

TELT November 2017

Examiners' Report

1. Introduction

29 candidates sat for the TELT November 2017 examination session. 26 candidates were awarded Pass grades or higher. This is the equivalent of a 90% pass mark compared to 85% pass mark of the candidates who sat the examination in May 2017, registering an increase of 5%.

The grades for the written paper are listed below:

0 Distinction
9 Pass with merit
10 Pass
6 Narrow Fail
4 Fail
0 Unclassified

2. General Remarks

The November 2017 TELT session has seen continued improvement in candidate performance when compared to the previous sessions held during the same year and the previous year. Candidates performed strongly overall with Section D in Part One, Transcription into Phonemic Script, still being the section that candidates struggle with most. The Writing Section still poses a challenge for many candidates who struggled with the format conventions of the text they selected; any weakness when it comes to lexis and structure was more noticeable in this section.

3. Section Analysis

Part 1 Language Description, Sensitivity and Awareness

Part 1 Section A – Language Terminology

In Section A Part 1, the average pass mark was quite high for this section registering 73%, indicating some improvement from the previous year but a slight drop from the last session this year. The candidate's general knowledge of language terms has improved slightly. Students who struggled in this area mostly did so with the lexical items. One candidate performed below par. It is advisable for all candidates to adequately prepare themselves for the exam in terms of learning the grammar and terminology. Candidates who did well were likely to have been well prepared in terms of grammar and lexis.

Part 1 Section B – Primary Stress Identification

Part 1 Section C – Transcription of Phonemic Script into Normal Spelling

Part 1 Section D – Transcription into Phonemic Script

Candidate performance was quite good in Section B (71%), registering a dip from the last session this year. Candidates performed well in Section C (86%), indicating that candidates can recognise and decipher words transcribed phonemically. The choice of transcription this time round was a bit more difficult for the candidates than the previous session. There were isolated instances of candidates misspelling words for which they lost marks. Although Section D remains the most challenging examination task for TELT candidates, candidate performance was stronger than the previous session at 43%; however, the pass mark is still low with 31% of the candidates awarded 0 – 2 points for this section.

Once again, the examiners would like to impress upon centres and trainers preparing candidates for this exam the importance of teaching pronunciation and using the phonemic script as a teaching aid in the classroom, especially to reinforce learner autonomy.

Part 1 Section E – Odd One Out

Overall, performance in this section was weaker than in previous sessions this year with an average pass mark of 61%. Some candidates continue to struggle with terminology. Candidates often identified the odd sentence, but they were unable to give the reason why it is different from the other three sentences. The range of challenge was spread across the task.

Examiners were pleased to see that candidates following the rubric. Candidates who partly responded to the questions had a chance to gain marks if their parts were correct. A few candidates did not volunteer any answers in some instances. Candidates who did not select the correct odd one out but delivered a justifiable description of what they identified as being in common and odd had a chance to gain points.

Part 2 Language Proficiency

Part 2 Section A – Identifying and Correcting Errors

The average pass mark for this section is strong at 70%, which is lower than last year's performance but higher than the previous session this year. Candidates did well to follow the rubric and wrote down only the correct word, phrase or punctuation in the space provided. Most errors had to do with not identifying misspelt words, wrong formation of words, and wrong choice of words. One correct sentence was frequently identified as having errors by those who did not fare too well in this task.

Part 2 Section B – Word Formation

Candidates performed well in this section with an average pass mark of 76%, which was the same for the previous year but fell slightly short of the previous session this year. On this occasion, apart from some words which were not reformulated correctly, valuable marks were lost due to poor spelling in isolated instances.

Part 2 Section C – Cloze Test – Selective Deletion

The majority of candidates performed quite well in this section with an average pass mark of 68%, which fell slightly short of the previous session this year but was the same pass mark as last year. Candidates who read regularly and broaden their range of collocation and commonly used phrases would fare well in this section.

Part 2 Section D – Sentence Transformation

Candidates performed strongly in this section evident by the 87% average pass mark, which was higher than the previous year and past sessions this year.

Part 2 Section E – Writing Section

Overall, performance was adequate with a third of the essays falling within the pass-with-merit band, signalling consistency from the previous session. In these instances, essays were coherent with good control of language and some appropriate use of cohesive devices. Task completion in the form of answering what was specifically requested of them in the rubric was generally good; there were some instances where it was clear candidates were not familiar with the required layout of the task they selected.

Marks for candidates who struggled in this area were brought down by poor spelling, awkward sentence construction, poor cohesion, and samples of wrong collocation. Candidates are advised to revise their writing and make any necessary corrections before handing the paper in. Some candidates selecting the report and letter tasks did not adhere to the required format. Even though candidates are writing under examination conditions, they should still pay some attention to presentation of their work. Some disregarded the rubric in that they far exceeded the word count. At the other end of the cline, a candidate wrote an essay over 4 pages. There were some instances of the content being below the expected level in terms of maturity. Three candidates fell short of the desired pass mark and did not produce a second essay.

In preparation of the writing section of the exam, examiners suggest that candidates dedicate more time to quality reading, with reading being a model for writing as well as a means by which candidates broaden their range of lexis and structures. Reading would also serve to help students develop their creativity and come up with ideas for their writing. Examiners encourage trainers to provide candidates with opportunities to read and develop their writing using a variety of texts.

4. Recommendations

As with previous reports, more focus and attention to phonology, in particular the phonemic scrip, is encouraged. The necessity to spell correctly needs to be impressed upon candidates as well as use correct combinations of collocation. Trainers are encouraged to provide candidates with opportunities to improve their writing skills in the various text types and their respective

writing conventions. Lastly, candidates should be encouraged to dedicate time for regular reading practice as this may serve as a valuable model for their own writing.