

TELT November 2019 Examiners' Report

1. Introduction

24 candidates sat for the TELT November 2019 examination session. 18 candidates were awarded Pass grades or higher. This is the equivalent of a 75% pass rate.

The grades for the written paper are listed below:

2 Distinction
7 Pass with merit
9 Pass
1 Narrow Fail
5 Fail
0 Unclassified

2. General Remarks

Overall, candidate performance in the November 2019 TELT session was uniformly strong in most sections. As usual, however, the examiners remarked that candidates seem to have struggled with Part One Section D and Part 2 Section C. The Writing Section was very satisfactory in this examination session with an average mark of 74%. Many candidates demonstrated a good control of language and familiarity with idiomatic expressions and turn of phrase. Some weaknesses regarding lexis, collocation and structure were noticeable throughout various sections of the paper. In the Writing section, a certain lack of punctuation and paragraphing were also evident, and this resulted in loss of marks. The presentation of some essays, moreover, left much to be desired.

3. Section Analysis

Part 1 Language Description, Sensitivity and Awareness

Part 1 Section A – Language Terminology

Candidates fared adequately in Section A Part 1 where the average pass mark reached 74%. Many candidates demonstrated a good general knowledge of grammar and language terms resulting from a good preparation for the examination. this time round.

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 (at just over 71%) and excellent in Section C (93%). Some candidates lost marks for spelling errors in Section C. The fact that candidates can generally recognise primary word stress and decipher words transcribed phonemically was, once again, counterbalanced by a very poor performance in Section D. As in most of the previous examination sessions, Section

D clearly remains the most challenging examination task for TELT candidates. Candidate performance registered a very low average rate at 29%, with a significant number of the candidates being awarded 0 – 2 marks for this section. Better preparation for and familiarization with the IPA and transcription is required 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 with a view of reinforcing learner autonomy.

Part 1 Section E – Odd One Out

Candidate performance in this section reached an adequate 66%. The examiners positively noticed that many candidates followed the rubric carefully and were thus more able to identify the three distinct strands: identifying the odd one out; specifying what all the items in bold had in common; and why the odd one out was different to the others. Marks were lost by those candidates who presented only half the answer. Candidates who could correctly identify the odd one out but came up with a plausible reason for another possible answer still gained marks.

A small number of candidates showed a certain lack of preparation for this section by not even hazarding a guess where they were not sure of the answer.

Part 2 Language Proficiency

Part 2 Section A – Identifying and Correcting Errors

The average pass mark for this section was a satisfactory 65%. Most errors had to do with failing to identify and correct errors with collocation, wrong formation of words, and wrong choice of words. As usual, some candidates wrongly identified errors in sentences where there were no errors. A good number of candidates performed well in this section, signifying that they had a better intrinsic feeling for the language but were not necessarily extrinsically acquainted with the grammar.

Examiners believe that examination preparation trainers would do well to remind candidates to closely follow the rubric in this section: identify the error by underlining the target error and writing ONLY the corrected word(s).

Part 2 Section B – Word Formation

In this section, candidates averaged a high average pass mark of 81%. However, some valuable marks were, as usual, lost due to poor spelling in a number of instances and illogical word formation.

Part 2 Section C – Cloze Test – Selective Deletion

The majority of candidates did not perform strongly in what is usually one of the most challenging sections in the exam with a rather low average mark of 63%. Candidates who came up with plausible lexical options gained marks. Candidates who read regularly and broaden their range of collocation and commonly used phrases would

generally have a good chance of performing well in this section. This concept needs to be emphasized and reiterated by examination preparation trainers.

Part 2 Section D – Sentence Transformation

Candidates registered a very good 80% average pass mark. However, marks were lost mostly due to awkward sentence construction, misspelt words, non-existent 'creative' collocations and a certain general unease with the Use of English sentence transformation task.

Part 2 Section E – Writing Section

Overall, performance in this section was good with a 74% pass mark. A number of essays were written exceptionally well; others clearly less so in terms of both language and ideas. Many of the candidates produced responses with an acceptable format and register depending on the task type. There were several instances of weakness with paragraph structure. Marks were also deducted for poor spelling, awkward sentence construction, and poor text cohesion.

One candidate did not submit any essay.

Candidates are advised to revise their writing and make any necessary corrections before handing the paper in. Even though candidates are writing under examination conditions, they should still pay some attention to presentation of their work.

4. Recommendations

As with previous reports, more focus and attention to phonology, in particular, the transcription of the phonemic script, is encouraged. The lack of familiarity with the phonemic script is a matter of concern and, examiners feel, continues to arise from the fact that candidates fail to recognise its usefulness in and out of class for their learners. This is an area that trainers should address much more forcibly in future TELT Preparation courses. Moreover, the necessity to spell correctly and the use of correct combinations of collocation, need to be impressed upon candidates.

Trainers are encouraged to provide candidates with opportunities to improve their writing skills in the various text types and their respective writing conventions. Correct punctuation and conventions for paragraphing should also be explicitly focused on.

Lastly, candidates should be reminded of the importance of regular quality reading practice as this will increase their exposure to modern English and serve as a valuable model for their own writing as well as a means by which candidates broaden their range of lexis and structures. Reading a variety of texts would also serve to help students develop their creativity.