

English as a Foreign Language Teachers' Perceptions Towards The Use of the Communicative Testing Method

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Abstract

The current study addresses the existing gap between English language programme of the secondary stage classes, and the English language testing method of the Ministry of Education in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), which is used to assess students' outcomes in English language in the school leaving exams (known as Baccalaureate Exams). The study aims at exploring EFL teachers' views about English language testing method acquired in the Baccalaureate exams in developing students' communicative skills. It also aims at revealing their opinions regarding the introduction of a more communicative format for testing students' outcomes in English in the Baccalaureate Exams of Grade 12. The data for the current study was collected through a questionnaire with a sample of 60 EFL teachers who teach English at Grade 12 in different secondary schools in the KRI. The main findings of the study showed that, the English language test, in the Baccalaureate exams, does not meet the communicative needs of the students. This study has implications for the Ministry of Education to introduce more communicative tests in assessing students' levels of English at the end of their secondary education.

Keywords: communicative testing approach, Grade 12, baccalaureate exams, testing, EFL teachers

1. Introduction

As a popular trend in the field of language teaching, the communicative approach has received a lot of attention from experts, educators, and teachers across the globe to teach English as it focuses on teaching English in real life situations that deals with the social-functional and communicative features of language which students face outside the classroom (Karfa, 2019). This awareness of the need of employing a communicative approach has helped teachers and educators to reshape the way they plan and teach English.

With regards to foreign language teaching, the way test writers look at a language reflects how it is tested and what to be tested. For example, some view language as separate parts to focus on accuracy and to divide language into smaller units, while some others see language as unitary abilities and suggest an integrative type of testing, and there are also some who view language communicatively (Freeman, 2000).

Communicating effectively has become more important nowadays as a result of technology development and team work at workplaces, and this requires the test methods to be extensive enough to tell us what the test takers know or can do with a language. Therefore, it is argued that it is high time for the Ministry of Education in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) to introduce new mechanisms for assessing the English language in all the school Grades (=levels), especially in Grade 12, so as to create real contexts for students to use the English language when they leave school, and graduate towards university, or towards the professions that they wish to do in life.

While English as foreign language (EFL) teachers, in the KRI, try their best to use a communicative approach in their teachings, this is not the case when it comes to the assessment of their students. It is observed that most of the EFL teachers of Grade 12 and the Ministry of Education, generally, focus on knowledge testing and ignore important language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Therefore, the results of students' performances do not show the real competences of the students. This means, there is a gap between the English programme and testing method of the Ministry of Education-KRI, when assessing students' outcomes in the English language in the

Baccalaureate exams. In other words, students are trained to learn English for communicative purposes involving the four fundamental skills and, at the end of the program, are tested in a way that mainly reflects their knowledge of grammar and vocabulary of English rather than their ability to use the language in context.

The study aims at exploring EFL teachers' perceptions regarding the current English language testing method of the Baccalaureate Exams in developing students' communicative skills, and revealing their opinions on the introduction of a more communicative format for testing students' outcomes in English in the Baccalaureate Exams at the end of the secondary stage.

To meet the aims of this study, the current study tries to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the Grade 12 English as a foreign language teachers' perceptions
 - a) regarding the current method of testing English in the Baccalaureate Exams in developing students' communicative skills?
 - b) towards the use of a communicative testing method in assessing English as a foreign language students' levels of English in the Baccalaureate Exams secondary stage?

2. Literature Review

It is worth mentioning that, there is a close relationship between language teaching theories and language testing theories, in which the development of the first ones will influence the nature of the second ones (Giri, 2003). According to Heaton (1990) there are four main approaches to language testing which are developed through the progress of language teaching theories.

2.1 Essay Translation Testing Approach

In the Essay Translation Approach, language abilities are tested through subjective tools like: translation tasks and essay type questions (Farhady, 2006). The translation method of testing was commonly in use when the Grammar-Translation teaching was in use, which paid little attention to the statistical tools (Mousavi, 2009). In this method, students were given a passage or a set of sentences to be translated into the target language from the source language or vice versa. Sometimes questions of the essay type were given and different raters subjectively scored the responses of the students (Farhady, 2006).

2.2 Discrete – Point Testing Approach

With the appearance of structuralist linguistics, test performance was hugely affected. To them, knowledge of language means controlling features of language as a system (McNamara, 2000). This view resulted in forming a discrete point approach to language testing, which means language consists of different parts; grammar, vocabulary, sounds, and so on, and the fundamental skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking (Giri, 2003).

A structuralist view of language was reinforced by the theory and practice within psychometrics; the emerging science of the measurement of cognitive abilities (McNamara, 2000). The aim was to get objectivity through using various statistical tools to assure reliability and validity of the tests (Mousavi, 2009).

The discrete point approach tested the knowledge of a language in a decontextualised form. Each part or skill is tested separately at a time, and each gives specific information about the examinee's mastery of that part, and the total score gives total language ability of the examinee (Giri, 2003). This approach led to the development of the multiple – choice format of language testing (Farhady, 2006).

2.3 Integrative/Pragmatic Testing Approach

In its implementations, Discrete - Point Approach was seen as focusing on knowledge of a formal linguistic system rather than knowledge of using a language, and this led to the development of another form of language testing known as Integrative Pragmatic Approach commonly known as Integrative Approach (McNamara, 2000).

Supporters of the integrative approach believe that language cannot be broken into separate items as it is a holistic phenomenon. To them, the sum of all parts is not equal to whole, which means having knowledge about vocabulary, structure and other items of language separately, does not mean that the learner has the capacity of using language as an integrative tool for communication (Farhady, 2006).

This approach is mainly based on John Oller's Unitary Competence Hypothesis, which focused on the psycholinguistic processing involved in language use (McNamara, 2000). As Giri (2003) states that, language capacity is seen as a unitary factor rather than a separate construct. Here, language performance can be understood on the basis of the learner's pragmatic Expectancy Grammar, i.e., learner's capacity to expect utterances in a given

context. An example of this approach of testing is “Cloze Test”, in which a piece of reading is given to the learners, words removed systematically and replaced with blanks. The task of the reader is to guess and supply the missing words (Mousavi, 2009).

2.4 Communicative Testing Approach

Hymes’ communicative competence theory in early 1970s vastly influenced areas of language teaching and testing (McNamara, 2000). The approach focused on being able to communicate needs more than knowing linguistic knowledge. To communicate meaningfully the learner needs to know when and how to use a language (Freeman, 2000).

The era in which this approach appeared in the field of language testing is known as the Communicative period which starts from early 1980s up to the present day (Weir, 1990). The communicative language testing approach is based on the idea that language is learned to convey different types of functions and focuses on having a test that allows learners to use language in different situations and perform different tasks (Giri, 2003). Hughes (2003) defines communicative language testing as evaluating the ability to participate in communication acts...., and how best to do so. Communicative competence shifted psychological perspectives on language to the social perspective, focusing not only on the internal factors, but also on external and social functions of language (McNamara, 2000).

Communicative language testing is based on communicative competence. According to Phan (2008), from Canale and Swain 1980, “communicative competence involves linguistic competence (knowledge of linguistic forms), sociolinguistic competence (the ability to use language appropriately in contexts), discourse competence (coherence and cohesion), and strategic competence (knowledge of verbal and non-verbal communicative strategies)” (p. 3).

2.5 Principles of the Communicative Language Testing Approach

Phan (2008), from Bailey 1998, suggests the following principles in designing communicative language tests:

1. Test makers should know what they want from the test takers when the test takers use and perform a target language. The test makers should also establish a careful scale and criterion to measure test-takers’ performances.
2. Test content and tasks should be authentic and fit learners’ needs, interests, age, goals and level of proficiency.
3. The test should assess test takers’ performance at their best, and help them to go beyond the test to some strategic involvements.
4. Creating clear scoring criteria for both test takers and teachers, and putting course objective and content to get positive washback.

2.6 Characteristics of the Communicative Language Testing Approach

Despite the above principles, Phan (2008) argues that communicative language testing has the following characteristics:

1. The test is based on meaningful communication, which meets personal needs of the students and helps them to activate language which is useful to them.
2. Making use of real life situations (i.e. authentic situations), this leads to meaningful communication. Language cannot be meaningful if it is separated from contexts. Therefore; the communicative tests should assess students’ use of integrated language skills as it happens in the ordinary daily life.
3. As in real life, one cannot predict what the speaker is going to say “unpredictable input”, and also one cannot prepare himself /herself for one’s reply “creative output”. This real feature is used in the communicative tests.

Communicative test takers are required to act communicatively as in real-life situations (Mousavi, 2009). Performance assessment and task- based assessment can be considered the most suitable ways in designing communicative language tests (Phan, 2008).

The strong points of this approach are: measuring students integrate skills and all language skills, also preparing students for real life situations and problems. The weaknesses are: it is difficult to administrate, and does not focus on grammar but expects the examinees’ control of the grammar of a language (Trick, 2011).

Al-Mashhadani’s study (2002) aimed at finding out to what extent questions of the final examinations relating to functional language are valid and reliable. To achieve the aim of his study, a content of Book Eight was analyzed and

examination papers from 1993 up to the year 2001 were evaluated. One of the most important findings of the study revealed that, the Ministerial examinations have yearly emphasizes on certain items in a systematic selection at the expense of others. Also, it was revealed that there are defects in the validity and reliability of the General Baccalaureate Examination.

In another study Al-Nasiry (1984) reached to the conclusion that, English general Baccalaureate examination is not suitably successful in testing oral competence. In addition, the oral – aural test is more successful than the Baccalaureate written test in testing oral competence.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design and Procedures

A quantitative research design was implemented to effectively answer the research questions posed. Quantitative research as defined by Dörnyei (2007) is a “data collection procedures that result primarily in numerical data which is then analysed primarily by statistical methods” (p. 15).

After obtaining the validity of the questionnaire, it was distributed to achieve the aims of the current study. Accordingly, the researcher visited EFL teachers in 35 public schools, in which all the participants were met face to face to clarify the aims and items of the questionnaire, also to get their views about the English language testing method of Grade 12. The questionnaires were collected for analysis twenty-five days after their distribution.

3.2 Participants and Sampling

The participants of the study were 60 EFL teachers who teach English at grade 12 in secondary schools in Erbil city centre. Different schools in different quarters within Erbil city were visited to collect data. To put it another way stratified random selection was employed (Dörnyei, 2007), and it is carried out depending on the geographical distribution of the EFL teachers among different quarters of Erbil city centre. That is to say, different numbers of teachers were visited, to get the 60 EFL teachers as a total sample.

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis

A questionnaire was employed to collect the data. The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended questions to give us accurate quantitative results. Most of the items of the questionnaire were constructed in the light of using the presented sources in the current study, which deals with English language assessment and testing, and some of the other items were constructed by consulting college instructors, EFL supervisors, and curriculum experts at the Ministry of Education. The questionnaire consisted of 11 items. A five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree was employed. Data were analysed employing the Statistical package of social sciences (SPSS) version 20, and Microsoft Excel-2007. Frequencies and percentages were used to interpret the data.

3.4 Validity

To ensure validity, experts in the field of English language teaching, applied linguistics, education, curriculum design as well as statistics, checked the questionnaire items. They reduced, modified, and added some items to the tool before its distribution.

4. Results and Findings

In the view of the below data tables, which shows the frequencies and descriptive statistics for each item of the questionnaire, and reveals participants’ levels of agreement to each item, the researcher arrived at some results and findings.

4.1 Perceptions Regarding the Existing Method

In relation to the first research question, which seeks to reveal the EFL teachers’ opinions of Grade 12, regarding the role of the existing method of testing the English language in the Baccalaureate Exams in developing students’ communicative skills, the teachers believe that, the Baccalaureate Exam test of English language does not develop students’ communicative competence skills, and it fails to assess their proficiency in the English language. In addition, it seems that the Baccalaureate Exam test of the English language does not meet the language needs of the teachers and students to cope with the new system of education in the KRI. Furthermore, the Baccalaureate Exam format of the English test is inappropriate for the English language programme of Grade 12 which is called Sunrise 12 and it does not assess all the fundamental skills/ areas of the target language. These views are in line with the study of Al-Nasiry (1984) who reported that English general Baccalaureate examination is not suitably successful in testing students’ oral competence, and he suggests that the oral – aural test is better test type for testing students’ oral competence in English language.

The following will present detailed information regarding the teachers' responses with respect to the current method of the Baccalaureate exam to test the English language.

When the participants were asked to state their level of agreement to whether testing the English language in the current Baccalaureate Exam assesses students' proficiency in the language (Statement 1), N:7 (10.4%) of the teachers strongly disagreed, N: 20 (29.9%) disagreed, N: 23 (34.3%) of them were not sure, N:13 (19.4%) agreed, and N:4 (6.0%) strongly agreed. These results indicate that, Baccalaureate Exam of English does not evaluate students' oral and speaking skills in the English Language at the end of Grade 12.

When the participants were asked to state their level of agreement to whether the English language test in the current Baccalaureate Exam meets the needs of the teachers and students to cope with the new system of education in the Region (Statement 2), N: 7 (10.4%) of the teachers strongly disagreed, N: 26 (38.8 %) disagreed, N: 17 (25.4%) of them were not sure, N: 14(20.9%) agreed, and N: 3 (4.5%) strongly agreed. These results indicate that, the Baccalaureate Exam of English does not consider teachers and students' requirements according to the new KRI system of education.

When the participants were asked to state their level of agreement to whether the English language test in the current Baccalaureate Exam assesses the development of students' communicative competence skills (Statement 3), N: 9 (13.4%) of the teachers strongly disagreed, N: 34 (50.7 %) disagreed, N: 11(16.4%) of them were not sure, N: 9 (13.4%) agreed, and N: 4 (6.0%) strongly agreed. These results indicate that, Baccalaureate Exam of English does not evaluate students' communicative competence in English language, which is the desired goal of the Ministry of Education.

When the participants were asked to state their level of agreement to whether the existing method of the current Baccalaureate Exam of English language does not suit Sunrise English Course (Statement 4), N: 4 (6.0%) of the teachers strongly disagreed, N: 15 (22.4%) disagreed, N: 4 (6.0%) of them were not sure, N: 33 (49.3%) agreed, and N: 11(16.4%) strongly agreed. These results indicate that, the current Baccalaureate Exam of English needs adjustment as it fails to be in line with the new English language Course of KRI schools curriculum.

When the participants were asked to state their level of agreement to whether the existing method of the current Baccalaureate Exam of English does not assess student's competence and proficiency of the language (Statement 5), N: 1(1.5%) of the teachers strongly disagreed, N: 12 (17.9%) disagreed, N: 9 (13.4%) of them were not sure, N: 36 (53.7%) agreed, and N: 9 (13.4%) strongly agreed. These results indicate that, the current Baccalaureate Exam of English fails to evaluate students' four language skills of English language at the end of Grade 12 of the secondary stage education.

Table 1. EFL Teachers' Responses Regarding the Existing Method

Statement	Level of Agreement	N	%
1. Testing English language in the current Baccalaureate Exam assesses students' proficiency in the language.	strongly disagree	7	10.4
	disagree	20	29.9
	not sure	23	34.3
	agree	13	19.4
	strongly agree	4	6.0
	Total	67	100.0
Statement	Level of Agreement	N	%
2. The English language test in the current Baccalaureate Exam meets the needs of the teachers and students to cope with the new system of education in the Region.	strongly disagree	7	10.4
	disagree	26	38.8
	not sure	17	25.4
	agree	14	20.9
	strongly agree	3	4.5
	Total	67	100.0
Statement	Level of Agreement	N	%
3. The English language test in the current Baccalaureate Exam assesses the development of students' communicative competence skills.	strongly disagree	9	13.4
	disagree	34	50.7
	not sure	11	16.4
	agree	9	13.4
	strongly agree	4	6.0
	Total	67	100.0
Statement	Level of Agreement	N	%
4. The existing method of the current Baccalaureate Exam of English language does not suit Sunrise English Course.	strongly disagree	4	6.0
	disagree	15	22.4

	not sure	4	6.0
	agree	33	49.3
	strongly agree	11	16.4
	Total	67	100.0
Statement	Level of Agreement	N	%
5. The existing method of the current Baccaalaureate Exam of English does not assess student’s competence and proficiency of the language.	strongly disagree	1	1.5
	disagree	12	17.9
	not sure	9	13.4
	agree	36	53.7
	strongly agree	9	13.4
	Total	67	100.0

4.2 Perceptions Regarding the Communicative Testing Method

Moreover, to be able to answer the second research question that seeks to reveal the participants’ perceptions towards the use of the communicative testing method in assessing English as a foreign language students’ levels of English in the Baccaalaureate Exams of the secondary stage, the teachers believe that, while the Baccaalaureate exam of English language reflects the topics and content of Sunrise 12, but the EFL teachers ignore important topics, skills and areas in teaching Sunrise 12 as they are not included in the Baccaalaureate exam such as listening and speaking activities. Also, majority of the teachers agree on having a new revised system of Baccaalaureate Exam for English language testing. Here, most of them prefer a format that focuses on Communicative Testing Approach, rather than a format that forces students to memorize knowledge of the target language for only passing the English language test in the Baccaalaureate Exams. Furthermore, majority the participants see the necessity of including speaking and listening skills in the Baccaalaureate exam of English, especially, through having an action plan for that, and with the participation of reputable international partner in the process of revising Baccaalaureate exam of English. These views are in line to the study of Abbas and Chrage (2020) who reported that, the focus of the KRI Ministry of Education in English language testing is to test students’ knowledge of language rather than how to use the English language in real contexts. Also, the complete content and topics of Sunrise Course are not fully taught and assessed by EFL teacher, but only those items and skills that are included for the monthly, end-term, and Baccaalaureate exams.

The following will present detailed information regarding the teachers’ responses with respect to the communicative testing method of the Baccaalaureate exam to test the English language.

When the participants were asked to state their level of agreement to whether the English test items of the current Baccaalaureate Exam reflect the content and topics of Sunrise English Course (Statement 6), N: 4 (6.0%) of the teachers strongly disagreed, N: 12 (17.9%) disagreed, N: 11 (16.4%) of them were not sure, N: 33 (49.3%) agreed, and N: 7 (10.4%) strongly agreed. These results indicate that, there is a close link between Baccaalaureate Exam items and school curriculum, which is positive point, and can show achievement levels of students in English language, if it is done in a proper way.

When the participants were asked to state their level of agreement to whether some teachers ignore topics, subjects and skills in teaching Sunrise 12 because they are not included in the current Baccaalaureate Exam (Statement 7), N: 3 (4.5%) of the teachers strongly disagreed, N: 3 (4.5%) disagreed, N: 3 (4.5%) of them were not sure, N: 32 (47.8%) agreed, and N: 26 (38.8%) strongly agreed. These results indicate that, the Baccaalaureate Exam of English leads to negative washback as students try to pass the exam only, not trying to study English for real life and communicative requirements.

When the participants were asked to state their level of agreement to whether Ministry of Education should consult with an international partner to help in the process of developing a revised system of the English language test for the Baccaalaureate Exam (Statement 8), N: 2 (3.0%) of the teachers strongly disagreed, N: 10 (14.9%) disagreed, N: 5 (7.5%) of them were not sure, N: 33 (49.3%) agreed, and N: 17 (25.4%) strongly agreed. These results indicate that, it is time for the Ministry to adapt Baccaalaureate Exam of English through some international standards like CEFR, and measure students’ levels accordingly.

When the participants were asked to state their level of agreement to whether in the revision, the test items of the Baccaalaureate Exam should include limited portion to evaluate students’ speaking skills (Statement 9), N: 1 (1.5%) of the teachers strongly disagreed, N: 6 (9.0%) disagreed, N: 9 (13.4%) of them were not sure, N: 42 (62.7%) agreed, and N: 9 (13.4%) strongly agreed. These results indicate that, speaking skill is needed to be tested in the Baccaalaureate Exam of English as primary skill of students’ communicative competence.

When the participants were asked to state their level of agreement to whether in the revision, the test items of the Baccaalaureate Exam should include the evaluation of listening skills to reflect communication and language use in

real contexts (Statement 10), N: 0 (0%) of the teachers strongly disagreed, N: 8 (11.9%) disagreed, N: 6 (9.0%) of them were not sure, N: 35 (52.2%) agreed, and N: 18 (26.9%) strongly agreed. These results indicate that, listening skill is needed to be tested in the Baccaulaureate Exam of English as an important skill of students' communicative competence.

When the participants were asked to state their level of agreement to whether the Ministry of Education should draw up an action plan and consider necessary facilities for teaching & testing according to the Communicative Approach when revising English testing in the Baccaulaureate Exams (Statement 11), N: 1 (1.5%) of the teachers strongly disagreed, N: 1 (1.5%) disagreed, N: 3 (4.5%) of them were not sure, N: 36 (53.7%) agreed, and N: 26 (38.8%) strongly agreed. These results indicate that, any adaptation or change of Baccaulaureate exam of English should be through clear plan and targets, to get desired goals in relation to teaching and assessing English language in the KRI schools, rather than getting the opposite consequences of teaching and assessing English language process.

Table 2. EFL Teachers' Responses Regarding the Communicative Testing Method

Statement	Level of Agreement	N	%
6. The English test items of the current Baccaulaureate Exam reflect the content and topics of Sunrise English Course.	strongly disagree	4	6.0
	disagree	12	17.9
	not sure	11	16.4
	agree	33	49.3
	strongly agree	7	10.4
	Total	67	100.0
Statement	Level of Agreement	N	%
7. Some teachers ignore topics, subjects and skills in teaching Sunrise 12 because they are not included in the current Baccaulaureate Exam.	strongly disagree	3	4.5
	disagree	3	4.5
	not sure	3	4.5
	agree	32	47.8
	strongly agree	26	38.8
	Total	67	100.0
Statement	Level of Agreement	N	%
8. Ministry of Education should consult with an international partner to help in the process of developing a revised system of the English language test for the Baccaulaureate Exam.	strongly disagree	2	3.0
	disagree	10	14.9
	not sure	5	7.5
	agree	33	49.3
	strongly agree	17	25.4
	Total	67	100.0
Statement	Level of Agreement	N	%
9. In the revision, the test items of the Baccaulaureate Exam should include limited portion to evaluate students' speaking skills.	strongly disagree	1	1.5
	disagree	6	9.0
	not sure	9	13.4
	agree	42	62.7
	strongly agree	9	13.4
	Total	67	100.0
Statement	Level of Agreement	N	%
10. In the revision, the test items of the Baccaulaureate Exam should include the evaluation of listening skills to reflect communication and language use in real contexts.	strongly disagree	0	0
	disagree	8	11.9
	not sure	6	9.0
	agree	35	52.2
	strongly agree	18	26.9
	Total	67	100.0
Statement	Level of Agreement	N	%
11. The Ministry of Education should draw up an action plan and consider necessary facilities for teaching & testing according to the Communicative Approach when revising English testing in the Baccaulaureate Exams.	strongly disagree	1	1.5
	disagree	1	1.5
	not sure	3	4.5
	agree	36	53.7
	strongly agree	26	38.8
	Total	67	100.0

4.3 Discussion of the Results and Findings

The results and findings which are obtained from the study reveal the followings:

1. Baccaulaureate Exam test of English language lacks characteristics of a good language test.

2. Baccalaureate Exam test of English language lacks characteristics of the communicative approach of language testing.
3. The format of English language test, in the Baccalaureate Exams, is not suitable for Grade 12 students, and it does not assess all the skills/areas of the target language, and it needs improvements to assess all the skills/areas of the target language.
4. The EFL teachers, who teach English at KRI schools, neglect important topics, skills and areas in teaching Sunrise 12 as they are not parts in the Baccalaureate Exam of English language.
5. Majority of the EFL teachers like to have a new format of Baccalaureate Exam for the English language program of KRI schools. Here, most of them prefer a format that focuses on developing students' communicative skills, also a format that focuses on understanding and students' critical thinking, rather than a format that forces students to memorize knowledge of the target language, for only passing the English language test in the Baccalaureate Exams.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the above results and findings, it is concluded that, the English language test in the current Baccalaureate Exams and its format cannot be considered as a communicative test, as it does not contain most of the main characteristics and features of the communicative approach of language testing. This shows that, the English language test format of the Baccalaureate Exam does not match with the core of Sunrise Course which has a communicative nature.

Also, The English Language test format of the current Baccalaureate Exam does not develop students' communicative competence, and it does not fulfill teachers, and students' needs of the target language. In this regard most of the teachers agree that the existing format of the current Baccalaureate Exam does not suit Sunrise curriculum. Furthermore, the English language test and its format of the current Baccalaureate Exam leads to poor classroom teaching. Here, most of the teachers agree with the researcher about the effect of this format on teaching Sunrise in general and Sunrise 12 in particular. To them, most classroom teachers neglect topics, subjects, and skills because they are not considered in the test.

Finally, majority of the teachers agree and open to a new format for testing English, in the Baccalaureate Exams, in a way that all the skills and areas of English language are included and tested in a balanced way to develop students' communicative skills in English.

Through the current study, it is recommended for the Ministry of Education that, it should step forward gradually towards introducing and applying communicative format of language testing for English, therefore, improvement is needed for being able to assess all the skills/areas of the target language. In this regard, all the necessary plans and facilities should be considered before starting the process. This is to pave the way to assess English as communication, and develop students' communicative skills in English.

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Appendix A

EFL Teachers' Questionnaire

	Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Testing the English language in the current Baccalaureate Exam assesses students' proficiency in the language.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
2	The English language test in the current Baccalaureate Exam meets the needs of the teachers and students to cope with the new system of education in the Region.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
3	The English language test in the current Baccalaureate Exam assesses the development of students' communicative competence skills.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
4	The existing method of the current Baccalaureate Exam of English language does not suit Sunrise English Course.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
5	The existing method of the current Baccalaureate Exam of English does not assess student's competence and proficiency of the language.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
6	The English test items of the current Baccalaureate Exam reflect the content and topics of Sunrise English Course.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
7	Some teachers ignore topics, subjects and skills in teaching Sunrise 12 because they are not included in the current Baccalaureate Exam.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
8	Ministry of Education should consult with an international partner to help in the process of developing a revised system of the English language test for the Baccalaureate Exam.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
9	In the revision, the test items of the Baccalaureate Exam should include limited portion to evaluate students' speaking skills.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
10	In the revision, the test items of the Baccalaureate Exam should include the evaluation of listening skills to reflect communication and language use in real contexts.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
11	The Ministry of Education should draw up an action plan and consider necessary facilities for teaching & testing according to the Communicative Approach when revising English testing in the Baccalaureate Exams.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree

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