

**THE WASHBACK EFFECT OF IRANIAN NATIONAL
UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE EXAM (INUEE) ON PRE-UNIVERSITY
ENGLISH TEACHING AND LEARNING**

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**THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA
KUALA LUMPUR**

2014

UNIVERSITI MALAYA

ORIGINAL LITERARY WORK DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

Washback effect of a test generally refers to the effect of a test on teaching and learning. Washback is generally known as being either negative or positive (Taylor, 2005). The washback effect of high-stakes tests has been approached and investigated from various perspectives in different contexts and countries. The aims of the current study are: 1. To examine the washback effect of the INUEE on English language teaching as perceived by the teachers. 2. To examine the washback effect of the INUEE on English language learning as perceived by the learners. 3. To examine the washback effect of the INUEE on English language teaching as observed by the researcher. 4. To examine the role of other factors besides the INUEE which contribute to the washback effect of the INUEE on English teaching as perceived by the teachers. 5. To examine the role of other factors besides the INUEE which contribute to the washback effect of the INUEE on English learning as perceived by the learners.

The participants of the study were 6 female teachers and 218 female students at two pre-university schools in the city of Ahwaz, Iran. The data were collected through teachers and students' questionnaires, teachers' interviews as well as observation of the classes for the six consecutive sessions. In order to better capture and report the nuances of classroom dynamics, all the classroom sessions were audio-video recorded. Existence of various data collection methods made the triangulation of the findings possible. The findings of the study indicated that the teachers and students' perceptions about the INUEE were mixed; students and teachers with positive attitudes towards the INUEE considered the test as an evaluator of academic knowledge. Moreover, the majority of students viewed the test as a factor that made them study English. However, the teachers and students who held negative perceptions about the INUEE criticized the test on the

grounds that it was an evaluator of rote-memorization ability (rather than academic knowledge) and was a main source of anxiety, etc. The students who were critical of the test mainly alluded to its multiple-choice testing format as an inefficient and invalid evaluator of their academic knowledge, as well as the incompatibility of the INUEE and the textbook in terms of level of difficulty. All the teachers and students were unanimously found to hold negative perceptions about the teaching materials. As for the teachers' perceptions about the English curriculum, the study showed that the teachers had no idea about the existence, and consequently the content and objectives of the curriculum.

It was also found that regardless of the teachers and students' positive or negative perceptions about the INUEE, their processes of teaching and learning were negatively affected not only by the test itself, but also by the factors other than the test. For instance, 'contextual' factors such as professional reputation for the teachers and family pressures and peer competitions for the students were among the factors which aggravated the washback effect of the test.

The findings of this study could have a number of implications: 1. Observations should be an inseparable part of washback studies. As the study indicated, what teachers claimed to have been doing in their classes in their questionnaires and interviews did not necessarily take place in the natural context of their classes. 2. Given that the national curriculum has devoted a balanced weight towards the four language skills and communicative functions of language, and has emphasized the importance of familiarization of Iranian students with the culture of target-language, the material developers are expected to take the national curriculum as the point of departure for material development. The INUEE also needs to be tailored in order to reflect the

language learning goals of the curriculum. Moreover, the test format of the INUEE should be modified. For instance, both the multiple-choice questions as well as open-ended questions should be included in the test. 3. Given the indispensable position of the INUEE in the socio-cultural context of Iran, the test could be capitalized on as an influential instrument to create positive changes on the country's system of English education. For example, incorporation of the listening skill into the content of the INUEE might probably accentuate its prominence and could entail its practice in the classes by the teachers and students. 4. The cultural awareness of the public towards the genuine values of education and knowledge-seeking should be raised and learning for the sake of genuine learning rather than merely obtaining university degrees should be promoted among the public.

ABSTRAK

Kesan ‘washback’ sesuatu ujian merujuk kepada kesan ujian tersebut ke atas pengajaran dan pembelajaran. ‘Washback’ secara umumnya negatif atau positif (Taylor, 2005). Kesan ‘washback’ ujian yang mempunyai kepentingan yang tinggi telah didekati dan diselidiki dari pelbagai perspektif dalam konteks dan negara yang berbeza.

Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk menyelidik kesan ‘washback’ Peperiksaan Kemasukan Universiti Kebangsaan Iran (INUEE) yang mempunyai kepentingan yang tinggi ke atas persepsi peserta (persepsi guru terhadap INUEE, kurikulum Bahasa Inggeris dan bahan pengajaran serta persepsi pelajar terhadap INUEE, pengajaran guru mereka dan bahan pengajaran). Kajian ini juga bertujuan untuk melihat bagaimana persepsi guru dan pelajar boleh mempengaruhi proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran Bahasa Inggeris.

Peserta dalam kajian ini terdiri daripada 6 orang guru perempuan dan 218 orang pelajar perempuan di dua buah sekolah pra-universiti di bandar Ahwaz, Iran. Data telah dikumpul melalui borang soal selidik guru dan pelajar, temubual bersama guru serta pemerhatian dalam bilik kelas untuk enam sesi berturut-turut. Untuk mendapatkan tangkapan dan laporan nuansa dinamik di bilik kelas dengan lebih baik, semua sesi di bilik kelas telah dirakam secara audio dan video. Kewujudan pelbagai kaedah untuk mengumpul data menyebabkan kemungkinan berlakunya triangulasi dalam hasil kajian. Hasil kajian ini menunjukkan persepsi guru dan pelajar terhadap INUEE adalah bercampur-campur; Pelajar-pelajar dan guru-guru yang positif terhadap INUEE berpandangan bahawa peperiksaan ini sebagai satu penilaian terhadap ilmu akademik. Walaubagaimanapun, guru-guru dan pelajar-pelajar yang negatif terhadap INUEE mengkritik peperiksaan ini sebagai satu penilaian terhadap kemampuan menghafal-

mengingat (bukannya ilmu akademik), ia menjadi sebab utama kebimbangan, dan mempunyai fungsi nyah motivasi. Pelajar-pelajar yang kritikal terhadap peperiksaan ini merujuk format ujian aneka pilihan sebagai penilaian yang tidak cekap dan tidak sah terhadap ilmu akademik mereka, ketidakserasian di antara INUEE dan buku teks pada tahap kesukaran dan lain-lain. Semua guru dan pelajar sebulat suara mempunyai persepsi negatif terhadap bahan pengajaran. Adalah mengejutkan apabila kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa guru-guru tidak mengetahui mengenai kewujudan dan kandungan kurikulum kebangsaan. Didapati bahawa tanpa mengira persepsi positif atau negatif dari guru-guru dan pelajar-pelajar terhadap INUEE, proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran mereka terkesan secara negatif bukan hanya disebabkan oleh INUEE, tetapi disebabkan juga oleh faktor-faktor yang lain termasuklah prestij kerja dan pulangan untuk guru dan tekanan dari keluarga dan persaingan antara rakan sebaya untuk pelajar.

Kajian ini mempunyai beberapa implikasi (secara teori dan secara pedagogi): 1. Pemerhatian sepatutnya menjadi bahagian yang tidak terpisah dari kajian 'washback'. Seperti yang ditunjukkan dalam kajian ini, apa yang dinyatakan oleh guru-guru untuk dibuat di dalam kelas mereka dalam borang soal selidik dan temubual bersama mereka tidak semestinya berlaku dalam konteks semulajadi dalam kelas mereka. 2. Berdasarkan fakta bahawa kurikulum kebangsaan yang menumpukan keseimbangan ke arah empat kemahiran bahasa dan fungsi perhubungan bahasa, dan menekankan kepentingan pelajar Iran membiasakan diri dengan budaya suatu bahasa sasaran, pembina bahan dijangka untuk mengambil kurikulum kebangsaan sebagai titik untuk memulakan pembinaan bahan. INUEE juga perlu disesuaikan untuk mencerminkan sasaran pembelajaran bahasa dalam kurikulum. Tambahan lagi, format INUEE seharusnya diubah. Sebagai contoh, kedua-dua soalan aneka pilihan dan soalan terbuka perlu dimasukkan ke dalam peperiksaan ini. 3. Merujuk kepada INUEE yang amat diperlukan dalam konteks sosio-

budaya Iran, peperiksaan ini boleh dijadikan modal sebagai instrumen yang berpengaruh untuk membentuk perubahan yang positif terhadap sistem pendidikan Bahasa Inggeris di negara ini. Sebagai contoh, kemasukan kemahiran mendengar ke dalam kandungan INUEE akan menyerlahkan keutamaannya dan dapat melibatkan amalannya di dalam kelas oleh guru dan pelajar. 4. Kesedaran kebudayaan di kalangan orang awam terhadap nilai pendidikan dan pencarian ilmu perlu ditingkatkan dan belajar demi pembelajaran yang tulen bukan semata-mata mendapatkan ijazah di universiti seharusnya digalakkan di kalangan orang awam.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mostly to God, the Compassionate the Merciful, through Him all is possible. Completing my PhD degree is probably the most challenging activity of the first 33 years of my life. The best and worst moments of my doctoral journey have been shared with many people. It has been a great privilege to spend four years in the Department of Languages and Linguistics at University of Malaya, and its members shall never be forgotten.

My first debt of gratitude must go to my ex-supervisor, Dr. Evelyn Khor Sook Hiang, whose meticulous comments and insightful advice have enhanced this thesis. She patiently provided the vision, encouragement, and advice necessary for me to proceed through the doctoral program. Although her retirement deprived me of her supportive companionship, I got the blessing of working with another nice supervisor, Dr. Azlin Zaiti Zainal, who kindly accepted to steer me towards completion of this work. I wish to gratefully acknowledge her kind support and encouragement as well.

Special thanks are due to the members of candidature defense panel and the seminar panel: Assoc. Prof. Mohana Kumari Nambiar, Assoc. Prof. Kuang Ching Hei, Assoc. Prof. Toshiko Yamaguchi and Dr. Ng Lee Luan, Dr. Jawakhir Mior Jaafar, Dr Tam Shu Sim, Dr. K. Karunakaran and Dr.Tan Siew Kuang. With no doubt, this study would not have been what it is now without their constructive suggestions and insightful advice. Their astute comments proved indescribably fruitful and enlightening throughout the research process. All the teachers and students who welcomed me to their classes and agreed to participate in this study also deserve acknowledgement. I am grateful to them for their time and cooperation.

Lastly, I wish to thank my family. First and foremost, I owe a huge debt of gratitude to my husband, Yasin, whose love and unflagging commitment and unconditional support allowed me to finish this rough journey. My motherly love and thanks to my little angel, Nika, whose cooing and babbling doubled my energy and motivation to continue my work. My especial acknowledgement also goes to my mother and two brothers, Babak and Hossein. They are unique in many ways, and the stereotype of a perfect family in many others. They have cherished with me every great moment and supported me whenever I needed it.

Last but not least, for any errors and inadequacies contained in this study, the responsibility is exclusively my own.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
GTM	Grammar Translation Method
INUEE	Iranian National University Entrance Exam
TESL	Teaching English as a Second Language

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Looking in retrospect at the history of language teaching, one may discern a long-standing companionship between testing and teaching. Nonetheless, how testing could affect teaching has almost recently attracted the attention of researchers. It has now become a common belief that tests can impose their influence on teaching, especially when they are high-stakes. In technical terms, the influence of testing on teaching and learning is called washback (Alderson & Wall, 1993). Due to the crucial importance of high-stakes tests and their influences on educational systems, scholars worldwide have approached and investigated the effect of high-stakes tests from various perspectives in different educational contexts (e.g., Cheng, 2004; Lumley & Stoneman, 2000).

A number of washback studies have been carried out in the context of Iran as well. Some of the existing washback studies in Iran have looked into the teachers' perceptions about the washback effect of Iranian National University Entrance Exam (referred to as INUEE hereafter), which is undoubtedly the most important high-stakes test in the country. In order to link the present study to its contextual setting, a brief description of Iran's educational system, EFL context in Iran, the INUEE, national English curriculum, and pre-university textbook is provided in the coming sections.

1.1 Iran's Educational System

The current educational system in Iran consists of primary school, junior high school (Guidance School), senior high school, and pre-university level. Children at the age of

seven are eligible to be registered for primary school. During the five years of primary school, students are required to study different subjects such as the Persian language, elementary science, and elementary social sciences. After primary school, students proceed to junior high school, which lasts three years, and they begin studying English as one of their compulsory subject matters. They study English for three hours a week. The major components of their English textbooks are: simple speaking, pattern practice, and vocabulary.

Following junior high school, students go to senior high school for another three years and study English as a mandatory subject matter for two hours per week. At this level the textbooks are mainly focused on reading comprehension. After senior high school, eligible students attend the pre-university level which is a preparatory course for tertiary education. This level lasts for one academic year and English, which is one of the compulsory subject matters, is taught for four hours a week. At this level the English textbook is mainly centered on reading comprehension (See Appendix A). At the end of this period students obtain the pre-university certificate which makes them qualified to sit for the INUEE.

1.2 EFL Context in Iran

Unlike ESL contexts (e.g., India and Malaysia) where English has permeated the very fabric of society and it carries a high instrumental value and communicational function, the English language in Iran is regarded as a foreign language (Yarmohammadi, 2005). Not only is it rarely used in the wider context of Iranian society, but also it is not a medium of instruction in any of the country's hundreds of universities. Iranian students

usually learn English in order to enter universities, and thereby proceed to the higher level of social status and prestige in their society.

As far as the quality of English education in the country is concerned, unlike private institutes in some of which state-of-the-art methods of English teaching and modern facilities are employed to cater for the communicative needs of the influx of people coming from all walks of life, English teaching in the schools is not geared to using English for communicative purposes, but rather its main objective is to prepare students for their English needs at universities. According to Hosseini (2007), ELT in most of the schools in Iran is ineffective and impractical and English language proficiency and communicative competencies of a vast majority of students who have learnt English at schools are open to question. Prominent Iranian language specialists like Farhady, Jafarpoor, and Birjandi (1994) as well as other researchers (e.g., Eslami-Rasekh & Valizadeh, 2004; Mirhassani, Ghafar Samar, & Fattahipoor, 2006) all share the view that Iranian students do not have enough competence in language use and in its components as they are expected to. The scholars have unanimously blamed language teaching methods and materials at schools. Hosseini (2007) mentions exam-orientedness, teacher domination, and reliance on out-dated pedagogy as the three outstanding maladies of Iran's educational system

1.3 INUEE: English Section

Iranian National University Entrance Exam (INUEE) is a high-stakes test. In June each year, more than one and half a million candidates (pre-university graduates) sit for this stringent and centralized nationwide university entrance exam seeking a place in one of the national universities. Since the number of seats at the universities is not matched for

the number of candidates, the competition is fierce. University admission is based on the candidates' performance on the INUEE. This 4 to 5 hour multiple-choice exam covers all subjects taught in Iranian high schools--from math and science to Islamic studies and the foreign language (English).

The INUEE questions are different for the three high school branches of natural sciences, mathematical sciences, and humanities. Based on the course contents of the three educational branches, the content of the INUEE is designed differently. It consists of 200 questions and is basically divided into two different parts: general subject matters (English language, Arabic language, Persian literature, and theology), as well as special subject matters (e.g., mathematics, physics, biology, psychology, etc.). The general subject matters' questions are similar in all branches, while the special subject matters are different for each branch.

Since the INUEE is a high-stakes test and is administered on a scale of the entire country, the multiple-choice format is favored due to the higher reliability and practicality reasons. The English section of the INUEE (See Appendix B) includes 25 multiple-choice items which are purported to gauge the candidates' lexico-grammatical knowledge and reading comprehension ability. The 25 multiple-choice items (grammar and vocabulary: 10 questions, cloze test: 5 questions, reading comprehension: 10 questions) need to be answered within 20 minutes. The other skills like listening, speaking, and writing are not tested on the INUEE. It should be mentioned that in this high-stakes test, English does not have the same weighting for all the fields of study. It has different value for the students of different subject fields. For example, a student who wants to study foreign languages at universities has to exclusively sit for the test of

general subject matters in which English has the highest weighting of four. However, English has the weighting of two for other fields of study.

1.4 The Objectives of Iranian National Curriculum and English Textbooks

The content of the English section of Iranian National Curriculum (See Appendix C), which is in Persian, pursues the following main objectives:

- 1) To promote foreign language learning as a bridge of communication among nations;
- 2) To familiarize the learners with the culture of the target language, and more importantly to propagate Iranian cultural values by means of a foreign language;
- 3) To enhance the four language skills (i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing) on the part of learners. A balanced focus on the four language skills has been emphasized as one of the main aims of the national curriculum, and
- 4) To enable students to read and understand the passages with intermediate level of difficulty as well as to be able to write short essays in the target language.

Dahmardeh (2009) conducted a study on the English language textbooks used in Iranian secondary schools. In his study he carried out an interview with one of the co-authors of the Iranian English textbooks. As far as language skills were concerned, the interviewee pointed out that as reading skill is the major skill which is emphasized and required at tertiary level in Iran, it has accordingly become the most emphasized skill in the textbooks. He further added that the Iranian English textbooks were not designed for communicative purposes, and their design was primarily structure-oriented. The author of Iranian English textbooks emphasized that the current textbooks were not designed based on any curriculum at all, and the structural approach was adopted by the

consensus of the committee of the textbook writers. He also remarked that the teachers needed to be encouraged to apply test preparatory materials in their teaching which are mainly in the form of test books. In Iran, the same textbooks are taught nationwide because the educational system is centralized. In other words, it is the content of the textbooks prescribed by the Ministry of Education which largely determines what to be taught by the teachers and what to be learnt by the learners. In addition to the prescribed teaching content, Namaghi (2006) refers to the existence of certain cultural constraints as a factor which impedes the teachers' application of professional knowledge, initiatives, and experience in their classes.

1.5 Statement of the Problem

Due to the significance of teachers and students as two most important stakeholders in English education, a large number of washback studies have been focused on investigation of teachers and learners' perceptions towards the high-stakes tests as well as the washback effect of the tests on their process of teaching and learning (e.g., Ferman, 2004; Glover, 2006; Gosa, 2004; Stoneman, 2006).

As far as the washback studies on teachers and learners in the context of Iran are concerned, there exist a few studies which have addressed the teachers' perceptions about the washback effect of the INUEE on their English teaching (e.g., Ghorbani, 2008; Salehi & Salehi, 2011; Salehi, Yunus & Salehi, 2011); however, the investigation of the high-stakes test's effect on teachers' teaching process in practice and in the real context of classrooms has yet to be conducted. It should be pointed out that the present study aims to re-investigate the Iranian teachers' perceptions towards the INUEE on the grounds that behavior is guided by thought (Bailey, 1996; Hughes, 1993), and

examining teachers' perceptions and attitudes could help us better understand teachers' behaviors in classrooms. To put it in other words, investigation of the perceptions is a requisite for the exploration of their teaching process, because without scrutiny of teachers' perceptions, it might not be possible to come up with a true picture of their teaching processes.

As for the washback effect of high-stakes tests on learners, the review of related studies indicate that overall the number of washback studies addressing the learners is limited despite the fact that "learners are the key participants whose lives are most directly influenced by language testing washback" (Bailey, 1999, p. 14). More importantly, the Iranian learners' perceptions towards the effect of the INUEE on their English learning have not been explored yet. In addition, a study has yet to be done to concurrently and comparatively look into the teachers' and learners' perceptions about the INUEE as well as the effect of the INUEE on teachers' teaching and learners' learning processes. This could indicate how the effect of INUEE unfolds among teachers and students as the two key participants of the washback studies.

It is also necessary to investigate the role of other factors along with the INUEE in teaching and learning because washback effect of the test does not take place in vacuum and there would be factors other than the test itself which could affect teaching and learning (Wall & Alderson, 1993). Therefore, with reference to the significant relationship between the high-stakes tests and the curriculum (Cheng, 1998), it is imperative to compare the objectives of the high-stakes test and the curriculum in order to find out whether the test represents the curriculum. It is also necessary to look into the objectives of the textbook and the curriculum because the textbook normally serves as a medium of implementing the curriculum. In addition, since students' process of

English learning might be influenced by their teachers' methods of English teaching (Hwang, 2003), the learners' perceptions about their teachers' teaching and its effect on their English learning are worth investigating.

Finally, Hughes' (1993) and Bailey's (1996) washback models which are the basic washback models in the literature seem to represent a mechanical relationship between the influence of a test and the participants' (i.e., teachers' and learners') perceptions; in the sense that based on these models, it is only the test that exerts influence on the perceptions of the participants, and accordingly affects their process of teaching or learning; whether or not this is the case warrants an investigation. The present study is a step in this direction.

1.6 Objectives of the Study

The study is centered on the following five objectives:

1. To examine the washback effect of the INUEE on English language teaching as perceived by the teachers.
2. To examine the washback effect of the INUEE on English language learning as perceived by the learners.
3. To examine the washback effect of the INUEE on English language teaching as observed by the researcher.

4. To examine the role of other factors besides the INUEE which contribute to the washback effect of the INUEE on English teaching as perceived by the teachers.

5. To examine the role of other factors besides the INUEE which contribute to the washback effect of the INUEE on English learning as perceived by the learners.

1.7 Research Questions of the Study

The following questions are posed to guide the study.

1. What is the washback effect of the INUEE on English language teaching as perceived by the teachers?

2. What is the washback effect of the INUEE on English language learning as perceived by the learners?

3. What is the washback effect of the INUEE on English language teaching as observed by the researcher?

4. What other factors besides the INUEE contribute to the washback effect of the INUEE on English teaching as perceived by the teachers?

5. What other factors besides the INUEE contribute to the washback effect of the INUEE on English learning as perceived by the learners?

1.8 Significance of the Study

This study is deemed significant firstly because the findings of the study could overall add to the existing body of washback studies in general and to washback studies in Iran in particular. Secondly, compared to the large volume of washback studies on teachers' teaching, there exists much less research looking into the washback effects of test on students' learning processes. Thirdly, despite the existence of a few studies investigating the Iranian teachers' perceptions towards the INUEE, the influence of the test on their actual teaching process in their English classes still remains unexplored.

More importantly, drawing upon Wall and Alderson's (1993) caution against the simplistic conceptualization of the washback phenomenon which confines the washback effect to the relationship between tests and teaching or learning, the present study aims to shed light on the role of factors other than the test itself (e.g., teachers' perceptions about the test, learners' perceptions about the test, and teaching materials) on teachers' teaching or learners' learning. The present study aims to shed light on these untapped issues.

The findings of this study could also be of pedagogical help and significance to policy makers, curriculum planners, textbook designers, test constructors, teachers and practitioners, as well as learners and their parents. Furthermore, given the ongoing hot debates in Iran's educational context over whether the INUEE should be preserved or eliminated as a gate-keeping test to enter the universities, the findings of the present study, which reflect the teachers and students' perceptions about the test and its functions, could help the policy-makers to make a right decision.

1.9 Outline of the Study

This thesis is structurally divided into the following chapters.

Chapter 1 (Introduction) highlights the inspiration and motivation of the researcher in conducting the study. It is intended to provide an overview picture of the related literature and pinpoint a likely “gap” in the pertinent literature that has been the reason behind conducting the study.

Chapter 2 (Literature Review) provides some general explanation on the origin of washback and reviews through the related empirical washback studies investigating the teachers and students’ perceptions about the high-stakes tests, and washback effect of the high-stakes tests on English teaching and learning processes in different educational contexts.

Chapter 3 (Methodology) describes the research methodology used in the study. The research design, the participants of the study, setting, instrumentation, procedure and data collection as well as data analysis are all explained in this chapter.

Chapter 4 is related to the teachers’ English teaching whose findings were obtained from teachers’ questionnaire, interviews, and class observations. The chapter is also related to learners’ English learning whose findings were collected from students’ questionnaires and class observations.

Chapter 5 (Findings I) is apportioned to presenting the teachers and students' perceptions which were obtained from the teachers and students' questionnaires and teachers' interviews.

Chapter 6 is related to the document analysis (the pre-university textbook, the INUEE sample tests, and Iranian National Curriculum) in order to see whether their objectives are in the same line.

Chapter 7 (Discussion) summarizes and discusses the main findings of the study in connection to the socio-cultural and contextual factors of Iranian society as well as to the findings of previous research studies.

Chapter 8 (Conclusions & Implications) provides a summary of the findings and their probable implications for the context of the English language pedagogy in Iran. Limitations of the study as well as directions for future studies are also included in this chapter.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The present chapter is intended to lay the ground for the study through putting it in the context of relevant studies carried out earlier. The chapter begins with a brief presentation of the origin, existing definitions, and the typology of washback. Once a general understanding of the concept of washback is established, a review of empirical washback studies would be made. Drawing upon the washback model set forth by Hughes (1993), the review of related studies will be presented under the titles of the washback effect of high-stakes tests on teachers and learners' (participant) perceptions, and on participants' teaching/ learning (process) in different educational contexts.

2.2 The Origin of Washback

The study about washback effect of tests began in the 1950's and 1960's when researchers started to think about and systematically investigate the effect of examinations on what takes place inside the classrooms. Some researchers came up with interesting findings in this regard. For instance, Vernon (1956) found out that in a clear contrast with the objectives of the curriculum there was a tendency on the part of teachers to ignore subjects that were not directly related to the exam in the classes. Similarly, Davies (1968) suggested that tests and testing materials used by the teachers as teaching materials had resulted in narrowing educational experiences for learners. Years later, some other studies were carried out to examine how testing could drive teaching. Popham (1983) initiated the concept of measurement-driven instruction. The

concept was related to the matching of test format and content with curriculum's format and content. It has also been suggested that introducing a new or revised test or examination into an educational context might have positive effect on teaching and learning. This has been referred to as systemic validity (Fredrickson & Collins, 1989), consequential validity (Messick, 1989) and test impact (Baker, 1991).

2.3 The Definitions of Washback

The concept of washback has been explored and defined from various vantage points. Washback (Alderson & Wall, 1993) or backwash (Biggs, 1995, 1996) generally refers to the influence of testing on teaching and learning. The concept is basically rooted in the notion that tests or examinations could or should drive teaching and learning. Alderson and Wall (1993) restrict the use of the term 'washback' to the teachers' and learners' classroom behaviors and explain that "tests are held to be powerful determiners of what happens in classrooms" (p. 117). Messick (1996) paraphrases the concept of washback proposed by Alderson and Wall (1993) as "the extent to which the introduction and the use of a test influence language teachers and learners to do things they would not otherwise do that promote or inhibit language learning" (p. 241). Wall (1997) made a distinction between test impact and test washback in terms of the scope and the extent of the effects. According to him, test impact refers to ". . . any of the effects that a test may have on individuals, policies or practices, within the classroom, the school, the educational system or society as a whole" whereas test washback is defined as "the effects of tests on teaching and learning" (p. 291). Similarly, Buck (1988) uses the term washback on the micro level and defines it as the effect of a test on what teachers and students do in their classrooms, while Pierce (1992) outlines the term washback on the macro level and defines it as "the impact of a test on classroom

pedagogy, curriculum development, and educational policy” (p. 687). Messick (1996) locates both washback and impact within the theoretical notion of consequential validity in which the social consequences of testing are part of a broader, unified concept of test validity.

Bailey (1996, 1999) made further distinction between washback and impact and divided the term washback into two subcategories: ‘washback to the learner’ and ‘washback to the programme’. The former refers to the effects of tests on students, while the latter refers to the effects of tests on other participants such as teachers, material writers, and administrators. Similarly, Shohamy (2001) distinguished washback from impact by locating washback under the umbrella of impact. She pointed out that while impact may occur at a macro or social and institutional level, washback occurs only at the micro level of the individual participants such as teachers and students.

2.4 The Typology of Washback

Washback effect of a test could be either negative or positive. The negative or positive nature of washback might be determined by different contextual factors. Pearson (1988) asserted that if a test fails to reflect the learning principles and the course objectives related to it, its washback effect would be negative. However, if the effects are positive and “encourage the whole range of desired changes” (p. 101), the washback effect of test will be positive. According to Alderson and Wall (1993), for evaluating the consequences of a test for teaching and learning, it would be necessary to fully understand the educational context in which the test takes place because in order to investigate the type of washback effect, positive or negative, it would depend on where and how the test takes place.

2.4.1 Negative Washback Effect

Negative washback has been defined by a host of scholars. Alderson and Wall (1993) defined it as the undesirable influence of a test on teaching and learning, meaning that “something that the teacher or learner does not wish to teach or learn” (p.5). According to Smith (1991), the washback effect of a test would be negative if “testing programs substantially reduce the time available for instruction, narrow curricular offerings and modes of instruction, and potentially reduce the capacities of teachers to teach content and to use methods and materials that are incompatible with standardized testing formats” (p. 18). Vernon (1956) asserted that in negative washback those subjects and activities which are not directly related to the test are usually ignored by the teachers. He claimed that under such circumstances the tests “distort the curriculum” (p. 166). Wiseman (1961) believed that in coaching classes, where the students attended for test preparation, the time was not used properly because the students were mainly involved in mastering test techniques rather than genuine language learning. Davies (1968) stated that testing devices had been extensively used as teaching devices, in the sense that teaching and learning was being directed to the test samples from previous years, which in turn made the educational experience narrow and uninteresting. Shohamy (1992) asserted that in negative washback the test would lead to narrowing of content in the curriculum, and what students learn is the test language instead of expected understanding. Similarly, Shohamy, Donista-Schmidt, and Ferman (1996) pointed out that negative washback occurs when teachers experience a high level of anxiety, fear, and pressure to cover the material because they feel that their job performance is assessed by students’ test scores.

2.4.2 Positive Washback Effect

According to Alderson and Wall (1993), positive washback generally refers to the beneficial influence of tests and examinations on teaching and learning. In positive washback students are usually encouraged and motivated to work harder, teachers and learners fulfill their teaching and learning goals and teachers pay more attention to students' interests and needs. Davies (1985) pointed out that a test's washback will be positive if it promotes teaching and learning. Messick (1996) stated that "for optimal positive washback there should be little, if any, difference between activities involved in learning the language and activities involved in preparing for the test" (pp. 241–242).

Some scholars believe that it is feasible and desirable to bring about positive changes in teaching by changing examinations; this is closely related to "measurement-driven instruction" in general education. A number of ways and strategies have been suggested to transform negative washback into positive washback. Hughes (1989, pp. 44-47) outlined seven ways of promoting positive washback: 1. Test the abilities whose development you want to encourage; 2. Sample widely and unpredictably; 3. Use direct testing; 4. Make testing criterion-referenced; 5. Base achievement tests on objectives; 6. Ensure that test is known and understood by students and teachers; 7. Where necessary, provide assistance to teachers.

Prodromou (1995, p. 21) suggested shifting to a learner-centered approach with an emphasis on the language process rather than "preoccupation with the end-product." Bachman and Palmer (1996) proposed that washback effect could be positive by "involving test-takers in the design and development of the test, as well as collecting information from them about their perceptions of the test and test tasks" (p. 33). Sample

strategies which can positively influence language teaching are as follows: using more open-ended items as opposed to selected-response items like multiple choice (Heyneman & Ransom, 1990), making examinations reflect the full curriculum, not merely a limited aspect of it and using a variety of examination formats, including written, oral, aural, and practical (Kellaghan & Greaney, 1992), designing criterion-referenced tests (Hughes, 1989; Wall, 1996), providing detailed score reporting (Bailey, 1996), and making sure that results are believable, credible, and fair to test takers and score users (Bailey, 1996).

2. 5 Previous Washback Models

This section provides Hughes' (1993) and Bailey's (1996) washback models as the two basic models of washback. In fact, each of the models illustrates the complexities of washback phenomenon in different ways and explains how washback works. In 1993 Hughes proposed his model of washback. In this model, the effect of tests was described based on three main components: *participants, process, and product*. According to him, a test could affect *participants* (i.e. teachers, students, administrators, material writers, and publishers) or "all whose perceptions and attitudes toward their work may be affected by a test" (p.2). The participants' perceptions might in turn influence the *Process* which is defined as any actions participants do in order to complete teaching and learning tasks such as materials development, syllabus design, changes in teaching methods, or content, and learning and test-taking strategies. Finally, the process might affect the *Product* which refers to "learning outcomes and the quality of learning" (p.2). One of the shortcomings of the Hughes' model is that in his model it is not explained why a test itself can lead to various perceptions and attitudes of participants toward their

work. In other words, it is not clear whether it is the test only or factors other than the test which might affect process of teaching and learning.

Drawing upon the ideas proposed by Hughes (1993), Bailey (1996) proposed a basic model of washback representing Hughes' three major categories: *participants*, *process*, and *product*. In her model (See Figure 2.1) it is illustrated how the tests directly affect the *participants* (i.e. students, teachers, materials writers and curriculum designers, and researchers) who, in turn, are involved in the *processes* (i.e., any actions taken by the participants which may contribute to the process of learning) that will lead to the *products* (i.e., what is learned and the quality of learning). The model also shows that the researcher as one of the participants can play a role in the process of washback of a test. Her model included the wider test effects such as those on teaching materials (i. e., impact), rather than being restricted to the effects that a test has only on teachers and learners' behavior (i.e. washback). The model also indicates that a test not only affected products through the participants and the processes they engaged in, but the participants and processes also in turn provided feedback and thereby also had an impact on the test, as dotted lines in Figure 2.1 indicate. It should be mentioned that in this model both bold and dotted lines mean "influences". According to Hamp-Lyons (1997) and Wall (1997), what is not clear in Bailey's model is that it is not shown what exactly the intermediate processes are and how they lead to the corresponding products. In other words, her model shows a test directly influencing the participants, without mentioning the role of the participants' beliefs.

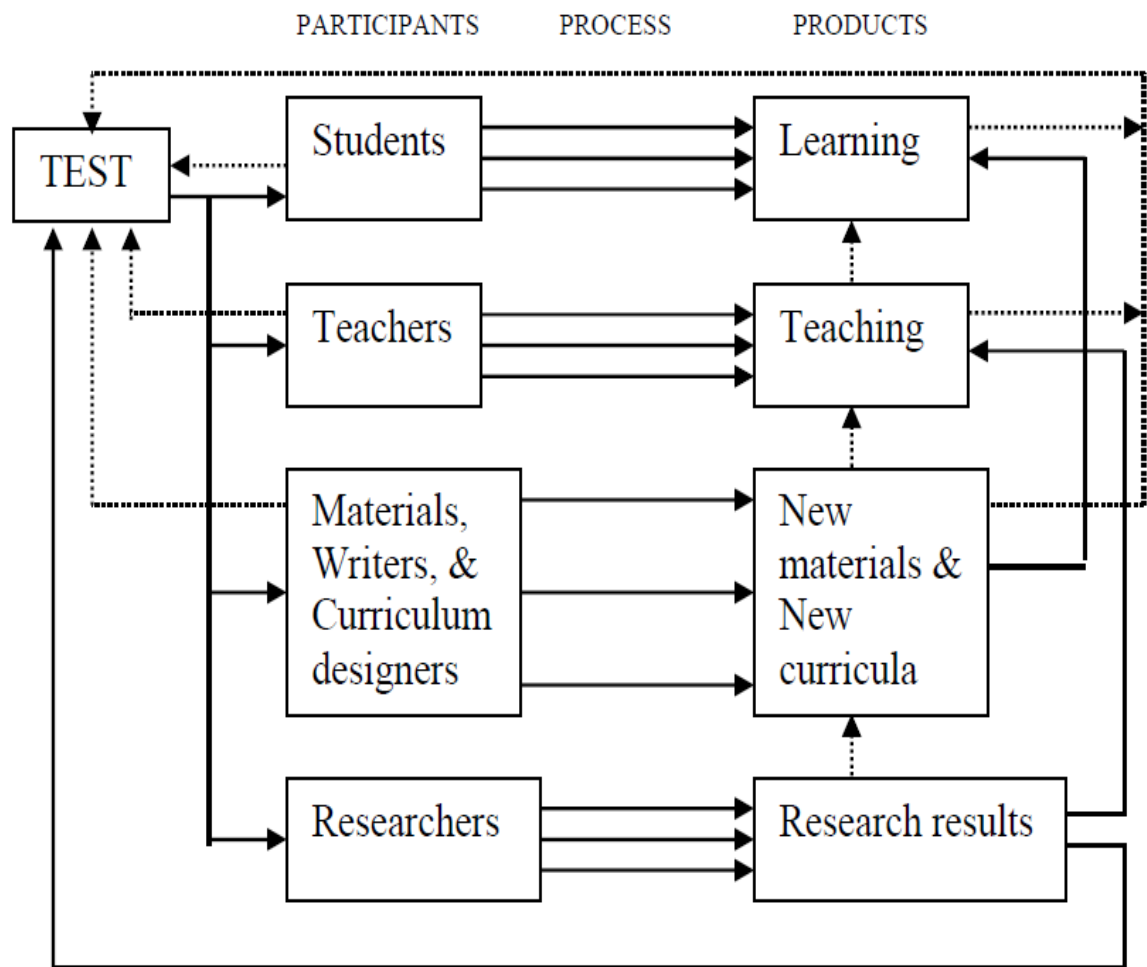


Figure 2. 1 A basic model of washback (Bailey, 1996, p. 264)

2.6 Empirical Washback Studies in Different Educational Contexts

A test might influence different aspects of learning and teaching, and various factors might play mediating roles in this process. According to Cheng, Watanabe, and Curtis (2004), these mediating factors might be: *test factor* (test methods, test contents, skills tested, purpose of the test, decisions that will be made on the basis of test results, etc.), *prestige factors* (e.g., stakes of the test, status of the test within the entire educational system, etc.); *personal factors* (e.g., teachers' educational backgrounds, their beliefs about the best methods of teaching and learning, etc.); *micro-context factors* (e.g., the school setting in which the test preparation is being carried out); and *macro—context*

factors, that is, the society where the test is used). From among the just-mentioned factors, *personal factors* have been investigated by many scholars in washback studies. Given the pivotal role of teachers and learners in washback processes (Alderson & Wall, 1993), a vast majority of the washback studies are focused on the washback effect of tests on teachers and learners. The following sections consist of two subsections: 1. Teachers and learners' perceptions towards the high-stakes tests, and 2. The washback effect of high-stakes tests on teachers' teaching and learners' learning processes in different educational contexts.

2.6.1 Teachers and Students' Perceptions towards the High-stakes Tests

As mentioned earlier, teachers and learners are the most frequently investigated participants in washback studies. According to Hughes (1993) and Bailey (1996), participants' perceptions could directly influence their action (i.e., teaching or learning). Therefore, understanding how the participants of the study perceive the test is very crucial in washback studies. In the following paragraphs, first the studies dealing with the investigation of teachers' perceptions towards the tests are presented, then the studies related to the investigation of learners' perceptions towards the tests are reviewed through, and finally a review of the studies which have concurrently looked into the learners and teachers' perceptions towards the tests is made.

Washback effect of high-stakes tests on teachers' perceptions has been extensively investigated by scholars in different contexts. The studies have yielded variable findings. Whereas some researchers (e.g., Hughes, 1988; Li, 1990) reported stress and anxiety on the part of teachers when helping students to prepare for high-stakes tests,

some other studies (e.g., Cheng, 2004; Lumley & Stoneman, 2000) indicated that tests motivated teachers to put greater effort into their teaching.

Hughes (1988) investigated a new English test for academic purpose in Turkey. He used teacher's questionnaire to collect data. He found that Turkish university English teachers' reaction towards the test was stressful and the test caused anxiety amongst them and they believed that they would have to take drastic action if they wanted their students to do well in the test. Hughes stated that:

The first result of even threatening to introduce a test of this kind was to cause consternation amongst the teachers. They argued that their students could not possibly cope with such a test. Pointing out that the test would actually require the students to perform just the kind of tasks that they would meet in their first year as undergraduates (and thus the kind of task for which they, the teachers, had always been preparing them) was not very much appreciated. Many teachers were convinced that they were quite unable to provide the necessary training (p. 143).

Li (1990) reported that a new National Matriculation English Test (NMET) in Mainland China first caused turmoil in high school English classrooms and only later was accepted by most teachers. She stated that the test "urges them to find a true purpose in their teaching and compels them to change, to seek for, and to create new ways and new ideas to fulfill this purpose" (p. 403).

In their study in Israel, Shohamy (1996) and her research fellows found that teachers showed negative feelings towards the Arabic test while the EFL oral test caused "an atmosphere of high anxiety and fear of test results among teachers and students." They stated that "teachers feel that success or failure of their students reflects on them and they speak of pressure to cover the materials for the exam" (pp. 309-310). The

researchers attributed these different attitudes to the different status of the examinations (i.e. ASL and EFL).

Two other studies also showed the negative effects of high-stakes test on the participants. In Jones and Egley's (2004) study, most of the teachers believed that the testing program had negative effects on the curriculum, teaching and learning, and student and teacher motivation. In their study in China, Han, Dai, and Yang (2004) reported that the majority (70%) of teachers believed that the test could not improve overall English teaching and learning at the tertiary level and about 25% of the teachers pointed out that the test encouraged students to guess and to use test-taking strategies, rather than to improve their actual language ability.

Unlike the studies cited above, some studies have reported positive or mixed attitudes of the participants towards the tests. Lumley and Stoneman (2000) in their study found that teachers showed positive attitudes towards the test preparation materials provided by the test developers. Cheng (2004) used the teacher's questionnaire twice during a period of two years to find out possible change of teachers' attitudes toward the modified Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE). She reported that teachers showed positive reaction to the modified test and that their initial tensions and worries decreased.

In Turkey, Ozmen (2011) analyzed the washback effect of the Selection Examination for Professional Posts in Public Organizations (SEPPPO) on prospective English teachers. As for the data collection, the researcher collected the data from students and teachers following a private SEPPPO course. A survey was conducted to reveal certain social and economic effects of getting prepared for the examination. Teachers'

interviews were also administered to provide a clear picture of the prospective teachers' experiences about the examination. The findings indicated that the SEPPPO exerted negative and harmful effects on the students and teachers as well as educational faculties and families. In fact, it was revealed that the test had negative effects at both "micro" and "macro" levels. The study showed that the reason for such a negative washback on the candidates' academics was attributable to the content (i.e., only grammar, vocabulary, and reading skill) and the style (i.e., multiple-choice) of the test.

In parallel with studies aiming to investigate the teachers' perceptions towards the high-stakes tests, some studies have sought to examine the learners' perceptions about the tests (Li, 1990; Weili, 2010; Wesdorp, 1983; Zhao, 2006). These studies found that students had either positive, negative or mixed feelings towards the test.

Zhao (2006) investigated the attitudes of Chinese university students toward the College English Test (CET) and the relationship between their attitudes and their test performance. Students' attitudes were explored through a questionnaire. The findings indicated that students were motivated to do well on the CET-4 but they were not sure of their ability to perform well on the test. Students' attitudes toward the CET-4 accounted for about 15.4% of the variance in their test performance.

Stoneman (2006) studied the perceptions of a group of Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) graduates towards the university exit English test and the way they got prepared for the test. Two different tests (the Graduating Students' Language Proficiency Assessment or GSLPA and the IELTS-Common English Proficiency Assessment Scheme or CEPAS) with different status were adopted as an exit test. Indeed, Stoneman's study drew upon a washback hypothesis proposed by Alderson and

Hamp-Lyons (1996) who state that “the status/stakes of a test will affect the amount and type of washback” (p. 296). In this study, Stoneman applied two methods to collect data: students’ survey and semi-structured student interviews. After examining and comparing the nature and extent of the test preparation activities reported by two samples of students, Stoneman found out that IELTS-CEPAS respondents engaged themselves in more test preparation activities than the GSLPA-English sample and students’ test preparation behavior was affected by test status. Stoneman mentioned that there were no considerable differences in the nature of the test preparation activities reported by the respondents in the two samples because both groups chose activities mainly intended for test preparation.

In USA, Reynolds (2010) analyzed the washback effect of the TOEFL test on the learners. Data collection consisted of student surveys and three semi-standardized, open-ended group interviews. An open-ended, focus-group interview with the three teachers of the TOEFL preparation courses and informal observations of the three classrooms rounded out the data corpus to both directly and contextually interpret students’ responses. The results indicated that the meanings of washback for students can be investigated in terms of whether or not the TOEFL preparation process is useful for students and can meet their needs. The descriptive interpretations revealed that the more confident students were regarding English and TOEFL, the more negative washback they perceived for their English language learning. From students’ point of views, some factors such as students’ attitudes and motivation, authentic contexts and materials for English practice along with teacher’s pedagogy had constructed the washback effect of TOEFL on learning.

In China, Weili (2010) looked into the washback effect of the New College English Test (CET 4) on language learners, which was explored through college students' attitudes toward it and their learning processes influenced by it. Data were collected by means of a questionnaire survey. The study found that there were both positive and negative washback effects on students' attitudes and behaviors in terms of learning content (e.g., using textbooks, quantity and variety of the listening materials) and learning methods (e.g., coaching method). While the students were found to be positive about the objective aspects of the listening subtest, they were subjectively unsatisfied by the subtest's difficulty, its time allotment, and its score report. Analysis of the results showed that the new CET 4 listening subtest had produced more positive washback effects than negative washback effects on students.

Along with the studies in the literature which looked into the teachers or students' perceptions towards the high stakes tests, some studies do exist in the related literature which have investigated both teachers and students' perceptions towards the tests concurrently. Some of the studies are presented below.

In the Netherlands, Wesdorp (1983) examined students' attitudes towards multiple-choice questions in order to determine whether there were discrepancies between students' view and their teachers'. Data was collected through student questionnaires. The findings indicated that students' views did indeed differ from what their teachers perceived them to be. The students also thought that there was no change in their study habits after the introduction of multiple-choice into their final examinations. Likewise, contrary to the teachers' beliefs that students did not favor multiple-choice questions, the students preferred multiple-choice to open-ended question tests. The study suggests

that researchers cannot take students' perspectives for granted based on others' judgment rather than those of students themselves.

Li (1990) investigated the power of the National Matriculation English Test (NMET) taken by Chinese students at the end of high school to enter universities. She conducted a large scale survey. According to the researcher, because of both *extrinsic* (the official authority and huge population size) and *intrinsic* powers (test validity, test reliability and feedback), the NMET was positively influencing teaching and learning. Furthermore, the researcher reported that students held positive attitudes towards the exam due to the significant influence of the test on their future opportunities. In contrast with the students, teachers were found to be uncomfortable with the NMET. Li's study had a serious weakness: she did not directly gather data from students, but rather she drew upon what the teachers reported about their students in their questionnaires.

Seventeen years later, Qi (2007) sought to investigate whether the NMET washback effects intended by the test designers really happened in the classroom at high school. Students' perspectives obtained from the survey were used to support their teachers' claims in the study. The study found that the communicative context of writing was neglected, but the testing situation and the conceived preference of the exam makers was stressed by the students. Students' attitudes towards writing coincided with their teachers' and they were positive about the exam. However, whether what students claimed in their questionnaires has really happened in their learning or not warrants further investigation

In their study, Lumley and Stoneman (2000) compared the teachers' and students' reactions towards a Learning Package-exam preparation materials which were designed

for a new high-stakes English test at tertiary level in Hong Kong-The Graduating Students' Language Proficiency Assessment (GSLPA)-English. They used questionnaires and interviews in their study. Teachers' interviews showed that they were positive about the Learning Package and they believed that it included relevant and valuable teaching activities. In contrast, the interviewed students revealed more complicated and mixed reactions towards the Learning Package. In fact, all the students were concerned about the test formats of the Learning Package, but they had different attitudes towards the learning strategies proposed for improving English proficiency. Lumley and Stoneman asserted that the students' different attitudes towards the exam preparation materials could be partly due to their different level of English proficiency. The study of Lumley and Stoneman is deemed to be important because it emphasized the importance of directly drawing on the students' perspectives towards the exam.

In China, Gu (2005) focused on the participants' perceptions of College English Test (CET) and its washback. Various research methods were employed in the study including classroom observations, questionnaire surveys, interviews, and analysis of documents. The findings indicated that CET had both positive and negative washback effect and the test stakeholders' view towards the CET was either positive or negative. Most of them thought highly of the test's design, administration, marking and the new measures adopted in recent years and believed that the positive washback of the test was much greater than the negative washback, and the negative washback was mostly due to the misuse of the test. However, some CET stakeholders were dissatisfied with the overuse of the multiple-choice (MC) format of the test, the lack of direct score reports to the teachers, the incomplete evaluation of the students' English proficiency without a compulsory spoken English test, etc.

Green (2006) examined learners and teachers' perspectives on IELTS preparation course. The study found that the learners' perceptions of the course outcomes were affected by the course focus. The results indicated that teachers and students perceived both IELTS task one and task two as having a positive effect on their class-based writing skills and bearing a reasonable relationship with academic skills needed at universities.

Haddadin, Dweik and Sheir (2008) investigated teachers and students' perceptions of the effect of the public examinations on English instructions at secondary school in Jordan. Survey questionnaires for teachers and students were utilized to collect data. Teachers were interviewed to discuss their perceptions and the effect of the national test on their instruction. The findings indicated that both teachers and students were negatively affected by the content and the format of the test and teaching and learning were oriented towards the national test with a clear abandonment of the listening and speaking skills which were not included in the test.

From the review of literature, it could be seen that the studies on the teachers' perceptions are varied; therefore, firm conclusions cannot be drawn and the findings can hardly be extrapolated to other contexts. In addition, the findings of some studies (e.g., Lam, 1994; Watanabe, 1996) have indicated that washback effect on 'what' and 'how' teachers teach could vary from teacher to teacher. On the other hand, based on Hughes' (1993) washback model, the *participants'* (i.e., teachers') teaching *process* is driven by their perceptions. Therefore, it could be deduced that the perceptions of the teachers, even if they are operating in the same educational context, could not necessarily be expected to be the same. More importantly, the studies conducted in Iranian context

have all been confined to the level of perceptions, falling short of linking teachers' perceptions to their actual teaching process.

With regard to the washback effect of tests on students' perceptions, the review of related literature shows that overall the number of existing studies is not considerable, and in some of the studies learners' perceptions have been investigated indirectly through the perspectives of teachers (Li, 1990; Wesdorp, 1983). In fact, in these studies teachers have been considered as the main source of data and students have been involved in the studies as an ad-hoc source of data which could only provide a complementary perspective to the research being undertaken, and to yield information that would allow for triangulation of data obtained from teachers. In addition, in the prior studies how the students' affected beliefs in turn might have influenced their learning behavior is still vague. Therefore, this area is worth reinvestigation.

Furthermore, in some other studies (e.g., Ferman, 2004; Nkosana, 2010; Stoneman, 2006) the scholars have applied questionnaires and interviews to elicit participants' (i.e., teachers or students) perceptions and they did not have classroom observations for data collection, which in turn diminishes the reliability of findings and impedes people's understanding of how testing influences the participants' beliefs. Last but not least, there is no study in the educational context of Iran looking concurrently into the teachers and students' perceptions towards the effect of the INUEE on teachers' teaching and learners' learning.

2.6.2 Washback Effect of Tests on Processes of Teaching and Learning

In parallel with the studies which have investigated the teachers and learners' perceptions about the high stakes tests, some other studies have aimed to shed light on what happens in language classrooms when test washback occurs. A major proportion of the existing studies (Wall & Alderson, 1993; Watanabe, 1996) has been focused on examining the washback effect of tests on teachers' teaching process, and a small number of studies (Gosa, 2004; Watanabe, 1990) have looked into the washback effect of tests on learners' learning process. A number of studies have also concurrently and comparatively investigated the washback effect of tests on teaching and learning processes. In the following paragraphs, first the studies dealing with the washback effect of tests on teachers' teaching process are presented, then the studies concerned with the washback effect of tests on learners' learning process are reviewed through, and finally a review of the studies which have concurrently looked into the washback effect of tests on teaching and learning is made.

In Sri Lanka, Wall and Alderson (1993) studied the impact of a new English examination (revised O-Level English examination) on language teaching. The researchers observed the classes and conducted interviews with the teachers. The study found that the revised examination impacted on the teachers' content of teaching, but there was no evidence for any influence of the test on how teachers taught. The researchers also mentioned that English lessons were still teacher-centered and there was still little chance for the students to use English in a practical way. They pointed out that the positive washback of the revised test was more limited than expected.

Shohamy et al. (1996) investigated the effect of Arabic as a Second Language (ASL) test and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) test on teachers' teaching in Israel. The instruments of data gathering were questionnaire and interviews. Shohamy and her colleagues found that by introducing the new test of Arabic (ASL), teachers stopped teaching new material and began to review; textbooks were replaced with worksheets identical to the previous year's test; class activities became "test-like"; the classroom atmosphere became tense; and students and teachers were observed to be "highly motivated to master the materials" (p. 301). They also noted that "once the test had been administered, such teaching and learning activities ceased." Through the interviews, the researchers found that "once teachers learnt that the result had no personal immediate effect on them, they became relaxed and fearless, and thus effect of the test decreased" (p. 314). By the same token as the new EFL test was introduced in Israel, teachers spent more class time on teaching oral language, and the tasks and activities which "were identical to those included in the test" (p. 301).

Some other studies indicated that teachers are different from each other in terms of the washback effect of tests on what and how teachers teach. For example, based on teacher's questionnaire, in the context of Hong Kong, Lam (1994) found that the younger teachers in his study were less examination-oriented than their older counterparts. He also called teachers 'textbook slaves' who were relying on the textbook in exam classes and 'exam slaves' who were focusing even more heavily on past papers. He mentioned that the teachers were relying on the past papers because "they believed that the best way to prepare students for exams is by doing past papers" (p. 91).

Watanabe (1996) looked into the washback effect of the university entrance examination in English on the prevalent use of the grammar-translation method in Japan. Data were collected through interviews and class observations. The findings indicated that although grammar translation had become a major tool for taking or preparing for the test, the teaching of English in Japan had become increasingly communicative both instructionally and experientially, and grammar translation (GT) was under attack. Watanabe (1996) also claimed that “Teacher A appeared to be more GT orientated than Teacher B, regardless of the type of course he was teaching” (p. 327). In sum, Watanabe concluded that the grammar translation-oriented university entrance exam induced washback on some teachers but not on others.

In USA, Alderson and Hamp-Lyons (1996) investigated the influence of the TOEFL on classroom teaching. The data were gathered through interviews with teachers and students, as well as class observations. After analyzing the teachers’ behavior, Alderson and Hamp-Lyons stated that “the differences between the two teachers are at least as great as the differences between TOEFL and non-TOEFL classes” (p. 290). They described the TOEFL class as follows: test-taking activity was more common; teacher talking time was more than student talking time; turn-taking between teachers and students was not noticeable; little time was spent on pair work, and classes were routinized. In contrast, in non-TOEFL classes usually students asked questions of their teachers. It was also observed that there was a greater degree of student-student and student-teacher interaction in their classes.

In Hong Kong, Cheng (1997) examined how the revised Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE) affected the teaching of English in Hong Kong secondary schools. Cheng used questionnaire, interviews, and classroom observations as

her method of data collection. The findings of her study revealed that the changes in the teaching materials had been more intensive than other areas. She related this change to the “highly commercial nature of Hong Kong society” (p. 38). The effects on the teachers’ methodology were found to take place “...slowly and reluctantly and with difficulties...caused by the constraints imposed upon teaching and teachers in...schools” (p. 38). In fact, the results of the Cheng’s study indicated that the HKCEE had affected teachers’ choice of activities and had prompted them to choose activities more pertaining to the requirements of the test, but it had little or no significant impact on teaching methodology.

Hwang (2003) investigated the washback effect of the College Scholastic Ability Test (CSAT) on the teaching and learning of EFL in Korean secondary schools. Teacher and students’ questionnaires as well as teachers’ interviews were utilized for data collection. For the purpose of comparing the relationship between the CSAT, curriculum, and the textbooks, they were analyzed based on a checklist proposed by Cunningsworth (1995) for evaluation of the textbooks and a checklist proposed by Bachman and Palmer (1996). The results indicated that the curriculum corresponded to the textbooks, while the CSAT did not represent the curriculum because the CSAT did not measure all the skills mentioned by the curriculum. Therefore, there was a negative washback effect of the CSAT on EFL teaching and learning. The participants of the study also had negative attitudes towards the test.

Stecher, Chun, and Barron (2004) looked into the effects of assessment-driven reform on the teaching of writing in Washington State. The data was gathered through two surveys of principals and teachers throughout State of Washington. One of the main purposes of the study was to investigate the effect of the Washington educational reform

on school and classroom practices. The study found that teaching of writing was significantly influenced by the tests (i.e., Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs) and Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL)). Furthermore, teachers reported some changes in the content of their writing lessons; the lesson's content was broadly reflective of the EALRs. The teachers also reported changes in their teaching methods. They gave regular writing assignments to the students and took a number of specific steps to prepare the students for the WASL tests in writing. The researchers mentioned that such a reform had created "winners" and "losers" among the subjects. The big "winner" was writing. According to the teachers, replacing or supplementing multiple-choice tests with more performance-based assessments had led to a dramatic increase in the amount of writing students did in school—both as part of language arts instruction and as part of instruction in their subjects. The "big loser" was the untested subject area.

Manjarrés (2005) investigated the washback effect of the foreign language test of the state examinations in Colombia. The study was intended to find out whether the test had had any effect on the teaching of English in the country. The data for the study was collected through classroom observations, interviews with students and teacher, and the English test used in the class. The results indicated a strong correlation between classroom teaching and evaluating practices. An overall positive washback effect of the introduction of the foreign language test was documented because English teaching and learning as a foreign language improved in the school where the study was conducted. The researcher also emphasized the complex nature of washback phenomenon and strongly supported the use of qualitative research methods for investigation of washback effect.

In the educational context of Spain, Pizarro (2010) investigated the washback effect of a high-stakes English Test (ET) on the teaching of English in upper secondary schools. One of the main purposes of the study was to examine the effects of the ET on the curriculum, materials, teaching methods, and teachers' feelings and attitudes. The other purpose of the study was to find out teachers' perceptions towards the introduction of a listening and speaking component in the design of the new ET. Data was collected through a questionnaire. The study found the test influenced different aspects associated with the curriculum, especially with content. In other words, teachers' teaching methodology and teaching content were negatively affected by the test and the content and activities were to a large part adapted and geared in the direction of the test. It was also found that teachers spent most of class time practicing the skills featured in the test and neglecting untested skills and material. Therefore, the test had serious detrimental effects on the overall communicative competence of students since the current format of the test neither included a speaking nor listening component in the examination. Therefore, most of the teachers were positive about incorporating the listening and speaking components in the new ET design.

NKosana (2010) reported the findings of five teachers and students' survey questionnaires regarding the teaching of speaking skill which was not assessed compared to reading and writing which were assessed in the ESL exam of General Botswana Certificate of Secondary Education (GBCSE). The study found that factors such as GBCSE ESL exam, the sociolinguistic status of English in the wider context of society (Botswana) and lack of materials and appropriate professional development had negatively affected teachers' classroom practice. The researcher concluded that both the just-mentioned factors and the GBCSE ESL exam influenced the teaching of speaking in secondary schools in Botswana.

Wang's (2010) study, which was carried out in the educational context of China, investigated the effect of the College English Test (CET) on teachers' beliefs, interpretations, and practices. The study also looked into the pedagogical, social, and personal complexities influencing teachers' beliefs, interpretations, and practices. The study found that the CET along with some interrelated components of the teacher factor were fostering the washback effect. Wang pointed out that due to the complex nature of washback phenomenon, the educational change carried out in curriculum and assessment was not sufficient on its own to change teacher's behavior in terms of pedagogical strategies. The results revealed that one external and four internal factors were significant predictors contributing to teachers' implementation activities: resource support, teaching methods (communicative language teaching and grammar-translation method), teaching experience, language proficiency, and professional development needs.

Khan (2011) investigated the impact of creative writing tests on classroom practice in a university in Pakistan. The data were collected from questionnaires and focus group interviews with postgraduate students. The study found that English teachers did not teach to develop the creative and communicative abilities of the students studying the English at Matriculation Level. The findings also showed that the in-service teachers were not aware of the approaches being widely used for teaching writing in western educational context, such as the 'genre approach' and 'the process approach'. The classroom assessment was influenced by the Board Examinations.

In parallel with the studies aiming to investigate the washback effect of tests on teachers' teaching process, some studies have been conducted in order to examine the washback effect of tests on learners' learning process. For instance, Watanabe (1990)

investigated the washback effect of a university entrance exam on language learning strategies used by Japanese EFL learners. Two groups of students who had been admitted by means of either the entrance examination or recommendation letters were administered questionnaires twice: once two months after the entrance examination and once again, one week after the start of the first term of the university. The study indicated that those students who were admitted by means of university entrance examination tended to use a greater variety of learning strategies than those students who were admitted through recommendation letters from their previous supervisors. It was also found that the test failed to help the exam students develop the use of “socio-effective strategies” which shared the characteristics of focusing on social aspects of language, and managing affective factors in learning language.

Gosa (2004) investigated the washback effect of the English component of the Romanian School-leaving exam (i.e., Bac) on secondary students. Her research was qualitative and ten students participated in the study by keeping learning diaries over various periods. Based on her findings through analysis of the diary data, Gosa found out that although students expected their teachers would teach towards the Bac, they experienced very little practice for the tests in class. It was also revealed that Bac affected students’ choices of the task types and practiced language skills considerably and students were different in the ways they experienced the Bac washback. Gosa acknowledged her study had some shortcomings. First, only using diary studies did not allow further probing of the answers to the questions which appeared during the process of analysis. Second, the diary study seemed not to be the best instrument of eliciting possible washback since it was basically uncontrolled.

Song and Cheng (2006) studied how College English Test Band 4 (CET-4) might affect learners' language learning strategies in China. The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationships between the strategies used by the learners and their language performance on the CET-4. The data were collected through questionnaire. The findings indicated the use of cognitive strategies (e.g., memory and retrieval strategies) by the learners.

Along with the studies in the pertinent literature which have looked into the washback effect of tests either on teachers' teaching processes or on students' learning processes, some studies do exist in the related literature which have investigated the washback effect of tests on both teachers' teaching and students' learning concurrently. For instance, Jin's (2000a, 2000b) study investigated the washback effects of the College English Test (CET) in China. Data were collected through students and teachers' questionnaires. Questionnaires were distributed to the students and teachers. About 80% of the students reported that the test was useful for evaluating their communicative competence in English. An overwhelming majority of the students (96.9%) and all the teachers (100%) stated that it was necessary to have an oral test in the CET battery. All the teachers asserted that the Spoken English Test would have a significant effect on college English teaching and would enhance students' ability to use English communicatively. The participants of the study (teachers and students) reported that the test design should be evaluated. The researcher believed that since the administration of the CET-SET, some positive changes had taken place in college English teaching. For example, many colleges and universities focused more on improving students' communicative competence, students practiced the oral activities in classes, and some universities developed and designed teaching materials that provided for the test.

Qi (2003, 2004, & 2005) examined the washback effect of the National Matriculation English Test (NMET) in China. The study aimed to find out why the NMET failed to create the intended washback effects on English teaching and learning in secondary schools. The data were collected through interviews. The study revealed the teachers were affected by the test and they taught in favor of the test. It was also found out that the test failed to navigate teaching and learning as it was planned by the constructors and policymakers.

In China, Ferman (2004) studied the washback effect of an EFL national oral matriculation test on teaching and learning. Four types of instruments were used in the study: structured questionnaires, structured interviews, open interviews, and document analyses. The results of the study indicated that teachers would stop teaching oral proficiency immediately following the oral test and would engage in preparing for the written test only. About two-thirds of the students reported that there had been an increased focus on learning the oral skills in class in preparation for the test. The English inspectors stated in interviews that the oral test had had a huge effect on the teaching-learning activities of all those involved. They strongly believed that what teachers taught and students learned, and how they did it, was largely dictated by official exam requirements. They stated that if the oral test were cancelled, teachers would stop teaching oral skills, and students would stop developing oral proficiency.

Gu (2005) looked into the relationship between the College English Test (CET) and college English teaching and learning in the context of China. The study showed that some CET stakeholders were critical of the overuse of the multiple-choice (MC) format in the test and other issues such as not direct reporting of scores to the teachers, the incomplete evaluation of the students' English proficiency without an obligatory spoken

English test, and the use of the test as the absolute means in evaluating the quality of CE teaching and learning. The study concluded that the washback effect of the CET is complicated and the CET is part of a complex set of factors such as: students' educational background, teacher quality, and administrators' attitudes about the CE courses and the CET that determine the outcome of CE teaching and learning.

Shih (2007) conducted a study in Taiwan. The aim of her study was to investigate the washback effect of the General English Proficiency test (GEPT) on institutes' policies, teaching, and learning. Participants of the study were two groups of English students from two universities of technology. Unlike the students of university A who were not required to pass GEPT, the students in university B were required to pass GEPT. Data were collected through various qualitative methods: Interviews with the teachers, observations, and reviews of departmental documents and records. Shih found that the GEPT caused various degrees of washback on English learning at both schools, but there was still an absence of long-term systematic preparation for the test. In addition, there was a difference in degree of washback among the students from the two universities. The students' amount of test preparation activities in University A was less than that of students in University B. Shih also embarked on describing the areas in which students were affected by the test and the findings of the study indicated that due to the influence of the GEPT, the students were focusing more on listening and reading skills rather than speaking and writing skills in practice and they often used the GEPT-preparation books and its past papers as their learning materials. Students were also found to use a variety of strategies such as reading aloud and test-taking strategies and going to cram schools to get prepared for the exam.

Prapphal (2008) reported the washback effects of university entrance exams in Thailand. According to the researcher, both teaching and learning processes in the last semester of Grade 12 in many schools were affected by the tests and teachers and learners focused on reviewing the content and format of the university entrance exams. Muñoz and Álvarez (2009) looked into the washback effect of an oral assessment system on some areas of the English teaching and learning. The study combined quantitative and qualitative research methods within a comparative study between an experimental group and a comparison group. As for data collection, they surveyed teachers and students, observed classes and they carried on external evaluations of students' oral performance. The findings revealed positive washback in some areas.

Sukyadi and Mardiani (2011) examined the washback effect of the English National Examination (ENE) in three secondary schools in Indonesia. The data were collected through questionnaire, interviews, and observation. The results of the study indicated that English teachers and students of these schools held different perceptions towards the ENE. As for the effect of the test on teachers' teaching, it was found that the ENE had an influential impact on teachers' teaching in terms of time arrangement, teaching materials, teaching contents, teaching methods, teaching strategies, and ways of assessing. In fact, teachers mainly taught to the test, practiced the test, and developed test-taking strategies. The test also affected feelings and attitudes. The students' learning was affected due to teachers' teaching to the test. The washback effect of the ENE on both English teachers and students was mixed (negative and positive).

Apichatrojanakul (2011) looked into the washback effect of the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) examination on the teachers and students in Thailand. The Data were collected through the teachers' and students' interviews. The

researcher found out that there were both positive and negative effects of the TOEIC preparation courses on the TOEIC teachers and learners. He suggested that in order to increase positive washback effect of the test and reduce its negative washback effect on the learners, there should be practical measures used by the TOEIC teachers. For instance, there should be some kind of balance between teaching-centered approach and students-centered approach, including pair work and group activities in teaching plans. Likewise, there should be effective and proper strategies and techniques for increasing positive washback effects and decreasing negative washback effects of the test on the teachers.

Nambiar and Ransirini (2012) examined the washback effect of the Malaysian University English Test (MUET) in order to investigate how Malaysian students and English teachers perceive the impact of the MUET on their learning and teaching, respectively. Data were gathered through teachers and students' questionnaires, teachers' interviews, as well as classroom observations. The study revealed the complex nature of students' perceptions of the test impact of MUET. It was found out that washback operates on different skills in different ways: for speaking there seemed to be positive while for listening, it seemed to be rather negative and the type of washback effect MUET had on writing and reading was rather ambivalent.

From the review of literature, it could be seen that compared to the sizeable volume of research dedicated to the study of washback effect of high-stakes tests on teaching, overall the number of studies aiming at study of washback effect of tests on learners' learning is limited, and some of the existing studies seem to have certain methodological shortcomings. Some of these studies, (e.g., Jin, 2000; Qi, 2003) did not carry out class observation in their studies, which according to Wall and Alderson

(1993) must be an essential channel of data collection in washback studies. With regard to the Iranian educational context, it could be stated that there is still a gap in the literature when it comes to the study of the washback effect of high-stakes tests on the learners' learning process and teachers' teaching process.

2.7 Washback Studies in Iran

Some washback studies have been conducted in the educational context of Iran about the participants' perceptions towards the washback effect of the INUEE. For instance, in Shiraz city, Razmjoo (2004) investigated teachers' and learners' perceptions regarding the impact of the INUEE on teachers' teaching. All the participants were males, and questionnaires were applied for data collection. Razmjoo reported that the participants had different viewpoints about the INUEE: 60% of the students mentioned that their teachers always focused on vocabulary, idiomatic expressions and reading comprehension, while the teachers held different views in this regard and believed that they always attached importance to all language skills and components except for the listening skill. Furthermore, 42.50% of the students believed that the aim of learning English was to prepare them for the INUEE, while 10% of the teachers believed that the "only purpose of teaching English" was to prepare the students for INUEE.

Ghorbani (2008) investigated the nature and scope of the INUEE on pre-university English teachers' curricular planning based upon teachers' perceptions. He used a questionnaire and interviews for data collection. He investigated "teachers' *perceptions* of the impact of the INUEE considering variables such as teachers' background and gender, school type, school location" as well as teachers' *expectations* of "the INUEE with respect to the administration, structure, task, etc". The findings showed that almost

all the teachers, regardless of their teaching experience, educational background, gender, the school type, and the school location where they were teaching, held negative perceptions about INUEE.

Salehi and Salehi (2011) investigated the teachers' perceptions towards the washback effect of the INUEE on using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in English classrooms in the city of Isfahan. The researchers used a questionnaire and the purpose of their study was two-fold: firstly to identify whether the INUEE influenced the use of ICT in English classes, and secondly to investigate teachers' perceptions of the factors encouraging and discouraging teachers to integrate ICT into the curriculum. The participants of the study were requested to say whether the INUEE acted as a facilitator or barrier in using ICT in the classroom. The findings of the study showed that teachers had negative beliefs about the INUEE and believed that the test discouraged them to implement ICT applications in their teaching. Teachers also mentioned that the content and format of the INUEE directed them towards using those skills which could help the students pass the test. In fact, the INUEE acted as a barrier preventing the teachers to integrate ICT into the curriculum.

Salehi and Yunus (2012) investigated the high school English teachers' perceptions about the INUEE. The study was carried out in the city of Isfahan. A questionnaire was administered for data collection. The findings of their study revealed that the teachers' perceptions were negatively influenced by the test. Some of the findings of the study were: about one-third of the teachers (31.8 %) reported that they used English supplemented with occasional Persian explanation. Another one-third of the sampled teachers (31.8 %) also stated that they used half English and half Persian, (18.9%) and (17.4%) of the teachers mentioned that they used English only and mainly Persian

respectively in their English classes. About three fourths of the high school teachers (73.5 %) stated that the INUEE is considered as an exam which evaluates talented students and two thirds of them (65.9 %) considered EEU as an exam which meets the demands of tertiary education. Three fourth of the teachers explicitly disagreed with the EEU function which motivates students to use integrated skills. Majority of the teachers (84.8 %) believed that the current exam papers of the EEU in recent years emphasize the reading comprehension skill and such an attitude can make teachers ignore productive skills of writing and speaking and receptive skill of listening. More than two third of the respondents (67.5 %) indicated that they have to employ new teaching methods to fulfill the students' expectations. About three fourths of the teachers (74.2 %) also indicated that they teach according to the INUEE format due to the pressure from the context of this test. They directed their teaching methods towards the test format and adopted new teaching methods to help their students perform well on the EEU. Even about two thirds of the teachers (60.6 %) believed that the INUEE motivates them to encourage their students to participate in class activities. What makes Salehi and Yunus' (2012) study different from the present study is that in their study they investigated the washback effect of the INUEE at high school, while in the current study the washback effect of the INUEE at pre-university level would be investigated.

Overall, by comparing and contrasting the washback studies conducted in the context of Iran, we could deduce that the 'loop-holes' found in the existing washback studies could fall under two categories: 1. Topical. 2. Methodological. As far as the *topical* dimension is concerned, firstly, the learners' perceptions about the effect of the INUEE on their English learning as well as the influence of factors other than the washback effect of the INUEE on their English learning has yet to be investigated. Secondly, the washback effect of the INUEE on teachers' actual teaching processes and the influence of factors

other than the washback effect of the INUEE on teachers' teaching processes still needs to be examined.

As for the *methodological* dimension, except Ghorbani's study which employed questionnaires and interviews, the other remaining studies have utilized solely the questionnaire as the data collection instrument in their studies. According to Wall and Alderson (1993), in washback studies the data collected through questionnaires and even both questionnaires and interviews would not suffice to produce reliable findings about the occurrence of washback phenomenon in a given context. They strongly argue for the use of observation as an essential methodological instrument in washback studies reasoning that without the observation of the actual process (e.g. teaching process) by the researchers themselves, there would be no choice but to believe what the teachers tell the researcher about their teaching. By this methodological standard set by Wall and Alderson (1993), the findings obtained and the conclusions drawn in the earlier washback studies in the context of Iran are open to question. In other words, methodologically speaking, it would be oversimplification to solely draw on teachers' responses in a questionnaire and to firmly conclude that the teaching methods adopted and practiced by the teachers were due to the washback effect of the INUEE. Therefore, in order to fill Ghorbani's study gap for example, in the present study the researcher have tried to triangulate (through the use of questionnaire, interview, and observations) the finding as strongly suggested by Wall and Anderson (1993) as well. In fact, class observations could be considered as one of the basic ways of understanding how the test might influence the process of teaching in the English classes and in practice.

2.8 Summary of the Impact of High-stakes Tests on Teaching and Learning

In the present study washback effect of the INUEE, the effect of test on teaching and learning as Alderson and Wall (1993) defined, would be examined in the context of Iran. Reviewing the related literature revealed that washback effect of high-stakes tests could be constructive (positive) or destructive (negative) in different educational contexts. Different studies (e.g., Green 2006; Gu, 2005) indicated that teachers and learners, as the two key participants of the washback studies, had different perceptions (negative, positive, mixed) about the role of the high-stakes tests in their English teaching and learning. In most of the studies it was shown that the participants' positive or negative perceptions about the tests had directly affected the processes of teaching and learning (e.g., Bailey, 1996; Hughes, 1993). Bailey (1996) and Hughes (1993) have proposed diagrammatic washback models depicting how a test might influence the participants' (e.g., teachers and learners) perceptions, their processes of teaching and learning as well as their learning outcome as product. The three Ps (i.e., participants, process, and product) have inspired many researchers to investigate how a test might influence these three Ps in different educational context. In the present study which was inspired by two basic washback models (Bailey's (1996) and Hughes' (1993) models), the researcher aimed to examine how the INUEE might affect the teachers and learners' perceptions towards language teaching and learning. It also aimed to explore the effect of other factors along with the test (e.g., context-specific socio-cultural norms and values) on teachers' teaching and students' learning processes as well as on teachers and learners' perceptions in the context of Iran.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the research methodology used in the study. The present study was designed to seek answers to the five research questions of the study: **RQ1.** What is the washback effect of the INUEE on English language teaching as perceived by the teachers? **RQ2.** What is the washback effect of the INUEE on English language learning as perceived by the learners? **RQ3.** What is the washback effect of the INUEE on English language teaching as observed by the researcher? **RQ4.** What other factors besides the INUEE contribute to the washback effect of the INUEE on English teaching as perceived by the teachers? **RQ5.** What other factors besides the INUEE contribute to the washback effect of the INUEE on English learning as perceived by the learners?

In conjunction with its goals, the study was carried out based on a mixed method design. The major rationale behind using mixed method design in this study was the superiority of mixed method studies as opposed to studies carried out by either quantitative or qualitative research alone (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005); the results obtained through quantitative approaches have higher degree of generalizeability to other populations and contexts, but are often charged with being oversimplified and having poor ecological validity. In contrast, the qualitative approach is capable of presenting a more accurate picture of reality and bringing more complexities to light, but it is time-consuming and the findings are not meant to be readily generalized to other contexts (Cohen, 1976; Cohen & Manion, 1989).

As far as the study of washback phenomenon is concerned, Brannen (1992) argues that neither of the single approaches (quantitative vs. qualitative) would be sufficient to answer the research questions of washback phenomenon and recommends mixed methods be used. On the other hand, washback studies usually require an analysis of classroom dynamics (what teachers and students do in the actuality of their classes) as well as scrutiny of the changes in their teaching/learning behaviors as a result of the effect of a test. Therefore, using a multi-method methodology is required. According to Hammersley and Atkinson (1983), using multiple sources of data and methods provides a cross-examination mechanism which is generally known as triangulation. Dornyei (2007) asserts that triangulation is one of the most efficient ways of ensuring research validity in that it reduces the chance of systematic bias in a qualitative study. It is a truism that when we come to the same conclusion about a phenomenon using a different data collection/analysis method, the convergence offers strong validity evidence.

3.2 Research Design of the Study

In this study three sources of data collection methods were used: two questionnaires (i.e. teacher's questionnaire and student's questionnaire), class observations, and post observation interviews with the teachers. The purpose of conducting interviews was two-fold: 1. To elicit further clarification on what the teachers had reported on their questionnaire; 2. To figure out the reasons behind the teachers' behaviors and teaching activities observed during class observations. Figure 3.1 represents the research design of the study with reference to Creswell and Clark's (2007, p. 63) Convergence Model which is a triangulation design.

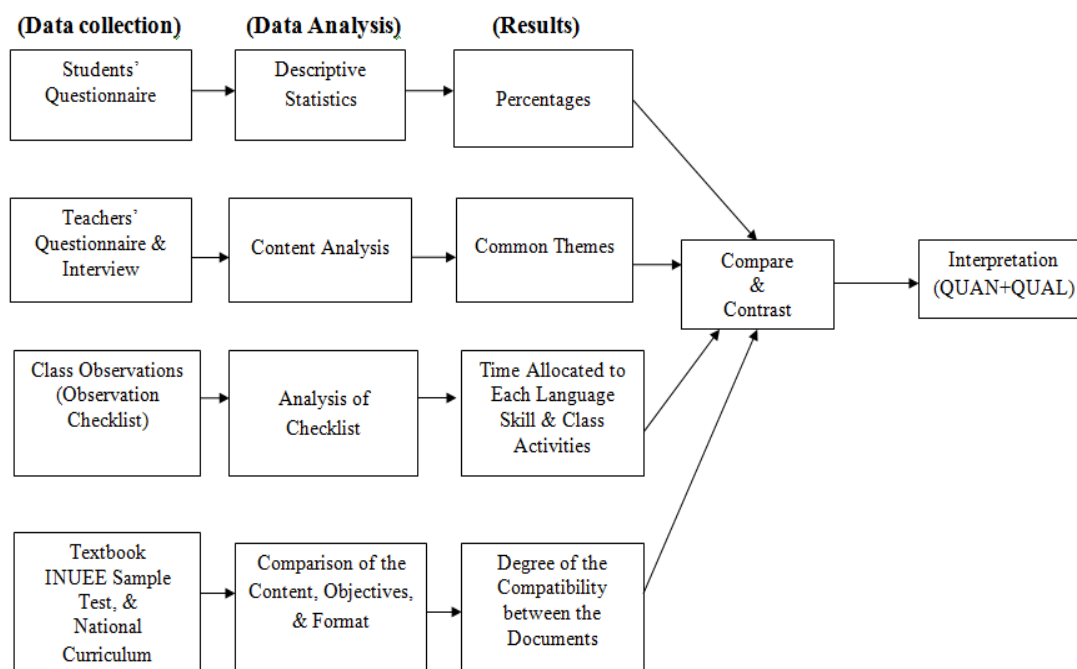


Figure 3.1 Research Design of the Study

As Figure 3.1 illustrates, the data were collected through both quantitative and qualitative research methods. In quantitative part of the study, the students' responses collected through their questionnaires were examined through the application of frequency counts and were presented in percentages. As for qualitative part of the study, the students' further comments provided in the open-ended parts of the questionnaire were analyzed and the common themes were extracted and categorized in order to be compared with those of the teachers. The teachers' responses were also subjected to content analysis through which common themes were identified and categorized. Teachers' comments and further explanations obtained through the open-ended parts of their questionnaires as well as their interviews were also categorized based on the themes listed earlier in order to compare and contrast with those of the students. Finally, all the responses were compared with whatever the researcher observed during her class observations to make triangulation and interpret the data. During the six sessions (540

min.) of class observations, the researcher used an observation checklist and recorded the amount of class time dedicated to each language skill and class activities.

Last but not least, drawing upon Wall and Alderson's (1993) strong argument in favor of necessity of investigating factors other than the test in washback studies as well as Cheng's (1998) reasoning over the significance of investigating the level of compatibility between the objectives of the curriculum and the high-stakes tests, it seemed warranted to conduct an analysis of objective compatibility between the INUEE and the Iranian national curriculum. In addition to this, since the textbooks normally represent the objectives of curriculums, a comparison of objectives was made between the pre-university textbook and the curriculum in order to find out if the objectives of the test and the textbook were in line with those of the curriculum. This tripartite comparison was basically done in order to find out whether factors other than the test might have been in operation and affecting the teaching/learning processes. In other words, along with the test, it was intended to look into the role of the curriculum and the textbooks utilized by the teachers and students.

3.3 Participants of the Study

The present study included pre-university students and pre-university English teachers in the city of Ahwaz, Iran. More detailed information about the participants is provided below.

3.3.1 Students

The participants of the study were 218 pre-university female students. The students' ages ranged from 17 to 19. The female students were chosen to be the participants because the authority in the ministry of education, who issued the permission for the conduct of the current study, emphasized that the study could be carried out with only female students. He argued that "... with regard to certain 'considerations' we don't encourage female researchers to do their research in the boys' schools....even female teachers are not allowed to teach at male high-schools and pre-university centers."

3.3.2 Teachers

Six teachers participated in the study. From among six teachers, five teachers held BA degrees and one of them held MA degree in English language teaching. The teachers' ages ranged from 30's to 40's. They were all experienced teachers and some of them had the experience of teaching at pre-university level for 13 or 14 years. The teaching experience of the participating teachers varied from 3 years to 14 years. Some general information about the teachers is provided in Table 3.1

Table 3.1: Some Information about the Teachers (N=6)

Name	Teaching Experience	Degree	Major
A	6 years	M.A.	EFL education
B	5 years	B. A.	EFL education
C	3 years	B. A.	EFL education
D	14 years	B. A.	EFL education
E	13 years	B. A.	EFL education
F	3 years	B. A.	EFL education

3.4 Setting of the Study

The study was carried out in the city of Ahwaz, Iran. Two pre-university schools were selected from among the four female pre-university schools of the city. The main reason behind choosing these two schools was the willingness of the teachers and students to cooperate in conducting the study. Six classes were finally selected from the two schools on a voluntary basis.

3.5 Instrumentation

The instruments used in this study were: teacher's questionnaire (See Appendix D), student's questionnaire (See Appendix E), a semi-structured interview questions (See Appendix F) which were prepared based on the feedback received from the teachers' responses to the questionnaires, an observation checklist (See Appendix G) to conduct structured observation in the classrooms, a textbook evaluation checklist to evaluate the pre-university textbook (in terms of its goals and objectives, content and language skills), a framework for evaluating the test (in terms of goals and objectives, content and language skills), and the National Curriculum whose goals, objectives and language skills were compared with those of the textbook and the test (i.e. the INUEE) in order to see the degree of compatibility between the textbook, the test and the curriculum. In fact, this comparison between the documents was done in order to answer Research Questions 4 and 5 which aimed to investigate the possible role of the factors other than the test in the process of teaching and learning. By such a comparison, the researcher could find out whether it was only due to the washback effect of the test which pushed the teachers and students to teach and learn English in the way which was observed or

there were other factors (e.g., the prescribed textbook and the national curriculum) which contributed to the washback effect of the test.

Questionnaires and interviews were, in fact, utilized as it was necessary to find out the participants' perceptions. Classroom observation was used in order to show to what extent the INUEE influenced what happened inside the classrooms. As stated earlier, the main reason for using a variety of methods and research tools was to reduce the chance of systematic bias in the study in the sense that when we come to the same conclusion about a phenomenon (e.g., washback effect in the case of the existing study) using different research methods, the convergence of findings indicates strong validity evidence. Besides using different research tools, the relevant reliability and validity issues of the tools themselves were also taken care of because meeting validity and reliability requirements constitutes the basis of any sound research. According to Hatch and Farhady (1982), in addition to accuracy and precision in the procedure of data collection, the validity and the sound interpretation of the results depend, to a large extent, on the appropriateness of the tools and instruments used. In the following paragraphs some detailed explanations on each of the instruments used in the study are provided.

3.5.1 Questionnaires

In order to find the most suitable questionnaires (both teacher's questionnaire and student's questionnaire), a thorough review of the relevant washback studies was made. The questionnaires of Hwang's (2003) study were used in the present study because they seemed to be the most comprehensive and relevant ones for the purpose of this study: 1) both teacher's and student's questionnaires were similar in terms of content

and format of the questions and they seemed to be suitable to investigate the teachers' and students' perceptions towards the test concurrently, 2) both questionnaires centered on two main parts (i.e., *Participants' perceptions* and *Processes* of teaching/learning) which are two essential components in Hughes' (1993) and Bailey's (1996) basic models of washback, based on which the objectives of the study were written, 3) the questionnaires had different types of questions. For instance, each Likert-scale question was followed by an empty space in order to let the respondents provide their further comments about the questions 4. In both questionnaires, some questions were allocated to the *participants' perceptions* about the factors other than the test (e.g., teaching materials and teachers' teaching method) which were among the objectives of the study, and 5) the questionnaires had some questions regarding the compatibility of the curriculum, the textbook and the test with each other (in terms of content, objectives, and format).

It is also worth mentioning that, both teacher and student's questionnaires have got common themes such as the participants' personal details, their teaching and learning experiences in their EFL classrooms, their attitudes, and impressions towards the INUEE and pre-university English textbook. The questionnaires also included a variety of question types: Open-ended questions, Ranking type questions, Yes/No questions, and Likert scale questions. In the Likert scale questions the options were provided from Strongly Disagree (SD) to Strongly Agree (SA). Each response option was assigned a number for scoring purposes. For example, ('strongly disagree'=1... 'strongly agree'=4) and the scores for the items addressing the same target were summed up. Open-ended items included questions which were not followed by response options to be chosen, but rather they were provided with some blank spaces (for example, dotted lines) to be filled in. The researcher used open-ended questions because according to Dornyei

(2007), “open-format items can provide a far greater richness than fully quantitative data” (p. 107). Indeed, open-ended questions did lead us to new points and ideas about which we did not think before. Dornyei (2007) has divided the open-ended questions into four different types: Specific open questions, clarification questions, sentence completion and short-answer questions. In this study, the second type of open-ended questions (i.e. clarification questions) was used. The students were provided with, for example Likert-scale questions which were immediately followed by clarification requests. These questions started with ‘*please specify...*’ or ‘*please give reasons...*’.

3.5.1.1 Teacher’s Questionnaire

The teacher’s questionnaire included the following sections:

1. *Personal information (from Q1 to Q12)*: In this part, they were asked about their educational background, teaching experiences and in-service teacher education program relevant to the curriculum, etc.
2. *Awareness of the curriculum and the INUEE (from Q13 to Q17)*: the purpose of the researcher was to find out whether the teachers were aware of the overall philosophy of the English curriculum; if yes, did they follow the curriculum guidelines when they taught? They were also asked about their familiarity with the INUEE and whether they knew which skills were tested on the INUEE or what the purpose of the INUEE was.
3. *Attitude towards the INUEE (from Q18 to Q28)*: the teachers were asked about their attitudes, feelings, perceptions, and motivation towards the INUEE. They were also

asked about the effect of the INUEE on their students' English learning. They were then requested to comment if the INUEE forced their students to study English harder.

4. *Attitude towards the textbook (from Q29 to Q32)*: In this part the teachers were inquired about the content of the pre-university textbook. The purpose was to find out whether the textbook provided practice tests for the INUEE and whether finishing the textbook could help the students achieve high scores on the INUEE.

5. *Content of teaching (from Q33 to Q39)*: In this part the teachers were enquired about their content of teaching. They were requested to answer whether they modified the content of the textbook due to the INUEE, skipped any parts of the textbook in favor of the INUEE, and used other complementary materials along with the pre-university textbook. They also commented on the areas of focus (language skills and components) in their English classes.

6. *Methodology of teaching (from Q40 to Q48)*: They were asked about the methods of teaching and the class activities they applied in their English classes, and whether they changed the method of their teaching as the INUEE test date got closer.

7. *Ways of assessing (from Q49 to Q55)*: They were inquired about their ways of assessing their students' learning. The researcher's aim was to find out what kind of test format they used to evaluate their students' learning. In fact, the purpose was to understand whether the way the teachers evaluated their students was affected by the INUEE or not.

8. *Their general views on their teaching (from Q56 to Q64)*: Teachers were also asked to say whether their teaching experiences or beliefs were reflected in their teaching, whether they taught based on the students' needs, whether the INUEE influenced their teaching, etc.

As far as the validity of the teacher's questionnaire was concerned, it was established through a panel of experts (two university lecturers and three PhD candidates in TESOL). They reviewed and evaluated the content of questionnaire as appropriate in terms of addressing the objectives of the study adequately. Besides this, the questionnaire had already been used by Hwang (2003) in the context of Korea, Meaning that it had been validated earlier by other experts in the context of Korea.

In order to examine the internal consistency reliability for each subscale of the questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha was calculated and based on George and Mallery's (2003, p. 231) categorization of Cronbach's alpha reliability (" $\alpha > .9$ – Excellent, $\alpha > .8$ – Good, $\alpha > .7$ – Acceptable, $\alpha > .6$ – Questionable, $\alpha > .5$ – Poor, and $\alpha < .5$ – Unacceptable"), Table 3.2 was provided.

Table 3.2 Reliability of Teacher's Questionnaire

Subscales of perception and Process	Cronbach's alpha	
Attitude toward the INUEE	0.748	Good
The textbook	0.750	Good
Content of teaching [what to teach]	0.761	Good
Methodology of teaching [how to teach]	0.669	Acceptable
Way of assessing [how to assess]	0.673	Acceptable
General views on your teaching	0.656	Acceptable

3.5.1.2 Student's Questionnaire

The student's questionnaire consisted of the following sections:

1. *Personal information (from Q1 to Q7)*: in addition to some personal questions, the students were asked to report whether they had any tutor or attended any preparatory schools for the INUEE.

2. *Awareness of the INUEE (from Q8 to Q10)*: the questions of this part were intended to illuminate the students' level of familiarity with the INUEE questions, content, and its purpose.

3. *Attitude towards the INUEE (from 11 Q to Q19)*: In this part the researcher's aim was to collect some information about the students' feelings, attitudes, and perceptions towards the INUEE. For example, they were asked whether they felt pressured about the INUEE or whether they ever liked to be tested or not.

4. *Attitude towards the textbook (from Q20 to Q23)*: Questions of this part of the questionnaire aimed to elicit the students' opinions on the textbook. They were asked to comment whether the textbook provided practice tests for the INUEE or whether they could achieve high scores on the INUEE if they studied the whole textbook.

5. *Their English learning (from Q24 to Q44)*: The students were requested to mention whether their teacher skipped any part of their textbook while teaching; if yes, what parts of the textbook were usually skipped over? They were also supposed to rank the

English skills and components based on what they practiced in their classes and to report whether such priority remained unchanged as the INUEE test date got closer.

As in teacher's questionnaire, the validity and reliability of the student's questionnaire were taken into consideration. In order to ascertain the validity of the student's questionnaire, a panel of experts (two university lecturers and three PhD candidates in TESL) was requested to review and evaluate the questionnaire in terms of its content validity. The reviewers evaluated the content of questionnaire as appropriate in terms of addressing the objectives of the study adequately; however, they unanimously envisaged that the students would encounter problems with understanding and responding to the questions of the questionnaire in English. Therefore, they all suggested that the questionnaire be translated from English into the students' mother tongue. The English version was translated into Persian. In order to preserve the validity of the original questionnaire, the back-translation procedure (from Persian into English) was done by two PhD students of TESL.

The translated version of the questionnaire was administered to a class with 34 pre-university students as a pilot study. The pilot study was, in fact, conducted in order to establish the feasibility of the research and face any probable challenges earlier than the main study, as well as to examine the reliability of the student's questionnaire. For internal consistency reliability for each subscale of the student questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha was calculated and based on George and Mallery's (2003, p. 231) categorization of Cronbach's alpha reliability ("_ > .9 – Excellent, _ > .8 – Good, _ > .7 – Acceptable, _ > .6 – Questionable, _ > .5 – Poor, and _ < .5 – Unacceptable"), Table 3.3 was provided.

Table 3.3 Reliability of Student’s Questionnaire

Subscales of perception and Process	Cronbach’s alpha	
Personal information	0.634	Acceptable
Awareness of INUEE	0.618	Acceptable
Attitude toward INUEE	0.796	Good
Attitude toward the textbook	0.760	Good
Learning [how to learn]	0.767	Good

3.5.2 Observation Checklist

Classroom observation is considered as a pivotal means of data collection in washback studies. Emphasizing the defining role of observation in washback studies, Alderson and Wall (1993) stated that “We would not have known that the exam had virtually no impact on methodology if we had not observed classes” (p.65). Similarly, Bailey (1999) asserted that without observational data it is not possible to understand how test pressure influences teaching and in what ways tests influence “planning and delivery.”

As for the present study, after obtaining permission letter from the relevant authorities in the provincial branch of Education Ministry, the researcher conducted structured observations in all of the classes and each class for six sessions. Each session took about 90 minutes. Indeed, class observations allowed the researcher to examine the teachers and students’ activities in their natural setting, which provided a deeper and richer understanding of the context. The researcher took observation notes in the six classes, paying special attention to the areas of focus (e.g., language skills, pronunciation, etc.), quantity of time allocated to each language skill and to the practice of INUEE-related sample tests.

The rationale for using structured observations was to reduce classroom behavior to small-scale units under pre-determined categories suitable for qualitative analysis. In this case, the observer was not required to make many inferences during the data collection process. Since one of the aims of the present study was to investigate the washback effect of the INUEE on teachers' teaching in terms of *teaching content* and *teaching methodology*, it was necessary to find out whether the teachers were working on those parts of the textbook which resembled the test, and whether they were paying a balanced amount of attention to all the four language skills (i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing). If teachers used other materials along with the textbook, how much of class time was allocated to the textbook and the supplementary materials? Besides this, drawing upon the findings of Razmjoo's (2004) study which characterize frequent switching to L1 and the usage of L2-L1 translation by the teachers/students as an indication to the occurrence of washback phenomenon in learning/teaching contexts, the researcher set out to keep a record of using L1 during the observed sessions in the present study. Table 3.4 below shows a sample of the checklist used in this study.

Table 3.4 Class Activities during 540 Minutes

Class observation	*L.	*S.	*R.	*W.	*Pro.	*G.	*Voc.	The INUEE practice	Use of Persian	Use of English
1st session										
2nd session										
3rd session										
4th session										
5th session										
6th session										

* Listening * Speaking * Reading * Writing * Pronunciation *Grammar * Vocabulary

In Table 3.4, the rows represent the number of sessions during which teachers' teaching dynamics were observed and the columns of the table are intended to reflect the amount of time dedicated to language skills and other class activities in the course of the six observed sessions.

It is needless to say that in order for the researcher to be as inconspicuous and unobtrusive as possible, she decided to be sitting at the back of the classes and observe the classroom dynamics. It is also necessary to say that during the class observations, the researcher used a video-tape recorder to record all the points and hints which she might have missed during her observations. In fact, the video recorded data provided the researcher with richer contextual data and the researcher could repeatedly see and scrutinize all the teachers' and students' activities by playing it back and forth.

In order to ensure the reliability of the observation notes, the researcher herself and another researcher holding a PhD in TESL viewed all the videos of the recorded sessions together and discussed the contents of the videos against what had been written down during class observations. The high degree of compatibility between the notes prepared during the class observation sessions and the review of the videos was a reconfirmation for the reliability of observation notes.

3.5.3 Interview Questions

Following the class observations, a semi-structured post-observation interview was conducted with the teachers. In fact, the semi-structured interviews were developed by the researcher in order to gain richer information, and to shed more light on the data

collected through questionnaires. According to Dornyei (2007), the semi-structured interview is:

...suitable for cases when the researcher has a good enough overview of the phenomenon or domain in question and is able to develop broad questions about the topic in advance but does not want to use ready-made response categories that would limit the depth and breadth of the respondent's story (p. 136).

All the six teachers were interviewed; each teacher was interviewed separately for 20 minutes. The interviews were carried out during the teachers' tea break times in the teachers' room at both schools. The researcher wrote down all the relevant points mentioned by the interviewees during the interviews for the interview questions. It is worth noting that for the purpose of validation of the interview questions three PhD candidates in TESL were requested to evaluate and comment on the questions. A few of the interview questions were proposed to be eliminated on the grounds that the answers to them could be deduced from the teachers' responses in the questionnaire. However, there were a number of questions which apparently needed detailed explanations and further illumination. For example, it seemed warranted to find out how and in what ways the INUEE affected teachers' English teaching. Therefore, in their questionnaire (Q41), teachers were enquired about the method they followed for their English teaching, and once more the similar question was asked in their interviews (Q9) to find out more explanations and details from the teachers and to see whether it was due to the washback effect of the test or some other reasons were behind it.

3.5.4 Document Analysis

In the following subsections the pre-university textbook and one of the INUEE sample tests were evaluated to investigate the degree of their compatibility with the curriculum in terms of content, objectives, and format. Such a comparison was made to answer

Research Questions 4 and 5 which aimed to find out how factors along with the test might influence teaching and learning and could lead to positive or negative washback effect. According to Cheng (1998) and Hwang (2003), high-stakes tests usually represent the curriculum. Given that there is a gap in the literature with regard to the amount of compatibility between the objectives of the Iranian National Curriculum and the INUEE, a part of the present study aims to investigate whether their aims and objectives are in the same direction or not.

3.5.4.1 Pre-university Textbook

The textbook was analyzed by three PhD candidates in TESL based on a checklist proposed by Ghorbani (2011). The pre-university textbook was evaluated by three Iranian PhD candidates in TESL. One of the candidates' thesis was centered on evaluating teaching materials at Iranian schools. The other candidate was an in-service high school teacher, who did have good amount of familiarity with the textbook. Therefore, they suggested insightful comments on the pre-university textbook. In Ghorbani's checklist, he has proposed seven categories to be considered for evaluation of an English textbook: practical considerations, language skills, exercises/activities, pedagogic analysis, appropriateness, supplementary materials, and general impression. According to Cunningsworth (1995), the first thing which should be taken into consideration in evaluating a textbook is to identify our priorities and then choose the most important criteria for the analysis. Therefore, in this study six categories (i.e., *language skills, exercises/activities, pedagogic analysis, appropriateness, supplementary materials, & general impression*) from among seven categories were chosen to be used for the analysis of the pre-university textbook. The first part of the

checklist (i.e., *practical considerations* which were about the textbook's physical appearance, cost, etc.) was excluded from the analysis.

3.5.4.2 INUEE's Sample Test

A sample of the INUEE test was analyzed based on a framework proposed by Bachman and Palmer (1996). According to them, their framework was useful to describe the characteristics of test tasks and was suitable to be used “as a means for assessing reliability” (p. 47). The framework consists of five task facets: *the setting of the test, the test rubric, the input, the expected response, and the relationship between input and response*. By the *facets of the setting*, it is meant the physical environment in which testing takes place. *The test rubric facets* mean the structure and instructions of the test, the time allowed to answer the questions and the scoring method. *The input facets* look at the format with which the input is presented and the nature of the language used in the input. By the *facets of expected response*, it is meant the format in which a response is produced as well as the nature of the language used in the response. Finally, *facet of the relationship between input and response* consider reactivity, scope of relationship, and directness of relationship. As the first two facets (i.e., *the setting of the test, the test rubric*) are concerned with describing testing situations such as the physical environment, test instructions, and scoring method, they were excluded in this study and the remaining facets (i.e., *the input, the expected response, and the relationship between input and response*) were used in order to compare the test's content, format, and objectives with those of the national curriculum and the pre-university textbook.

3.5.4.3 National Curriculum

In order to find out the degree of compatibility between the objectives of the curriculum with those of the test and the textbook, the objectives and goals of the curriculum were used as benchmarks for comparison.

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

At the very beginning of the data collection, the ethical issues were taken into consideration and the researcher obtained a letter of permission from the provincial branch of Ministry of Education in Ahwaz in order to conduct the study at two pre-university schools. The authorities emphasized that the issued letter would remain valid as long as the participants would consent to take part in the study. Both teachers and students were assured of the confidentiality of the identities and all the information provided by them, and a Consent Form (See Appendix H) was provided to be signed by the participants. They were also informed that their participation was voluntary and they could stop it at any time without any problem. Having the consent of the participants, the researcher explained the purpose of the study in detail and described the merits of carrying out this research to the students.

Data was collected over a period of two months (February & March 2010). Data collection was deliberately carried out during these two months because the INUEE takes place in June every year, and intensive practices for the exam start as early as April each year. The selection of the observation time was made on the principle that observed classes should reflect their normal and natural conditions for teaching and learning as much as possible, because the school year starts in October and it has been

suggested that neither the very beginning of the term nor the end of the term would provide such a condition (Cheng, 1997). The relationship between washback and the time of teaching has been documented in similar studies (Cheng, 1997; Freeman, 1996; Shohamy et al., 1996; Wall & Alderson, 1993; Watanabe, 1996).

As stated earlier, the required data for the present study was collected through questionnaires (teacher's and student's questionnaires), teachers' interviews, and class observations. In order to delve into the participants' perceptions, the questionnaires were administered to them. In their questionnaires teachers and students were asked some questions related to their perceptions toward the INUEE: their awareness, attitudes, motivation, and feelings towards the INUEE. Also, in order to find out whether the teachers' process of teaching and learners' process of learning had been affected by the INUEE, the questionnaires put some questions related to: the relationship between the INUEE and the way they taught or learnt English in their EFL classes. The students were asked whether their teacher ignored any parts of the textbooks in favor of the INUEE, and whether their class activities were subjected to any change as the INUEE date got closer. They were also enquired about the most practiced and focused skills in their classes.

As far as class observation was concerned, it worked quite well and all the six teachers consented to get their classes observed. The class observations were overt and the researcher followed structured observation method. Each class was observed six times. The researcher wrote detailed descriptions of each session and filled in checklists, recording the type of activities and the amount of time allocated to each class activity. The researcher then looked at whether teachers were using the prescribed textbook or whether they were using materials from other sources. If they were using the textbook,

it was necessary to check whether they were working on content which resembled the test, and whether they were paying the same amount of attention to each of the four skills as the curriculum has emphasized. If teachers were not using the textbook, it was necessary to find out why they had chosen the content they were using, which skills they were more inclined to emphasize, and how the content of the materials was similar to that of the test. To investigate the effect of the exam on teaching methodology and in order to see if there was a difference between what the textbook suggested and what the teachers did, it was necessary to see if the methodology the teachers used matched the suggested methods given in the 'map' and the 'foreword' of the textbook (See Appendix I).

Drawing upon Bailey's (1999) assertion that without observation we may not understand how much of class time is devoted to preparing students for testing, during observations the researcher noted the time spent on each language skill and other class activities. Besides, since observations on their own might not have given us a full account of what was happening in the classrooms, the researcher utilized a video-tape recorder to record all the class activities and discussions which she might have missed during her observations. As for filming the classes, the researcher explained to the participants that her major aim of filming the classes was to capture some dynamics of the classes which might miss during the observation stage; four of the teachers agreed and two teachers did not allow their classes to be filmed. Thus, four classes were video-filmed with the participants' consent.

During the classroom observations some questions came up, which could not be answered without conducting teacher interviews. Emphasizing the significance of interviewing with the teachers of their study, Alderson and Wall (1993) argued that they

“would not have been able to understand why the exam had no impact on how teachers taught without discussions with teachers after having observed their classes” (p. 65). The interviews were based on semi-structured format and the content was organized based on teachers’ questionnaires and class observations. While preparing the interview questions, the researcher selected the most salient responses of teachers to their questionnaires so that more detailed questions could be asked and more detailed explanations could be obtained. The interviews lasted approximately 20 minutes each, and all the points were written down for later analysis. During the interviews, the interviewees were allowed to comment on what most concerned them about their English teaching as well as the INUEE. The researcher occasionally probed further in an attempt to clarify the interviewees’ responses or to obtain in depth views of what they were discussing in their interviews.

3.7 Data Analysis

Collected data was analyzed through various data analysis procedures. In the following paragraphs the data analysis procedures are explained.

3.7.1 Questionnaires

For the analysis of the data collected through the students’ questionnaires, their responses were examined through the application of frequency counts, and were presented in percentages. In order to identify a total student response, a total answer for each question across the student’s questionnaire was calculated. Like Hwang’s (2003) study, in the present study quantification was restricted to describing the frequency and percentage of the responses (descriptive statistics). Quantification was not utilized for

verification or rejection of hypotheses, the way it is normally done in quantitative studies.

As for the qualitative part of the research, the data collected through the six teachers' questionnaires were examined in order to find out the similarities and differences in their perceptions across their responses. As stated earlier, the questionnaires had some open-ended questions. The responses to this type of questions were subjected to content analysis through which common themes (e.g. their views towards the test/teaching materials and English teaching/learning) were identified and categorized. Once the teachers and students' comments about the pre-university English textbook and the INUEE were obtained, the purposes and the characteristics of the pre-university textbook and the INUEE sample questions were compared against each other in order to find out whether the test and the textbook followed the same purposes and represented the aims of the curriculum.

3.7.2 Interviews

The purpose of conducting interviews with the teachers was two-fold: 1. To explore in more detail the issues addressed in their questionnaires, and 2. To find out the teachers' reasons behind following their current teaching method (i.e., GTM). In order to analyze the data, the face-to-face interviews with all the teachers were transcribed verbatim. The researcher then read the transcripts one by one and line by line carefully to find the relevant themes. Finally, all the words, phrases and sentences or sections which seemed relevant were highlighted and coded to be analyzed qualitatively.

3.7.3 Observations

Observation notes were coded according to the observation checklist, which was based on the areas of focus in English classes as well as the amount of time allocated for different language skills and activities in each class across six sessions. For the clear representation of data, the collected data for each class was illustrated in the separate bar graphs. The horizontal axis represented the language skills and other class activities which were focused on during the six sessions, and the vertical axis represented the parameter of time in minutes. It is worth mentioning that as the class time for each session was 90 minutes for each class, the number of sessions ($n=6$) was multiplied by the duration of each class session ($t=90$ min) in order to calculate the total amount of class times during six sessions ($t=540$ min). Therefore, the language skills and other class activities were observed and described within 540 minutes for each class and illustrated in the form of bar graphs which are provided in the next chapter.

3.7.4 Triangulation of the Data

In order to check out the consistency of the findings by different data collection methods (questionnaires, interviews, and observations), and to reduce any systematic bias, triangulation (methods triangulation) was used in the present study. For instance, to find out whether teachers' teaching was affected by the washback effect of the test, after obtaining teachers responses from their questionnaires (Q41) and interviews (Q9), the researcher observed their actual teaching for six sessions to triangulate the data. According to Dorneyei (2007), "if we come to the same conclusion about a phenomenon using a different data collection/ analysis method or a different participant sample, the convergence offers strong validity evidence" (p. 61).

CHAPTER 4

WASHBACK EFFECT OF THE INUEE ON TEACHERS' TEACHING & LEARNERS' LEARNING

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an analysis and reports the findings obtained from the teacher's and student's questionnaires, teachers' interviews, as well as class observations for the purpose of cross-validation of the findings in order to address the first, second and third research questions of the study: **RQ1.** What is the washback effect of the INUEE on English language teaching as perceived by the teachers? **RQ2.** What is the washback effect of the INUEE on English language learning as perceived by the learners? **RQ3.** What is the washback effect of the INUEE on English language teaching as observed by the researcher?

To be more specific, the teachers' and students' responses to the similar questions on their questionnaires, the findings of teachers' interviews, and the findings collected from class observations would all be compared and contrasted. The questions compared are generally centered on the following themes: 1) teaching content (what to teach) vs. learning content (what to learn), and 2. teaching methodology (how to teach) vs. learning strategies (how to learn) for the purpose of exploring how the test affected teachers' English teaching and learners' English learning.

4.2 Teaching Content vs. Learning Content

A comparative analysis of the teachers' and students' responses to their questionnaires' questions concerning the effect of the INUEE on teachers' teaching and learners' learning (RQ1 and RQ2) in terms of teaching content and learning content are presented in the following subsections.

4.2.1 The Use of Teaching Materials

In their questionnaires (Q33, Q34, 35and Q36), teachers were enquired about their use of teaching materials in their English classes. The purpose of these questions were to find out if they taught all parts of the textbook or whether they made any changes in the content of the textbook in favor of the INUEE. Their responses obtained from their questionnaires along with their interviews (Q3) are provided below.

Table 4.1 Content of Teaching

		Yes	No
Q33	Do you teach the whole textbook?	6	0
Q34	Do you modify the content of the textbook due to the INUEE?	6	0
Q35	Do you skip over parts of the textbook?	0	6
Q36	Do you use other materials?	6	0

As Table 4.1 shows, all of the six teachers indicated that they taught the whole textbook and did not skip over any part of it. They mentioned that due to the INUEE they resorted to using supplementary materials and test samples, and also made some modifications to the content of the textbook from time to time. For example, one of the

teachers (Teacher F) further commented in her questionnaire that “the textbook is neither enough for passing the INUEE, nor it is enough for students to learn English...”

In response to the Q3 of the interview which was intended to gain further insight into the teachers’ answers to the Q36 of the questionnaire, all the teachers indicated that their content of teaching was affected by the test. For instance, two of them commented that:

Teacher A: I put more weight on certain parts of the textbook because those parts are seemed to be much more important for the INUEE...on the INUEE the candidates tested based on: reading comprehension, vocabulary, and grammar. I put more emphasis on vocabulary and grammar...if they learn more vocabulary items; they would be able to understand reading texts better.

Teacher C: I cover the textbook and I don’t skip any part of it, I should prepare my students for the test and practice sample tests in my class as well...nobody criticizes us if our students cannot speak English, but we will be criticized if we fail to make our students prepared for the INUEE.

Class observations also indicated that the teachers sometimes modified the content of the textbook according to the question formats of the INUEE. For instance, while teaching of reading skill in the class C, the teacher converted the reading text of the textbook into a cloze test. She omitted some of the key words of the texts and asked the students to guess the missing words from among the four provided options. An actual example showing how teacher C tinkered with the text comes as follows:

Scientists and researchers from different fields tell us that the possible effects of -----change could be big and, in some cases, would cause ----- problems. Among the possible effects are increased number of human deaths,----- of groups of animals and plants, and a dangerous rise in sea levels.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| a. Serious, weather, extinction | b. Extinction, bad, climate |
| c. Climate, serious, extinction | d. Weather, bad, extinction |

Teachers also frequently shifted their teaching to practice mock exam papers and other supplementary books. Class observations also revealed that all the six teachers were teaching and practicing other supplementary books along with the textbook, and spent considerable amount of their class time on practicing the INUEE sample tests and those areas which are routinely tested on the INUEE. Class observations revealed that from 540 minutes of total class time, each teacher allocated the following amounts of class times to practicing the INUEE sample tests: Teacher A (100 min.), Teacher B (95 min.), Teacher C (102 min.), Teacher D (111 min.), Teacher E (154 min.), and Teacher F (88 min.).

4.2.2 The Use of Learning Materials

In their questionnaire, students were asked about their content of learning (Q24, Q25, Q26, and Q34). Their responses to these items of the questionnaire along with a few of their additional comments provided on designated spaces of the questionnaire are presented below.

Table 4.2 Content of Learning

		YES		NO	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Q24	Do you learn the whole textbook?	136	70%	57	30%
Q25	Is the content of the textbook modified because of the INUEE?	171	78%	47	22%
Q26	Does your teacher skip over parts of the textbook	179	82%	39	18%
Q34	Do you often have self-study, relevant to the INUEE, not assigned by the teacher?	196	90%	22	10%

As seen from Table 4.2, the majority of the students answered the four questions of the questionnaire (Q24, Q25, Q26, and Q34) in the affirmative. From among 218 students, 136 students reported that they learnt the whole textbook and 57 students stated that they did not learn the whole textbook. The remaining 25 students left the question unanswered. Such a high percentage of learners' positive tendency towards learning the entire textbook could be ascribed to the significance of the textbook from the students' perspectives. The textbook serves as the only source of designing all the formative and summative tests administered during the pre-university period. Besides, the scores obtained on these tests affect the students' CGPA, which is used as one of the parameters determining the ranks of the candidates on the INUEE and their admission into the universities.

With respect to the textbook modification, 78% of the students confirmed that their textbook's content was modified in favor of the INUEE. Meanwhile, unlike the teachers who unanimously claimed that they did not skip over any part of the textbook, a clear majority of the students (82%) reported that their teachers usually skipped over certain parts of the textbook. In order to see what really happens in actuality of the classes irrespective of the teachers and students' contradictory responses, class observations were carried out.

Class observations revealed that contrary to the teachers' claims, certain parts of the textbook were skipped over by the teachers. For instance, they skipped over the pre-reading activities of the reading passages which encouraged students to have group discussions on the topics of the passages, or the teachers sometimes provided some additional explanations which did not seem necessary or relevant at all. It was found that sometimes the teachers highlighted and analyzed some grammatical points in the

reading texts while they were teaching reading comprehension. For example, while one of the students was reading out a passage of the textbook for the rest of the students, Teacher B stopped her and said "...there is an important grammatical point here. Highlight it as an important point for the INUEE."

In short, during the class observations it was found out that sometimes what teachers mentioned in their questionnaires was not in line with the findings of the class observation. For instance, the teachers claimed that they did not skip any part of the textbook in favor of the test; however, during the class observations the researcher noticed that all the teachers were conspicuously inclined to be focused on those contents of the textbooks which had higher likelihood of being part of the INUEE test. On the contrary, all the teachers skipped over those parts of the textbook which were not expected to make any contribution to the students' INUEE performance; for example, the exercises in the textbook that asked students to have a group discussion about certain speaking topics were all ignored. This could be considered as one of the sign of the negative washback effect of the high-stakes tests on teachers' teaching.

In response to an item of the questionnaire (Q35) concerning students' self-studying for the INUEE, 90% of the students reported that their practicing for the test was not limited to English classes at schools or prep schools, and they themselves had their own self-study for the exam as well. They mentioned that they were constantly busy with mastering test-taking strategies and tricks.

Overall, with juxtaposition and comparison of the students' responses to the Q25, Q26, and Q34 of the questionnaire, it could be inferred that their content of learning was affected by the INUEE in negative way.

4.2.3 Areas of Focus in Classes Reported by the Teachers

In order to find out the areas of focus in their English classes, teachers were asked through Q37 and Q38 in their questionnaires to rank the language skills and other points of focus in the order of priority. The ranks ranged from one to six representing the highest and the lowest ranks, respectively. The teachers' responses to these questions are provided in Tables 4.3 and 4.4 below.

Table 4.3 Teachers' Areas of Focus

	Teacher A	Teacher B	Teacher C	Teacher D	Teacher E	Teacher F
Rank 1	Vocabulary	Reading	Grammar	Vocabulary	Reading	Reading
Rank 2	Grammar	Vocabulary	Reading	Reading	Grammar	Vocabulary
Rank 3	Reading	Grammar	Vocabulary	Grammar	Vocabulary	Grammar
Rank 4	Writing		Writing		Writing	Writing
Rank 5	Speaking		Speaking		Speaking	Speaking
Rank 6						

The blank cells represent the skills which received no ranks from the teachers

Table 4.4 Teachers' Areas of Focus as the INUEE's Date Gets Closer

	Teacher A	Teacher B	Teacher C	Teacher D	Teacher E	Teacher F
Rank 1	Vocabulary	Reading	Grammar	Vocabulary	Reading	Reading
Rank 2	Grammar	Vocabulary	Reading	Reading	Grammar	Vocabulary
Rank 3	Reading	Grammar	Vocabulary	Grammar	Vocabulary	Grammar
Rank 4						
Rank 5						
Rank 6						

The blank cells represent the skills which received no ranks from the teachers

According to the teachers' answers in Table 4.3, reading, vocabulary, grammar, writing, and speaking received the highest ranks and listening received no ranks at all in their

English classes. Likewise, Table 4.4, which represents the teachers' responses to the question 38 of the questionnaire, shows the orientation of the teachers towards different skills at the threshold of the exam. Reading skill, vocabulary, and grammar were found to be the only language areas that the teachers focused on as the date of the INUEE got closer.

4.2.4 Areas of Focus in Classes Reported by the Students

In student's questionnaire (Q27 and Q28) students were enquired about the most learnt language areas in their classes. They were also asked which language areas they learnt most as the INUEE date was approaching. Based on the students' responses as shown by Table 4.5, there was no balance in teaching language skills and components in the English classes; whereas grammar, vocabulary, and reading, with 39%, 27% and 22% respectively, were ranked as the most practiced areas by the students, and writing (7%), speaking (4%) and listening (1%) were ranked as being the least practiced skills.

Table 4.5 Areas Learnt the Most in Classes

	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5	Rank 6
Reading			22%			
Writing				7%		
Listening						1%
Speaking					4%	
Grammar	39%					
Vocabulary		27%				

A couple of students' additional comments collected from their questionnaires are provided below.

We learn vocabulary and grammar formulas, but we don't know how to use them. This makes it very boring and pointless to attend the classes...I believe that it is good for us to practice vocabulary and grammar because they would be tested on the INUEE, but sometimes I feel I should learn other language skills as well...

Another student mentioned that:

English classes in our schools are really the INUEE-preparation classes because what we mostly learn is about grammar and how to answer the questions on the test. We don't learn language, but rather we acquire test tricks. Our class activities center on reading, grammar, and vocabulary only...

About 68% of the students chose the item "Yes" for question 28 of student's questionnaire which asked the students whether they intensified their efforts to study and learn more as the INUEE test date was getting closer. They ranked the language skills in the order of intensity of focus as follows.

Table 4.6 Areas Learnt the Most as the INUEE Date Gets Closer

	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5	Rank 6
Reading			25%			
Writing				3%		
Listening						
Speaking						
Grammar		32%				
Vocabulary	40%					

According to Table 4.6, vocabulary, grammar and reading, with about 40%, 32% and 25% of the respondents respectively, received the highest ranking and writing skill with almost 3% of the students received the lowest ranking of the students. Speaking and listening were not ranked by the students at all. The respondents reported that as the test date got closer, they tended to adopt a highly focused studying program not only in the classes at schools, but also at their homes and during their self-study occasions, giving utmost attention to those areas and language skills which they needed to conquer the

INUEE. They also claimed that their INUEE-oriented efforts and activities got intensified as the date of the test got closer. Some of the students were also planning not to go to school in the run up to the test so as to have further time to practice for the test.

4.2.5 Areas of Focus in Classes Observed by the Researcher

Findings obtained through observations of the classes were mostly in agreement with the teachers and students' responses elicited through the questionnaires. The following bar graphs, which were designed based on the data recorded in observation checklists (See Appendix G), show how the 6 teachers distributed their class time for teaching different language skills and other class activities across six sessions.

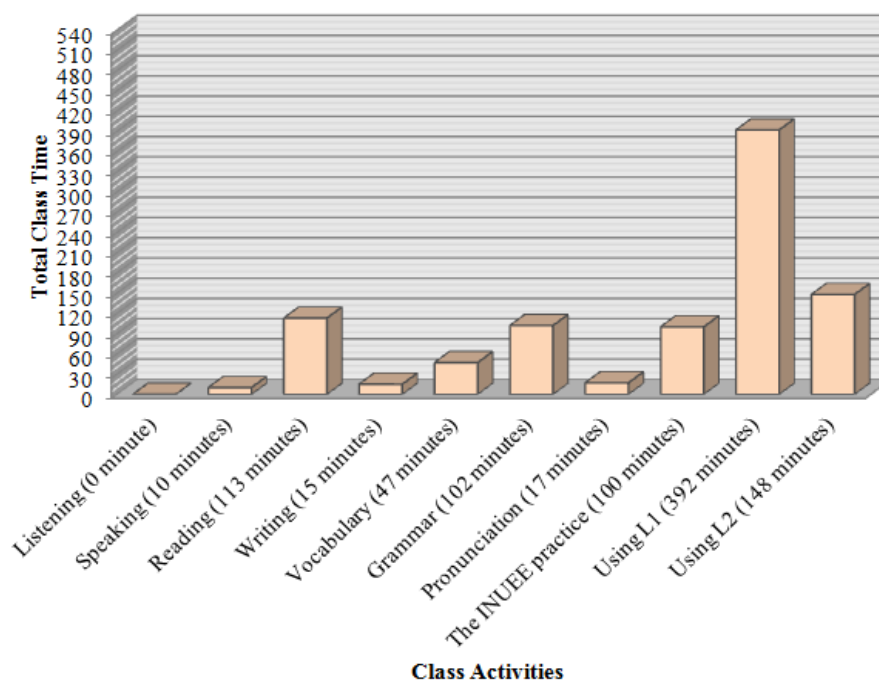


Figure 4.1 Teacher A's Class Activities

Figure 4.1 illustrates the quantity of time spent on language skills and components in the course of six sessions in classroom A. As Figure 4.1 indicates, whereas there was a

predominance of L1 use during the sessions (392 minutes out of 540), L2 was used only for 148 minutes throughout the sessions. As far as the amount of time allocated for different 'areas of focus' in the sessions was concerned, reading skill, grammar and practice for the INUEE with 113, 102 and 100 minutes, respectively, were the three areas which were given the highest proportion of total class time. Vocabulary with 47 minutes (out of 540) ranked fourth in terms of the amount of class time spent on it, and pronunciation, writing, speaking and listening with 17, 15, 10 and 0 minutes respectively, had the least amount of classroom focus during the six observed sessions.

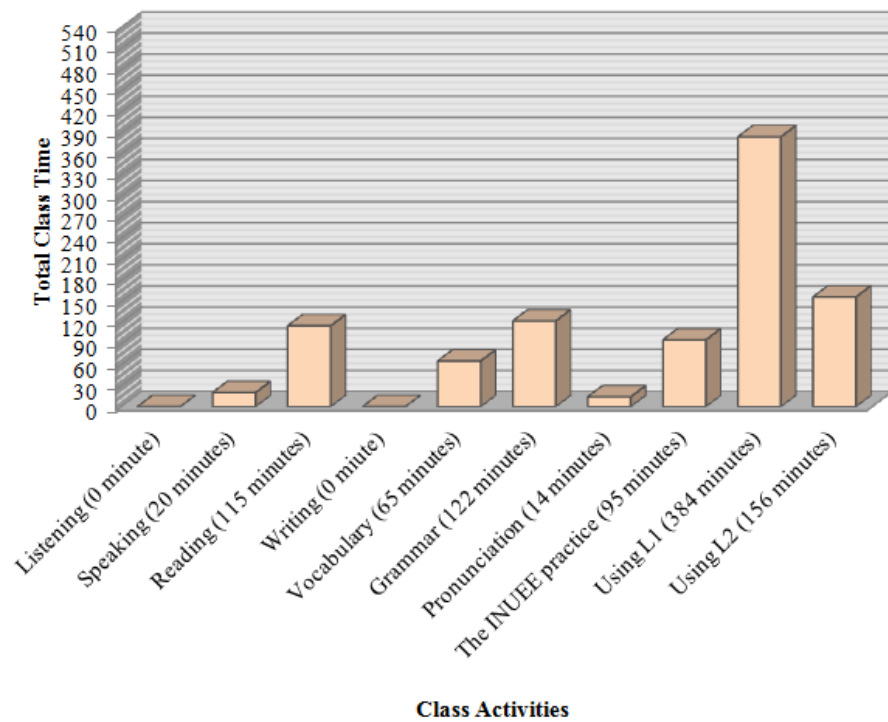


Figure 4.2 Teacher B's Class Activities

Figure 4.2 illustrates the amount of time allocated to different activities in class B. As it is clearly shown, just over two thirds (i.e., 384 minutes) of the total class time was allocated to teaching English through L1, and only almost 30% of total class time was taught through L2. As for the amount of time spent on different 'areas of focus' in the class sessions, grammar, reading skill and practice for the INUEE with 122, 115 and 95 minutes, respectively, garnered the highest amount of total class time. The amount of time spent on vocabulary was 65 minutes (out of 540), ranking fourth in terms of the amount of class time. Speaking, pronunciation, writing, and listening with 20, 14, 10, 0 and 0 minutes respectively, had the least amount of classroom focus during the six observed sessions.

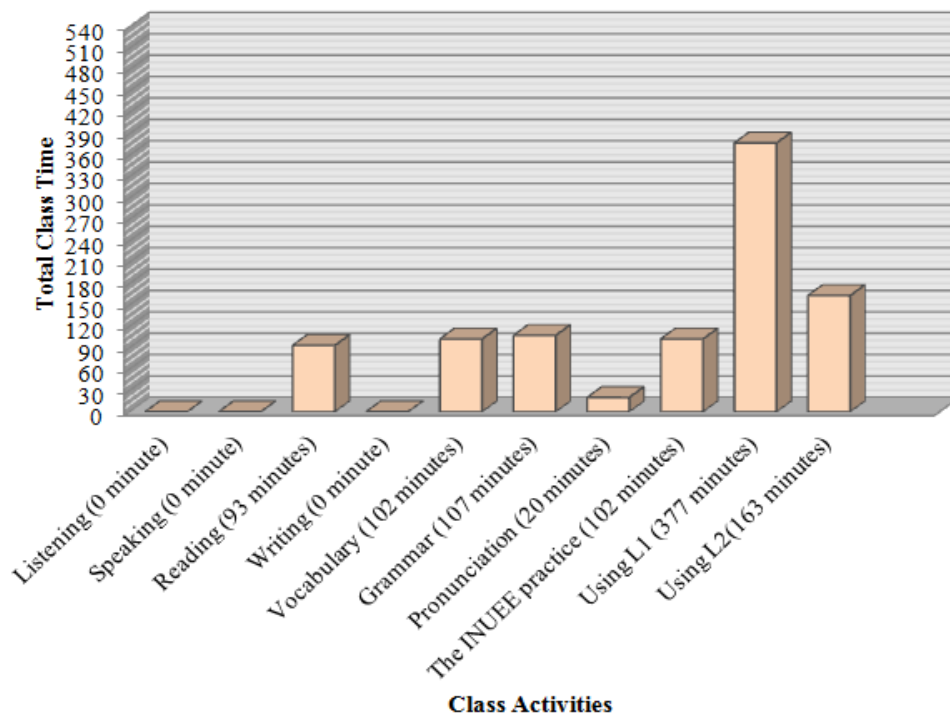


Figure 4.3 Teacher C's Class Activities

Figure 4.3 shows the amount of time allocated to each language skill and component in class C during six sessions. It is clearly shown that use of L1 was twice as much as that of L2. Concerning the time spent on the language skills and components, obviously grammar with 107 minutes and both the INUEE practice and vocabulary with 102 minutes had the greatest proportion of total class time. The amount of time spent on reading and pronunciation was 93 and 20 minutes, respectively. The remaining three language skills (i.e., listening, speaking, and writing) were totally ignored during the six sessions.

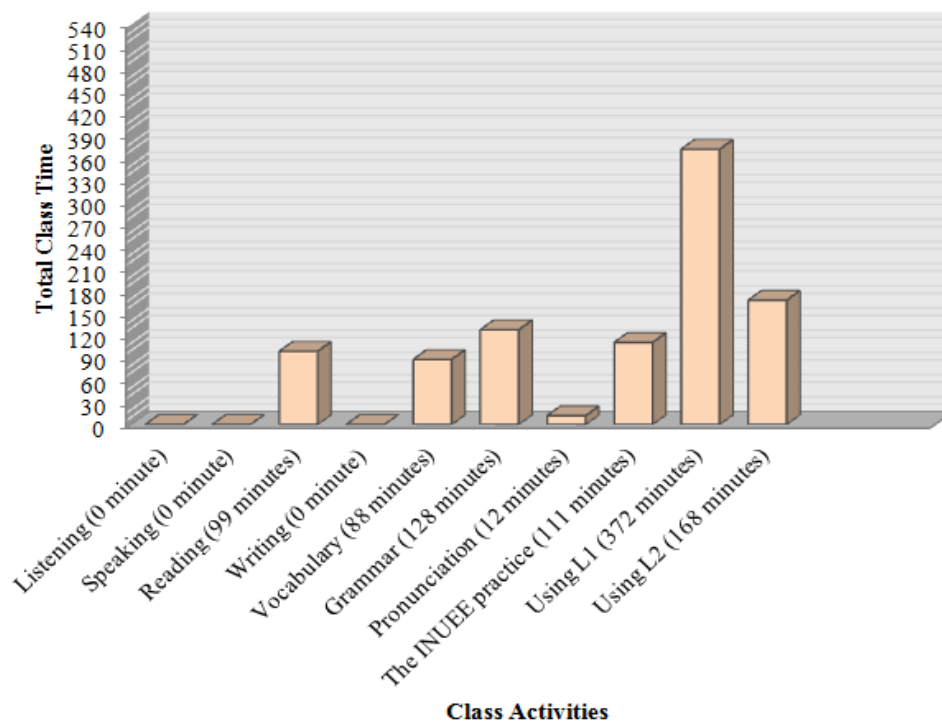


Figure 4.4 Teacher D's Class Activities

Figure 4.4 shows the total amount of time spent on language skills and components in the course of six sessions. It is obvious that a large proportion (372 minutes) of total class time was allocated to teaching English through L1. The use of L2 in this class was 168 minutes (out of 540 minutes) during the six sessions. As far as the language skills and components were concerned, the high priority was given to grammar, reading, and vocabulary with the time proportion of 128, 99, and 88 minutes respectively. Moreover, practicing the INUEE test was among those activities for which a considerable amount of time (111 minutes) was spent. In this class no time was dedicated to teaching and practicing of listening, speaking, and writing.

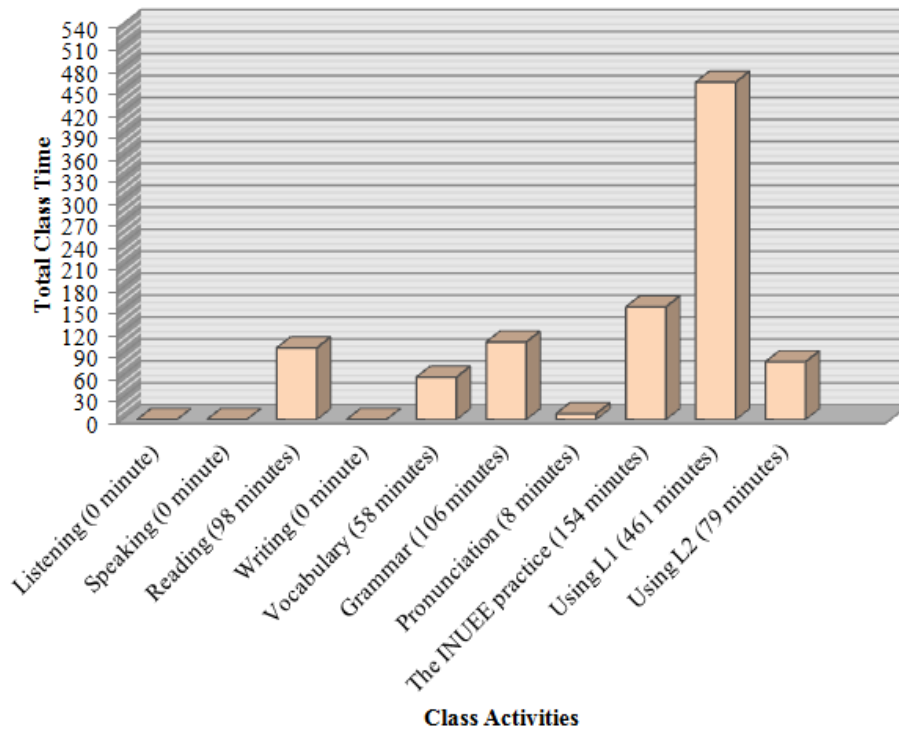


Figure 4.5 Teacher E's Class Activities

Figure 4.5 illustrates the quantity of time allocated to various language skills and components during six sessions in classroom E. L1 domination was clearly evident in this class; over 85% of classroom discourse took place in L1. Regarding the areas of focus, the INUEE test practice, grammar, reading, and vocabulary with 154, 106, 98, and 58 minutes respectively had the highest amount of classroom focus, whereas pronunciation had a minuscule portion of only 8 minutes. Listening, speaking and writing were neither taught nor practiced.

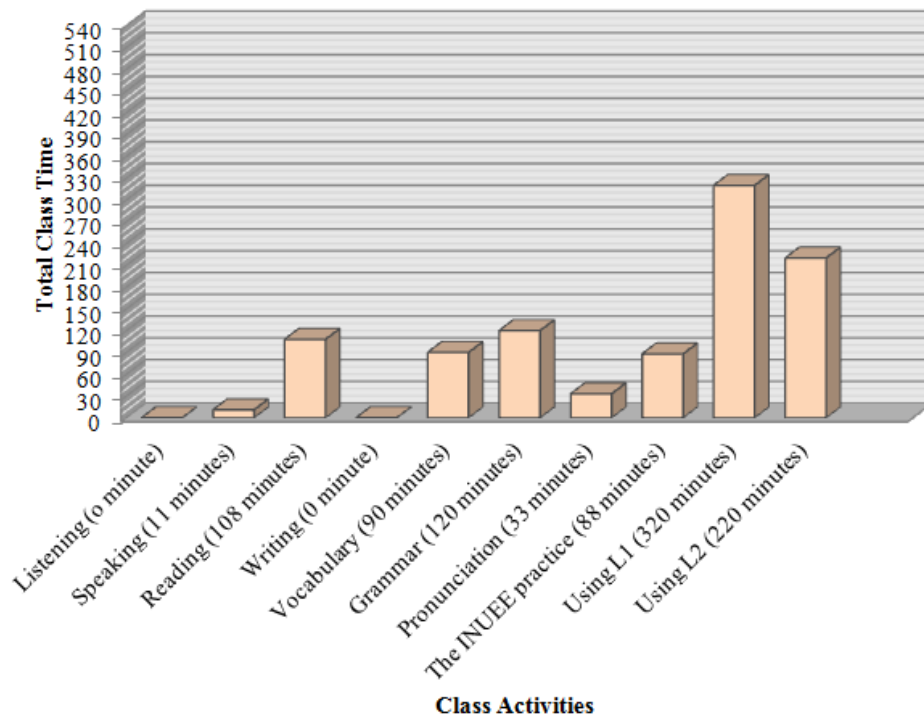


Figure 4.6 Teacher F's Class Activities

Figure 4.6 shows the time allocation for areas of focus across six sessions in class F. Compared to other classes, the quantity of L2 used in this class was higher. About 40% of total classroom discourse was in L2. Regarding the amount of time allotted for language skills and components, listening and writing skills received no time at all during the six sessions and speaking received only 11 minutes (out of 540 minutes of total class time). Grammar with 120 minutes and reading with 108 minutes respectively ranked first and second in terms of the intensity of classroom focus. Vocabulary and the INUEE test practice received almost the same amount of class time (90 and 88 minutes, respectively). Pronunciation with 33 minutes was visibly further underscored and practiced in this class compared to other classes. One-fifth (108 min) of total class time was spent on reading, and 120, 90, and 33 minutes, respectively, were allocated to teaching grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. As far as teaching L2 through L1

was concerned, a good proportion of class time was allocated to teaching through L1, and teaching through L2 was 220 minutes of total class time.

Overall, it was found that the findings of teacher's questionnaire, student's questionnaire, and class observations concerning the intensity of classroom focus on different language areas had convergence with each other: the INUEE-related language areas (i.e., reading, vocabulary, grammar) had the highest amount of classroom focus whereas the language areas which were not related to the INUEE either received little attention (i.e., speaking and writing) or no attention at all (i.e., listening). Given that with the approaching of the test date, practicing the INUEE-related language areas was intensified, and practicing the language areas which are not tested on the INUEE either diminished or was completely abandoned, it could be concluded that the content of teaching and learning was affected by the test.

In sum, class observations revealed that all the six teachers' teaching procedures were negatively affected by the test. They all focused on test-related areas and language skills, and tended to ignore those areas which were not tested in the INUEE. All the teachers without exception dedicated at least half of the class time to practicing the INUEE sample tests and taught test tricks to their students. They mostly used L1 during class times. Overall, the observed English classes were mostly like test preparatory classes rather than English classes.

4.2.6 Additional Teaching Hours Reported by the Teachers

Question 39 of teacher's questionnaire enquired as to whether any extra classes beside the regular school hours were held by the teachers. Teachers' responses to this question are provided as follows.

Table 4.7 Extra Teaching Hours by the Teachers

		YES	NO
Q39	Do you give extra classes to your students, besides regular school hours?	5	1

Teacher B: I normally try my best to cover the whole textbook during the semester, so I usually do not need to hold extra classes. Most of the students have supplementary books in which the answers of the pre-university textbook's exercises are provided. In case we could not finish the textbook, students could use those supplementary books.

Teacher C: I ask my students to attend extra classes because of different reasons. For example, I encourage them to attend these classes to have more practices for the INUEE. Due to public holidays, we sometimes miss some of our school hours; therefore, we need to ask students to come to extra classes to finish the textbook as well....

Teacher E: When the date of the INUEE gets closer, I usually do not force the students to come to extra classes because they prefer to have their INUEE practices with their own private tutors. In contrast, when the date of final exams gets closer, I usually hold extra classes in order to help the students with their English problems. We need to practice the INUEE and finish the textbook as well; therefore, we are usually pressed for time to cover the textbook. This is the reason we need to have extra classes.

4.2.7 Additional Teaching Hours Reported by the Students

In student's questionnaire (Q31), they were asked whether any extra classes beside the regular school hours were held by their teachers. The students' responses to this question are provided as follows.

Table 4.8 Extra Teaching Hours by the Teachers

		YES		NO	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Q31	Does your teacher give extra classes beside regular school hours?	186	85%	32	15%

Some of the students' further comments are presented as follows.

We usually have extra classes in addition to our regular classes. In our extra classes we usually practice multiple-choice tests for the INUEE and for our final exams. I think these classes are helpful but they are very crowded and noisy...sometimes some of our questions are ignored by our teacher because of shortage of time...

We have extra classes but I prefer not to go because I believe going there equals waste of time and energy. I prefer to study at home and finish my supplementary books...in these books all the answers of the questions are provided so why should I make myself tire to go and sit in those classes?

Usually due to some reasons we need to have some extra classes besides our regular classes. For example, sometimes we face public holidays during a semester and we miss our regular school hours...there is no choice for us but to go and sit in those extra classes...if we don't go, we will lose the chance of learning those missed lessons...the more important reason is that in those sessions our teacher practices the INUEE and sample questions of previous final exams...

Based on the responses of the teachers and students in the questionnaires as well as the findings of class observations, it was found out that the class activities were so intensely focused on the INUEE-related supplementary materials that the teachers had to hold extra classes to catch up on the textbook. For example, in one of the class observation sessions one of the teachers (Teacher C) dedicated one complete session to practicing the INUEE sample tests. She used an INUEE-specific supplementary book named "Anjoman" and during the session the questions deemed irrelevant to the INUEE were

ignored. For instance, the students' pronunciation errors were hardly corrected by the teacher.

These frequent instances of textbook marginalization and turning to supplementary materials might presumably have been due to the inadequacy of the textbook to prepare the students for the test from the perspective of the teachers. Therefore, this could be perceived as an indication that the content of teachers' teaching was affected by the test.

4.3 Teaching Methods vs. Learning Strategies

In subsections 4.3.1 and 4.3.2, the findings related to the effect of the INUEE on English teaching and English learning in terms of the effect of the INUEE on method of teaching and strategies of learning are provided. These findings, which address the Research Questions 1, 2, and 3 of the study, were obtained from the analysis of the responses in the teacher's and student's questionnaires as well as teachers' interviews.

4.3.1 Adjustment of Teaching Method

In teacher's questionnaire (Q44), they were asked about their teaching methods in their English classes. Their responses are presented below.

Table 4.9 Adjustment of Teaching Method for the Test

		Yes	No
Q44	Did you change your teaching methods as the INUEE approached?	0	6

Based on the teachers' responses as represented by Table 4.9, none of them changed their teaching method in favor of the INUEE. In their questionnaire, they further explained their reasons as follows.

Teacher C: I never want to change my method anymore, because once I did and my students, their families, and even the school's principal criticized me as a teacher who was unable to teach in the way the students could learn and understand English better. What they all want me to teach is teaching one skill [reading skill] as well as some special language items [grammar and vocabulary]...

Teacher D: I have always taught the way I am teaching now. I have been teaching English for almost 14 years and I have never changed my method of teaching, because I did not see any reason for that. I have always been successful in helping my students pass the INUEE ... a few times I have been rewarded and praised as a good teacher by the school principals and students' families ...

From the Teachers C and D's quotations, it might be inferred that their teaching methods were not affected by the washback effect of the INUEE. However, the teachers' reports of their own teaching method per se may not provide reliable evidence to conclude that their teaching method has or has not been affected by a test. Therefore, it is imperative to observe their actual teaching practice in the context of the classes.

4.3.2 Adjustment of Learning Strategies

In their questionnaire (Q38), students were enquired about their learning strategies in their English classes. The students' responses are provided as follows.

Table 4.10 Adjustment of Learning Strategies for the Test

		YES		NO	
		Frequency	percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Q38	Did you adjust your learning strategies appropriate to the INUEE?	191	88%	27	12%

Some of the students' further explanations are provided as follows.

Yes, of course we do change our techniques of learning because at the end of the day it is the INUEE which counts...Life of most of the pre-university students depends on this test...

I adjust my learning strategies for the INUEE. We need to practice more sample tests and we must learn how to manage our time when we answer the sample tests. I think the more we practice, the better and more quickly we can answer the tests...

I usually practice the INUEE sample tests at home but I would change my learning strategies when the date of the INUEE gets closer. For example, I would record the time while I want to answer the multiple choice tests. I would try to learn how to control the time because on the INUEE it is very important to learn how to answer the INUEE questions within the limited amount of time which has been allocated to answer each test.

I need to register for test-preparations classes at least for a few sessions because I am so slow in answering multiple-choice questions. I think I need to learn some test-taking strategies to pass the test.

Based on the students' responses in Table 4.10 and their further comments, it could be concluded that majority of the students (88%) adjusted their learning strategies in favor of the INUEE. This clearly exemplifies the existence of washback effect of the INUEE on their English learning.

4.3.3 Adjustment of Teaching Method (Observed by the Researcher)

During six sessions of the class observations, it was also found that teachers always followed the same method of teaching. Students were usually taught in their L1 and teaching English in L2 was rarely observed. Sometimes, vocabulary was taught in the form of lists of isolated words along with their Persian equivalents (See Appendix J). Disconnected sentences were translated from English into Persian and little or no attention was given to pronunciation. As for grammar, long elaborate explanations of the grammatical structures were given and little attention was paid to the content in the midst of teaching reading skill. During the reading classes except teacher F who would orient the students to the passage through some pre-reading activities, the other teachers rarely engaged the students in any sort of pre-reading activities. Meanwhile, the teachers would normally pick the so-called ‘important’ INUEE-related questions from the sample tests and other supplementary books and wrote them on the board so that the students could transfer them onto their own notebooks. Obviously, the teaching methodology (i.e., Grammar Translation Method) that teachers were following in their classes was akin to the teaching procedure prescribed by the designers of the pre-university textbook (contained in the foreword of the textbook).

Cross-checking the three categories of findings (obtained through teacher and student’s questionnaires, teacher interviews, and class observations), it could be deduced that the teachers’ teaching method was not affected by the washback effect of the test only. Majority of the students reported that they adjusted their English learning strategies appropriate to the INUEE. Drawing on the students’ comments that as they got closer to the test date, they intensified their test-oriented efforts and became further obsessed

with acquiring test-tackling strategies, it seems plausible to assume that their learning strategies might have been affected by the test.

4.3.4 Adjustment of Class Activities for the Test (Reported by the Teachers)

In their questionnaire (Q46), teachers were asked whether they changed their class activities as the INUEE approached. The teachers' responses are provided below.

Table 4.11 Adjustment of Class Activities for the Test

		Yes	No
Q46	Did you change the activities as the INUEE approached?	6	0

In their questionnaires, two teachers (A and D) further commented as follows.

Teacher A: We usually teach as if tomorrow is the date of the INUEE...along with the textbook we teach other supplementary books and sample tests in order to make students ready for the test...but as we the date of the INUEE gets closer, we try to bring more sample tests in our classes to practice with the students...definitely we try to focus our attention on those class activities which the candidates need more to pass the test...

Teacher D: As the date of the test gets closer, I try to encourage the students to get engaged in mock exams in order to help them realize their area of difficulty before they sit for the actual test... as for class activities, we provide the students with more sample tests to have as much practice as possible for the test.

Teachers' responses indicate that their class activities had been affected by the INUEE. They claimed that their class activities were mainly centered on the sample test practices. This could be a clear evidence of washback effect of the INUEE on teachers' teaching.

4.3.5 Adjustment of Class Activities for the Test (Reported by the Students)

In the student's questionnaire (Q30), they were asked whether their class activities changed in favor of the INUEE. Students' responses are provided below.

Table 4.12 Adjustment of Class Activities for the Test

	YES		NO	
	Frequency	percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Q30 Class activities change as the INUEE test date get closer	183	84%	35	16%

Some of the students provided some additional comments as coming below.

Since the INUEE determines our future and its result is very important for the candidates, teachers usually try to help them to get prepared for this very competitive test. For example, my teacher provides us with sample tests and compels us to respond to the questions within the time limits which are similar to the real test.

As the date of the test gets closer, our teacher teaches us more vocabulary items. Sometimes, she also teaches us a lot of grammar....sometimes she teaches us the easiest and shortest ways of answering multiple-choice questions...

When the date of the INUEE gets closer, we practice more supplementary books than the textbook because they include more sample tests. Our teacher writes the important sample questions on the board and we write them down in our notebooks or we underline them as important questions to be given further thought and care later at home...

In their questionnaires, students also reported that their teachers usually maneuvered around those parts of the textbook which were relevant to the INUEE, in one way or another. They also reported that they practiced the INUEE sample tests from the beginning of the semester and these practices became more and more intense as the date of the test got closer.

4.3.6 Adjustment of Class Activities for the Test (Observed by the Researcher)

Class observations also indicated that the teachers would divide class time into two parts. Almost half of the class time was devoted to teaching the pre-university textbook and the other half was allocated to practicing the supplementary books or other INUEE-related sample tests. In order to make the test-related points clearer and easily understandable to everyone, the teachers explained them totally in Persian. The students were barely engaged in any of class activities, and teachers were almost the only voice in the classes, dissecting and explaining the INUEE-related sample tests to the students. By cross-checking the findings collected through teacher's and student's questionnaires, and from class observations, it could be plausibly argued that the class activities were affected by the prospective test.

4.4 Assessment Procedure in Classes

Teachers and students were asked about the way the teachers evaluated the students' learning for the formative and summative tests. Teachers and students responses along with their further comments are presented below.

4.4.1 Assessment Procedure in Classes (Reported by the Teachers)

In their questionnaire (Q49), the teachers were enquired about the ways they evaluated their students' learning. According to all the six teachers, in order to evaluate the students' learning, they very often used multiple-choice testing format, and occasionally the open-ended questions.

In the case of multiple-choice questions, the teachers stated that the textbook and other supplementary materials (e.g., exam papers of the previous years and the INUEE-related sample tests) were the main sources for the designing of the questions. As for the open-ended questions, they reported that they only used the pre-university textbook samples.

4.4.2 Assessment Procedure in Classes (Reported by the Students)

In their questionnaire (Q40), students were also asked about what they studied for their mid-term and final exams. Their responses are presented below.

Table 4.13 The Material to be Practiced for the Mid-term and Final Exams

	Frequency	Percentage
I review what I learned in class, focusing on the textbook	136	62%
I study the past exam papers like the practice kit of the past INUEE	25	12%
I study both (1) and (2)	57	26%

Comparing the data provided in Table 4.13 shows that whereas an overwhelming majority of the students tended to use supplementary materials and sample tests along with the textbook for their self-studies for the INUEE, a huge percentage of them reported that their major source of studying and practice for the ‘formative tests’ during the semester and the ‘summative test’ at the end of the semester was only the textbook itself. A number of sample reasons provided by the students as further comments in the questionnaire are presented below.

I think the textbook is enough for the mid-term and final exams, because the questions of these tests are mainly designed from the textbook itself and besides this the teachers have been using the series of the same tests each year and we have access to these tests... We don’t feel any need to work on extra materials.

Comparing the mid-term and final exams with the INUEE, you may find that they are very different in terms of level of difficulty. For the INUEE the textbook cannot help you pass the test but in mid-term or final tests if you practice and learn the textbook, you can be sure that you will pass the exam successfully.

Passing or failing the INUEE determines our future life, job, and so on. In contrast, passing, or failing a mid-term or final test does not affect our life that much. Therefore, naturally for passing the mid-term and final tests we do not devote as much energy and time as we do for the INUEE.

The reasons provided by the students regarding how they prepared themselves for the mid-term, final exams and the INUEE could overall fall into three major categories: typology of the test, the population size of the test-takers, and the standing of the test (high-stakes vs. low-stakes). As far as the typology of the test is concerned, the INUEE can be categorized as a norm-referenced test which imposes intense competition. When it comes to the norm-referenced nature of the INUEE, the examinee's performance on the test is not evaluated with a predetermined criterion but rather in comparison with other examinees; therefore, competitiveness is heightened, which in turn amplifies their need to go for supplementary materials and sample tests. In addition, for the INUEE the competition is among more than a million students, but in mid-term or final tests the competition is among students of a class. As for the standing of the test, it was mentioned that the scores of the mid-term or final test do not count too much, but a lower score on the INUEE could affect their future educational and career lives. Based on the teachers' responses, it might be concluded that they were also affected by the test in terms of how to assess the students' learning.

4.4.3 Assessment Procedure in the Classes (Observed by the Researcher)

During the class observations it was also revealed that most of the drills and class exercises were designed based on multiple choice formats. For instance, after finishing

the teaching of a new grammatical structure, the teachers provided many related sample tests from the available supplementary materials. In their interviews (Q10) the teachers provided some additional comments as below.

Teacher B: I usually use different types of questions in the midterm exams. I use multiple-choice tests in order to make my students familiar with the format of the INUEE... I usually take the questions from supplementary books or from the sample INUEE tests of the previous years. In fact, the purpose is to kill two birds with one stone because on the one hand they take their mid-term exam, and on the other hand, they would get familiar with the format of the INUEE questions.

Teacher: E: I usually try to make my students familiar with the format and content of the INUEE in the mid-term exams. I incorporate multiple-choice questions all mid-term and final exams for two reasons: firstly, correcting multiple-choice exams are easier, and secondly my students would get familiar with the format of the INUEE questions.

Teacher F: My chief aim behind using multiple-choice questions in the mid-term exams is to check out whether my students have learnt those strategies I have taught them earlier. In each class session I teach them some test-taking strategies which would be helpful for them to pass the INUEE test. For instance, I teach them how to eliminate the incorrect options and how to guess the correct option. Therefore, I think in midterm exams I would be able to check whether they could apply those strategies or not.

Teachers' quotations clearly indicate that incorporating multiple choice questions and preparing students for the test are among their top priorities in their classes. In fact, the teachers' comments show that one of their main purposes is to ensure that their students are well versed with the multiple choice format of INUEE and are able to use the test taking strategies taught in their classes. This finding also indicates the existence of washback effect of the INUEE on teachers' teaching assessment.

4.5 The Effect of INUEE on English Teaching

In teacher's questionnaire (Q60 and Q61), the teachers were asked about the effect of the INUEE on their English teaching. Their responses obtained from their questionnaires and interviews (Q8) are provided below.

Table 4.14 The Influence of the INUEE on Teachers' Teaching

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q60	I think the INUEE has the most influence on my own teaching.	0	0	2	4
Q61	I believe the INUEE has a great influence on EFL teaching and learning in secondary schools and even on the whole education system.	0	0	0	6

In their interviews (Q8), teachers D and E also mentioned that:

Teacher D: Teachers are not free to teach what they want to teach based on their teaching experiences. They have to teach for the test and allocate even half of their class time to practice INUEE sample tests in order to prepare and satisfy their students...

Teacher E: In our schools and in reality what counts is how you teach for the INUEE and how you make your students ready for the final exams or the INUEE. I believe that our personal beliefs are among the last priorities.

It is obvious from the teachers' comments that they felt restricted in their teaching English, and regarded their teaching practice as being strongly overshadowed by the INUEE. They alluded to their lack of freedom to teach according to principles of their academic knowledge as well as professional experience.

Class observations also revealed that there was a relative balance in terms of time allocation between teaching of the textbook and practicing of the INUEE sample tests. For example, during class observations the researcher found out that half of the class time was dedicated to practicing the INUEE. In some classes the teachers spent the entire time of a class session to teach the INUEE-related issues and the next session would be allocated for teaching the textbook. Interestingly enough, even during the session allocated for the textbook the teachers taught in favor of the INUEE and taught test taking strategies.

Teachers' teaching also centered on teaching the INUEE-related language areas as well as the INUEE sample tests. There were also occasions on which the students preemptively sought the coaching of their teachers about the INUEE. For example, they asked the teachers questions such as "How can this grammar point in the textbook be tested or asked on the INUEE?" or "what is the shortest possible way to answer this question?" Overall, juxtaposition and comparison of the findings indicated that teachers' teaching and learners' learning might have been affected by the test. Based on the findings, it could be claimed that the students' learning might have been both negatively and positively affected by the test. The test's effect could be viewed as positive because it serves as a factor which compels them to intensify their efforts to study English. On the other hand, the INUEE and the teachers' teaching were found to have a negative influence on the learners' language learning. Based on the students' explanations in their questionnaire, these two factors (i.e., the INUEE and the teachers' teaching) shifted their attention from learning English to learning test tricks.

4.6 The Effect of INUEE on English Learning

In their questionnaire (Q42, Q43, and Q44), students were enquired about the effect of the INUEE on their English learning. Their responses are presented as follows.

Table 4.15 The Influence of the INUEE on Learners' Language Learning

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	*F	**P	F	P	F	P	F	P
Q42 INUEE has the most influence on my learning.	14	7%	27	12%	79	36%	98	45%

*Frequency ** Percentage

Some of the students' further comments collected from their questionnaires are provided below.

The INUEE has affected my English learning very much...I always memorize vocabulary to help on the INUEE....the problem is that when I review them, it seems that I have never memorized them...learning vocabulary is very difficult. I don't know how to keep them in my memory till the day of the test.

I used to watch English movies to improve my English but since I came to pre-university level, I stopped watching movies because I feel I am wasting my time because my other classmates spend their time to go to preparatory schools and learn more for the INUEE...learning or not learning to speak in English does not change anything in my future life, but failing this competitive test means losing everything in the future...

I have learnt many grammatical structures since I have started learning English but finally I did not understand what it is used for...but to be honest the INUEE is one of the main reason that I practice grammar because grammar is not interesting at all for me...it is very boring and tiresome but I know it would be very important for passing the INUEE which is very important for my future life...

Based on the above quotations collected from the students' questionnaires, it was obvious that students' studying for the INUEE was not due to their interest but rather it

was driven by some external pressures (e.g., family pressures). As reflected in their quotations, the students indicated that in spite of their lack of interest in the study of grammar; they spent considerable amount of time to practice grammatical exercises because they all were aware that the grammar was an inseparable part of the INUEE and was crucially important for passing the test.

4.7 Summary of the Findings

To sum up the findings of the present chapter, it might be concluded that the INUEE affected teachers' teaching and learners' learning in different ways. The study revealed that teachers' teaching was negatively affected by the test in terms of teaching content (e.g. areas of focus), class activities, and assessment procedures. Document analysis shed light on other factors along the test (e.g., the prescribed textbook) which guided the teachers teaching and pushed them to act and teach in the way they did at their classrooms. Furthermore, the learners' learning was also found to be negatively affected by the INUEE. For instance, learners' learning content (e.g., their areas of focus), and learning strategies were affected by the test.

CHAPTER 5

OTHER FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO WASHBACK EFFECT OF THE INUEE

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an analysis and reports the findings obtained from the teacher's and student's questionnaires, and teachers' interviews in order to address the third and fourth research questions of the study: **RQ4:** What other factors besides INUEE contribute to the washback effect of the INUEE on English teaching as perceived by the teachers? **RQ5:** What other factors besides the INUEE contribute to the washback effect of the INUEE on English learning as perceived by the learners?

In this chapter, the teachers' responses collected from teacher's questionnaire and student's questionnaire are compared and contrasted. To this end, the similar questions from both teacher's questionnaire and student's questionnaire were extracted. The questions to be compared were generally centered on the following themes: 1) Teachers' perceptions about the test, teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards teaching materials as well as teachers' familiarity with the purposes of the National Curriculum, and 2) learners' perceptions about the test, the teaching materials and their teachers' English teaching in order to see how the factors other than the washback effect of the test might affect teachers' English teaching and learners' English learning.

5.2 Teachers' and Students' Awareness of the INUEE

Both teachers and students were enquired about their familiarity with the test as well as their perceptions about the chief aim of the INUEE. Their answers are presented below.

5.2.1 Teachers' Perceptions about the Purpose of the INUEE

Teachers' responses to the related items of the questionnaire (Q15) revealed that all the teachers were aware of the language skills to be tested on the INUEE and they all knew what the INUEE's questionings were like. As far as the teachers' perceptions about the purpose of the INUEE were concerned (Q17), the findings indicated that except two teachers (C and F) who believed that the INUEE tested students' academic knowledge, the four other teachers (A, B, D, and E) believed that the INUEE tested students' rote-memorization skill only. In their interviews (Q5), four teachers further commented as follows.

Teacher A: I believe that the INUEE only evaluates the students' rote-memorization skills. It is not true that the best always pass the INUEE successfully...there are many diligent and intelligent students who have failed the INUEE many times...I have had many good students who have had problems in answering multiple-choice questions....so I have come to the conclusion that, for the time being, I mostly focus on preparing my students for the INUEE through teaching them the tricks and test-tackling strategies...I usually teach them time management methods during the test...

Teacher C: I believe that the INUEE represents students' academic literacy. It is obvious that those who have learned more in classes can perform better on the day of exam. At the same time I do not believe that those who know more can be the fastest in answering the multiple-choice questions too. I think one of the disadvantages of the INUEE is its format [multiple-choice]...The INUEE makes us spend a considerable of our class time on teaching the test strategies ...I personally believe the INUEE could determine the students' knowledge better if it included variety of questions such as open-ended questions.

Teacher E: I doubt the INUEE can really measure students' English knowledge... It only measures students' memorization ability because students' true English

knowledge can't be measured within 20 minutes allotted to the English section of the INUEE, at the same time we are always under stress to practice the sample tests in our classes and make our students prepare for the test.

Teacher F: I believe that the INUEE could evaluate students' academic knowledge if it were administered in more than one day... although most of my students who passed the INUEE in the previous years were very hard-working and diligent students, most of them were also quite skillful in answering multiple-choice questions and some of them had learnt test-taking strategies at preparatory schools...I believe the format of the test needs to be revised and changed in order to evaluate the candidates' real English knowledge...

As the above quotations show, the teachers held different views about the purpose of the INUEE. But, at the same time they all had doubt about the appropriateness of the test in terms of its format and they thought that students' real English knowledge could not be truly evaluated by the current format of the test (i.e., multiple-choice format). The necessity and significance of students' mastery over answering multiple-choice questions put the teachers under the pressure and obligation of devoting a sizeable portion of class time to practice and teach test tricks. This could be a clear evidence of washback effect of the test on teachers' teaching.

5.2.2 Students' Perceptions about the Purpose of INUEE

In student's questionnaire (Q8 and Q9), they were also asked whether they knew what the INUEE was like and how the structure of the test was. From among 218 students, 12 students left the question unanswered, 5 of the students chose the item "No" and the remaining students answered "Yes" to this question. Students also were asked whether they knew which language skills would be tested on the INUEE. From among 218 students, 11 students left the question blank and 207 of the students answered "Yes" to this question. In their questionnaire (Q10), they were also asked about the main aim of the INUEE. Most of the respondents (68%) seemed to believe that the quintessential

philosophy behind creation and administration of the INUEE was to evaluate students' rote-memorization skill.

Table 5.1 Purpose of the INUEE on Learners' Language Learning

Q10	Frequency	Percentage
1) To evaluate student's academic competence	54	25%
2) To evaluate student's rote-memorization	149	68%
3) To choose intelligent students	15	7%

As Table 5.1 shows, students held quite contradictory ideas about the purpose of the test. Some of them provided further comments in their questionnaire as follows.

In my idea, the INUEE should not be omitted from the educational system because this test could easily show how well we have learned during the high school.

I think the INUEE evaluates students' academic competence. Therefore, it is very hard to pass the INUEE for those who only memorize their lessons....those students who have learned well might pass the INUEE successfully...

I believe that deciding the learners' future based on the results of the INUEE is unfair, because for the students whose families cannot afford to send them to preparatory schools, the INUEE will be a barrier that can block their progress in the entire life... It encourages the candidates to memorize what they have been taught during their high school and encourages them to compete with their rivals....

I think the INUEE does not evaluate our academic knowledge. In my idea it is like a tool that help our parents' dreams come true ...My parents perceive their children as instruments by which they wish to realize their own unfulfilled educational and professional dreams.

In my idea, most of the candidates who passed the INUEE had learned some tricks and strategies to answer multiple-choice questions....they passed it because they knew those tricks and strategies better; it does not mean they were more knowledgeable than those who failed...in fact, the purpose of the INUEE

is to test candidates capability in answering the questions quickly. In the INUEE you are not given enough time to think carefully and then answer the questions. You have to know some test-taking tricks to answer the questions. If you couldn't answer within the limited time provided, nobody would care how much knowledge you had and how much you were able to present yourself...

I think the INUEE questions are very difficult and only intelligent and very clever students can answer these questions. Some of them are like puzzles and they make you confused.

In our English classes we practice for the test...We learn vocabulary and grammar formulas, but we don't know how to use them. This makes it very boring and pointless to attend the classes, but for the sake of our own future, we have to attend preparatory classes because for those who want to pass the INUEE successfully, there is no other choice but to learn how to answer multiple-choice questions as quickly as possible.

Comparison of the teachers and students' responses indicated that majority of the students and all the teachers were aware of the format of the INUEE and the skills which would be tested on day of the test. Two of the teachers believed that the INUEE evaluated students' academic knowledge and the other four teachers were of the opinion that the purpose of the INUEE was to evaluate students' rote-memorization skill. Concerning the students' perceptions towards the test, as Table 5.1 indicates, the majority of the students believed the INUEE solely evaluated students' rote-memorization ability.

Being familiar with the format and structure of the test indicates that whatever activities the participants (i.e., teachers and students) have had in their English classes was based on some kind of pre-determined purpose and familiarity with the requirement of the test. For example, the reason that they practiced vocabulary in their English classes was because they knew that testing vocabulary was an inseparable part of the INUEE and knowing more vocabulary would help them to answer some of the grammar or reading questions as well (in their questionnaire Q8 and Q9, from among 218 students, 201

students reported that they knew what the INUEE was like and which language skills would be tested on the day of the exam). Elicitation and comparison of the students' viewpoints about the purpose of the INUEE also revealed that over two-thirds of the teachers and students viewed the INUEE's primary function as evaluating students' rote-memorization ability. It seemed that teachers and students' perceptions about the test had been negatively affected because only two teachers held positive perceptions about the purpose of the INUEE and believed that its purpose was to evaluate students' academic purposes, the other four teachers had negative perceptions about the test's purpose. In other words, teachers and students with negative perceptions did not consider the test to be a valid evaluator of candidates' real-life language ability. It means that like the teachers the students did not consider the test to be a valid evaluator of candidates' real-life language ability.

5.3 Teachers' and Students' Attitudes toward the INUEE

In order to understand the teachers and students' attitudes towards the INUEE, different questions were asked. Both teachers and students' answers along with further comments provided by the students in their questionnaire as well as two verbatim quotations from teachers' interviews are presented as follows.

5.3.1 Teachers' Attitudes toward the INUEE

In teacher's questionnaire (Q20), they were asked whether the INUEE enriches the students' knowledge of English language or not. The teachers' responses are presented below.

Table 5.2 INUEE and Enhancement of English Knowledge

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q20	The INUEE enriches students' knowledge of English language.	2	2	2	0

As Table 5.2 shows, two teachers (C and F) agreed that the test enriches the students' knowledge of English, and the four other teachers (A, B, D, and E) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the role of the INUEE in improving students' English knowledge. In their interviews (Q5), teachers (A and F) provided the reasons for their agreement or disagreement as follows.

Teacher A: The INUEE can't help students to increase their English knowledge. I believe that they only have learnt a pile of vocabulary and English grammar for a short period of time. For example, due to practicing many sample tests my students have learnt some tricks which help them recognize the correct answer without understanding the whole sentence. For instance, in the following example, my students have learnt that in this test they should choose '*such*' as the correct answer because they know when after blank space there is an article (a)+ an adjective (big)+ and a noun (house), the answer should be the word *such*. Sometimes they even do not need to read the sentence to the end and they can find the correct answer in this way.

She has----- **a big house** I actually got lost on the way to the bathroom.
 a. such b. too c. so d. very

Teacher F: The INUEE increases students' English knowledge because except the school hours during which students have to study for English, in Iran there is no other obligation for students to study English...but at the same time the INUEE's format is not reliable format for reflecting the candidates' real knowledge. We do not know whether the correct answers were out of the students' knowledge or their good luck and chance. Furthermore, such a format forces all of us to teach in the way that we do not really believe in. The format of the questions, the types of questions needs to be revised and other language skills (listening, speaking, and writing) should be included in the test.

The above quotations indicate that Teacher A did hardly believe in the **validity** of the INUEE and was of the opinion that the only purpose of the INUEE was to make the

candidates memorize a pile of vocabulary and grammar, which might not be used in actual practice. She argued that the candidates memorize the vocabulary items and grammatical rules for a short period of time till the date of the INUEE. In contrast, Teacher F looked at the INUEE as a chance for the candidates to practice English, while at the same time she was critical of the INUEE's current testing format and content and believed that the multiple-choice format and content could not reflect the candidates' real ability in language.

5.3.2 Students' Attitudes toward the INUEE

In students' questionnaire (Q12), they were asked whether the INUEE enriched their English knowledge or not. As illustrated by Table 5.3, most of the respondents either *disagreed* (31%) or *strongly disagreed* (43%) that the INUEE had enriched their knowledge of the English language. From among 218 students, 15% of students *agreed* and 11% of them *strongly agreed* that the INUEE had enriched their English knowledge.

Table 5.3 INUEE and Enhancement of English Knowledge

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	93	43%
Disagree	69	31%
Agree	32	15%
Strongly Agree	24	11%

Three sample quotations from the student's questionnaires about the role of the INUEE in improving the students' English language knowledge are presented below.

I feel that my grammar knowledge has improved and I have added to the number of my words since I started the pre-university period because I have to learn them if I want to pass the INUEE and enter university.

I am not very sure that I would manage to do well in the English section of the INUEE this year, because I seem to have forgotten many of the words and grammar points that I used to know...since I don't learn English at school out of interest, I tend to forget it easily....Actually, I like English very much but I do not like it when I have to study it for the INUEE or other English exams...

I am not sure about the positive role of the INUEE on increasing my English knowledge.... at the moment, I feel I have learnt a lot of vocabulary items, and I have good amount of English knowledge. But I am not quite sure about my memory to keep them till the day of the exam [INUEE]...it makes me crazy if I can't remember them on the exam....

Based on the above findings obtained from teacher's and student's questionnaires as well as teachers' interviews, it might be concluded that teachers and students held contrasting ideas about the role of the test in improving students' English knowledge. Two teachers had positive perceptions and four teachers had negative perceptions about the INUEE with regard to its effect on improving students' English knowledge. As for the students, from among 218 students 162 students, held negative perceptions about the role of the INUEE in increasing their English knowledge and thought that such a mechanical and rote learning had little to do with real-life language learning. The findings indicated that even those students who liked to learn English believed that their current need was to memorize all the INUEE related skills and points...they stated that they would have enough time to learn English later (after passing the INUEE).

5.3.3 The Effect of the INUEE on English Proficiency (Perceived by the Teachers)

Question 21 of teacher's questionnaire was about the role of the INUEE in improving students' English proficiency. The teachers' responses are provided below.

Table 5.4 INUEE and Improvement of Students' Proficiency

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q21	The INUEE improve students' proficiency in English.	2	2	2	0

As Table 5.4 shows, four teachers (A, B, D, and E) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that the INUEE improves students' English proficiency and two teachers (C and F) agreed that the INUEE improves students' English proficiency. In their interviews (Q5) Teachers A, B and D further commented as follows.

Teacher A: I strongly disagree that the INUEE enriches students' knowledge. Actually, the INUEE misleads the students in their language learning. Most of my students think that if they memorize a pile of vocabulary, they would be able to cope with the test.

Teacher B: I believe that the INUEE only makes the students more skillful in answering multiple-choice questions...Most of my students go to preparatory schools in order to learn some strategies for answering the INUEE's multiple-choice questions. They believe that if they grasp certain techniques and learn how to manage the time, they would be able to answer the questions on the INUEE.

Teacher D: I think having a proficiency in language means being able to use that language in the real context, but we all know the INUEE doesn't prepare the students for real use of language.

Teacher F: The INUEE increases students' English proficiency. Practice makes perfect...students learn more as they practice more sample tests...each time they learn a new thing. In fact, little by little they increase their English proficiency...

The above quotations indicate that the four teachers had different views as to what entails proficiency and how proficiency can be attained. While Teacher F believed that proficiency in English was achievable through practicing more sample tests, the other teachers (Teachers A, B, and D) believed that the INUEE only encourages students to prepare for the test and it does not increase the students English knowledge.

5.3.4 The Effect of the INUEE on English Proficiency (Perceived by the Students)

Question 13 of student's questionnaire was about the role of the INUEE in improving students' English proficiency. The students' responses are presented below.

Table 5.5 INUEE and Improvement of Students' Proficiency

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	110	50%
Disagree	78	36%
Agree	22	10%
Strongly Agree	8	4%

As illustrated by Table 5.5, the majority of the students did not perceive the INUEE as having any positive effect on enhancement of their English proficiency. Some of the sample quotations (further comments) provided by the responding students are as follows.

I think the INUEE is not having a good and positive role in our learning...it is like a barrier for entering universities...For the English subject, we learn a lot of vocabulary items and grammar for passing the test but we do not know how to use them in practice and we usually forget them quickly ...I think the INUEE does not improve our English knowledge. It only forces us to practice English for some time and then forget whatever we have learned because we only memorize all the words and grammatical structures for the test, not for learning.

The INUEE only intensifies our sense of competition and makes us nervous...if I cannot pass the test and make my future then I don't need to learn English...what is the point of learning English if I am to spend the rest of my life at home without a bright future, a good job, having university degree...?

I think the INUEE increases our English proficiency because I have memorized many words. I have memorized half of the words in my pocket dictionary for the INUEE...if it were not for the test; I might never memorize those words... I know the synonyms and antonyms of the words I have learned...

Comparing teachers and students' responses and quotations indicates that the INUEE affected most of the participants' perceptions negatively. In other words, it seemed that four teachers (A, B, D, and E) and 188 students held negative perceptions about the role of the test in improving students' English proficiency.

5.3.5 Motivating Role of the INUEE (Perceived by the Teachers)

In teacher's questionnaire (Q22), they were enquired about the motivating impact of the INUEE on students to study and learn English. The teachers' answers obtained from their questionnaires are presented as follows.

Table 5.6 The Motivating Role of the INUEE

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q22	The INUEE would motivate students to study English.	1	3	1	1

As Table 5.6 shows, two teachers (F and C) either agreed or strongly agreed that the test increased students' motivation to study English and the other four teachers (A, B, D, and E) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the motivating effect of the INUEE on students' English learning. A few additional comments from the questionnaires of three of the teachers (A, B, and D) who were negative about the motivating function of the INUEE are presented as follows.

Teacher A: ...pre-university students' mind is occupied by the stress of the INUEE and this feeling of fear and distress de-motivates them to study English. Learning a foreign language should be enjoyable; otherwise, learners become disinterested in learning that language.

Teacher B: I disagree that the INUEE motivates students to learn English because they do not enjoy learning English and in their English classes they are always worried about how this or that new point would be tested on the INUEE. Students and teachers' stress reaches its peak as the time of the INUEE gets closer.

Teacher D: I don't think that the INUEE motivates students to learn English. It just makes the class atmosphere stressful and boring. For some students this test is considered as an unconquerable monster which can easily destroy their future life within a few hours.

In contrast, teachers C and F were positive about the INUEE and believed that the test motivated the candidates to study further. Their quotations are as follows.

Teacher C: I believe that the INUEE pushes the students to study more English because they know that in order to secure a high rank on the INUEE, they have to study harder...

Teacher F: the test motivate them to study and learn more because they have to try more if they want to have a bright future...the test help them to concentrate on whatever they study...it help them to be more dutiful when they study...if they want to pass the test they should not study in a cursory manner....

5.3.6 Motivating Role of the INUEE (Perceived by the Students)

In their questionnaire (Q14), students were also asked about the role of the INUEE in increasing their motivation toward English learning. They were enquired as to whether this high-stakes test had motivated them to study English or not. The majority's answers turned out to be in sharp contrast with those of the minority (as presented in Table 5.7 below). As clearly shown by Table 5.7, whereas a majority of the respondents ruled out the motivating role of the INUEE (56% of them *strongly disagreed* and 24% *disagreed* that the INUEE had motivated them to study English), 10% and 8%, respectively, *agreed* and *strongly agreed* with the idea that the INUEE had motivated them to learn English.

Table 5.7 The Motivating Role of the INUEE

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	123	56%
Disagree	53	24%
Agree	23	10%
Strongly Agree	19	8%

It is worth stating that some of those students who *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* with the motivating role of the INUEE further highlighted that they had always been subjected to a heavy burden of psychological pressure caused by the INUEE, which rendered English learning a tiring and tormenting experience to them. They mentioned a variety of reasons for the ‘non-motivating’ role of the INUEE. Sample quotations are provided below:

All the questions on the INUEE are multiple-choice type, so all the students only want to learn test-tackling tricks rather than English itself. Learning English is not an end, and the main goal is to pass this life-changing test.

For now what is important for me is passing the INUEE. Therefore, I do my best to learn the short-cut methods to answer the questions. After passing the INUEE, I will hire a private teacher to teach me English, especially conversation.

I think first we should define what is meant by learning English. If learning English is only vocabulary and grammar, yes I think the INUEE makes us memorize a lot of words and grammar formulas, but if learning English is learning to speak, to write, and to communicate with others, I believe it doesn't play any role in motivating us.

In our English classes, it is only the teacher who speaks all the time...we rarely participate in class activities...she is always worried about the limitation of the class time...she usually writes the INUEE sample tests on the board and she herself provides their answers. Our only duty is to listen and write down the important notes.

The findings indicate that four of the teachers had negative attitudes about the INUEE.

The four teachers all asserted that the INUEE exerts a severe stress on the candidates;

therefore, it does not motivate the students to learn, but rather it forces them to read and memorize. Only two teachers (C and F) disagreed with the other teachers and had positive perceptions about the INUEE in terms of its motivational functions for the candidates.

Overall, the majority of the participants did not view the INUEE as a motivator to learn English. Juxtaposing the content of Table 5.7 with the additional comments provided by some of the students may lead us to deduce that students barely felt motivated to learn English for itself, but rather they had a strong motivation to pass the INUEE and enter university.

5.3.7 The Role of the INUEE in Teachers' Teaching (Perceived by the Teachers)

In teacher's questionnaire (Q24), they were enquired as to whether the INUEE made the students study English harder. Furthermore, they were asked (Q25) whether they enjoyed practicing for the INUEE in their English classes. Their responses along with their additional comments are provided as follows.

Table 5.8 Study-inducing Role of the INUEE

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q24	The INUEE makes my students study English harder.	0	3	3	0

Table 5.9 Teachers' Satisfaction with Practicing the INUEE

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q25	I enjoy the teaching of the practice tests in preparation for the INUEE.	3	3	0	0

Tables 5.8 shows that teachers (A, B, and D) disagreed with the statement that the INUEE forces the students to study harder and teachers (C, E, and F) thought otherwise. Table 5.9 indicates that teachers (C, D, and F) and teachers (A, B, and E) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that they enjoyed practicing for the INUEE in their English classes. In fact, all the teachers expressed their dissatisfaction with practicing the INUEE in their English classes. In their questionnaires, some of the teachers expressed their discontent as follows.

Teacher B: I think practicing the INUEE is boring and tiresome...we, the teachers, have to practice the INUEE sample tests along with the textbook from the beginning of the semester.... the teachers who can send more students to universities would be praised by the principals and would be awarded...

Teacher D: I have to explain the INUEE points all the time during my teaching...sometimes it is so boring, but I as a teacher have to practice the INUEE because all the teachers' performance is evaluated based on making their students ready for the test....all the city knows me as a good teacher whose students always manage to pass the INUEE....

Teacher E: I don't enjoy teaching to the test, but I do it....After teaching for almost 13 years, I as a teacher got assured that what counts more is the teacher's capability of better preparing the students for the INUEE...

5.3.8 The Role of the INUEE in Learners' Learning (Perceived by the Students)

In question 17 of the student's questionnaire, they were asked whether the INUEE forced them to study English. As shown by Table 5.10 below, a clear majority of the students reported that they have to study English.

5.10 Study-inducing Role of the INUEE

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	15	7%
Disagree	21	10%
Agree	47	21%
Strongly Agree	135	62%

A few sample quotations of the students who either agreed or disagreed with the statement that the INUEE forced them to study harder are provided below.

I can say the INUEE makes me study English, but this studying is not out of interest...sometimes it is very boring to study something without a true interest and motivation....I have to study English because I need it to pass the test. Its weighting score is 2 and it can help me to elevate my rank in this tough competition...

I like to study English for fun only. I hate it when I have to analyze the grammatical structures and answer multiple-choice questions; the way our teachers deal with English in our classes...there is no other choice.... We have to practice for the INUEE and at the moment passing the INUEE is my only aim and if I want to be among the candidates with the top ranks on the INUEE, I need to know how to answer English questions of the INIEE, so it is not the matter of like or dislike.

I do not feel any obligation to study English for the INUEE. If I leave the English section of the INUEE unanswered, nothing would happen...the only thing which may happen is that I may not be accepted in top universities and majors...I just want to enter university and it does not matter in which city or which major of study. The only thing I want is to have a change in my routine life....

Based on the foregoing findings, it could be inferred that the obligation of studying for the INUEE was interpreted differently by the participants. Some of them held positive perceptions and some other held negative perceptions about the INUEE. In the positive sense, even the unmotivated students might feel compelled to study English. In negative sense, the INUEE might make the students more prone to rote memorization and cursory learning. It also seemed that what all the teachers had in common was their lack of interest and desire towards practicing for the test. They obviously did it against their own will and desire in their classes. Teachers' competitions with each other in terms of the number of their students who pass the test, and consequently their performance evaluation in the eyes of the society were among the factors which made them practice more INUEE sample tests in their English classes.

5.3.9 The INUEE and Feeling Pressured (Perceived by the Teachers)

In question 26 of teacher's questionnaire and question 16 of student's questionnaire, they were both asked whether they felt pressure about the INUEE when they taught or learnt English. Both teachers and students' answers obtained from their questionnaires along with teachers' verbatim quotations collected from their interviews are provided below.

Table 5.11 INUEE and Anxiety

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q26	I feel pressured about the INUEE when I teach.	0	0	2	4

As Table 5.11 shows, all the teachers either agreed (D and E) or strongly agreed (A, B, C, and F) that they were under pressure and stress by others such as students, their

families, etc. while they were teaching for the INUEE in their English classes. In order to gain further insight into the reasons behind their stress and anxiety, once again they were asked the same question in their interviews (Q2). Sample quotations from their interviews are presented below.

Teacher A: Practicing the INUEE tests is one of our main activities in English classes...I usually teach my students how to answer multiple-choice questions...I feel stress as much as they do because if they fail the test, it would affect my name and reputation...

Teacher B: Each year I do experience the crushing anxiety of the INUEE...to be honest, the principal of our school always encourages teachers to work harder for the INUEE and she admires those colleagues whose students receive high scores on the INUEE.

Teacher C: I always feel worried about my students' test performance on the INUEE. I always think to myself whether they have been given the right information and guidance about the test. And, have I sufficiently prepared them for their exam?

Teacher D: I suffer from stress and anxiety as much as the INUEE candidates do...I have shifted my emphasis in teaching from teaching what is really needed for students to practicing the INUEE sample tests...the pressures from the outside (e.g. school principal, parents, etc.) have doubled my stress.

Teacher E: Stress for the INUEE is something which almost all the pre-university teachers have experienced...I place more emphasis on teaching test-taking strategies to them.

Teacher F: I do feel stress as much as my students do. If my students manage to answer the INUEE questions easily and pass the test, I will be proud of my teaching and my students and...

Based on the above quotations, it might be assumed that although all the teachers taught for the INUEE in their English classes, none of them felt satisfied with such practices in their English classes. They believed that they were compelled by some kind of external pressure (e.g., society expectations) to teach in the way they did approve of at all. It was

evidently clear that what counted more was their success in helping their students to pass the INUEE and to enter universities.

5.3.10 The INUEE and Feeling Pressured (Perceived by the Students)

As clearly shown in Table 5.12 below, a considerable number of the students believed that they felt pressure about the test. 54% of the students strongly agreed and 33% of them agreed that the INUEE put them under a lot of psychological pressure and anxiety. In contrast, only 11% of students *disagreed* and 2% of students *strongly disagreed* with the idea that the INUEE was a cause of stress and anxiety.

Table 5.12 INUEE and Anxiety

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	4	2%
Disagree	23	11%
Agree	73	33%
Strongly Agree	118	54%

Sample student quotations obtained from their questionnaires are presented below:

I am under an unimaginable stress for the INUEE.... If I fail the INUEE, it may affect my siblings' motivation very badly. I don't want to let them down...My parents have in fact pinned down all their hopes on me. I am the eldest child and I should set a successful example for my other siblings. If, for any reason, I fail the INUEE, my parents will lose their hopes and will be disappointed.

Sometimes my stress gets out of my hand and I become very aggressive and bad-tempered at home. The stress of the INUEE affects my body and mind and sometimes I experience unexplained aches and pains in my body. Actually I have lost my interest in all other activities.... My father works in a hospital and I am not from an affluent family. So I cannot imagine myself getting a good job in future unless I can pass the INUEE.

Surely the day on which I would take the INUEE would be one of the most stressful days of my life. I am very much afraid of the day when I have to choose a field of study other than my area of interest to enter the university.

I really feel desperate. I wish I could be somewhere in which I didn't need to worry about the exams or the INUEE anymore...My parents believe that a girl should either go to university or she should get married as soon as possible...I feel I am not ready to get married...I want to try my chance many times and enter a good university.

My older brother is very talented and he got graduated from high-school with a top grade point average. However, since he could not pass the INUEE, he has not found any job yet because all the organizations and employers demand university degrees.

I am under pressure and stress...I do not know what I should do if I could not pass the test. Entering the universities with high ranks is very important for my family and our relatives...in our family get-togethers, aunts and uncles compete with each other using their children's test scores...

The data collected from teacher's and student's questionnaires and teachers' interviews indicates that all the teachers and majority (above 80%) of the students were subjected to the pressure and anxiety caused by the INUEE.

In addition, based on what teachers stated in the above quotations, it seemed that they were also under some kind of pressure which was rooted in factors other than the test itself (e.g., external forces and society expectations). Therefore, it might be interpreted that other participants out of the class context (e.g., parents) were affected negatively by the test at macro level of the society. It means that the test not only affected the teachers and learners within the context of classroom (at micro level), but others beyond the classroom (at macro-level). Both micro-level participants (e.g., teachers and students) and macro level participants (e.g., parents) seemed to be subjected to the socio-cultural norm "values" and forces defined and exerted by the context of Iranian society.

5.3.11 Necessity of Reformatting the INUEE (Perceived by the Teacher)

In teacher's questionnaire (Q28), they were asked whether they agreed or disagreed that the INUEE should be changed. Their answers along with their sample quotations are presented below.

Table 5.13 Reformatting of the INUEE

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q28	The INUEE must change in some ways.	0	0	3	3

As Table 5.13 indicates, all the teachers either agreed (A, C, and D) or strongly agreed (B, E, and F) that the INUEE needed to be changed. The teachers added the following further comments in their questionnaires.

Teacher B: I believe that in addition to reading skill, other three language skills (i.e., listening, speaking, and writing) should be included in the test.

Teacher E: I think that the INUEE questions are considerably harder than what the students learn from the textbook and in their English classes. It needs to be changed.... due to such a discrepancy in the level of difficulty between the textbook and the INUEE, we have to use other supplementary books along with the textbook.

Teacher F: The test format should be changed. The INUEE should have different types of questions such as: multiple-choice, open-ended, etc.

5.3.12 Necessity of Reformatting the INUEE (Perceived by the Students)

Like the teachers, students were also asked whether the INUEE needed to be changed or not (Q18). The findings indicated that from among 218 students, a clear majority (170 students) supported the idea that INUEE was a necessary mechanism of selecting the

entrants to universities; nevertheless, they expressed their discontent with the current format of testing and contended that some fundamental changes were required to be made. From among 170 students who were in favor of the INUEE, 124 students (69%) *strongly agreed* and 42 students (23%) *agreed* that the INUEE needed to be changed.

It is also worth mentioning that from among the entire population of 218 respondents (i.e., 218 students) 39 students believed that there should be no INUEE to enter universities. A small percentages of students either disagreed (8%) *or* strongly disagreed (3%) with the introduction of any kind of change into the INUEE.

Table 5.14 Reformatting of the INUEE

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	5	3%
Disagree	8	5%
Agree	42	23%
Strongly Agree	124	69%

Some of the students' additional comments obtained from their questionnaires are provided below.

I think the INUEE questions should be changed... the government should give us more chance to enter state universities....They should even be considerate about average students who are motivated to continue their study at universities. I always feel that government is always giving the chances to the gifted students...

The INUEE determines the students' future and destiny within a few hours.... It is very difficult to enter universities... some students are very smart and talented, but they cannot perform well when it comes to the INUEE with its multiple-choice format....

I think the INUEE is not a reliable evaluator of the students' capabilities....It cannot put right people in the right places....Many of the students end in fields of study in which they are not interested at all, which means wasting the talents.

This in turn could have negative consequences for the future career of the person as well as the society because students feel they are forced into studying in a particular field or having a career in which they have no interest.

As mentioned above, all the teachers agreed that the INUEE's typology of the questions should be changed. As for the students, the majority of them agreed that the INUEE must be kept as an evaluating mechanism; nevertheless, they criticized the INUEE's current test format, and argued that having the monopoly of multiple-choice type of questions has made the test prone to cheating, chance, and memorization. Therefore, it would be better to add production types of questions (e.g., open-ended questions) as opposed to recognition type of questions (e.g., multiple-choice questions) to the test in order to help those candidates who have problem in answering multiple-choice questions. Based on this finding, it might be concluded that majority of the participants (i.e., teachers and students) had negative perceptions about the current format of the INUEE.

5.4. Teachers' and Students' Perceptions towards Teaching Materials

Questions (Q31 and Q32) of the teacher's questionnaire and questions (Q21 and Q22) of the student's questionnaire sought to elicit teachers and students' attitudes towards the pre-university textbook. The participating teachers and students were enquired about the textbook and other materials utilized in their pre-university classes as well. Teachers and students' answers along with their quotations are presented as follows.

5.4.1 Teachers' Perceptions about the Teaching Materials

In their questionnaire (Q31 and Q32), teachers were asked about their attitudes towards the pre-university textbook. Their responses along with their verbatim quotations are presented as follows.

Table 5.15 Inclusion of INUEE Sample Tests in the Textbook

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q31	The textbook provides many practices tests for the INUEE.	3	3	0	0

Table 5.16 Finishing the Textbook Equals Getting Higher Scores on INUEE

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q32	If I teach the whole textbook, then my students can achieve high scores on the INUEE.	3	3	0	0

Tables 5.15 and 5.16 show that half of the teachers (B, C, and F) disagreed and the other half (A, D, and E) strongly disagreed that the pre-university textbook included sufficient amount of practices for the INUEE and teaching the whole textbook would guarantee the university candidates to achieve high scores on the INUEE and they did not believe in the textbook as an enough source for passing the INUEE test. They also referred to the inadequacy of the textbook as a source of study for the INUEE and clearly posited that the reliance on the textbook per se could not secure high scores and top ranks on the INUEE test.

Teachers were also requested to comment on whether the textbook covered the guidelines of the National Curriculum. Surprisingly, none of the teachers responded to the question (Q14). In their interviews (Q6), when asked why they had left that question in their questionnaire unanswered, all the teachers indicated that they even did not know such a curriculum existed. In their questionnaires, three teachers (B, C, and F) further commented that in the textbook there was not any sample test for the INUEE but there was a small section in which new vocabulary items were provided in the format of multiple-choice questions. They mentioned that the section was similar to the vocabulary tests of the INUEE only in terms of testing format (not level of difficulty). In their interviews (Q1 and Q3), in order to gain further insight into their perceptions about the pre-university textbook, they were asked to further elaborate on the role and place of the textbook in connection with the INUEE.

Teacher A: The textbook neither helps students with the language skills nor does it adequately enable them to pass the INUEE.

Teacher B:being disappointed with what is offered by the textbook and in English classes; many students seek other supplementary materials or rush to register in private language institutes, which puts a heavy financial burden on the parents.

Teacher C: The textbook does not have sample tests for practicing the INUEE. Therefore, every teacher has to use other supplementary books....

Teacher D: The textbook follows Grammar Translation Method (GTM) which is one of the old methods of teaching English... I think the textbook is not up-to-date and could not help students to improve their English for communication...it lacks sample tests for the INUEE as well.

Teacher E:the reading texts in the textbook and the INUEE are completely different. Therefore, I do not think that the students would be guaranteed to achieve high score on the INUEE after reading the whole textbook....

Teacher F: I strongly believe that the textbook can neither prepare the students to use language properly, nor can it prepare them for the INUEE....it is only a bunch of reading texts, grammar exercises and some orders for rote

memorization of vocabulary....students need to practice other supplementary books in order to pass the test.

5.4.2 Students' Perceptions about the Teaching Materials

As far as the students' attitudes towards the pre-university textbook were concerned (Q21 and Q22), an overwhelming majority of the respondents contended that the textbook did not contain sufficient amount of practices for the INUEE; nearly two thirds of the students *strongly disagreed* and almost one-third *disagreed* with the idea that the textbook could by itself prepare them for the INUEE. It is worth noting that only a very small fraction (3%) of the respondents positively viewed the pre-university textbook as a source which provides some INUEE sample tests; they specifically referred to the "vocabulary review" section of the textbook as the only part of the textbook which bore some resemblance to the test of vocabulary on the INUEE.

Table 5.17: Inclusion of INUEE Sample Tests in the Textbook

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	132	61%
Disagree	79	36%
Agree	7	3%
Strongly Agree	0	0

Most of the students mentioned that the INUEE tests were more difficult than the textbook exercises. They also pointed out that there were no cloze passages in their textbook while it was one of the most frequently used question types of the INUEE tests.

As Table 5.17 illustrates, a majority of the students obviously did not consider the textbook helpful enough to achieve high scores on the INUEE. Whereas almost a quarter of the participants (28%) believed that the textbook had an instrumental value in achieving high scores on the INUEE, 44% of the respondents *strongly disagreed* and 28% *disagreed* that they could achieve high scores on the INUEE, if they studied the whole textbook. Some of them further commented that as the INUEE questions are far harder than what is normally taught in English classes, finishing the textbook per se could not guarantee their success on the test.

Table 5.18 Finishing the Textbook Equals Getting Higher Scores on INUEE

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	96	44%
Disagree	62	28%
Agree	60	28%
Strongly Agree	0	0

Below are some direct quotations gathered from student's questionnaires about their views toward the pre-university textbook.

Compared to the textbook, the INUEE questions are much more difficult. I suggest that either the INUEE questions become easier or the textbook questions become more difficult in order to help us pass the INUEE.

The textbook must change. The INUEE sample questions should be added to the textbook and the focus should be on both vocabulary and grammars as both are very important for the INUEE.

I believe that the textbook is very helpful for the INUEE because it is centered on reading and vocabulary and these language components are the basic parts of the INUEE...by reading texts we can learn more new vocabulary items.

A major portion of the students disagreed with the idea that covering the textbook alone suffices to help them cope with the test, arguing that the textbook and the test are different in terms of format, and level of difficulty. Based on the above findings regarding the teachers' and students' perceptions and views about the pre-university textbook, there seem to be two major factors pushing them towards supplementary materials: 1. Lack of the INUEE sample tests in the textbook; 2. The discrepancy between the content of textbook and that of the actual INUEE test in terms of the level of difficulty of the questions. In fact, comparison of the objectives of the textbook and the national curriculum indicated that the textbook only partially followed the objectives of the national curriculum. While the textbook was structure-based, the curriculum's focus was on communicative approach. On the other hand, it was found that the textbook and the INUEE were also different in terms of typology of the questions, reading texts, etc. Test and the textbook both were structure-based and textbook alone could not fulfill the candidates' needs to pass the INUEE.

5.5 Students' Perceptions about Teachers' English Teaching

In students' questionnaire (Q29), students were asked about the types of activities they usually had in their English classes. Based on students' answers to this question, it was revealed that except one of the teachers (F) whose English class was enjoyable and teaching the new words were accompanied with some pictorial information and soft music, the students of the other teachers reported that they did not have any role-play, reading aloud, or other enjoyable activities in their English classes. The following quotations were collected from the teacher F's students:

I like my English teacher. She is very kind and duty-conscious. Sometimes, she makes the class atmosphere very enjoyable by playing soft music. I like her

teaching style more when she teaches vocabulary by their pictures or by playing videos. The way she follows helps us to learn vocabulary easily...

In some sessions when we don't practice too much for the test, we usually have enough time to learn English by fun...our teacher teaches us vocabulary by playing video. In some sessions we only practice the INUEE sample tests. That is awful, and boring ...I know we have to do practice for the test because we need to pass this test, but I wish there were no INUEE at all...

Our English class is nice...we practice one of the important things [vocabulary] which we need for the INUEE...I wish we could learn all the new vocabulary items...I hope I don't forget them till the day of the exam...

Students were also enquired (Q41) about the role of their teachers' teaching on their English learning. Students' answers to this question are provided in Table 5.19 below.

Table 5.19 The Influence of Teachers' Teaching on Students' Learning

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	7	3%
Disagree	19	9%
Agree	42	19%
Strongly Agree	150	69%

As Table 5.19 demonstrates, almost 88% of the students either agreed (19%) or strongly agreed (69%) that their teachers' teaching had affected their English learning. From among 192 students who agreed that their language learning had been affected by their teachers' teaching, 123 students were negative and 69 students were positive about the effect of their teachers' teaching on their English learning. A number of sample quotations from the students are presented below.

Usually our teacher repeatedly reminds us of the importance of the INUEE...I believe that the best way to help students is to encourage them to be calm and to study without stress. Unfortunately, our teachers not only do not help us overcome our stress, but also they make the class very stressful by reminding us

of the importance of the scores on the INUEE...she always says “be careful that by losing even one question on the INUEE, your rival may leave you behind. Most of my classmates and I are not satisfied with the teacher’s teaching. My teacher not only skips over some parts of the textbook, but also disregards some of our questions. Actually, there are a pile of unanswered English questions in my mind....I think our English teacher suffers from the test anxiety as much as we do...

I am satisfied with my teacher, because she understands us very well...she knows for us the INUEE speaks first...she always practices INUEE sample tests in our classes. She also teaches us how to control the time and how to find the answers of multiple-choice questions as soon as possible...she teaches us some very helpful test-taking strategies as well.

I don’t think that my teacher’s teaching method have had any serious effect on my language learning. It does not matter how she teaches and which method she follows. What is important for us is the INUEE and for those students who want to pass the test there is no other choice but to register in preparatory schools...

These respondents had apparently different interpretations of the ‘effect’. For those students who had negative perceptions about their teachers’ teaching, their complaints were mainly focused on two points: 1. Teachers themselves were a source of stress and anxiety. According to the students, the teachers intensified the students’ anxiety through over-emphasizing the value of scores and frequent cautions that every single question of the test counts in the fierce competition. 2. Teachers did not answer some of the questions raised by the students. For example, teachers rarely corrected students’ wrong pronunciations. Those students who had positive perceptions about their teachers’ teaching, argued that their teachers spent a good share of class time on practicing the INUEE-related sample tests, and on teaching them the short-cut methods to find the answers to the INUEE questions.

5.6. Summary of the Findings

The findings presented in this chapter were used to answer Research Questions 4 and 5 which seek to investigate the role of other factors along with the test (e.g., the teaching materials as well as socio-cultural factors at the macro level of the society) on the teachers' teaching and learners' learning. The findings indicated that not only some factors such as teachers' teaching and the content of the prescribed textbook affected students' English learning but also some socio-cultural factors and societal expectations (e.g., families' expectations) influenced the teachers teaching and learners' learning English in a negative way. For example, for most of the students, what counted more was passing the test and studying in the so-called "prestigious and top-fields of study" and studying for the genuine learning seemed to be of a lower priority.

CHAPTER 6

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

6.1 Introduction

Along with chapter 5, this chapter again seeks to provide some evidence to address the research questions 4 and 5 of the study: **RQ4**. What other factors besides the INUEE contribute to the washback effect of the INUEE on English teaching as perceived by the teachers? **RQ5**. What other factors besides the INUEE contribute to the washback effect of the INUEE on English learning as perceived by the learners? To this aim, it seems necessary to take a closer look into the relationship between the English curriculum, the test, and the pre-university textbook in terms of their content, objectives, and format (Hwang, 2003). Given that the textbooks are commonly expected to reflect the objectives of the curriculum, it was decided to scrutinize the textbook using the evaluation checklist proposed by Ghorbani (2011). An INUEE sample question was analyzed based on a framework suggested by Bachman and Palmer (1996), who asserted that the framework could be useful for describing the characteristics of the test tasks, and as a means to assess reliability. It is also worthwhile to mention that the framework was found to be pertinent to this study because it provided a clear and detailed picture of the characteristics of a test, and served as criterion to measure the relationship between a test and the curriculum relevant to such a test. Thirdly, the textbook and the INUEE sample test were compared with the National Curriculum in terms of objectives in order to see whether the test and the textbook objectives were in line with those of the curriculum.

6.2 Textbook Analysis

The evaluation of the pre-university textbook was done based on a checklist proposed by Ghorbani (2011), according to whom, the checklist was extracted from the checklists of other scholars (Matthews, 1985; D. Williams, 1983; R. Williams, 1981; Daoud & Celce-Murcia, 1979; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Cunningsworth, 1984; Breen & Candlin, 1987; Sheldon, 1988; Tucker, 1975; Ur, 1996; Skierso, 1991; Littlejohn, 1996; Chambers, 1997; Harmer, 1998; Garinger, 2002; Ansary & Babaii, 2002). The criteria of this checklist were numerically rated: 0 (poor), 1 (satisfactory) and 2 (good). Seven subheadings: A. Language Skills, B. Exercises and Activities, C. Pedagogic Analysis, D. Appropriateness, E. Supplementary Materials, and F. General Impressions were included in the checklist.

6.2.1 Language Skills

The pre-university textbook was first rated in terms of its language skills as provided in Table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1 Language Skills Presented in the Pre-university Textbook

A: Skills	Scores
1. Are the skills presented in the textbook appropriate to the course?	1
2. Does the textbook provide learner with adequate guidance as they are acquiring these skills?	1
3. Do the skills that are presented in the textbook include a wide range of cognitive skills that will be challenging to learners?	0
4. Is the balance between listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills development in the textbook appropriate to the particular learner and learning situation?	0

5. Is the skills integration given sufficient attention?	0
6. Is the development of discourse and fluency skills given sufficient attention?	0

The raters (i.e., three PhD candidates in TESL) rated the textbook as “satisfactory” when it came to the appropriateness of the textbook to the course and the adequacy of the guidance provided by the textbook to the learners to acquire the language skills. However, their evaluation of the textbook was “poor” when they rated the textbook’s degree of coverage of cognitive skills, the balance between the language skills, the integration of the skills, as well as the adequacy of the textbook in developing discourse and fluency skills.

6.2.2 Exercises and Activities

The three raters ranked the pre-university textbook in terms of exercises and activities as presented below in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2 Exercises and Activities of the Pre-university Textbook

B: Exercises and Activities	Scores
7. Do the exercises and activities in the textbook promote learners’ language development?	0
8. Is there a balance between controlled and free exercises?	1
9. Do the exercises and activities reinforce what students have already learned and represent a progression from simple to more complex?	1
10. Are the exercises and activities varied in format so that they will continually motivate and challenge learners?	0
11. Are these activities for communicative interaction and the development of communicative strategies?	0

12. Are new structures presented systematically and in a meaningful context?	1
13. Is the meaning of new vocabulary presented in context?	2
14. Is there sufficient work recognition and production of individual sounds for pronunciation practice?	0
15. Is there sufficient work on recognition and production of stress patterns and intonation?	0
16. Is there a summary of new and reviewed grammar?	1
17. In general are the activities in the book neither too difficult nor too easy for the learners?	2

As Table 6.2 indicates, the three raters held a positive view about the level of difficulty of language activities as well as the contextualized presentation of the new vocabulary items in the pre-university textbook, and rated the two items on the checklist as “good.” However, the textbook’s quality in terms of its having the balance between controlled and free exercises, the procedural progression of language activities from simple to more difficult, systematic presentation of the new structures, and the summary of new and reviewed grammar were rated as “satisfactory.” Those qualities of the textbook which were not favored by the raters and was rated as “poor” were the inefficacy of the textbook’s exercises and activities in promoting learners’ language development, the poor motivational and challenging capacity of language activities, the inadequacy of its language activities to develop learners’ communicative competence, as well as its lack of any activities related to supra-segmental aspects of language.

6.2.3 Pedagogic Analysis

The textbook was rated by the raters with respect to some pedagogical benchmarks as indicated in Table 6.3

Table 6.3 Pedagogical Analysis of the Pre-university Textbook

C: Pedagogic Analysis	Scores
18. Is the book methodologically in line with current worldwide theories and practice of language learning?	0
19. Does the book contain adequate formal learner achievement tests?	0
20. Is the book enabling learners to use English outside the classroom situation?	0
21. Is the book sufficiently challenging to learners?	1
22. Are there mechanisms for giving regular feedback to learners?	0
23. Are new items reviewed and recycled throughout the book?	0
24. Does the book match the syllabus of the school to a sufficient extent? Is the time allowance indicated appropriate?	1

Unlike the challenging capacity of the textbook’s language activities which the raters rated as ‘satisfactory’, the other items of the section were rated as “poor.” The rating practice revealed that from the perspective of the raters: 1. the textbook was barely in line with the current trends of learning theories and practices; 2. the textbook was hardly capable of preparing the language learners to cope with real-life situations; 3. There hardly existed any mechanism to provide learners with regular feedback 4. The new items were seldom reviewed and recycled throughout the textbook; 5. The textbook did not match the curriculum to a sufficient extent as well.

6.2.4 Appropriateness

The textbook’s appropriateness in terms of its being up-to-date and attending to the short-term and long-term needs of the learners was rated as ‘poor’ whereas the other qualities which the raters were almost satisfied and positive about were: 1. Their general impression of the textbook’s content, instructions, and language focus/ activities. 2. The

compatibility of the textbook with the objectives of the learner; 3. The facilitating role of the textbook for interactive learning; 4. The socio-cultural appropriateness of the textbook; 5. The well-gradedness of the input; 6. The age-appropriateness of the textbook, and 7. The textbook's relevance to real-life practices.

Table 6.4 The Appropriateness of the Pre-university Textbook

D: Appropriateness	Scores
33. Are the materials, instructions, language focus, and activities in general appropriate for the learners?	1
34. Will the textbook meet the long and short term goals specific to the learners?	0
35. Does the material match learner objectives?	1
36. Does the material facilitate interactive learning?	1
37. Is the material socio-culturally appropriate?	1
38. Is the material up-to-date?	0
39. Are vocabulary and comprehensible input levels well-graded?	1
40. Is the material age-appropriate?	1
41. Is the material relevant to real life?	1

6.2.5 Supplementary Materials

The Pre-university textbook did not have any accompanying teacher's book or a student's workbook. It only had an audio CD for reading texts.

Table 6.5 Supplementary Materials Considerations

F: Supplementary Materials	Scores
42. Is a teacher's book available and does it give useful and complete guidance, along with alternative activities?	0
43. Is a workbook available and does it contain appropriate supplementary activities?	0
44. Are audio-visual aids accompanied? and are they of good quality?	1

6.2.6 General Impression

Table 6.6 General Impression of the Textbook

F : General Impression	Scores
45. Does it have clear objectives & instructions?	2
46. Does it include reasonable balance & range in skills and activities?	0
47. Does it motivate learners by pleasurable activities or arouse learner interest?	0
48. Does it provide a variety of Communicative activities? Does it promote the use of information/opinion gap?	0
49. Is the cultural tone of the book overall appropriate for use in the setting?	2
50. Does the book encourage learners to assume responsibility for their own learning?	0

The raters' impressionistic view about the evaluation criteria of the textbook, as illustrated in Table 6.6, was obviously varying between the extreme scores of 0 and 2. Whereas the raters assigned the maximum score of 2 to the textbook's presentation of clear objectives/instructions and to its appropriateness of the cultural tone in the socio-cultural context of Iran, the textbook got the lowest score for other rating criteria: 1. the existence of a reasonable balance between the skills and language activities of the textbook; 2. motivational and interest-arousing features of the textbook; 3. The diversity

of the communicative activities of the textbook, and 4. The suitability of the textbook to encourage responsibility and life-long learning on the part of the learners.

6.3 INUEE Analysis

English section of the INUEE with the weighting score of 2 suffers from some shortcomings. As far as the content of the INUEE is concerned, the test is quite a traditional one with some grammar, vocabulary, and reading questions, all of which are presented in multiple choice format. This 25 multiple choice test is expected to be answered in 20 minutes. The candidates have to answer each question in less than one minute which is not an effective timing procedure. Another problem is that the test does not offer any section or item for listening, speaking, and writing skills as well. Obviously, these bring about serious validity problems. Table 6.7 shows the test content of the INUEE.

Table 6.7 The Test's Structure of English Section of the INUEE

Parts	Task Type	No. of Tasks	Allocated Time
A: Grammar & Vocabulary	Multiple-choice questions	10 questions	20 minutes
B: Cloze Test	Multiple-choice questions	5 questions	
C: Reading Comprehension	Multiple-choice questions	10 questions	

The INUEE English questions are organized in three parts: part A is comprised of both grammar and vocabulary, part B includes cloze tests, and part C consists of two reading comprehension passages. The sequence of the components of the test is always in the order of grammar, vocabulary, cloze tests, and reading comprehension. Reading texts

are almost the same with regard to their length and each passage contains approximately 200 words. The reading questions should be answered in less than one minute. As for test format, all the parts of the exam are of similar testing format (i.e., multiple-choice).

In order to evaluate the English section of the INUEE, a framework proposed by Bachman and Palmer (1996) was used. The framework is based on five task facets: *the setting of the test, the test rubric, the input, the expected response, and the relationship between input and response*. In this study, the INUEE was evaluated in terms of three task facets: *the input facets* (it looks at the format with which the input is presented and the nature of the language used in the input), *the facets of expected response* (it looks at the format in which a response is produced as well as the nature of the language used in the response), *the facet of the relationship between input and response* (it looks at the reactivity, scope of relationship, and directness of relationship). As the first two mentioned facets are used for describing testing situations such as physical environment, test instructions, and scoring method, they were excluded in this study.

Evaluation of a sample INUEE test in terms of the three facets in Bachman and Palmer's framework (i.e., *input, the expected response, and the relationship between input and response*) was an attempt to objectively analyze the test against the standards set by Bachman and Palmer (1996). From the perspective of input-facet, the English section of the INUEE contains multiple-choice (only recognition type) items. With respect to the facet of the *expected response*, since all the INUEE questions are of multiple-choice type, all the responses provided by the candidates would necessarily be in the form of selected responses. As far as the facet of the *relationship between input and response* is concerned, since the INUEE candidates are provided with no feedback on their responses for each of the test items, either correct or incorrect ones, it could be

claimed that the INUEE in general and its English section in particular fall into the category of non-reciprocal test task. As for the measurement of language skills and components, the INUEE only measures the reading comprehension, vocabulary, and grammar. Measuring the abilities of candidates in listening, speaking, writing, supra-segmental features and the like are taken for granted.

6.4 Scrutiny of the National Curriculum

In order to find out as to whether the objectives of the National Curriculum were reflected in the content of the pre-university textbook and the INUEE, the Iranian National Curriculum (2010) was scrutinized. The principal objectives and recommendations of the curriculum (See Appendix C) are enumerated as follows.

1. The enterprise of language teaching ought to go beyond the influence of a bunch of limiting theories, approaches and methods, and aim at preparing the ground for boosting the national culture and fostering the social values. Given the crucial role of education in growth and salvation of human beings, any necessary step must be taken in the direction of materialization of the lofty goals of education.
2. Mainstream language education theories emphasize the development of communicative competence on the part of learners. According to the well-established tenets of those theories, language learners need to focus on and to become competent and proficient enough in all of the four receptive and productive language skills (i.e., listening, reading, speaking, and writing).

3. Education of the foreign language officially starts at the first grade of Guidance school (junior high school) and is intended to concurrently develop the four language skills as well as communicative abilities in the framework of the general educational blueprint. During the senior high school, the learners are expected to be able to read the intermediate-level texts and comprehend them. In addition, their writing ability is expected to be developed to the level of writing short essays. In conjunction with such prospects and purposes, the learners are thought to be proficient enough to make use of intermediate-level materials and be capable of communicating in a foreign language. The foreign languages could be English, French, German, and any other language approved by the supreme council of Ministry of Education.

4. The overall orientation of the country's foreign language education should be towards development of active communicative abilities and fostering learner-centeredness. In the preliminary stages of foreign language education, the content of the materials should be focused on domestic issues and fulfilling learners' essential needs such as personal hygiene and health, everyday life, etc and in the higher levels it is to be centered on issues related to culture, science, economics, politics, etc. It is also worthwhile to note that at the end of senior high school the graduates are expected to have developed the ability to read and comprehend simple specialized texts.

6.5 Summary of the Findings

Comparison of the findings of document analysis (i.e., National Curriculum, the textbook and the INUEE) revealed that the objectives of the National Curriculum were barely reflected in the content of the pre-university textbook and the INUEE. For instance, listening, speaking, and writing skills were not tested at all, and there was

hardly any test task on the INUEE to test into the communicative abilities of the candidates. In addition, contrary to the directions of the curriculum, culture seemed to be a neglected essential both in the textbook and on the test. Whereas the curriculum stressed the importance of raising the awareness of the learners towards the target culture, there was apparently no opportunity to display culture awareness on the INUEE or in the textbook. This finding is in line with Dahmardeh's (2009) study. In his study, the interviewed author of Iranian English textbooks emphasized that the Iranian textbooks were not designed based on any curriculum at all.

Moreover, the comparison of the textbook and the test in terms of the content and the format of the tests showed the existence of certain similarities and differences. As far as the content was concerned, the focus of both the test and the textbook was on the same language areas and skills. Reading skill, vocabulary, and grammar were the only language skill and components contained in both the test and the textbook. The topics of reading comprehension passages were quite divergent and different.

In addition, neither the textbook nor the test did contain anything about the target culture. As for the format of test, it was found that the INUEE and the textbook were different, because the test included multiple-choice items only, while the textbook was comprised of multiple-choice items as well as other different task types. For example, whereas the post-reading questions in the textbook came in a variety of question types such as true-false, short answers, paragraph location, etc. (i.e., both recognition and production types), the post-reading questions on the INUEE were only in the format of multiple-choice (i.e., only recognition type). The activities in the textbook required both feedback and interaction (reciprocal tasks). In all exercises students were encouraged to compare their answers with a partner's and give their reasons for the entire class. In

contrast, the INUEE was a non-reciprocal test task and candidates do not receive any feedback for their correct or incorrect answers.

CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION

7.1 Introduction

The present study was guided by the five Research Questions of the study: **RQ1.** What is the washback effect of the INUEE on English language teaching as perceived by the teachers? **RQ2.** What is the washback effect of the INUEE on English language learning as perceived by the learners? **RQ3.** What is the washback effect of the INUEE on English language teaching as observed by the researcher? **RQ4.** What other factors besides the INUEE contribute to the washback effect of the INUEE on English teaching as perceived by the teachers? **RQ5.** What other factors besides the INUEE contribute to the washback effect of the INUEE on English learning as perceived by the learners? The first three research questions fall into the category of washback effect of high-stakes test at Micro level (within the classroom) and the two last research questions fall into the category of washback effect of high-stakes tests at Macro Level (beyond the classroom). The closing section of the chapter is dedicated to explaining the proposed washback model based on the main findings of the current study.

7.2 The Effect of INUEE at Micro Level (Washback)

Washback effect of the test could occur at micro level of the individual participants such as teachers and students within the context of the classroom (Buck, 1988; Shohamy, 2001). Below the effect of the INUEE on both teachers and students at micro level is explained in detail.

7.2.1 The Washback Effect of the INUEE on Teachers' Teaching

The findings of the study indicated a negative effect of the INUEE on class activities, teachers' teaching content, teaching methodology, and methods of classroom assessment.

7.2.2 The Effect of the INUEE on Teachers' Class Activities

The findings of the study indicated that teachers' class activities were negatively affected by the test. It was found from the sample of six sessions of classroom observation as well as from the teachers' questionnaires and interviews that the main activity in the classrooms was 'teaching to the test' or 'practicing for the test'. All the six teachers obviously altered their activities and class time arrangements in response to the INUEE. Students were required to practice INUEE-like items similar in format to those on the test. All the teachers allocated a considerable amount of the class times for practicing the INUEE tests and other exam preparation books from the beginning of the semester as it was reported by the teachers and students. Class observations also revealed that the teachers taught according to the sequence of the importance of English components and language skills in the test. They frequently recommended that the students highlight and underscore certain parts of the textbook for the test.

Similar scenarios of teaching to the test and practicing for the test, which could be an indication of the occurrence of washback effect of the test, have been reported in other washback studies (e.g., Alderson & Hamp-Lyons, 1996; Alderson & Wall, 1993; Andrews, 1995; Nobel & Smith, 1994; Prapphal, 2008; Shohamy et al., 1996; Sukyadi & Mardiani, 2011). In their study, Shohamy et al. (1996) found that the high-stakes EFL

exam caused teachers to teach through imitating the exam tasks or through conducting other activities that directly aimed at improving test taking skills or strategies. Nobel and Smith (1994) also pointed out that high-stakes testing usually affects teachers directly and negatively by overusing and repetitive practice of previous multiple-choice test papers and teaching of test skills, reasoning that such practices may increase test scores. Andrews (1995) similarly reported that the teacher in his study spent an estimated two-thirds of class time working on exam-related published materials.

A number of researchers have criticized teaching-to-the-test practices on the grounds that it has a negative washback to the student because there is a concentration on skills and activities that increase test scores with little concern for the amount of knowledge attained (Langenfeld, Thurlow, & Scott, 1997). Some other researches (Haney, 2000; Smith, 1991) have argued against it reasoning that the standards compelled through high-stakes testing narrows curriculum to basic skills and test-driven content. In other words, skills and topics are ignored because they are unlikely to appear on the test. According to Vernon (1956), in negative washback teachers teach to the test and they narrow the curriculum and focus only on those components and skills which are going to be tested on the test. Wall and Alderson (1993) likewise stated that “tests can be powerful determiners of what happens in classrooms” (p. 41). In the present study, it was revealed that the INUEE could not be and should not be viewed as the only element which determines what to be taught and what not to be taught in English classes because the pre-university textbook closely resembles the test in terms of objectives and language skills/tasks. In addition, hardly do the textbook and the INUEE follow the curriculum. Therefore, it might be concluded that both the test and the textbook lead the teachers to narrow the objectives of the curriculum.

The teachers also tended to progressively allocate more of class time on the INUEE-related tests and discussions as the INUEE date was getting closer. Even two of the teachers (teacher D and teacher E), who were the most experienced of all, remarked in their interviews that they usually devote the last two or three sessions of the semester to the analysis of the INUEE sample tests and review of the test-tackling strategies. They also stated that sometimes some extra sessions of the INUEE practice classes were held even after the end of the semester at the request of the students, parents and the school principal. Similarly other researchers (e.g., Shohamy et al., 1996; Alderson & Wall, 1993) found out that exam-orientedness intensified among the teachers as the exam came closer.

7.2.3 The Effect of the INUEE on Teachers' Teaching Content

The findings obtained through questionnaires, class observations, and post-observation interviews revealed that teaching content might have been affected and guided by both the INUEE and the textbook in terms of language used and materials. All the teachers were teaching English grammar and vocabulary in favor of the INUEE, and there was barely any use of language for communicative purposes as emphasized by the national curriculum. The class observations showed that skills such as listening, speaking, and writing were always treated as less important and were normally neglected in classes. This finding is in line with other washback studies (Ghorbani, 2008; Razmjoo, 2004; Salehi et al., 2011) in the context of Iran. Shohamy (1992) asserted that in negative washback the test would lead to narrowing of content in the curriculum, and what students learn is the test language instead of expected understanding.

The teachers' choice of materials was also affected by the INUEE. The teachers used actual past papers and other commercial publications containing sample test questions or supplementary materials focusing on those language areas that the students were to be tested on the INUEE. Teaching materials were also negatively affected by the INUEE. With regard to the content of the materials, teachers' focus was more on previous years' sample tests than the textbook. Although the INUEE and the textbook were almost the same in terms of language skills (both of them only focus on reading, grammar, and vocabulary), the teachers all preferred to use the INUEE sample tests because they believed that the level of difficulty of the textbook content was way below that of the INUEE questions, and the textbook was not resourceful enough to prepare the students for the test.

Teachers' reflections (elicited through questionnaires and interviews) on the textbook were not positive. Being critical of the structure, the areas of focus, as well as the purpose of the textbook, the teachers stated that they themselves were well aware of the faults and deficiencies of the textbook; however, they felt they had no choice but to teach what they were supposed to teach. They complained that, on the one hand, time was tight, and on the other hand, they had to cover the whole textbook, the INUEE-related supplementary materials as well as sample papers by the end of the semester. This could be an indication of negative washback effect of the test because in negative washback one of the reasons for teachers' anxiety, fear, and pressure is to cover the material, as they feel that their job performance is assessed by the students' test scores (Shohamy, 1996). This finding could also be an example for what Lam (1994) calls "textbook slaves" and "exam slaves." He reports that teachers in his study believed that "the best way to prepare students for exams is by doing past papers" (p. 91). Andrews, Fullilove and Wong (2002) likewise found the large role played by exam-related

published materials in the Hong Kong classroom. Paris and Urdan (2000) also reported that classroom instruction was narrowed to only the content covered on the test.

7.2.4 The Effect of the INUEE on Teachers' Teaching Methodology

Based on the findings of the study, it was found that the teachers' teaching methodology might have been affected and guided by both the INUEE and the textbook. As it was mentioned in chapter 6, the comparison of the objectives and the content of the textbook with those of the test showed that both the test and the textbook were centered on grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. Besides this, class observations revealed that L2-L1 translation was a predominant practice in all the classes: the Persian equivalents of the vocabulary items were provided, the grammar was explained in the framework of formulaic rules in Persian, and the reading texts were translated into the students' mother tongue. Such a scenario of teaching in English classes in Iran, which is akin to Grammar Translation Method (GTM), is reported in a number of studies by Iranian scholars (e.g., Hosseini, 2007; Mahmoudi & Yazdi-Amirkhiz, 2011; Razmjoo, 2004; Salehi et al, 2011).

Razmjoo (2004) and Salehi et al (2011) have attributed the widespread use of the GTM by the Iranian teachers to the negative washback effect of the INUEE. As far as the negative washback effect of the INUEE on the teaching methods of the teachers is concerned, the findings of the present study are not consistent with the findings of the previous studies in the context of Iran. What is different in this study is that there could be factors other than the test (i.e., INUEE) that might affect teachers' teaching method. As it was revealed in the process of document analysis in this study, the pre-university textbook follows structure-based syllabus and upholds GTM. This clearly comes in a

clear contradiction with the accentuated recommendations and principles of the national curriculum that teachers should teach for communicative purposes. Therefore, it seems plausible to perceive the INUEE as only one of the possible factors affecting teachers' teaching methodology.

Similar to the finding of the current study, a number of studies conducted in other countries have shown a little or no effect of the high-stakes tests on teachers' teaching method (Alderson & Wall, 1993; Cheng, 2005; Luxia, 2007; Shohamy et al., 1996; Watanabe, 1996). What needs to be highlighted here and has not been addressed in the previous studies is the role and function of factors other than the test (e.g., teaching materials) in affecting the teachers' teaching methodology, in one way or another. This indicates that in addition to the INUEE itself, other variables such as even the duration of exposure to a certain kind of teaching materials could influence the overall enterprise of learning and teaching process. The multidimensional nature of variables influencing the teaching-learning processes comes in convergence with a multifaceted representation of washback phenomenon as advocated by Wall and Alderson (1993). According to them, it would be over-simplistic to relegate the washback effect to the relationship between the tests and teaching only, and asserted that besides scrutiny of the relationship between the tests and teaching, the complexity of the relationship between the test and other variables should also be taken into consideration.

Overall, post-observation interviews with the teachers and the findings obtained through the teacher's questionnaires revealed that the teachers were not in favor of what they did and practiced in their classes. They stated that they had no choice, but to teach as they did, and alluded to factors other than the test which affected their teaching method. A specific reference was made to the students and their family's demands to teach for the

test, and the pressure by the school principals to tailor their teaching methods to the most important immediate objective of the students which was obviously the INUEE.

7.2.5 The Effect of the INUEE on Classroom Assessment

Apart from teaching process, the teachers' assessment procedures seemed to be affected by the INUEE as well. All the teachers reported that they usually used multiple-choice test tasks in their mid-term and final exams in order to evaluate students' learning as well as to familiarize the students with the "form and content" of the target test (i.e., the INUEE). The tests were mostly taken from supplementary materials, exam papers of the previous years and the INUEE sample tests. This is a negative washback effect of the INUEE on teachers' way of assessment because as Smith (1991) puts it, "multiple-choice testing leads to multiple choice teaching" (p. 10). The effect of high-stakes tests on assessment procedures of the teachers has been reported in the literature. For example, Hwang (2003) also found out that the teachers were affected by the test (CSAT) in terms of students' evaluation procedures. He reported that the types of questions that the teachers designed for the class tests greatly resembled those presented on the test.

7.2.6 Teachers' Perceptions about the INUEE

The findings of the study indicated that the teachers' perceptions and attitudes about the INUEE were mixed. Two teachers (teacher C and teacher F) had some positive perceptions towards the INUEE and perceived it as a test capable of evaluating the university applicants' academic knowledge. The two teachers overall argued that the INUEE was undoubtedly suffering from some shortcomings; however, it does not

sound logical to thoroughly question the test's evaluation capacity. It certainly has some points of strengths as well. The test is particularly efficient when it comes to the diagnosis of the students' weaknesses, even if it is for their grammar or vocabulary knowledge. Furthermore, the teachers (C, E, and F) perceived the forcing role of the INUEE as positive, believing that the test could be considered as a compelling force which encourages the university candidates to study English harder. This could be interpreted in this way that in the EFL context of Iran, where there is barely an obligation to study English, the INUEE serves as a compelling element and can force the students to have some kind of challenge to learn English even if it is learning grammar or vocabulary. In contrast, those who held negative views about the test believed that the INUEE was not a valid test, and was therefore incapable of evaluating the students' English knowledge and communicative competence. They referred to the INUEE as a test which majorly tested the learners' rote-memorization ability, and a formidable exam which put the students under a great amount of stress and psychological pressure.

In some other aspects all the teachers agreed with each other and held negative perceptions about the test. For instance, they all felt pressured and had anxiety about the INUEE. They were also dissatisfied with practicing the INUEE in their classes. They claimed that the way they taught in their classes was contrary to their teaching philosophy. Hwang (2003) also reported that only 16% of the teachers in his study agreed that their beliefs about language teaching and learning were reflected in their teaching. The following sections provide the possible explanations for such negative perceptions of the teachers.

7.2.7 The Effect of the INUEE on Learners' English Learning

Based on what the students reported in the questionnaires, their learning content and learning strategies were affected by the INUEE, their teachers' teaching method and teaching materials. As far as the content of learning was concerned, it was found that the students gave utmost priority to those language areas which were to be tested on the INUEE. Since vocabulary and grammar were the two essentials of the INUEE as well as the teachers' major areas of focus during their teaching, the students accordingly devoted most of their time both in class and at home to practice and memorize lists of isolated vocabulary items and grammatical rules.

As for the students' learning strategies, the analysis of the students' responses on the questionnaire revealed that the INUEE and the teachers' teaching methodology had overshadowed their learning strategies and the INUEE negatively affected students' learning and their learning strategies through pushing the students towards mastering the test-tackling strategies rather than pursuing English for the sake of genuine learning. The capacity and function of the high-stakes tests in directing the learners away from learning to mastering the test tricks and strategies has been reported in a number of studies (e.g., Shih, 2007; Sukyadi & Mardiani, 2011)

Teachers' teaching methods and classroom practices apparently affected the students' English learning. Students held both positive and negative feelings about their teachers' teaching methods and practices. Students with positive views believed that their teachers usually supported them to pass the test through spending a good amount of class times on practicing the INUEE-related sample tests, and through teaching them a set of short-cut methods in order to answer the INUEE questions easily. Students with

negative views believed that besides the test itself, their teachers' teaching had also negatively affected their language learning. Two negative perceptions about the teachers were identified: 1. Teachers themselves were regarded as source of stress and anxiety, and 2. Teachers were sometimes not attentive enough to those questions of the students which were not related to the INUEE (e.g., questions about pronunciation). With respect to the teachers' being so-called source of anxiety in the classes and their inattentiveness to certain types of questions, one possible explanation might be the strong influence of the INUEE on the teachers and their teaching process.

As mentioned earlier, under the socio-cultural context of Iran, teachers' societal reputation and even professional promotion are very much dependent on the success of their students on the INUEE. Therefore, the teachers are automatically placed under a heavy burden of stress and anxiety to fulfill their 'obligations' of preparing their students for the contest of the INUEE. In fact, teachers as one of the key participants in English learning carry a big responsibility in their classrooms. Whatever they say and however they think will have an impact on the students. If the teacher feels stress towards the test, this negative feeling of stress and anxiety will be spread among the students, and if the teacher feels secure, the students will feel secure in the classroom as well because the attitude of the teacher gets contagious (Dornyei, 1998).

Class observations revealed that the students had hardly any active role in the classes. The passivity was caused and intensified by both the form of tasks used as well as "teacher-centeredness" of the classes. As for the form of the tasks used in the classes, they were mainly carried out in the form of translation from L2 into L1, grammar explanations and explaining the meaning of individual words. L1 was predominantly used in the classes and there were no other authentic tasks and activities requiring the

active participation of the students. In fact, the mere focus of the class activities was on those aspects and components of language which were to be tested on the INUEE (i.e., vocabulary, grammar, and reading). Their inattentiveness to a certain type of questions such as pronunciation questions could also be justified with the very same reason that the teachers tended to prioritize those items and questions which were likely to be tested on the INUEE.

Many of the students (46%) stated that in the English classes they always expected to develop a functional command of English in listening, speaking, and writing skills so that they could manage to meet their real life communicative needs (e.g., understanding English movies and programs, conversing in English with tourists, and letter writing). However, they complained that their expectation was never fulfilled in the classes. Some of the respondents commented that they knew a great deal of grammar and vocabulary by heart but were unable to use them for communication. For example, one of the students wrote that “We learn vocabulary and grammar formulas, but we don’t know how to use them. This makes it very boring and pointless to attend the classes.” Another student believed that “English classes in our schools are really the INUEE-preparation classes because what we mostly learn is about grammar and how to answer the questions on the test. We don’t learn language, but rather we acquire test tricks.”

Lack of interest and motivation to attend the classes was basically caused by the fact that the students saw no linkage between what the classes offered to them and their real life communicative needs. According to Jones, Jones, and Hargrove (2003), students are more likely to be motivated to choose an activity and persist at it if they enjoy the activity and are interested in it. Furthermore, other scholars have reported similar findings regarding their participants’ attitudes to teaching procedures and language

activities. For example, the participants in Kabayashi et al's (1992, cited in Norris-Holt, 2002) study expressed dissatisfaction with large class sizes, English grammar points being explained over and over in Japanese and a lack of focus on speaking skill.

Teacher-centeredness seemed to be another cause of student passivity and demotivation. Teachers were almost the only 'voices' in the classes and the students were rarely given the opportunity to be actively engaged in the classes. Despite the fact that teacher-centeredness has been recognized as one of the chronic maladies in Iran's educational system (Hosseini, 2007), one possible explanation for the teacher-centeredness of the classes in the present study could be the variation in the level of difficulty of the textbook and the INUEE. Perceiving the textbook not resourceful enough for the test, the teachers felt compelled to tailor their teaching to the level of the test rather than that of the textbook. To this end, they resorted to supplementary materials and test samples so that they could transmit the level of content required by the INUEE. Coping with new materials with a higher level of difficulty obviously required more of teacher's talk and effort in the classes. Au (2008) similarly attributed US teachers' regression to more teacher-centered instructional approaches to their intention to tailor the level of the content to the level required by the tests.

Furthermore, the fact that the teachers were focusing on exactly the same language components and there was more teacher talking time compared to the student talking time could be an indication that the classes were test-oriented and the major goal of the teachers was to prepare the students for the test. Cheng (1997) found similar instances of teacher domination and teaching to the test, which was an indication to the occurrence of negative washback effect. In her study students complained that their

teachers did not give them more practice opportunities and their teaching activities were towards the test (i.e., Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination) only.

The students also held negative perceptions about the teaching materials and believed that the teaching materials' format and objectives also affected their English learning. They were clearly convinced that the pre-university textbook alone was not adequate and resourceful enough to get them prepared for the INUEE (the textbook lacked sample tests for the INUEE and its level of difficulty was not a match for that of the INUEE questions). One strong possibility for the students' stronger tendency towards using the supplementary materials could be this negative attitude towards the content of the textbook that the textbook was not an adequate source for making them prepared for the test. Another possible explanation could be the high-stakes nature of the test itself. Regardless of the textbook's degree of adequacy and its level of resourcefulness for the INUEE, much of the students' concern and their orientation towards the supplementary materials could be attributed to the 'grandeur' of the test. The findings of a number of studies in various contexts have shown the awesome power of the high-stakes tests to drive teachers and learners to the test-preparation materials and supplementary books (e.g., Andrews et al, 2002; Cheng, 1997; Lam, 1994).

7.2.8 Learners' perceptions about the effect of INUEE

As for the students' perceptions about the role of the INUEE in their English learning, it was found that students' perceptions about the test were mixed. The students with positive attitudes towards the INUEE perceived it as a test capable of evaluating the university applicants' academic knowledge as well as a factor prompting the students to intensify their efforts to study English. From among 218 students, 42.18% of them

believed that the INUEE could be used as an evaluator of academic knowledge and the remaining students thought otherwise. Despite the fact that such a positive perception of the INUEE by such a considerable percentage of the students could be seen as a point of strength for the test, a scrutiny of the additional comments provided by a number of the students revealed that they apparently construed ‘academic knowledge’ as somehow equivalent to their level of vocabulary and grammar knowledge. Some of the respondents seemed to believe that memorizing a long list of vocabulary items along with grammar notes was ‘the’ way to boost their English knowledge and a key to cope with the English section of the INUEE. For example, one of the students said “If I memorize my pocket dictionary, I will be able to answer the entire INUEE test.” Thus, it could be inferred that their perception of academic knowledge was confined to the boundaries of grammar and vocabulary, not language in its communicative sense. Glasser and Bassok (1989) questioned such a restricted conception of language learning and asserted that language learning should be seen as a constant process of interpretation and construction of meaning, rather than an act of memorizing discrete pieces of information, each piece independent of the others.

In addition, a clear majority of the students *strongly agreed* and *agreed* that the INUEE forced them to intensify their efforts to study English more. A scrutiny of the students’ quotations revealed that their interpretation of the word “force” varied. Some had a positive interpretation of the INUEE’s forceful role, arguing that they would not have studied English at all if there had been no force. Assuming such a positive role for the INUEE sounds somehow plausible with respect to the status of the English language in Iran. The matter of the fact is that unlike ESL contexts (e.g., India and Malaysia) where English has permeated the very fabric of society and carries a high instrumental value and communicational function, the English language is regarded as a foreign language

(EFL) in Iran (Yarmohammadi, 2005) where it is seldom used in the wider context of society and the use of the language is almost limited to English classes at schools. Therefore, it could be argued that even if the INUEE does not follow communicative purposes, it at least could have the positive role of engaging the students with English in one way or another.

However, the respondents whose interpretation of the INUEE's forceful role was negative contended that the test intensified their tendency to cram for the test. They reported that as the test date got closer and closer, they tended to further intensify their efforts to memorize more vocabulary items and review through their grammar notes. The students also noted that they allocated a considerable amount of time for practicing test-taking tricks and strategies both in their classrooms and during their self-study at home. One plausible explanation for such a tendency among the students could be the influence of the INUEE on their learning strategy. Their language learning seemed to have been guided by the test. According to Bailey (1996, pp. 264), students' engagement in "studying vocabulary and grammar rules" and "applying test-taking strategies" could be an indication of the washback effect of tests on learners. In addition, some of the students stated that they would skip some of the classroom sessions for the "unimportant" subject matters of the INUEE (e.g., geology with the weighting of 0) and instead would spend their time on other subject matters such as English which has the weighting of 2. According to Bailey (1996), skipping classes to study for the test could be a sign of negative washback effect of the test.

Overall, over 70% of the students were in favor of making some amendments to the INUEE. The two most frequent themes extracted from the students' 'additional comments' were related to their complaints about the one-shot case testing procedure of

the INUEE as well as its testing format. The respondents seemed to be seriously doubtful about the validity of the INUEE; they questioned the test's capacity of measuring their knowledge in the matter of a couple of hours and also complained that the monopolized use of multiple-choice test type in the INUEE was not only unfair, but also it could hardly reflect the students' genuine language ability. Many of the students argued that one's lack of familiarity with the so-called short-cut methods of coping with the multiple-choice questions could cost him/her failing the test despite being in possession of good language knowledge. They mostly viewed the INUEE as capable of gauging their rote-memorization skill rather than their communicative competence. According to Ewing (1998), focusing solely on multiple-choice test format could be seen as a limiting factor and a menace to authentic assessment. Farhady (2006) in a seminal paper made a paradigmatic distinction between psychometric testing paradigm and edumetric assessment paradigm, arguing that the shortcomings of psychometric paradigm have prompted the theoreticians to abandon 'testing' in favor of 'assessment'. According to him, one of the most fundamental criticisms leveled against psychometric testing paradigm has been its administration of one-shot case testing procedure and using multiple-choice tests. As he puts it in his own words:

The idea of using multiple-choice tests for evaluating students' achievement is no longer acceptable. Nor is grading students' achievement on the basis of a single final examination. Rather, the grading system should be based on multiple exposures, multiple occasions, multiple devices complemented by students' self-assessment and peer assessment... (p.56)

7.2.9 Learners' Perceptions about the Effect of Teachers' Teaching Method on Their English Learning

In students' questionnaire (Q41), they were asked about the role of the teachers' teaching in their English learning. Based on the students' reflections from classes, the

teachers would excessively emphasize the importance of passing the INUEE and would depict failing the test as a great loss during class sessions. This act of teachers, according to most of the students, was aggravating their feeling of anxiety and stress about the test that they were soon going to sit for. Furthermore, they believed that teachers' teaching methods were not very effective for two main reasons: 1. Teachers' methods were revolving around grammar and language structures; 2. the teachers were almost the only voice in the classes and the students were seldom given any opportunity for self-expression. A glance at the language teaching-learning literature reveals the ineffectiveness of teacher-centered and grammar-obsessed methods for teaching and learning languages. For instance, according to Boud and Feletti (1999) traditional methods (e.g. Grammar Translation Method) which are normally teacher-centered might not fulfill the learners' needs in their English classes because in such methods students simply obtain information from the teacher without building their engagement level with the subject being taught. As a result, both interest and understanding of students may be compromised. To address such shortfalls, Zakaria Chin and Daud (2010) specified that teaching should not merely focus on dispensing rules, definitions and procedures for students to memorize, but should also actively engage students as primary participants.

7.2.10 Learners' and teachers' Perceptions about the Effect of Teaching Materials on their English Learning and Teaching

Questions 21 and 22 of the student's questionnaire and questions 31 and 32 of teacher's questionnaire were about the students' and teachers' attitudes towards the teaching materials (i.e., pre-university textbook). It was found that the most common criticism leveled by both teachers and students against the pre-university textbook was its

structure-based syllabus. Although one might claim that teachers' criticism against the materials might have been inspired by their pre-existing theoretical knowledge and familiarity with the shortcomings of structure-based syllabus, the complaints made by the 'unprofessionals' (i.e., students with little or no expertise of applied linguistic issues) about the practical inefficacy of the structure-based syllabus shows another layer of the problems of this type of syllabus.

Apart from being structure-based, the textbook is exclusively focused on reading skill. According to (Howard & Major, 2004), language learning cannot be maximally enhanced unless the materials give learners opportunities to integrate all the language skills in an authentic manner. Furthermore, Bell and Gower (1998) point out that at the very least we should listen and speak together, and read and write together. In addition, language-teaching materials should provide situations that allow the learners to interact with each other.

7.3 The Effect of INUEE at Macro Level (Impact)

The test could occur at macro level and within the broader scale of the society (Buck, 1988; Shohamy, 2001). It means that the test might not only influence teachers and learners' practices within the classroom, but also it could affect 'others' beyond the classroom context (e.g. candidates' parents) which in turn influence candidates' English learning and teachers' English teaching. For instance, the collected data from teachers' questionnaire revealed that all the six teachers strongly agreed that they felt pressured and anxious about the INUEE when they taught in their English classes. In their interviews (Q2), teachers stated that they were under pressure from students, parents, and school principals to practice the INUEE test with the students because their English

knowledge and their commitment was weighted based on the result of the INUEE and the number of students who would manage to pass the test. The teachers believed that the test was not only a competitive test for the candidates, but also it was like a 'battleground' of competition for teachers as well because teachers were also evaluated at schools based on their students' ranks and scores on the INUEE. Other researchers (e.g. Hughes, 1988; Ferman, 2004) have reported similar feelings on the part of participating teachers in their studies. Shohamy (1996) reported negative washback in her study of the state EFL National Oral Matriculation test in Israel. In her study the teachers stated that they had experienced high levels of anxiety because they felt that their job performance was assessed by students' test scores. Alderson and Wall (1993) also argued that "for teachers, the fear of poor results, and the associated guilt, shame, or embarrassment, might lead to the desire for their pupil to achieve high scores in whatever way seems possible" (p. 118).

Some other researchers have equated the high-stakes tests with stressfulness, which in turn could have undesirable effects on teachers' psychology. According to Mathison and Freeman (2006), the presence of high stake testing could change the nature of the job, adding an enormous amount of stress. It is argued that the dictates of high-stakes tests exercise a great deal of pressure on the teachers to improve test scores which eventually makes them experience negative feelings of shame, embarrassment, guilt, anxiety and anger (Gipps, 1994; Herman & Golan, 1993; Johnstone, Guice, Baker, Malone, & Michelson, 1995).

7.3.1 INUEE and Teachers' Notion of Professionalism

The findings from teachers' questionnaires (Q40 and Q 41) and interviews (Q7 and Q8) showed that teachers were not positive about and did not enjoy teaching and practicing for the INUEE in their English classes. They simply viewed the test as one of the main factors which negatively impacted on their professionalism (e.g., their ability to produce communicatively proficient learners). It was argued that the excessive sensitivity of the society about the INUEE and its extremely important role in determining the students' life and future placed the teachers in an unfortunate position of having to defend their instructional effectiveness to the public and authorities based on the test results of their students.

One of the interesting findings of this study was the fact that the more experienced the teachers were, the more concerned they appeared to be about their students' test scores. In other words, there seemed to be a direct relationship between the teachers' teaching experience and their exam-orientedness. For instance, the two teachers who spent more of class times on the INUEE-related tests and materials were the most experienced of all. The two teachers were known to be the so-called "ostad konkoori" which literally means "masters of the INUEE" in English. These private teachers who charge exorbitant fees for test-coaching are usually experienced and reputed to be excellent in preparing the candidates for the INUEE, and most of their students usually pass the test.

One possible explanation for the existence of the relationship between the teachers' teaching experience and their exam-orientedness could be their concern about their professional reputation which could be jeopardized in the event of their students' failing the test. Thus, it sounds plausible to believe that these teachers were more INUEE-

conscious so that they could safeguard their professional credibility in the city. This finding is in line with other studies such as Lam (1994) and Shohamy (1996) who found that the experienced teachers were much more examination-oriented than their younger counterparts.

As for the students, the findings of the study also indicated that along with the INUEE, some other factors intensified students' stress and anxiety and affected their English learning negatively. Analysis of the questionnaires' responses (Q16) and observation of classroom behaviors also indicated that the INUEE produced a strong sense of anxiety among the students of pre-university level. More than half of the students *strongly agreed* and over a third of them *agreed* that the INUEE put them under a lot of anxiety and psychological pressure. In their questionnaires, about 40% of the students reported that the INUEE had negative implications on their health and lives ranging from eliminating their entertainments, disrupting their eating habits, to slashing their sleeping hours. High levels of stress and anxiety induced by high-stakes tests have been reported by other scholars as well (e.g. Huang, 2002; Shih, 2006 & 2007; Shohamy, 1996). In fact, in this study some of the factors which put the candidates under the pressure were:

1. Parents' unrealistic expectations from the students;
2. Socio-cultural and contextual restrictions associated with the females;
3. Peer competition;
- and 4. The prospect of future employability.

7.3.2 Parents' Unrealistic Expectations from the Students

As numerically illustrated in the previous chapter, a large number of the students highlighted that their parents had illogical expectations from them; they expected their

children to be admitted into the so-called ‘top fields of study’. In Iran, majors such as medicine, electronic engineering, law, etc are viewed as ‘prestigious’ and ‘money-making’ which can bring about a bright future for the students. Therefore, parents usually push the students to study in these areas at universities even if they are not interested in them. For instance, one of the students said “my parents perceive their children as instruments by which they wish to realize their own unfulfilled educational and professional dreams.” Another student stated that “My parents have in fact pinned down all their hopes on me. I am the oldest child and I should set a successful example for my other siblings. If, for any reason, I fail the INUEE, my parents will lose their hopes and will be disappointed.”

Based on the foregoing, parents themselves seemed to be a source of stress and anxiety for their children. On the first glance, parents might be seen as a handy ‘suspect’ in creating such conditions; however, if it is looked at within the broader context of Iranian society, such a tendency among the parents could be attributed to a host of factors which are in turn driven by the socio-cultural variables and contextual forces prevailing in the wider community. Generally speaking, passing the INUEE embodies social status in Iran. For most Iranians, higher education is a promise of social mobility unachievable through any other means; therefore, parents whose children manage to ‘conquer’ the INUEE and get admitted into the top fields of study ostentatiously feel proud of them and brag about their achievements. One of the students said that “during family gatherings, aunts and uncles compete with each other using their children’s test scores.” A few of the students pointed out that they felt compelled to pass the INUEE at any cost because they felt by passing the test they were able to preserve the ‘face’ of family among the relatives and acquaintances. Besides this, having a university degree could enhance the graduates’ chances of gaining many privileges, whereas failing the test and

not going to university could bring about serious consequences on the personal, social, and economic lives of the candidates.

In addition to the pressure of the parents, a number of students said to feel obliged to pass the INUEE at any cost because they felt duty-bound to compensate for all the investment (money, time, moral support, etc) made by their parents in their education. Some respondents (32%) stated that their parents had done everything in their power to prepare a conducive atmosphere for them to study as hard as possible for the INUEE. For example, one of the students wrote that when her sister was preparing for the INUEE, all the family members were at her service:

If she was not in her room studying, the family would worry that she was not studying hard enough. My parents would remind her of the number of days left to the exam day on the daily basis and advised her to study to her full capacity. All the family members each contributed in their own way to her studies: the house was kept silent, she had no chores around the house, got her favorite meals, had no visitors...

Similar feelings of sacrifice and strong motivation to invest by the families in their children's education have been reported in other contexts as well. For example, as Ingulrud (1994) reported, spending a good deal of money to send the students to exam preparation schools is quite normal in Japan. Besides financial investment, the families seem to make any sacrifice required in order to help their candidates to win "a place in a prestigious university, which, in turn, leads to a successful career in business or government" (p. 80).

7.3.3 Socio-cultural and Contextual Restrictions Associated with the Females

A number of the respondents wrote in their questionnaires that they viewed passing the INUEE as a "turning point" in their lives. They pointed out that passing the test and

entering university was one of the possible ways to gain more freedom and to ease the pressure of socio-cultural restrictions imposed by the conservative families; in contrast, they equated failing the test with stagnating in the 'status quo', arguing that for those girls who neither pass the examination nor have family with the resources to send them to private institutions, no alternative is left but to get married. A few of the respondents also alluded to the dependence of a 'successful' married life on having a tertiary education by females. For instance, in her questionnaire, one of the students additionally commented that "females with no university education are less likely to be selected as marriage partners by people of high social status or they would have a slim chance of getting any job offer, or they even might be met with different [condescending] behaviors in society." From the students' responses and comments, it could be deduced that gender might be one of the parameters intensifying anxiety on the part of female candidates affiliated with certain strata of society. Whereas a female in the setting of a conservative family might be concerned about the 'consequences' of failing the test, her counterpart in the context of a so-called 'modern' family with liberalistic attitudes towards feministic issues or in an affluent family would not necessarily be expected to experience the same fear and consternation.

7.3.4 Peer Competition

Another source of stress and anxiety related to the INUEE was found to be *peer competition*. Apart from the high-stakes nature of the INUEE which could naturally make it somewhat formidable to the students, the norm-referenced nature of the INUEE as well as the score-consciousness prevailing among Iranian students (Hosseini, 2007) could be the other two factors intensifying the sense of competitiveness among the candidates. When it comes to the norm-referenced nature of a test, the examinee's

performance in the test is not evaluated with a predetermined criterion but rather in comparison with other examinees. Therefore, sense of comparison and consequently competition is intensified among the candidates. Some of the respondents in the existing study reported a sense of augmented rivalry caused by the INUEE. The dominant feeling was that by helping the peers you yourself would burn out because the person you are helping may be your rival on the INUEE.

As for score-consciousness of the Iranian students, it should be stated that score-consciousness lies at the very core of Iran's educational system. Socio-contextually speaking, managing to get higher scores is equated with being more "knowledgeable" in Iran. Therefore, the process of teaching and learning is controlled by the grade pressure from society in general and parents, family, teachers, and classmates in particular. In addition to this, given the function of the INUEE as a 'bridge' to the higher education, score-consciousness is even further amplified in that failing to answer even one single question, a candidate may fall behind his/her rivals by a considerable margin. Similar cases of score-consciousness of the students about high-stakes tests in other contexts of education are recorded in the literature (e.g., Meyer, McClure, Walkey, McKenzie & Weir, 2006; Mizutani, 2009; Stewart, Gray & Pilcher, 2007). The studies found that the students' main concern was accumulating the credits rather than learning itself.

7.3.5 The Prospect of Future Employability

Being worried about the prospect of future employability was another factor which caused stress among students. A good number of respondents indicated to be equating the success on the INUEE with a bright professional future. Youth unemployment is generally considered a worrying problem among young population of the country.

However, being graduated from a top government university, graduates would have a far better chance of employment in government as well as private sectors because in the eyes of the society they are perceived as more knowledgeable and competent. Therefore, fear of failing the INUEE and consequently getting deprived of the privileges as well as losing the job opportunities haunts them all the time. For example, one of the students wrote “I come from a middle-income family. My father works in a hospital. So, I cannot imagine myself getting a good job in future unless I can pass the INUEE.”

Another student said:

My elder brother is very talented and he got graduated from high-school with a top grade point average. However, he could not pass the INUEE...he has not found any job yet because all the organizations and employers demand university degrees.

7.4 Proposed Washback Model of the Study

Drawing upon Hughes’ (1993) basic model of washback, and based on the findings of the current study, the following washback model was proposed.

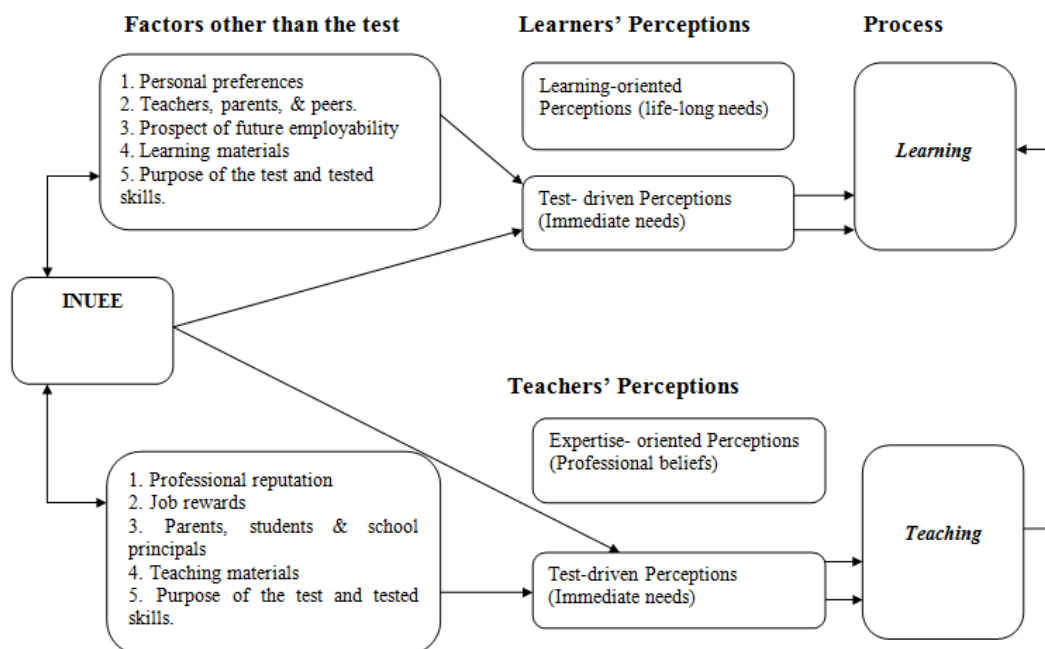


Figure 7.1 Proposed Washback Model of the Study

As mentioned earlier, Hughes (1993) and Bailey (1996)' washback models presented a trichotomy model of washback in which the three components of the model (i.e., *participants, process, and product*) are affected by the test in a linear fashion. The nature of a test first influences the participants' perceptions which in turn could affect the processes of learning and teaching on the part of learners and teachers.

As the proposed model (Figure 7.1) in the present study shows, apart from the test itself other factors could also be in operation when it comes to the characterization of the washback effect of a high-stakes test. In the case of the current study, it was found out that along with the INUEE, there existed a host of contextual factors which contributed to the washback effect of the test. For instance, teachers' concern about their professional reputation which could be easily affected by their students test performance in the INUEE and the students' concern about their future employability were among the factors which had intensified the washback effect of the test.

Unlike a general conceptualization of *participants'* perceptions in Hughes' and Bailey's models, in the present model, two types of perceptions were characterized for the *participants* (i.e., teachers and learners). As for the teachers' perceptions, it was found out that the teachers held both *expertise-oriented perceptions* and *test-driven perceptions* towards the enterprise of language teaching. *Expertise-oriented perceptions* were mostly concerned with the teaching philosophy the teachers favored and believed in. This line of teachers' perception, which was essentially guided by their knowledge on theories and language teaching methodologies, was obtained through years of their studies at university. The teachers were all aware of the significance of developing the learners' communicative abilities, but they alluded to the challenges they were faced

with at the implementation stage of the communicative approaches. For example, there was a clear reference to the structure and test format of the INUEE (structure-based) which in combination with other contextual factors pushed the teachers to tailor their teaching to the requirements of the test. Among the contextual factors were the content of teaching materials (structure-based), the highly dependence of teachers' performance appraisal, and their professional reputation upon the performance of their students in the INUEE. In other words, what the teachers decided to implement in the classes was not their intended approach and methodology which was apparently communicative, but rather their teaching practices were, first and foremost, guided by the perception that passing the test as the most immediate objective of the students, teachers, and even the school principles should be of top priority (*Test-driven perceptions*). Thus, teaching for communicative purposes gave way to teaching for the test which was structure-based and consequently requiring structure-oriented teaching.

Similar to teachers, students were also found to hold two types of perceptions about language learning: *learning-oriented perceptions* and *test-driven perceptions*. As the name speaks for itself, the *learning-oriented perceptions* were concerned with the students' perceptions about the genuine purpose of language learning. The students were clearly capable of distinguishing the long-term purposes of language learning from the short-term aim of passing the INUEE. They were, in fact, cognizant of the fact that what mattered in the long run was developing a communicative competence and command of English. Nevertheless, they argued that for a number of contextual factors they were prepared to prioritize the short-term aim of passing the INUEE over the long-term benefits of mastering the communicative ability in English. Among the *test-driven perceptions* which induced the students to embrace the immediate objective of passing the INUEE were the peer pressure and the expectations of teachers and parents

from the students, and the brighter prospect of employability for a person who passes the INUEE.

The influence of teachers' teaching *process* on learners' learning *process* was another finding of the current study. Unlike Hughes' model of washback in which the learners' learning *process* is linearly influenced by their own *perceptions*, it was demonstrated in the present study that the learners' learning *process* could be affected by the teachers' teaching *process* as well. This finding is similar to what Bailey (1996) reported in her washback model.

Overall, unlike Hughes (1993) and Bailey's (1996) basic models, it seems that the proposed model of washback in the present study is in line with the extended conceptualization of washback effect of a test by Wall and Alderson (1993). They viewed the relegation of washback effect to solely the relationship between the test and the teaching practice as over-simplistic and argued that besides scrutiny of the relationship between the tests and teaching, the complexity of the relationship between the test and other variables should also be taken into consideration. Besides this, according to Rust (1994), perceptions are socially-constructed representation systems, meaning that the socio-cultural and contextual variables are essential in constituting one's perception(s). Drawing upon Rust's characterizations of 'perception', it seems plausible to argue that the 'test' should not be seen as the only factor affecting the participants' perceptions, and besides the test itself, other socio-cultural and contextual forces which exist in different contexts should be taken into consideration. Thus, unlike Hughes' (1993) and Bailey's washback models in which the participants' perceptions are solely and directly affected by the test and the influence of factors other than the test are taken for granted, this study subscribes to the view that tests can function as

powerful ‘agents’ and can exert influence on the perceptions of people; however, as the tests do not take place in a vacuum and are intimately linked to the socio-cultural and contextual forces in human societies, it could be argued that it is not always the case that the direction of influence would be only from the “test” to the participants, not the other way round. To put it in other words, there is no controversy that a test can affect the perceptions of participants; however, it should be acknowledged that despite being a source of influence, the test itself could be subjected to the socio-cultural forces of the context in which it operates. For example, the concept of gender might have different instantiations in different cultural contexts. Depending on whether a female is in the setting of a conservative society and family or in the context of a family with liberalistic attitudes towards feministic issues would make her subjected to quite different forces and influences of a test. In the case of Iranian context, the female students coming from conservative family background are conspicuously more concerned about the consequences of the INUEE because in the event of failure on the INUEE, there would be no choice left for them but marriage. This is, of course, a concern not shared by the students coming from so-called ‘modern’ families.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS & IMPLICATIONS

The final chapter of this thesis draws conclusions based on the main findings of the study. Furthermore, implications, limitations of the study as well as possible avenues for further research are presented.

8.1 Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the teachers' teaching was negatively affected by the INUEE and the textbook in terms of: content of teaching, method of teaching, and ways of assessing. Furthermore, the teachers' teaching procedure was not in line with the objectives of the national curriculum. For example, whereas the national curriculum has emphatically called for a balanced weight on all of the four language skills (i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in English classes, the teachers' attention was solely focused on reading skill. Therefore, as Kellaghan and Greaney (1992) have recommended, the test should reflect the full curriculum, not merely some aspects of it, and variety of test formats (i.e., written, oral, aural, and practical) should be used.

It was also found that the students' English learning was negatively affected by the INUEE, teaching materials, and teachers' teaching. Their learning was affected in terms of content of learning, and learning strategies. Meanwhile, majority of the learners held negative views about their teachers' teaching and perceived teachers as one of the causes of their stress.

All the teachers and students held negative views about the teaching materials and believed that the materials were incapable of catering for their most immediate need (i.e., preparation for the INUEE). Therefore, it might be concluded that their perceived inadequacy of the textbook for the test preparation led them to resort to using other supplementary materials along with their textbook.

All the teachers and students with either positive or negative views about the INUEE believed that what they needed to do at that juncture was to strive for the INUEE rather than to learn English. Therefore, it could be concluded that the INUEE had a negative washback effect on learners' language learning.

Last but not least, it could be stated that the amount of criticism leveled against the teachers' teaching methods by the students was not fair because the study found that the teachers' teaching was under the influence of not only the INUEE, but also factors other than the INUEE such as the textbook objectives, and the pressure of the students, parents and principals to teach for the test only.

8.2 Implications of the Study

The implications of the study could be divided into *theoretical* and *pedagogical* implications provided in detail as follows.

8.2.1 Theoretical Implications of the Study

Unlike a general conceptualization of *participants'* perceptions in Hughes' (1993) and Bailey's (1996) washback models, in the proposed washback model of the present

study, two types of perceptions were characterized for the *participants* (i.e., teachers and learners). Teachers held both *expertise-oriented perceptions* and *test-driven perceptions* towards the enterprise of language teaching and the students were found to hold both *learning-oriented perceptions* and *test-driven perceptions* towards language learning.

The study indicated that what teachers claimed to be doing or not doing in their classes in their questionnaires and during interviews did not necessarily take place in the natural context of their classes. Therefore, observations should be an inseparable part of washback studies. According to Wall and Alderson (1993), observations, interviews, and questionnaires complement each other, therefore, triangulation should be incorporated as a methodological cornerstone in all washback studies.

8.2.2 Pedagogical Implications of the Study

Students' perceptions and views towards the high-stakes tests should not be taken for granted in washback studies, because, "learners are the key participants whose lives are most directly influenced by language testing washback" (Bailey, 1999, p. 14).

The INUEE should reflect the language learning goals of the National Curriculum. Document analysis (i.e. the comparative analysis of the National Curriculum, the INUEE, and the pre-university textbook) indicated that the INUEE and the textbook did not represent the curriculum. Therefore, in order to bring about positive washback, the material designers and the test developers need to consider the correspondence between the objectives of the curriculum and those of the INUEE and the textbook. That is, the test and material designers should aim to incorporate the goals of the curriculum in both

the INUEE and the textbook. For instance, the four language skills (i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing) should be included in the INUEE and the textbook. According to Kellaghan and Greaney (1992), tests should reflect the full curriculum, not merely a limited aspect of it.

Given the pervasiveness of test-orientedness as well as ‘teaching to the test’ in Iran’s educational system, tests could be capitalized on as effective instruments in order to create positive changes on the educational system. For example, through introducing the test of listening skill to the INUEE, the candidates would be automatically directed towards the skill. The inclusion of listening tests on Japanese university English language entrance examinations was also suggested by Brown and Christensen (1987) as well.

Hughes (1989) asserted that in order to make the positive washback effect happen, it is recommended to test those abilities you want them to be developed. For instance, if writing or listening skills are considered important for the candidates, it is advisable to include these skills in the INUEE.

The study found the teachers and students’ anxiety towards the INUEE as one of the important factors intensifying the negative washback effect of the test. The dominance of “culture of competition” on the micro-scale of families (parents) as well the macro-scale of the society was one of the major sources of stress and anxiety towards the test. The matter of the fact is that learning for the sake of genuine learning has given way to learning for the purpose of showing off the university ‘degrees’. There is no doubt that a problem so permeated in the very fabric of a culture could not be resolved instantly, but rather it requires a gradual enlightenment of the entire society. The major onus is

certainly on the mass media to raise the cultural awareness of the public towards the genuine values of education and knowledge-seeking rather than striving for merely the university degrees. In the current study, the participants' perceptions were found to be highly affected by the ideas and 'ideals' of the Iranian society. For instance, obtaining university certificates under any circumstances and 'at any price' seemed to be their first and main purpose of studying for the INUEE. By the same token, English was viewed as a subject of high weightage on the INUEE, which could affect their final score and ranking on the test. Learning English for the sake of genuine learning was not the primary objective of the students although they were cognizant of the significance of leaning English for genuine communicative purposes.

It is also advisable to replace the norm-referenced test of INUEE with a criterion-referenced test. In a criterion-referenced test (CRT) the candidates' test scores are interpreted with reference to a criterion level of ability and the candidates must reach this level of performance to pass the test; in other words, the candidates' performance is not evaluated by comparison with the achievement of other students, but their achievement is measured with respect to the degree of their learning or mastery of the pre-specified content domain. Therefore, it is plausible to assume and argue that the CRT might help to alleviate the fierce competition among the university candidates and could reduce the candidates' high level of stress and anxiety towards the test. Hughes (1989) and Wall (1996) have supported the idea of designing and administering criterion-referenced tests in order to induce positive washback.

It is also advisable to change the current one shot case testing procedure of the INUEE because according to Farhady (2006), "one shot case testing would not provide a fair assessment of the students' learning or their achievements" (p. 47). Besides this, the

non-reciprocal nature of the INUEE is questionable because the candidates are provided with no feedback on their responses for each of the test items. According to Bailey (1996), detailed score reporting to the test-takers ought to be an integral part of any test.

It is recommended to use *production type* of questions (i.e. open-ended questions) along with *recognition type* of questions (i.e., multiple-choice questions) in the test. The feedback received from the participants of the study about the single testing format of the test demonstrated that they were pushed towards adopting test tackling-techniques rather than genuine learning-oriented strategies. Heyneman and Ransom (1990) have suggested using more open-ended items as opposed to selected-response items like multiple choice. Kellaghan and Greaney (1992) recommended using a variety of test formats, including written, oral, aural, and practical as well.

The findings of the study revealed that the test affected not only the participants at the Micro Level (i.e., students and teachers) but also others at Macro Level (e.g., students' families), meaning that the test did not only have pedagogic effects on students and teachers, it had larger social implications on the lives of people beyond the classroom context as well.

8.3 Limitations and Further Avenues to Explore

This study has five limitations that indicate directions for further research.

The data collection for the current study was carried out in only two months at two pre-university schools. According to Shohamy et al. (1996), washback could evolve over time. Therefore, a longitudinal study could better capture and monitor the ebb and flow

of the INUEE washback effect. It is suggested that the future studies monitor the INUEE's long-term and widespread washback.

In this study, students were not interviewed because they were provided with Likert-scale questions which were immediately followed by open-ended questions. According to Sturman (1996), open-ended questions "allow the students' depth of feeling to be expressed" (p.350). Nonetheless, there is no doubt that conducting interviews would have provided a more profound understanding of the attitudes, perceptions, and feelings of the interviewees.

All the participants were female, which confines the range of generalizeability of the findings of the present study. A gender difference with regard to test anxiety is another variable that should be considered in future studies of washback.

The homogeneity of the students in terms of proficiency was not established. In fact, at the outset of the study students' homogeneity of proficiency was intended to be determined by giving them a general proficiency test, but the principals and teachers did not permit, and granted their consent only for administering the questionnaires and conducting the class observations. They argued that the students were at a critical juncture and needed to be intensely engaged in covering the textbook as well as preparing for the INUEE.

Last but not least, the current study was focused on learners' perceptions and process of learning. What learners claimed to have learned in terms of vocabulary and grammar knowledge was not empirically investigated. Therefore, the outcome of learning on the part of the learners was taken for granted.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: A Sample Lesson of Pre-university English Textbook

LESSON 3

Global Warming, Global Concern

Before You Read

The diagram illustrates the greenhouse effect. At the top, 'ENERGY FROM SUN' is shown as a large orange arrow pointing down. Three smaller orange arrows point away from the sun: 'radiated energy from below' (pointing left), 'energy reflected off atmosphere' (pointing right), and 'energy reflected off atmosphere' (pointing up). A large orange arrow labeled 'HEAT' points down from the sun towards the land and sea. Two curved orange arrows labeled 'heat radiated from land' and 'heat radiated off sea' point upwards from the land and sea respectively. A blue arrow labeled 'radiated energy from below' points upwards from the atmosphere. A blue arrow labeled 'energy reflected off atmosphere' points upwards from the atmosphere. A blue arrow labeled 'heat trapped by carbon dioxide in atmosphere' points downwards from the atmosphere towards the land and sea. On the left, a power station is labeled 'power stations: main source of extra carbon dioxide'. In the center, a truck is labeled 'car exhausts add to carbon dioxide in atmosphere'. On the right, a house is labeled 'burning of fossil fuels (coal, oil, etc.) adds excess carbon dioxide to atmosphere'. At the bottom right, a tree is labeled 'felling of trees which would 'lock up' carbon dioxide'.

In this lesson, you will read about changes in climate, the greenhouse effect, and global warming. You will notice how human beings can make the planet warmer. You will also read about some of the ways to control this process.

1 Answer the following questions.

1. Are you ever worried about the Earth? Why?
2. What are some of the things people do that damage the Earth?
3. How can we stop people from damaging the Earth?
4. Can you name some of the bad things that have already happened to the Earth?
5. Do you know if people around the world have done anything to control global warming?

Now ask your partner the same questions.



2 Read the following statements. Do you agree or disagree? Add two more statements of your own. Then discuss your ideas with a partner.

Statement	agree	disagree
The Earth is getting warmer.		
Harmful chemicals are the only cause for the warming of the Earth.		
Some of the things we do make the planet warmer.		
Cutting down the trees changes the conditions of the atmosphere.		
We can have an active role in controlling global warming.		



Global Warming, Global Concern*

1 The world is getting warmer. It has warmed by half a degree centigrade over the past 100 years. But why? And how? Well, scientists are not exactly sure. The Earth could get warmer by itself, without help from people. Many **climate** scientists think there is another reason for the change in temperature. They think that human activities like cutting down the trees, producing trash, and burning fuels like coal and oil are helping make the Earth warmer. Just because the weather has been hot for a month or two does not mean that global warming has arrived. But scientists think that as we use more gasoline and electricity, the Earth is going to get warmer. They believe that we know enough about the problem to take some action.

Greenhouse Effect, Climate Change, and Global Warming

2 The Greenhouse Effect: Scientists are sure about the greenhouse effect. They know that greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide and methane make the Earth warmer. They do so by **trapping** heat in the atmosphere.

3 Climate Change: Climate is the average of a **region's** weather over a period of time. For example, it is possible that a winter day in a city could be sunny and mild, but the average weather tells us that its winters will **mainly** be cold and include snow and rain. Climate change is a change in these general weather **patterns**. They can become warmer or colder; amounts of rainfall or snowfall can increase or decrease each year.

4 Global Warming: Global warming is the average increase in the Earth's temperature, which then **causes** changes in climate. A warmer Earth may have results such as changes in rainfall patterns, a rise in **sea levels**, and different effects on plants, wildlife, and humans. When scientists talk about climate change, they are concerned about global warming caused by human activities.

* adapted from <http://www.epa.gov/globalwarming>

concern:

a feeling of worry about sth

climate:

general weather of a place over a period of time

trap:

keep

region:

a particular area or part in a country or the world

mainly:

to a large degree

pattern:

a usual way in which sth happens or is done

cause:

make sth happen

sea level:

average height of the sea/ocean

Why should we care?

5 Global warming brings with it no guarantees. We don't know exactly what will happen—what the effects will be—nor do we know exactly where or when they will make problems. But it should be said that scientists have a pretty good idea of what is going to happen. Scientists and researchers from different fields tell us that the possible effects of climate change could be big and, in some cases, would cause serious problems. Among the possible effects are increased number of human deaths, **extinction** of groups of animals and plants, and a dangerous rise in sea levels. With this in mind, we have to think of the costs of action and **weigh** them **against** the risks of inaction.

We can make a difference!

6 Global warming may be a big problem, but there are many little things we can do to make a difference. If we try, most of us can do our part to reduce the amount of greenhouse gases that we put into the atmosphere. Many greenhouse gases coming from things we do every day trap energy in the atmosphere and make the Earth warmer. The following is a list of what we can do and think about.

7 Some things we can do:

1. Read about the importance of the **environment**.
2. Save electricity.
3. Ride a bicycle, take a bus, or walk.
4. Plant trees.
5. Talk to your family and friends about global warming.
6. **Recycle** cans, bottles, plastic bags, and newspapers.
7. Buy things that don't use much energy.

8 Some things we can think about:

1. Solar energy—energy that comes from the sun—can be used to heat homes, buildings, water, and to make electricity.
2. Cars cause **pollution** and release many greenhouse gases into the air. Driving cars that use less fuel can help reduce the amount of greenhouse gases in the air.

extinction:

when all the animals and plants of a particular type die

weigh sth against sth:

judge which of two things is more important

environment:

the air, water, or land in which living things live

recycle:

change old materials to use them again

pollution:

damage caused to water, air, etc by harmful materials

After You Read

6 Comprehension Check

1 Check your understanding. Are these statements True (T) or False (F)? If they are not mentioned in the text, write (N).

- 1. The greenhouse effect is dangerous for the planet.
- 2. Scientists believe that human activities are the only reason for global warming.
- 3. It takes a long time for the climate to change.
- 4. If global warming is not stopped, human beings might think about living on other planets.
- 5. You can help control global warming by using public transportation.

Compare your answers with a partner's.

2 A) Put the number of these sentences under the right column in the following box.

- 1) Scientists think that there will be a rise in sea levels.
- 2) It usually rains in Rasht.
- 3) Tomorrow it will be 15°C in Tehran.
- 4) Some of the plants are in danger of extinction.
- 5) Manjil is often windy.
- 6) It will be cloudy this evening.

describing weather	describing climate	effects of global warming

B) Somewhere in paragraph 1, the writer says that the danger of global warming is known and that people should start to do something about it. Can you find the sentences? Copy them down here.

.....

.....

C) What do you think "trapping heat in the atmosphere" in paragraph 2 means?
Complete the following sentence.

Greenhouse gases like CO₂ and methane.....
.....by trapping heat in the atmosphere.

Compare your answers with a partner's.

3 Discuss the following questions in class.

1. What have you already done to help protect the environment?
2. What do you do to help recycling?
3. If you wanted to talk to your family and friends about global warming, what would you say to them?
4. What can our government/people do to reduce pollution?

Sentence Functions

Look at the following sentences from the text.

- Climate is the average of a region's weather over a period of time.
- Global warming is the average increase in the earth's temperature, which then causes changes in climate.

1 The meanings of the following words are given in the text. Find them and complete the sentences.

- a. Climate change
- b. Solar energy

2 Now define the following words. You can use a dictionary if you want.

- a. forest
- b. researcher
- c. trash

Compare your answers with a partner's.

Reading Skills

یکی از مهارت‌های خواندن، درک روابط میان بخش‌های مختلف متن، از طریق شناسایی ضمائر و مراجع آن‌ها است. تمرین زیر به تقویت این مهارت می‌پردازد.

1 Refer to the text and complete the following table.

Pronoun / Adjective	Paragraph & Line Number	Check if it refers to something		Copy down what it refers to
		before	after	
itself	P1, L3			
another	P1, L4			
its	P3, L3			
they	P4, L5			
this	P5, L8			

Compare your answers with a partner's.

کلمه‌ها با عبارت‌های نشان‌دهنده تضاد (contrast)، مانند *though*، *although*، *while*، *whereas*، *even though* و *but* و استفاده از کلمه‌های اطراف واژه ناآشنا (surrounding words) شما را در پی بردن به معنی آن کلمات، یاری می‌کند.

2 Look back at the text and guess what the following words mean.

Word	Paragraph and Line No.	Meaning
global	title	
mild	P3, L3	
save	P7, L3	
decrease	P3, L6	
reduce	P6, L2	
solar	P8, L2	
inaction	P5, L9	

Compare your answers with a partner's.



Vocabulary Review

Choose a pair of words having a similar relationship as the pairs in each item.

1. increase: decrease
 - a. raise: lower
 - b. produce: keep
 - c. cause: create
2. extinction: death
 - a. pattern: region
 - b. importance: occasion
 - c. concern: worry
3. coal: fuel
 - a. bicycle: bus
 - b. electricity: energy
 - c. climate: change
4. risk: danger
 - a. fear: death
 - b. reduce: decrease
 - c. save: lose
5. researcher: laboratory
 - a. professor: university
 - b. doctor: medicine
 - c. scientist: school

Compare your answers with a partner's.

Focus on Grammar

Adjective Phrases

1 Read the following sentences carefully.

1. All over the world, there are people **who pollute the environment**.
2. All over the world, there are people **polluting the environment**.
3. Energy **which comes from fuels like coal and oil** is used to heat and light our homes.
4. Energy **coming from fuels like coal and oil** is used to heat and light our homes.
5. In some countries, people **who produce trash** are punished.
6. In some countries, people **producing trash** are punished.

Is the meaning of the two sentences in each pair the same or different?
Can you explain how the first sentence can be changed into the second one?

2 Now read the following set of sentences.

1. Most plastics **which are made from oil** are difficult to recycle.
2. Most plastics **made from oil** are difficult to recycle.
3. Heat **which is trapped in the atmosphere** causes the Earth to get warmer.
4. Heat **trapped in the atmosphere** causes the Earth to get warmer.
5. The photographs **which were taken of the Earth** were wonderful.
6. The photographs **taken of the Earth** were wonderful.

Is the meaning of the two sentences in each pair the same or different?
Can you explain how the first sentence can be changed into the second one?

Grammar Practice

1 Underline the correct word.

1. The teacher advised us to read the article (writing/written) about the greenhouse effect.
2. The scientists (studying/studied) the causes of climate change have made a lot of progress.
3. I met a group of scientists (concerning/concerned) about environmental problems.
4. The book (writing/written) about global warming became very popular.
5. The cars (releasing/released) greenhouse gases into the air are a danger to the environment.

Compare your answers with a partner's.

2 Rewrite the following sentences with the reduced form of the underlined parts.

1. The cars which release greenhouse gases into the air are a danger to the environment.
.....
2. The scientists are talking about another problem which is caused by human beings.
.....
3. Anyone who is interested in healthy living should exercise regularly.
.....
4. The plastic bags which are produced in this factory are recyclable.
.....
5. The cars which make a lot of noise pollution must be stopped by the police.
.....

Compare your answers with a partner's.

3 Use the information in parentheses to make adjective phrases and complete the following sentences.

1. Acid rain destroys forests. (Acid rain is created by burning of gas, oil and coal.)
.....
2. Factories help increase pollution. (Factories burn coal and oil.)
.....
3. The greenhouse effect is dangerous for the planet. (The greenhouse effect is enhanced by human activities.)
.....
4. Trash can be burned to produce energy. (Trash is believed to be useless.)
.....
5. Farming produces another greenhouse gas. (The greenhouse gas is called methane.)
.....

Compare your answers with a partner's.

Grammar Digest

1. Adjective clauses with an active structure are reduced to adjective phrases through an -ing form.

- The men **who work in this area** are in danger.
- The men **working in this area** are in danger.
- Anyone **who touches that wire** will get an electric shock.
- Anyone **touching that wire** will get an electric shock.

2. Adjective clauses with a passive structure are reduced to adjective phrases through a past participle form.

- Most of the people **who were invited to the party** were old friends.
- Most of the people **invited to the party** were old friends.
- The cars **which are produced in this factory** use a lot of fuel.
- The cars **produced in this factory** use a lot of fuel.

Appendix B: The INUEE Sample Test

کنکور سراسری ۸۸ - رشته انسانی

راه اندیشه

۱۱

PART A: Grammar and Vocabulary
Directions: Questions 76-85 are incomplete sentences. Beneath each sentence you will see four words or phrases marked (1), (2), (3), and (4). Choose the one word or phrase that best completes the sentence. Then mark your answer sheet.

76- Does Mary know whom ----- at the last party?
1) they met 2) they meet 3) do they meet 4) did they meet

77- The teacher was ----- tired that she could not continue teaching.
1) so 2) too 3) such 4) very

78- A: What's up? You look worried.
B: I am. My wife is sick. I think she ----- wrong medicine.
1) may take 2) should take 3) may have taken 4) should have taken

79- I have never had a good ----- for learning poems.
1) report 2) memory 3) hobby 4) influence

80- She is very good at ----- her duties.
1) winning 2) releasing 3) following 4) handling

81- Mary, listen! I have a concern to discuss with you. "Concern" means -----.
1) problem 2) contact 3) wonder 4) contrast

82- This book will ----- you with all the information you need.
1) react 2) evaluate 3) provide 4) measure

83- I admire the ----- use of color in her paintings.
1) effective 2) straight 3) public 4) mental

84- I ----- think it is too cold to go out today.
1) briefly 2) previously 3) heavily 4) personally

85- All the parking meters were taken, so we had to ----- a parking lot.
1) turn up 2) look for 3) pick up 4) insist on

PART B: Cloze Test
Directions: Questions 86-90 are related to the following passage. Read the passage and decide which choice (1), (2), (3), or (4) best fits each space. Then mark your answer sheet.

Psychology is the science of mental life. By mental life, we mean (86) ----- of the mind such as thinking, remembering, dreaming, (87) ----- a friend, and understanding a language. Mental life (88) ----- includes emotions, or feelings, such as pleasure and anxiety, and moods such as tiredness and worry. We express our mental life in our (89) -----, for example, when we speak or write, or when we do something (90) ----- skill such as playing tennis.

86- 1) formations 2) expectations 3) presentations 4) functions
87- 1) emphasizing 2) expressing 3) recognizing 4) generalizing
88- 1) so 2) too 3) also 4) either
89- 1) behavior 2) ability 3) basis 4) brain
90- 1) imagining 2) requiring 3) producing 4) realizing



PART C: Reading Comprehension

Directions: In this part of the test, you will read 2 passages. Each passage is followed by five questions. Answer the questions by choosing the best choice (1), (2), (3), or (4). Then mark your answer sheet.

Passage (1):

Most shoes are made to the basic design of a thick under part known as the sole, which takes the wear and tear of walking, and a thinner upper part which encloses the foot. However, as shoes are made to suit people living in climates ranging from tropical to very cold, and as they are also made according to fashion, a tremendous variety of shoes has been produced throughout the ages. Today it is mainly women's shoes that are made to different patterns from year to year—men's shoes change much less, although in past centuries they have varied as much as women's. Most of the people of the ancient world wore sandals with soles of leather or wood. They have been found in the tombs of the ancient Egyptians. The Greeks wore shoes for the bath and high boots for hunting. These were also worn by the Minoans of Crete and by the Romans. In the Middle Ages shoes were pointed but comfortable, for they were cut from soft leather or cloth to fit the shape of the foot.

- 91- The passage is mainly about -----.
- 1) shoes for men and women
 - 2) the variety of fashionable shoes
 - 3) shoes in different climates and periods
 - 4) the designs of shoes in the ancient world
- 92- In the Middle Ages, -----.
- 1) shoes were as soft and sharp as leather
 - 2) shoes were small but comfortable
 - 3) people liked their feet to feel relaxed
 - 4) people's feet were fit for shoes
- 93- According to the passage, which sentence is **NOT** true?
- 1) Women wore more shoes than men.
 - 2) Men's shoes are less various than women's.
 - 3) Shoes are different depending on climates.
 - 4) The Greeks wore different shoes for different purposes.
- 94- The word "they" in line 7 refers to -----.
- 1) women's shoes
 - 2) patterns
 - 3) men
 - 4) men's shoes
- 95- The word "tremendous" in line 4 is closest in meaning to -----.
- 1) exact
 - 2) great
 - 3) extra
 - 4) serious

Passage (2):

Robert Adam was the son of an architect, William Adam, and he had three brothers who were also architects. The buildings he designed with them were simple and well arranged outside, and the large rooms inside were beautifully shaped and decorated. He made the shape more interesting by having corners and curved walls, or sometimes a row of columns across one end. The ceilings and walls had beautiful patterns in plasterwork, which were painted in light colors. As well as designing the houses and decorating the rooms, Robert Adam also designed the furniture to go in the rooms. The furniture, the mantelpieces, the door handles and even the keyhole covers were all carefully designed and made. Much of his work was done inside existing houses, such as Syon House, near London. His best country houses, such as Kenwood, in London, and

Harewood House, in Yorkshire, were built from 1760 to the early 1770s.
 Adam studied architecture abroad while on the Grand Tour to Italy. He was especially interested in the houses in the Roman city of Pompeii and he copied their decoration in his designs. He established himself in London in 1758 and was later joined by his brother James.

When Adam made a design for plasterwork decorations it could be used in several houses, since the moulds which shaped the plaster could be used again.

- 96- According to the passage, which sentence is **NOT** true?
 1) Robert Adam used the Italian architecture.
 2) William Adam decorated buildings abroad.
 3) Adam studied architecture in a foreign country.
 4) The buildings Adam designed were curved in some parts.
- 97- According to the passage, much of Adam's work was done -----
 1) from 1760 to 1770
 2) in the Roman city
 3) inside his best country houses
 4) inside existing houses near London
- 98- Decoration in Adam's designs was copied from -----
 1) his brother's work
 2) the houses in Pompeii
 3) the houses in London
 4) the best houses in England
- 99- Adam was able to use the decoration designs more than once because he -----
 1) could establish them himself
 2) designed them more than once
 3) made several plasterwork decorations for houses
 4) used the moulds which could be used many times
- 100- The best title for the passage could be -----
 1) The History of Architecture
 2) William Adam's Best Work
 3) Robert Adam as an Architect
 4) The Best and Most famous Architects

ریاضی

- ۱۰۱ - اگر دو مجموعه با پایان A و B غیر تهی و مجموعه‌های $A \cap B$ و $A \cup B$ هم ارز باشند. الزاماً کدام نتیجه‌گیری درست است؟
 (۱) $A \neq B, A \neq B$ (۲) $A \subseteq B, A \neq B$ (۳) $A \supseteq B, A \neq B$ (۴) $A \approx B, A = B$
- ۱۰۲ - در تقسیم $(x^2 + 2) \div (x^2 - x^2) = (x^2 + 2) + (x^2 - x^2) \div (x^2 - x^2)$ باقیمانده کدام است؟
 (۱) $x + 2$ (۲) $-x + 2$ (۳) $2x + 4$ (۴) $-2x + 4$
- ۱۰۳ - در تجزیه عبارت $4a^2 - 4a - b^2 - 4b - 3$ کدام عامل وجود دارد؟
 (۱) $2a + b + 1$ (۲) $2a - b + 1$ (۳) $2a + b - 3$ (۴) $2a + b + 1$
- ۱۰۴ - خلاصه شده عبارت $|\sqrt{3} - \sqrt{3}| - \sqrt{3}| - \sqrt{3}|$ ، کدام است؟
 (۱) -2 (۲) -1 (۳) 1 (۴) $5 - 2\sqrt{3}$
- ۱۰۵ - ساده شده عبارت $(1 - \cos\theta)^2 - (1 + \frac{1}{\cos^2\theta}) - (1 - \sin^2\theta)$ ، کدام است؟
 (۱) $\sin^2\theta$ (۲) $\cos^2\theta$ (۳) $-\cos^2\theta$ (۴) $2\cos\theta$
- ۱۰۶ - میزان تحصیلات افراد یک شهر، کدام نوع متغیر است؟
 (۱) کیفی ترتیبی (۲) کیفی اسمی (۳) کتی پیوسته (۴) کتی گسسته
- ۱۰۷ - در ۵۶ داده آماری، بزرگترین و کوچکترین آنها به ترتیب ۸۶ و ۶۵ است. این داده‌ها به ۷ طبقه دسته‌بندی شده‌اند. اگر داده‌هایی که در یک دسته قرار دارند یکسان در نظر گرفته شوند، مقدار مشترک آنها در دسته پنجم کدام است؟
 (۱) ۷۷ (۲) ۷۷/۵ (۳) ۷۸ (۴) ۷۸/۵
- ۱۰۸ - در داده‌های آماری (۱۱، ۵، ۶، ۱۳، ۸، ۷، ۱۰، ۱۳، ۷، ۱۰، ۱۳) کمترین میزان را حذف می‌کنیم. واریانس داده‌های باقیمانده کدام است؟
 (۱) ۲/۸ (۲) ۳/۲ (۳) ۳/۶ (۴) ۴/۵
- ۱۰۹ - اگر $f(x) = \sqrt{-x^2 + 4x + 12}$ ، آنگاه $f(2) - f(2) - f(\sqrt{2}) - f(\sqrt{2})$ کدام است؟
 (۱) -۲ (۲) -۱ (۳) ۱ (۴) ۲

Appendix C: Iranian National Curriculum (Persian & English Versions)

برنامه درسی ملی جمهوری اسلامی ایران

3/6/10- حوزه یادگیری زبان‌های خارجی

آموزش زبان‌های خارجی بستر مناسبی را برای درک و دریافت و انتقال میراث فرهنگی و دستاوردهای دانش بشری در قالب‌های متنوع زبانی به صورت شفاهی، دیداری، و نوشتاری، برای مقاصد و مخاطبان گوناگون در مبادلات بین فرهنگی فراهم می‌کند.

ضرورت و کارکرد حوزه: از آن‌جا که مراودات اجتماعی تحت تأثیر تعاملات جوامع بشری توسعه پیدا کرده و این دامنه هر روز افزایش پیدا می‌کند، برای برقراری ارتباط سازنده و آگاهانه ضروری است مترجمان علاوه بر زبان مادری که به آنان امکان تعامل در سطح روابط میان فردی (خانوادگی، محلی و ملی) را می‌دهد، توانایی برقراری ارتباط با سایر جوامع و دستاوردهای بشری را در سطح منطقه‌ای و جهانی دارا باشند.

آموزش زبان خارجی علاوه بر کارکرد ارتباط میان فردی و بین فرهنگی، در توسعه اقتصادی مانند صنعت گردشگری، تجارت، فن‌آوری، توسعه علم، و هوشیاری اجتماعی سیاسی مؤثر است.

قلمرو حوزه: آموزش زبان‌های خارجی باید از دایره تنگ نظریه‌ها، رویکردها و روش‌های تدوین شده در جهان فراتر رود و به بستری برای تقویت فرهنگ ملی و باورها و ارزش‌های خودی در نظر گرفته شود و با توجه به این‌که تربیت اساساً آماده‌کننده زمینه و بسترهای لازم برای رشد و تعالی انسان است، باید تدابیر و اقدامات سنجیده‌ای برای نیل به این مقصود اندیشیده شود. امروزه آموزش زبان بر توانایی ارتباطی و حل مسئله تأکید دارد به گونه‌ای که فرد پس از آموزش قادر به ایجاد ارتباط با استفاده از تمامی مهارت‌های چهارگانه زبانی (گوش‌کردن، سخن گفتن، خواندن، و نوشتن) برای دریافت و انتقال معنا باشد.

آموزش رسمی و عمومی زبان خارجی از ابتدای دوره راهنمایی آغاز می‌شود و هدف آن آموزش چهار مهارت زبانی و آشناسازی مترجمان با مهارت‌های ارتباطی در چارچوب جهت‌گیری‌های کلی مورد نظر خواهد بود.

در سطح دوم متوسطه، مترجمان باید بتوانند متن‌هایی در حد متوسط را بخوانند و مفاهیم آن‌ها را دریابند. در ضمن توانایی نوشتن، در حد یک مقاله کوتاه، به زبان خارجی نیز در آن‌ها تقویت شود. با توجه به این اهداف و برنامه‌ریزی برای تحقق آن‌ها می‌توان امیدوار بود در پایان دوره متوسطه، مترجمان از توانایی‌های لازم برای

استفاده از منابع در حد متوسط برخوردار باشند و توانایی برقراری ارتباط را به یکی از زبان‌های خارجی داشته باشند.

آموزش زبان‌های خارجی در شاخه‌های زبان انگلیسی، فرانسوی، آلمانی و سایر زبان‌هایی که شورای عالی آموزش و پرورش تصویب کند ارائه خواهد شد.

جهت‌گیری‌های کلی در سازماندهی محتوا و آموزش حوزه: رویکرد آموزش زبان‌های خارجی، رویکرد ارتباطی فعال و خودباورانه است. در سطوح آغازین آموزش، محتوای آموزشی پیرامون موضوعات بومی و نیازهای یادگیرنده چون بهداشت و سلامت، زندگی روزمره، محیط اطراف و ارزش‌ها و فرهنگ جامعه در قالب‌های جذاب انتخاب و سازمان‌دهی می‌شود و در سطوح بالاتر انتخاب و سازماندهی محتوای این حوزه به سمت کارکردهای فرهنگی، علمی، اقتصادی، سیاسی و... متناسب با متون آموزشی سایر حوزه‌های یادگیری و در جهت تعمیق آن آموزش‌ها خواهد بود. در پایان دوره متوسطه دوم متربیان باید توانایی خواندن و درک متون ساده تخصصی را کسب کنند.

The Iranian National Curriculum

3/6/10 Foreign Languages Domain:

Instruction of foreign languages prepares a suitable ground for the exchange of cultural values, sharing scientific achievements made by different nations. This could take place in the framework of oral, visual, and written forms of language.

The significance and Functions of Foreign Languages:

Given the ever-increasing trend of international exchanges and communication between the nations, it is crucially important to provide the trainees with some means which enable them to go beyond the boundaries of their immediate life setting (family, town, country), where communication normally takes place in mother tongue, and manage to establish communication and enter into interaction with the people coming from other countries and cultures at international arena.

There is no doubt that teaching foreign languages, besides its interpersonal and intercultural functions, does play an indispensable role in the economic development of the country. It could positively impact on the tourism industry, business and trade, technological and scientific progress, not to mention the people's political and social awareness.

The Realm of Foreign Language Instruction

The enterprise of language teaching ought to go beyond the influence of a bunch of limiting theories, approaches and methods, and aim at preparing the ground for boosting the national culture and fostering the social values. Given the crucial role of education in growth and salvation of human beings, any necessary step must be taken in the direction of materialization of the lofty goals of education.

Mainstream language education theories emphasize the development of communicative competence on the part of learners; language learners need to focus on and to become competent and proficient enough in all of the four receptive and productive language skills (i.e., listening, reading, speaking, and writing).

Education of the foreign language officially starts at the first grade of Guidance school (junior high school) and is intended to concurrently develop the four language skills as well as communicative abilities in the framework of the general educational blueprint.

During the senior high school, the learners are expected to be able to read the intermediate-level texts and comprehend them. In addition, their writing ability is expected to be developed to the level of writing short essays. In conjunction with such prospects and purposes, the learners are thought to be proficient enough to make use of intermediate-level materials and be capable of communicating in a foreign language. The foreign languages could be English, French, German, and any other language approved by the supreme council of Ministry of Education.

The overall orientation of the country's foreign language education is towards development of active communicative abilities and fostering learner-centeredness. In

the preliminary stages of foreign language education, the content of the materials is to be focused on domestic issues and learners' essential needs such as personal hygiene and health, everyday life, etc and in the higher levels it is to be centered on issues related to culture, science, economics, politics, etc. It is also worthwhile to note that at the end of senior high school the graduates are expected to have developed the ability of reading and comprehending simple specialized texts.

Appendix D: Teacher's Questionnaire

In the study entitled "The washback effect of the Iranian National University Entrance Exam on English teaching and learning at pre-university level in Iran", the teacher questionnaire will provide information about teachers' reactions toward the university entrance exam (hereafter, INUEE) and viewpoints of their teaching.

Answer the questions as best as you can. If there are any questions you do not understand, please ask for help. You can withdraw from this study at any time if you think you cannot continue.

Personal Information

1. Name: -----

2. Age: 20-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 over 60

3. Sex: Male Female

4. School:

5. Educational Background: B. Ed B. A M. Ed M. A

Other, Specify-----

6. How long have you been an English teacher?-----

7. How many years have you taught students in their last year of high school?-----

8. How many classes do you have a week?-----

9. How many students are there per class?-----

10. How many students do you currently teach?-----

11. Have you ever had an EFL teacher-training program, non-funded (i.e., with your own payment) or funded by the Iranian government? Yes No

If YES, tell me briefly about the course description.-----

12. Have you ever had an in-service teacher education program relevant to the curriculum? Yes No

Direction: There are a variety of response formats to the following questions.

-Some questions require that you read statement and then decide if you agree or disagree with the statement.

-Some questions require simply a yes or no response.

-Some questions require a check (✓) mark.

-Some questions require a ranking.

-Some questions also require short written answers.

Awareness of the National Curriculum [English section] and the INUEE

13. Do you know what the overall philosophy of the curriculum is? Yes No

14. Do you follow the curriculum guidelines when you teach? Yes No

Give reasons: -----

15. Do you know what the INUEE is like? Yes No

16. Do you know what skills are tested on the INUEE? Yes No

17. Check what you think the purpose(s) of the INUEE is (are).

(1) to choose intelligent students

(2) to evaluate students' academic competence

(3) to evaluate students' rote-memorization skill

(4) other, specify-----

Attitude toward the INUEE

18. The INUEE reflects the goals and objectives of the curriculum.

a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

19. The INUEE is valid for evaluating students' communicative competence that the curriculum encourages.

a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

20. The INUEE enriches students' knowledge of English language.

a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

21. The INUEE improves students' proficiency in English.

- a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

22. The INUEE would motivate students to study English.

- a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

23. My students should adjust their learning strategies to the INUEE.

- a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

How?-----

24. The INUEE forces my students to study English harder

- a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

25. I enjoy the teaching of the practice tests in preparation for the INUEE.

- a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

26. I feel pressured about the INUEE when I teach.

- a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

27. I think the INUEE is contrary to my teaching philosophy.

- a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

28. The INUEE must change in some ways.

- a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

The Textbook

29. Which textbook do you use?

30. The textbook covers the entire curriculum's guideline.

- a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

31. The textbook provides many practice tests for the INUEE.

- a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

32. If I teach the whole textbook, then my students can achieve high scores on the INUEE.

- a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

Do you have any comments to add concerning the relationship between the curriculum, the textbook and the INUEE?-----

Teaching

Content of Teaching: What to Teach

33. Do you teach the whole textbook? Yes No

Give reasons:-----

34. Do you modify the content of the textbook due to the INUEE? Yes No

Give reasons:-----

35. Do you skip over parts of the textbook? Yes No

IF YES, which parts do you skip in the textbook?-----

Why?-----

36. Do you use other materials? Yes No

IF YES, what are they?-----

What skills do you intend to develop with the materials?-----

37. Which areas did you teach most in class? (Rank the skills)

1. reading-----

2. writing-----

3. listening-----

4. speaking-----

5. grammar-----

6. vocabulary-----

38. Did you change your teaching as the INUEE approached? Yes No

IF YES, how did you change them? (Rank the skills)

1. reading-----

2. writing-----

3. listening-----

4. speaking-----

5. grammar-----

6. vocabulary-----

39. Do you give extra classes to your students, besides regular school hours?

Yes No

Give reasons:-----

IF YES, what kinds of lessons do you give? (e.g. do you give grammar lessons or listening lessons?, etc)-----

What materials do you use?-----

Methodology of Teaching: How to Teach

40. Are you concerned about the methods you use to teach English?

Yes No

Give reasons:-----

41. What methods do you use?-----

42. Are the methods you use suggested by the *Teacher's guide*?

Yes No

43. Do you feel the methods you use help students prepare for the INUEE?

Yes No

Give reasons:-----

44. Did you change your teaching methods as the INUEE approached?

Yes No

IF YES, how did you change?-----

45. Tell me briefly about what activities you did in class. (e.g., reading aloud, role- play, and so on)-----

46. Did you change the activities as the INUEE approached? Yes No

IF YES, how and why?-----

47. Do you have any pattern for the lessons in class? Yes No

IF YES, what is your pattern?-----

48. Did you change the pattern as the INUEE approached? Yes No

IF YES, how did you change it?-----

Ways of Assessing: How to Assess Students

49. When you make up 'internal' tests for your students, what do you focus on? (e.g., do you focus on the content [topics and formats] of the textbooks you covered in class, or the content [topics and formats] of the past examination papers- the practice kit of the past INUEE)-----

50. Do you modify the content of the test due to the INUEE? (e.g., if the INUEE has a question about finding the key word from the passage, you include the question in your own test.) Yes No

Give reasons:-----

51. What are the criteria for the test? (e.g., in evaluating listening ability, do you make your own criteria for that? Or do you adopt the marking criteria used by the past INUEE?)-----

52. Do you explain the criteria to your students? (i.e., do you let them know the criteria before the test?)

Yes No

Give reasons:-----

53. What kind of test format do you use to evaluate your students' learning? (e.g., multiple-choice tests or alternatives, for example, performance assessments, such as essay writing, communicative pair-work tasks, role-play tests, group discussions, composition test, cloze tests, oral proficiency interview, portfolios, diaries, self-assessment, and so on)-----

Why do you use this format?-----

54. Does the format you use appear frequently on the INUEE? Yes No

55. Do you have any comments to add in terms of ways of assessing? (e.g., if you use multiple-choice tests or performance assessments, how appropriately do you use them to your students? Or do you think what you use are valid to evaluate your students' learning? Or is there anything to change?)-----

General Views on Your Teaching

56. My teaching experience is reflected in my current teaching.

- a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

57. My beliefs about language teaching and learning are reflected in my current teaching.

- a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

58. My personality is reflected in my current teaching.

- a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

59. What my students need is reflected in my current teaching

- a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

60. I think the INUEE has the most influence on my own teaching.

- a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

61. I believe the INUEE has a great influence on EFL teaching and learning in secondary schools and even on the whole education system.

- a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

62. If you think the INUEE affects your teaching, please comment on how the INUEE affects your teaching (i.e., negatively/positively).-----

63. What are other factors that affect your teaching?-----

64. If you don't think so, please comment on why the INUEE doesn't affect your teaching, and what are **the other factors**, except teaching experience, beliefs, and personality, that affect and reflect your current teaching-----

Thank you very much for your participation.

Appendix E: Student's Questionnaire (English & Persian Versions)

In the study entitled “The washback effect of the Iranian National University Entrance Exam on English teaching and learning at pre-university level in Iran”, the teacher questionnaire will provide information about teachers' reactions toward the university entrance exam (hereafter, INUEE) and viewpoints of their teaching. (On the question, the INUEE refers to the English section of the INUEE).

Answer the questions as best you can. If there are any questions you do not understand, please ask for help. You can withdraw from this study at any time if you think you cannot continue.

Personal Information

1. Age:
2. Sex: Male Female
3. School:
4. English Teacher's Name:
5. How many English classes do you have a week?
6. Did you ever go overseas to study English? Yes No
IF YES, where and how long did you study there?
7. Have you ever had private tutoring in preparation for the INUEE?
 Yes No

Directions: There are a variety of response formats to the following questions.
-Some questions require that you read statements and then decide if you:
-some questions require simply a yes or no response.
-some questions require a check (✓) mark.
-some questions require a ranking.
-some questions also require short written answers.

Awareness of the INUEE

8. Do you know what the INUEE is like? Yes No
9. Do you know what skills are tested on the INUEE? Yes No

10. Check what you think the purpose(s) of the INUEE is (are).

(1) to choose intelligent students-----

(2) to evaluate students' academic competence-----

(3) to evaluate students' rote-memorization skill-----

(4) others, specify-----

Attitude toward the INUEE

11. The INUEE is valid for evaluating my communicative competence.

a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d)strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

12. The INUEE enriches knowledge of English language.

a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

13. The INUEE improves my proficiency in English.

a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

14. The INUEE motivates me to study English.

a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

15. I like being tested on my knowledge.

a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

16. I feel pressure and anxiety about INUEE.

a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

17. The INUEE forces me to learn more English.

- a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

18. The INUEE must change in some ways.

- a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

19. If you don't have to take the INUEE, what would you do? (Check the following statement)

(1) I would like to continue studying English-----

(2) I would not study English any more-----

Why?-----

Attitude toward the Textbook

20. Which textbook do you use?-----

21. The textbook provides many practice tests for the INUEE.

- a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

22. If I study the whole textbook, then I can achieve high scores on the INUEE.

- a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

23. Do you have any comments to add regarding the INUEE, or the textbook?-----

Learning

24. Do you learn the whole textbook? Yes No

25. Is the content of the textbook modified because of the INUEE? Yes No

26. Does your teacher skip over part of the textbook? Yes No

IF YES, what part does he or she skip over in the textbook?-----

27. Which areas did you learn most in class? (Rank the skills)

- 1)reading
- 2)writing
- 3)listening
- 4)speaking
- 5)grammar
- 6)vocabulary

28. Did they change as the INUEE approached? Yes No

IF YES, how did they change? (Rank the skills)

- 1)reading
- 2)writing
- 3)listening
- 4)speaking
- 5)grammar
- 6)vocabulary

29. Tell me briefly about what activities you usually did in class. (e.g., reading aloud, role-play, and so on)-----

30. Did the activities you did in class change as the INUEE approached?

Yes No

IF YES, how?-----

31. Does your teacher give extra classes besides regular school hours?

Yes No

IF YES, what kinds of lessons does he or she give? (e.g. grammar lessons? Or listening comprehension lessons? etc.)

What kinds of lessons do you expect more from him or her? (i.e., what kinds of lessons do you need?)-----

32. Which areas did you spend the most time on your own studying? (Rank the skills)

1)reading

2)writing

3)listening

4)speaking

5)grammar

6)vocabulary

33. Did you change them as the INUEE approached? Yes No

IF YES, how did you change them? (Rank the skills)

1)reading

2)writing

3)listening

4)speaking

5)grammar

6)vocabulary

34. Do you often have self-study, relevant to the INUEE, not assigned by the teacher?

Yes No

Why or why not?-----

35. How much time do you usually spend on self-study to prepare for the INUEE in a week?

0h 1h-7h 8h-14h 15h-21h over 22h

36. The time and effort I invested in preparation for the INUEE increased as the INUEE approached.

a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

37. What do you study on your own to prepare for the INUEE ? (Check the following statement)

1) I study the textbook my teacher taught in class-----

2) I study the past exam papers or the INUEE practice .-----

3) I study both (1) and (2)-----

4) Other, Specify-----

Why?-----

38. Did you adjust your learning strategies appropriate to the INUEE? Yes No

IF YES, what are they?-----

39. What do you think the best way of preparing for the INUEE is?

40. What do you study to prepare for the 'internal' test that your teacher makes up?
(Check the following statement)

1) I review what I learned in class, focusing on the textbook.-----

2) I study the past exam papers like the practice kit of the past INUEE.-----

3) I study both (1) and (2).-----

4. Other, Specify-----

Why?-----

41. I think my teacher's teaching toward the INUEE has an influence on my learning.

a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

42. I think the INUEE has the most influence on my learning.

a) strongly disagree b)disagree c)agree d) strongly agree

Give reasons:-----

43. If you think the INUEE affects your learning, please comment on how the INUEE affects your learning (i.e., negatively/positively).

44. What are other factors that affect your learning? (i.e., future job, parent concern, peer competition, interest, and so on)

If you don't think so, please comment on why the INUEE doesn't affect your learning, and what are other factors that affect your learning?

Thank you very much for your participation

پرسشنامه

تحقیق موجود تحت عنوان "تاثیر کنکور بر روند آموزش و یادگیری زبان انگلیسی در مقطع پیش دانشگاهی" تلاشی است در جهت گرد آوری دیدگاهها و نقطه نظرات دانش آموزان در رابطه با کنکور و یادگیری زبان آنها. لطفاً به سوالات زیر به طور کامل جواب دهید و هر قسمت از سوالات را متوجه نشدید، بپرسید. در ضمن هر وقت احساس کردید دیگر قادر به پاسخگویی سوالات نیستید میتوانید از پاسخ دادن به سوالات دست بکشید.

اطلاعات شخصی

۱. سن
۲. جنسیت: مذکر مونث
۳. مدرسه:
۴. اسم معلم انگلیسی:
۵. در طول هفته چند ساعت کلاس زبان دارید؟
۶. آیا تا به حال برای یادگیری زبان به خارج از کشور رفته اید؟ اگر رفته اید کجا و برای چه مدت؟
۷. آیا تا به حال برای کنکور معلم خصوصی داشته اید؟ بله خیر

راهنمای پاسخگویی

برای پاسخ دادن به سوالات پرسشنامه حاضر میتوانید از فرمتهای مختلف پاسخگویی استفاده کنید: بله/خیر، تیک زدن، اولویت بندی و پاسخ کوتاه.

میزان اطلاعات شما در مورد کنکور:

۸. آیا شناخت کافی از کنکور دارید؟ بله خیر
۹. آیا میدانید چه مهارت‌های از زبان در کنکور تست میشود؟
۱۰. به ترتیب اولویت مشخص کنید که اهداف کنکور کدام یک از موارد زیر می‌باشد:
 ۱. انتخاب دانش آموزان با استعداد
 ۲. برای ارزیابی موارد علمی دانش آموزان
 ۳. برای ارزیابی حفظیات دانش آموزان

۴. دیگر موارد، توضیح دهید.

دیدگاه شما نسبت به کنکور

۱۱. کنکور یک تست معتبر است برای ارزیابی توان ارتباطی.
۱. کاملاً مخالفم ۲. مخالفم ۳. موافقم ۴. کاملاً موافقم
*دلایل خودتان را توضیح دهید.

۱۲. کنکور دانش زبانی را افزایش میدهد.
۱. کاملاً مخالفم ۲. مخالفم ۳. موافقم ۴. کاملاً موافقم
*دلایل خودتان را توضیح دهید.

۱۳. کنکور مهارت زبان انگلیسی من را بهبود می‌بخشد.
۱. کاملاً مخالفم ۲. مخالفم ۳. موافقم ۴. کاملاً موافقم
*دلایل خودتان را توضیح دهید.

۱۴. کنکور به من انگیزه میدهد که بیشتر زبان بخوانم.
۱. کاملاً مخالفم ۲. مخالفم ۳. موافقم ۴. کاملاً موافقم
*دلایل خودتان را توضیح دهید.

۱۵. دوست دارم دانش من ارزیابی و تست شود.
۱. کاملاً مخالفم ۲. مخالفم ۳. موافقم ۴. کاملاً موافقم
*دلایل خودتان را توضیح دهید.

۱۶. در مورد کنکور احساس استرس و فشار روحی می‌کنم.
۱. کاملاً مخالفم ۲. مخالفم ۳. موافقم ۴. کاملاً موافقم
*دلایل خودتان را توضیح دهید.

۱۷. کنکور من را مجبور می‌کند که بیشتر زبان یاد بگیرم.

۱. کاملاً مخالفم ۲. مخالفم ۳. موافقم ۴. کاملاً موافقم
*دلایل خودتان را توضیح دهید.

۱۸. باید یک سری تغییرات در کنکور ایجاد شود.

۱. کاملاً مخالفم ۲. مخالفم ۳. موافقم ۴. کاملاً موافقم

۱۹. اگر نخواهید در کنکور شرکت کنید کدامیک از کارهای زیر را انجام می‌دهید؟

۱. به خواندن زبان ادامه می‌دهم.

۲. خواندن زبان را متوقف می‌کنم.

چرا؟.....

دیدگاه شما نسبت به کتاب درسی پیش دانشگاهی

۲۰. اسم کتاب درسی تان چیست؟

۲۱. آیا کتاب درسی تان شامل تست‌های کنکور می‌باشد؟

۱. کاملاً مخالفم ۲. مخالفم ۳. موافقم ۴. کاملاً موافقم
*دلایل خودتان را توضیح دهید.

۲۲. اگر کتاب درسیم را کامل بخوانم می‌توانم در کنکور رتبه بالا بیاورم.

۱. کاملاً مخالفم ۲. مخالفم ۳. موافقم ۴. کاملاً موافقم
*دلایل خودتان را توضیح دهید.

۲۳. آیا پیشنهاد دیگری در مورد کتاب درسی یا کنکور دارید؟

۲۴. آیا کتاب درسی تان را به طور کامل یاد می‌گیرید؟ بله خیر

۲۵. آیا محتوای کتاب درسی تان در راستای کنکور تغییر داده شده است؟ بله خیر

۲۶. آیا معلمان بعضی از بخشهای کتاب را نادیده می‌گیرد و رد میشود؟ بله خیر

اگر پاسختان مثبت است، معلمان کدام بخشهای کتابتان را تدریس نمی‌کنند؟

۲۷. کدامیک از قسمتهای زبان را بیشتر یاد گرفته اید (مهارتها و عناصر زبانی زیر را به ترتیب اولویت مرتب کنید).

۱. خواندن ۲. نوشتن ۳. شنیداری ۴. گفتاری ۵. گرامر ۶. لغات

۲۸. آیا نحوه یادگیری شما در این مهارتها با فرا رسیدن کنکور تغییر می‌کند؟ بله خیر

اگر جوابتان مثبت است، مهارتها و عناصر زبانی زیر را به ترتیب اولویت مرتب کنید.

۱. خواندن ۲. نوشتن ۳. شنیداری ۴. گفتاری ۵. گرامر ۶. لغات

۲۹. بطور خلاصه بنویسید که چه نوع فعالیت هایی در کلاسهای زبانتان دارید(خواندن متون با صدای بلند، نمایش و غیره).

۳۰. آیا فعالیتهای کلاسی تان همزمان با فرا رسیدن کنکور تغییر می‌کند؟

اگر جوابتان مثبت است، این تغییرات به چه صورت هستند؟

۳۱. آیا معلم شما علاوه بر ساعات معمول کلاسی برای شما کلاسهای اضافی برگزار می‌کند؟

بله خیر

در این کلاسهای اضافی معمولان چه چیزهایی بیشتر تدریس میشود؟ (گرامر، مهارت شنیداری، و غیره...) انتظار دارید در این کلاسها چه چیزهایی بیشتر تدریس شود؟

۳۲. وقتی خودتان زبان می‌خوانید، بر روی کدامیک از مهارتها و عناصر زبانی بیشتر وقت صرف می‌کنید؟

۱. خواندن ۲. نوشتن ۳. شنیداری ۴. گفتاری ۵. گرامر ۶. لغات

۳۳. آیا این نحوه زبان خواندنتان با فرا رسیدن کنکور تغییر می‌کند؟ (اگر تغییر می‌کند به ترتیب اولویت مهارتها را مرتب کنید)

۱. خواندن ۲. نوشتن ۳. شنیداری ۴. گفتاری ۵. گرامر ۶. لغات

۳۴. آیا به جز مطالب مشخص شده توسط معلمان خودتان هم برای کنکور مطالعه می‌کنید؟ بله خیر

*دلایل خودتان را توضیح دهید.

۳۵. در هفته چند ساعت برای درس زبان انگلیسی کنکور مطالعه می‌کنید؟

۰ ساعت ۷-۱ ساعت ۸-۱۴ ساعت ۱۵-۲۱ ساعت بیشتر از ۲۲ ساعت

۳۶. با فرا رسیدن زمان کنکور تلاش من برای کنکور بیشتر میشود.

۱. کاملاً مخالفم ۲. مخالفم ۳. موافقم ۴. کاملاً موافقم

*دلایل خودتان را توضیح دهید.

۳۷. زمانی که برای کنکور مطالعه می‌کنید، چه مطالبی را بیشتر می‌خوانید؟

۱. کتاب درسی که معلم در کلاس درس میدهد.

۲. نمونه سوالات امتحانی سالهای قبل و نمونه سوالات کنکور.

۳. گزینه ۱ و ۲

۴. موارد دیگر؟

*دلایل خودتان را توضیح دهید.

۳۸. آیا روشهای یادگیریتان را متناسب با کنکور تغییر می‌دهید؟ اگر جوابتان مثبت است، این تغییرات به چه شکلی بوده است؟ بله خیر

۳۹. به نظر شما بهترین راه برای آمادگی در کنکور چیست؟

۴۰. معمولاً جهت آمادگی برای آزمونهای کلاسی که توسط معلمان طراحی میشوند چه چیزهایی را مطالعه می‌کنید؟

۱. مطالبی را که در کلاس یاد گرفته‌ام مرور می‌کنم؛ مخصوصاً کتاب درسی را بیشتر می‌خوانم.

۲. نمونه سوالهای سالهای گذشته را می‌خوانم مثل مجموعه سوالات کنکور.

۳. گزینه ۱ و ۲

۴. دیگر موارد را نام ببرید.

*دلایل خودتان را توضیح دهید.

۴۱. به نظر من نحوه تدریس معلمان به شکل کنکوری بر روی یادگیری زبان من تاثیر گذشته است.

۱. کاملاً مخالفم ۲. مخالفم ۳. موافقم ۴. کاملاً موافقم

*دلایل خودتان را توضیح دهید.

۴۲. به نظر من کنکور تاثیر خیلی زیادی بر یادگیری زبان من داشته است.

۱. کاملاً مخالفم ۲. مخالفم ۳. موافقم ۴. کاملاً موافقم

*دلایل خودتان را توضیح دهید.

۴۳. اگر فکر می‌کنید که کنکور بر یادگیری زبانان تاثیر داشته است، لطفاً توضیح دهید چه تاثیری داشته است (آیا این تاثیر مثبت بوده است یا منفی)؟

۴۴. چه عوامل دیگری بر روی یادگیری زبان شما تاثیر داشته است؟ (شغل آینده، نگرانی والدین، رقابت بین همکلاسی، علاقه، و غیره...). اگر فکر می‌کنید هیچ کدام از عوامل ذکر شده در بالا تاثیری بر یادگیری زبان شما نداشته است، لطفاً توضیح دهید چه عوامل دیگری بر یادگیری زبان شما تاثیر گذشته است.

از همکاری شما متشکرم

Appendix F: Interview Questions

1. Do you think that the pre-university textbook alone can help students cope with the INUEE questions?
2. While teaching, do you feel stress and pressure about the INUEE?
3. Do you practice the INUEE along with the teaching of the textbook?
4. Are your teaching activities based on the INUEE assessment? Why?
5. Do you think that the INUEE is accurately testing students' language skills or knowledge? What are the purposes of the INUEE?
6. Do you know what you are required to teach based on the national curriculum?
7. Do you think the way you teach in your EFL classes is a reflection of your teaching experiences and beliefs?
8. Do you think that your English teaching and the students' learning were negatively affected by the INUEE?
9. Which language teaching methodology you used in your classes?
10. How do you assess your students for the internal exams such as midterm exams?
Why?

Appendix G: Observation Checklists

Note: Total class time for each session included 90 minutes, during which classroom activities took place both in L1 and L2. The times (in minutes) in the charts represent the net amount spent on each activity.

Class A: Class activities during 540 minutes.

Class observation	*L.	*S.	*R.	*W.	*Pro.	*G.	*Voc.	The INUEE practice	Use of Persian	Use of English
1 st session	0	4	40	0	0	0	11	12	60	30
2 nd session	0	0	35	0	4	0	7	14	64	26
3 rd session	0	6	38	0	2	0	10	14	55	35
4 th session	0	0	0	6	5	37	8	20	71	19
5 th session	0	0	0	0	2	30	6	19	69	21
6 th session	0	0	0	9	4	35	5	21	73	17

*The abbreviations stand for:

L= Listening

S= Speaking

R= Reading

W= writing

Pro. =Pronunciation

G. =Grammar

Voc. = Vocabulary

Class B: Class activities during 540 minutes.

Class observation	*L	*S.	*R.	*W.	*Pro.	*G.	*Voc.	The INUEE practice	Use of Persian	Use of English
1st session	0	9	40	0	0	0	16	9	53	37
2nd session	0	7	36	0	6	0	13	11	65	25
3rd session	0	0	39	0	0	0	10	14	62	28
4th session	0	0	0	0	2	43	8	18	74	16
5th session	0	4	0	0	2	39	11	20	63	27
6th session	0	0	0	0	4	40	7	23	67	23

*The abbreviations stand for:

L= Listening

S= Speaking

R= Reading

W= writing

Pro. =Pronunciation

G. =Grammar

Voc. = Vocabulary

Class C: Class activities during 540 minutes.

Class observation	*L	*S.	*R.	*W.	*Pro.	*G.	*Voc.	The INUEE practice	Use of Persian	Use of English
1st session	0	0	23	0	9	0	25	17	61	29
2nd session	0	0	37	0	5	0	24	12	63	27
3rd session	0	0	33	0	0	0	18	16	71	19
4th session	0	0	0	0	0	31	13	22	64	26
5th session	0	0	0	0	6	40	9	16	58	32
6th session	0	0	0	0	0	36	10	19	60	30

*The abbreviations stand for:

L= Listening
Pro. =Pronunciation

S= Speaking
G. =Grammar

R= Reading
Voc. = Vocabulary

W= writing

Class D: Class activities during 540 minutes

Class observation	*L.	*S.	*R.	*W.	*Pro.	*G.	*Voc.	The INUEE practice	Use of Persian	Use of English
1st session	0	0	33	0	5	0	20	18	63	27
2nd session	0	0	29	0	4	0	28	15	71	19
3rd session	0	0	37	0	0	0	15	23	62	28
4th session	0	0	0	0	3	46	6	14	58	32
5th session	0	0	0	0	0	39	10	21	61	29
6th session	0	0	0	0	0	43	9	20	57	33

*The abbreviations stand for:

L= Listening
Pro. =Pronunciation

S= Speaking
G. =Grammar

R= Reading
Voc. = Vocabulary

W= writing

Class E: Class activities during 540 minutes

Class observation	*L.	*S.	*R.	*W.	*Pro.	*G.	*Voc.	The INUEE practice	Use of Persian	Use of English
1st session	0	0	32	0	3	0	19	23	78	12
2nd session	0	0	37	0	0	0	15	19	80	10
3rd session	0	0	29	0	5	0	13	29	74	16
4th session	0	0	0	0	0	35	0	38	77	13
5th session	0	0	0	0	0	40	0	25	73	17
6th session	0	0	0	0	0	31	11	20	79	11

*The abbreviations stand for:

L= Listening
Pro. =Pronunciation

S= Speaking
G. =Grammar

R= Reading
Voc. = Vocabulary

W= writing

Class F: Class activities during 540 minutes

Class observation	*L.	*S.	*R.	*W.	*Pro.	*G.	*Voc.	The INUEE practice	Use of Persian	Use of English
1st session	0	6	30	0	9	0	19	11	56	34
2nd session	0	0	38	0	6	0	16	13	63	27
3rd session	0	5	40	0	11	0	13	9	47	43
4th session	0	0	0	0	0	40	14	16	51	39
5th session	0	0	0	0	7	38	12	19	59	31
6th session	0	0	0	0	0	42	16	20	44	46

*The abbreviations stand for:

L= Listening

S= Speaking

R= Reading

W= writing

Pro. =Pronunciation

G. =Grammar

Voc. = Vocabulary

Appendix H: Consent Form

Information about the Study

Study Title: The washback effect of the Iranian National University Entrance Exam (INUEE) on pre-university English language teaching and learning.

Objectives of the Study:

The purposes of the study are to:

1. Study teachers' perceptions about the Iranian National Curriculum (INC), the INUEE and English teaching materials..
2. Study students' perceptions about the INUEE, teachers' teaching and teaching materials.
3. Study the effect of the INUEE on teachers' teaching process in terms of what to teach and how to teach.
4. Study the effect of the INUEE on students' learning process in terms of what to learn and how to learn.

What Participation in the study Involves:

If you are interested in participating in this project, you will be required to do the following:

1. Complete the questionnaire. It would only take you about 30 minutes to complete it.

2. Allow the researcher to observe your class activities to be used as a source of data for this study.

3. Agree to be audio-video taped during the data collection period (at least 6 sessions).

The audio-video taped will be analyzed later by the researcher.

Your participation in the present study is voluntary. Should you wish to participate, you will need to sign a Consent Form. You can, however, withdraw from the study at anytime. If you withdraw from the study prior to its completion, your data will be returned to you or will be destroyed.

Confidentiality

You will be assigned a pseudonym in the study; your personal details as well as anything you say during the interviews will be treated as confidential. Only I and my supervisory committee members will have access to the audio-video taped information.

Please feel free to discuss any of the above information with me.

I have read and understand the above information. I have received a copy of this form and consent to participate in this study.

Name and signature of participant.....

Date:.....

Name of researcher: Leila Mahmoudi

Appendix I: The Map and Foreword of the Textbook

In the name of God Map of the Book

<i>How to Study this Book</i>			<i>Page i</i>
<i>Review of English Book 3</i>			<i>Page vi</i>
Lesson	Reading	Vocabulary	Grammar
1 P. 1	<p><i>"Why Exercise Is Important!"</i></p> <p><i>Sentence Functions: Explaining</i></p> <p><i>Reading Skills: Paragraph Headings, Guessing Unknown Vocabulary</i></p>	<p><i>rely, efficiently, protect, injury, joint, flexible, bend, stretch, nutrient, fuel, store, fat, excellent, release</i></p>	<p><i>Conjunctions of Time, Reason and Condition: when, as, because, since, whether ... or</i></p>
2 P. 11	<p><i>"How to Give a Good Speech"</i></p> <p><i>Sentence Functions: Instructing</i></p> <p><i>Reading Skills: Guessing Unknown Vocabulary</i></p>	<p><i>audience, embarrassment, confidence, presentation, concentrate, firmly, distract, emphasize, gesture, expression, mood, projection, add variety, humor, nervousness</i></p>	<p><i>Verb+ Object+ Bare Infinitive</i></p> <p><i>Expressing Manner: By + Gerund</i></p>
3 P. 22	<p><i>"Global Warming, Global Concern"</i></p> <p><i>Sentence Functions: Defining</i></p> <p><i>Reading Skills: Understanding Reference, Guessing Unknown Vocabulary</i></p>	<p><i>concern, climate, trap, region, mainly, pattern, cause, sea, level, extinction, weigh something against something, environment, recycle, pollution.</i></p>	<p><i>Reduced Adjective Clauses</i></p>
4 P. 33	<p><i>"Earthquakes and How to Survive Them"</i></p> <p><i>Sentence Functions: Instructing (Review)</i></p> <p><i>Reading skills: Understanding Punctuation Marks, Guessing Unknown Vocabulary</i></p>	<p><i>float, consist of, smoothly, shake, rattle, damage, populated, destructive, probable, entirely, predict, locate, forecast, flood, emergency, procedure, calm, provide</i></p>	<p><i>Modification of Adjectives: so/such that enough/too</i></p>

Lesson	Reading	Vocabulary	Grammar
5 P. 43	“Child Labor: A Global Issue” Sentence Functions: Exemplifying Reading Skills: Recognizing Text Structure, Guessing Unknown Vocabulary	issue, vacation, apprentice, extreme, right, industrialized, rural, agriculture, trade, manufacturing, construction, domestic, poverty, prevent irrelevant, fail, willing, union, remove, social, movement	Expressing Contrast: while, whereas
6 P. 52	“Space Exploration” Sentence Functions: (Review) Defining and Exemplifying Reading Skills: Recognizing the Main Points of a Text, Guessing Unknown Vocabulary	exploration, feature, launch, artificial, density, mission, astronaut, sample, vehicle, beyond, mass, base, run	Expressing Purpose: so that, to, in order to, so as to
7 P. 62	“IT and Its Services” Sentence Functions: (Review) Defining, Exemplifying, and Explaining Reading Skills: Summarizing, Guessing Unknown Vocabulary	data, network, access, server, multimedia, compose, attach, document, forward, continuously, transfer, log on, addictive	Expressing Contrast (Unexpected Result): although, though, even though
8 P. 72	“Great Men and Women” Reading Skills: Outlining; Guessing Unknown Vocabulary	missionary work, community, nun, suffering, convent, devote, slum, voluntary, financial, charity, promotion, live on, sign, complex, private, tin	Expressing Possibility, Deduction, and Advisability in the Past: may/might must + have + p.p. should

Appendix

List of Irregular Verbs
Word List

Page 80
Page 83

How to study this book

دانش آموز گرامی

کتابی که در دست دارید، می‌کوشد با ارائه چارچوبی منسجم، مهارت خواندن را در شما تقویت نماید. برای این منظور، ابتدا لازم است خواندن را تعریف کنیم.

خواندن فرآیندی است که محصول آن درک مطلب است. طی این فرآیند، خواننده در تعامل با متن قرار می‌گیرد: او به متن چاپ شده نگاه می‌کند، علائم روی صفحه را رمزخوانی می‌کند، درباره معنی آن علائم و نحوه ارتباط آن‌ها با یکدیگر تصمیم‌گیری می‌نماید و درباره آن‌چه می‌خواند فکر می‌کند. می‌خواهد بداند متنی که می‌خواند تا چه حد سرگرم‌کننده، آموزنده یا خسته‌کننده است. او به دشواری یا آسانی این کار و راه‌های برطرف کردن مشکلات آن می‌اندیشد و سرانجام به ارزیابی خواننده‌هایش می‌پردازد تا ببیند که آیا آنچه را در متن جستجو می‌کرده، یافته است؟

خواندن فرآیندی پویا، متغیر و متفاوت است. از همین رو، وقتی متن واحدی را در زمان دیگر و با برای هدف دیگری می‌خوانیم، شرایط تغییر می‌یابد. به همین ترتیب، این فرآیند برای افراد مختلف به هنگام خواندن متون گوناگون در زمان‌های متفاوت و با اهداف مختلف، مشابه نخواهد بود.

خواننده خوب، خواننده فعالی است که از همان ابتدا، اهداف مشخصی برای خواندن دارد. او پیوسته می‌سنجد که آیا متن و خواندن آن، اهداف او را برآورده می‌سازد یا خیر. معمولاً، قبل از خواندن، نگاهی کلی به متن می‌اندازد و به نکاتی مانند ساخت متن و بخش‌هایی که به اهداف خواندن مرتبط هستند، توجه می‌کند. درحین خواندن، اغلب به پیش‌بینی مطالب بعدی می‌پردازد. انتخابی می‌خواند و مدام درباره خواندن تصمیم‌گیری می‌نماید: چه چیز را به دقت بخواند، چه چیزی را سریع بخواند، چه چیزی را دوباره بخواند، چه چیزی را نخواند و غیره.

برای این که خوب بخوانیم، لازم است به چند راهکار مهم توجه کافی داشته باشیم :

۱. بدانیم چرا می‌خواهیم بخوانیم. برای خواندن دلایل مختلفی وجود دارد که در زیر به چند مورد اشاره می‌کنیم.

- خواندن برای به‌دست آوردن اطلاعات
- خواندن برای یاد گرفتن
- خواندن برای یکبارچه کردن اطلاعات
- خواندن برای نوشتن
- خواندن برای نقد کردن
- خواندن برای درک کلی

در بعضی موارد شاید لازم باشد متنی را به چند دلیل بخوانیم.

۲. قبل از خواندن باید بدانیم درباره موضوع موردنظر چقدر اطلاعات داریم و چه چیزهایی را می‌خواهیم بدانیم. از همین رو پیشنهاد می‌کنیم قبل از خواندن متون، جدولی نظیر جدول زیر در دفتر تمرین خود ترسیم نموده، آن را بسته به اطلاعات خواسته شده قبل، در حین و پس از خواندن متن کامل کنید.

آنچه می‌دانیم What we know	آنچه می‌خواهیم بدانیم What we want to know	آنچه یاد گرفته‌ایم What we have learned	چطور می‌توانیم بیشتر یاد بگیریم؟ How can we learn more?

۳. به عنوان‌ها، تصویرها، جدول‌ها و به‌طور کلی امکانات دیداری روی صفحه به دقت توجه کنید. در بسیاری موارد، مشکلات درک مطلب از طریق توجه به این نشانه‌ها مرتفع می‌گردند.

۴. در خواندن بعضی قسمت‌های متن از اطلاعات قبلی و تجربه‌های شخصی خود و در سایر قسمت‌ها، از دانش زبانی خود شامل واژگان و دستور استفاده نمایید. بنابراین همیشه لازم نیست معنی تک‌تک کلمات به کار رفته در هر پاراگراف را بدانیم. گاهی با عبور از برخی کلمات و به واسطه همسو بودن اطلاعات قبلی با پیام متن به یک درک نسبی می‌توان دست یافت. صرفاً زمانی که اطلاعات موجود در متن با دانسته‌های قبلی‌تان همخوانی ندارد، روی زبان از طریق توجه به واژگان و ساختارهای دستوری تکیه کنید.

۵. به علامت‌نشانه‌گذاری، کلمات ربط و ضمائر توجه زیادی داشته باشید. گاهی، دقت نکردن به این موارد، در فرآیند درک اختلال ایجاد می‌کند.

۶. از آن‌جا که جمله‌ها نقش‌های متفاوتی ایفا می‌نمایند، سعی کنید با دریافت پیام هر جمله ببینید به چه منظور به کار رفته است. گاهی جملات دارای معانی ضمنی هستند که آن‌ها را با توجه به متن باید استنتاج نمود.

۷. در حین خواندن، در حاشیه متون نکات مهم را به‌طور خلاصه یادداشت کنید.

۸. سعی کنید سرعت خواندن خود را با کم کردن تعداد نگاه‌های خود به متن افزایش دهید (یعنی در هر بار نگاه، تعداد کلمات بیشتری را ببینید). برای این منظور تمرین زیر را همواره انجام دهید:

لیستی از عبارات‌های دوکلمه‌ای مانند نمونه‌ی زیر تهیه کنید، سپس خطی عمودی میان صفحه کشیده و کلمه‌های هر عبارت را در دو طرف این خط بنویسید، آنگاه با تمرکز روی خط میانی سعی کنید کلمه‌های دوطرف خط را بخوانید؛ اگر کلمه‌ها برایتان واضح نیستند، این بدان معنی است که دید جانبی شما نیاز به تقویت دارد. می‌توانید این کار را چندین مرتبه با لیست‌های دیگری از عبارات‌های دوکلمه‌ای (حتی با کلمات طولانی‌تر) انجام دهید و زمانی که این توانایی را به‌دست آوردید، با عبارات‌های چهار کلمه‌ای، شش کلمه‌ای یا بیشتر ادامه دهید.

my	town
the	book
red	car
hard	job
less	time
very	well

چند توصیه برای یادگیری بهتر

۱. همواره با مشارکت با سایر دانش آموزان به انجام فعالیت‌های کلاسی بپردازید. به‌طور مثال، پاسخ‌های خود را به تمرین‌ها با هم‌کلاسی‌هایتان مقایسه کنید و با آن‌ها درباره‌ی نحوه حل تمرین‌ها و انجام کارهای کلاسی مشورت نمایید. به‌همین منظور در پایان اکثر بخش‌های کتاب، جمله‌ای است که شما را به مقایسه یا به بحث گذاشتن کارهایتان با سایر دانش‌آموزان دعوت می‌نماید.

۲. در کلاس، یک فرهنگ لغت مناسب به همراه داشته باشید. ترجیحاً از فرهنگ لغت انگلیسی به انگلیسی آموزشی استفاده کنید. این نوع کتاب‌های مرجع، علاوه بر معانی کلمات، تلفظ، قسم کلمه، الگوی کاربرد دستوری لغت، مثال از کاربرد کلمه در جمله، کاربردهای اصطلاحی واژه و تفاوت‌های معنایی کلمات هم‌معنا را نیز ارائه می‌دهند. برای تهیه چنین فرهنگ لغتی از دبیر محترمتان نظر بخواهید.

۳. دفترچه واژگان برای خود تهیه نمایید و در آن از شیوه‌های مختلف برای ثبت کلمات استفاده کنید. برخی از این شیوه‌ها عبارتند از:

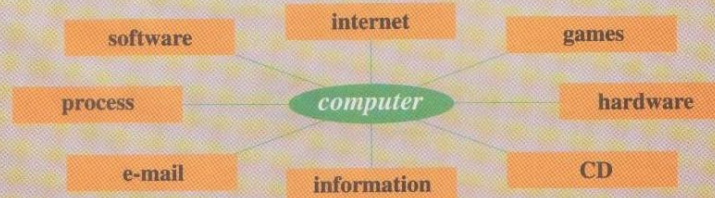
- ثبت واژه به همراه تلفظ، قسم کلمه، معنی و یک مثال از کاربرد آن در جمله مانند:

familiar/ fə'milɪər/ adj. usual; that you often see, hear, etc. : *the familiar faces of your parents. be familiar with*, know something well: *I can't drive this tractor because I'm not familiar with the controls.*

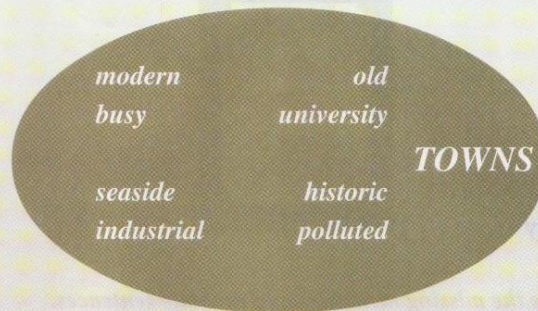
- دسته‌بندی کلمات براساس موضوع. به‌طور مثال:

Food	Animals	Body	Jobs
spaghetti	cat	arm	teacher
chicken soup	lion	leg	lawyer
.....
.....

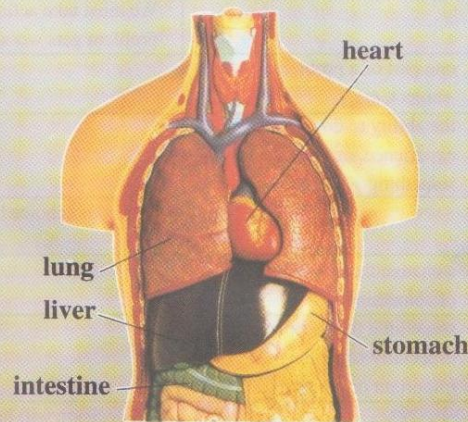
- ترسیم شبکه‌های واژگانی موضوعی. به‌طور مثال:



● ثبت کلمات هم‌نشین، یعنی کلماتی که غالباً با یکدیگر به کار می‌روند. به طور مثال :



● استفاده از تصاویر برای تداعی کردن معنی و کاربرد کلمات. به طور مثال :



۴. برای تقویت مهارت خواندن لازم است که علاوه بر آشنایی با راهبردهای خواندن به خواندن گسترده نیز مبادرت ورزید. از این رو سعی کنید برحسب علاقه‌تان از منابع مختلف، متون گوناگونی را استخراج کنید و بخوانید. برای آشنایی با این منابع و همچنین اطلاع از گونه‌های مختلف متنی، از دبیر محترمتان نظر بخواهید.

با این کتاب، انگلیسی خود را تقویت
نمایید و از آن لذت ببرید!



English Translation of the Foreword

How to study this book

To the Students

This book is intended to develop your reading ability through providing a comprehensive framework. To this aim, it is necessary to first define what the reading is. Reading is a process whose product is comprehension. In the course of this process, the reader is engaged in an interaction with the text. He or she looks through the text, tries to decipher the codes of the text and goes on to think about the meanings as well as the interrelationship among those codes and other elements of the text. The reader also likes to assess to what extent the existing passage is entertaining, informative, or boring. The reader thinks about the problems and complexities of the text that he faces and tries to decipher the meaning of the text through comparing and evaluating what he has grasped from the text with what he already knows about the topic (schematic knowledge).

Reading is a dynamic and varying process. When we read a text in another time and for a different purpose, the situation varies. Therefore, this process would not be the same for different people with different purposes.

A good reader is the one who defines his own specific purposes for his reading. He continuously considers whether the text and its reading would fulfill his aims and expectations or not. Usually before starting to read a text, he would skim through the text and would look at the structure of the text and the parts which are relevant to his

purpose of reading. During his reading, he usually makes some predications on what is about to come. He tries to be selective in terms of what to read, what to re-read and what not to read.

To develop our reading ability, it is necessary to know some strategies:

1. We should know why we want to read a text. Reading is usually done for different reasons and purposes, some of which are as follows:

- Reading for information
- Reading for learning
- Reading for integration of our information
- Reading for writing
- Reading for critiquing
- Reading for general understanding

In some cases we may read for other reasons:

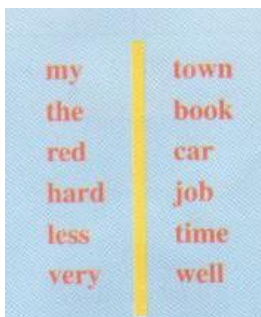
2. Before we start to read, we should know how much information we have about the intended topic and what we do want to know through our reading. Therefore, before starting to read, it is recommended that you design a table similar to the following table and fill it out based on the pre-reading, during-reading, and post-reading information.

انچه مي دانيم What we know	انچه مي خواهيم بدانيم What we want to know	انچه ياد گرفته ايم What we have learned	چطور مي توانيم بيشتر ياد بگيريم؟ How can we learn more?

3. Look carefully at the topics, pictures, tables and all the pictorial information provided on the page. The comprehension problems could be usually rectified through such contextual supports.
4. In order to have a good reading, the reader needs to combine his personal experiences, background knowledge, and lexico-grammatical knowledge. Therefore, it is not always necessary to know all the words in the text one by one because the background knowledge may help him to have a relative understanding of the text meaning even if some words are skipped over.
5. Pay attention to the punctuations, conjunctions, and pronouns. Sometimes inattention to these elements may cause some problems in reading comprehension process.
6. Since sentences play different roles within the text, try to understand the messages which each sentence gives you. Some sentences have implicit meanings and their meanings should be guessed within the text.
7. Write down a summary of important points in the margin of the text during your reading.
8. Try to increase your reading speed by seeing more number of words each time you look at the text. Follow the instruction below:

Make a list of two-part words and then draw a dividing line between the two parts of the words (see below). Focus your attention on the line and try to read the two words

simultaneously. If you could not see both words at the same time, it needs that you need to improve your marginal vision. Try with another list of words and continue to practice this way by looking at three words, six words and even more.



Some Recommendation for a Better Learning

1. Do your class activities in collaboration with other students. For example, check your assignments with theirs and discuss your answers with each other. To this aim, at the end of each lesson there is a sentence which invites you to have some discussion with your classmates.
2. Have a good dictionary on you. It is better you use monolingual dictionary. Dictionaries usually provide some information on the meaning of the words, pronunciations, types of the words, grammatical function of words, how to use a word in a sentence, idiomatic function of the words, and different meanings of the same word. Consult your teacher to choose a better dictionary.
3. Prepare a notebook for your words and make use of different methods to categorize the words.

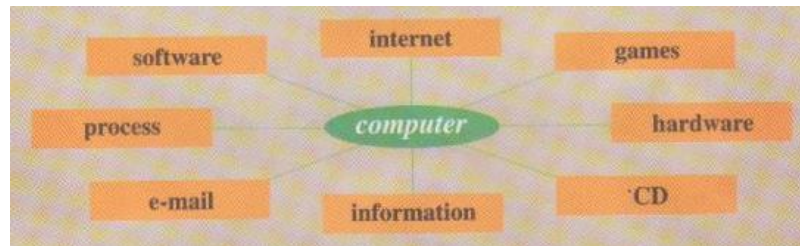
- Write down the words along with their pronunciation, derivatives, meaning, and examples an example of how to use it in a sentence. For example:

Familiar /.../adj. usual; that you often see, hear, etc.: *the familiar faces of your parents.* **Be familiar with,** *know something well: I can't drive this tractor because I'm not familiar with the controls.*

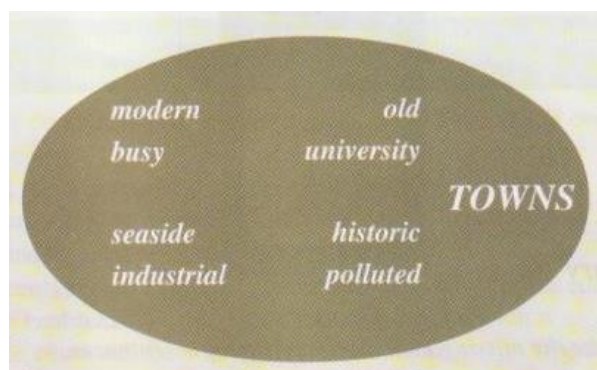
- Classify the words based on their topics. For example:

<i>Food</i>	<i>Animals</i>	<i>Body</i>	<i>Jobs</i>
<i>spaghetti</i>	<i>cat</i>	<i>arm</i>	<i>teacher</i>
<i>chicken soup</i>	<i>lion</i>	<i>leg</i>	<i>lawyer</i>
.....
.....

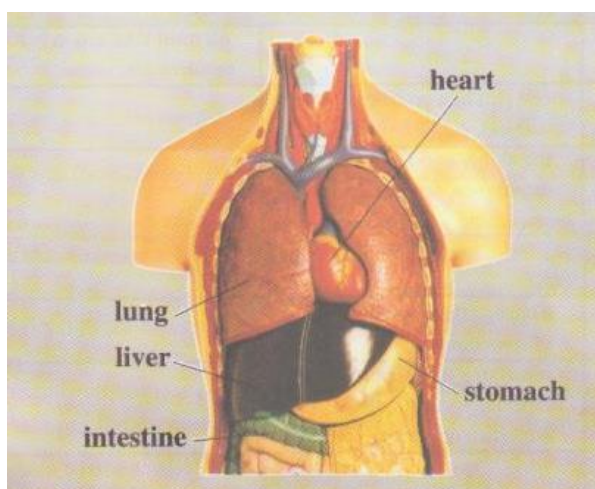
- Design a topical net of words. For example:



- Write the collocations, those words which usually go together. For example:



- Use pictures to help you remember the words and their functions. For example:



4. In order to improve your reading ability, besides knowing how to read you need to have extensive reading. Therefore, try to read those texts that interest you. To get familiar with such sources and to know more about different types of the texts consult your teacher.

Improve your English by this book and enjoy your reading.

Appendix J: List of Words (A Sample from the Textbook)

Word List

In the following list you can find the new words that appeared in this book with their lesson numbers. You can change this list into a bilingual dictionary by providing Farsi equivalents for the words. The numbers in brackets show the lessons in which the word first appeared.

A	Farsi equivalent
access / 'ækses / v.	(7) دسترسی پیدا کردن.....
addictive / ə'dɪktɪv / adj.	(7)
addition / ə'dɪʃən / n.	(7)
advertising / 'æd'vɜ:təɪzɪŋ / n.	(7)
advisability / əd'vaɪzə'bɪləti / n.	(8)
aerobic / eə'reʊbɪk / adj.	(1)
agriculture / 'ægrɪkʌltʃər / n.	(5)
aid / eɪd / n.	(4)
Albanian / əl'beɪniən / n.	(8)
annoy / ə'noɪ / v.	(8)
anxious / 'æŋkʃəs / adj.	(2)
Apollo / ə'pɔ:ləʊ / n.	(6)
apprentice / ə'prentɪs / n.	(5)
artificial / ɑ:rtə'fɪʃəl / adj.	(6)
aspect / 'æspekt / n.	(2)
astronaut / 'æstrənɔ:t / n.	(6)
atmosphere / 'ætməsfɪər / n.	(3)
attach / ə'tætʃ / v.	(7)
audience / 'ɔ:diəns / n.	(2)
August / 'ɔ:gəst / n.	(8)
aware / ə'weər / adj.	(2)
B	
base / beɪs / n.	(6)
bend / bend / v.	(1)

BIODATA OF THE STUDENT

Leila Mahmoudi was born in Masjedsoleyman, a city in southwest of Iran, in 1979. She earned a bachelor's degree in English Translation from Allameh Tabatabaee University, Tehran, in 2002 and a master's degree in Applied Linguistics from Azad University of Ahwaz. She started her career of teaching English at Izeh Azad University in 2004 and later served as the head of English department for a year. She was also given the chance of teaching for two semesters at Ahvaz Azad University and Shahid Beheshti University in Tehran. She was admitted into Applied Linguistics program in University Malaya (UM) in 2008, and has presented a few papers in ELT conferences, and has published four papers in international journals.