candidates are familiar with the basic language terminology needed at this level rather than overwhelm them with minute details which are then sprinkled erroneously here and there by candidates.

Moreover, prospective candidates would do well to focus on the recognition of the Odd One Out that goes beyond superficial differences. As stated elsewhere in this report, a large proportion of answers, albeit correct, lacked the ‘in-depth’ analysis that one would expect from prospective teachers of English

Part 2 Language Proficiency

Section A - Identifying and Correcting Errors

Candidates generally demonstrated a good range of lexis and a general knowledge of English and managed this task relatively well. A number had difficulty in identifying grammatical and spelling errors and in some cases even corrected correct sentences. Candidates do not gain a mark if they fail to recognise that a sentence is already correct.

Section B - Word Formation

The word formation task (Part 2 Section B) was, once again, significant in that this exercise is a clear indicator of strength or weakness in vocabulary and understanding of morphological patterning in English words. While a few candidates provided almost all answers correctly, a considerable number did not perform so well and produced a number of incorrect answers – a disturbing fact when one remembers that these same candidates will

focus on word formation techniques with their EFL students in the near future. One would certainly expect a much wider range of vocabulary from prospective EFL teachers.

Section C – Cloze Test – Selective Deletion

This exercise tested a range of linguistic areas including grammar, collocation and also general reading skills and prediction abilities. Examiners have to report that this exercise once again proved to be very challenging leading to a good number of candidates faring badly and, in the case of many, even failing this section.

The main problem once again revolves around incorrect collocation. Many candidates collocated lexical items incorrectly as a result of an evident lack of or insufficient familiarity with and exposure to current spoken and written English.

Section D – Sentence Transformations

Generally, a much better performance was expected here. Precious marks were lost due to a basic inability to manipulate sentence structures within the given parameters. A greater exposure to modern written and colloquial English is certainly called for.

Overall, in spite of our comments above, the team of examiners feels that candidates' performance in Sections C, B and D has registered a marked improvement over recent TELT exam sessions. The main problem persists, however, and seems to be caused by an intrinsic lack of language awareness and/or lexical sensitivity that both individual candidates and TELT preparation centres would do well to address.

Section E— Writing

In the free writing section, many candidates performed better than in recent TELT exam sessions. However, examiners also noted an inappropriate use of linkers and discourse markers while the incidence of widespread spelling errors even for frequently used words unfortunately still prevails. A greater attention to detail is definitely to be expected.

On a positive note, candidates performed well in a range of essay genres and made an appropriate choice of register this time round – this is a clear improvement over recent exam performances and could denote a welcome increased exposure to English in various registers.

A sharper focus on layout and signposting, linked with report writing in particular, during TELT Preparation courses also seems necessary.

4. Recommendations

The greatly improved Pass rate this time round clearly suggests that candidates and TELT preparation course providers are to be commended for their efforts to prepare thoroughly for this exam.

It is also evident that while candidates are preparing/being prepared for grammar tasks quite thoroughly, less effort and attention still seem to be given to phonology, to extending and broadening their lexis, and their familiarity with collocations in English.

Examiners felt that many candidates were adequately prepared for the essay writing part of the exam.

Specific training for the Speaking test is recommended as it was noted that a small number of candidates struggled to cope with the speaking task largely due to a poor range of vocabulary and a certain lack of fluency. 4 candidates actually failed the Oral exam, while 33 others were awarded a 'mere' Pass grade. Given that these candidates are prospective teachers of EFL it was felt that this need should be highlighted and properly addressed.
