

Testing Grammar

The testing of usage and use assesses the students grammatical competence as well as his active control of sentences structure. Knowledge of grammatical structure is necessary to be mastered by students.

1-Main Areas of Grammar points :

- Verb form
- Verb tense
- Prepositions
- Auxiliary verbs .
- Question words
- Conjunctions
- Articles
- Determiners
- Pronouns
- Demonstratives
- Subject-verb agreement
- Changing sentence from one structure into another
Singular into plural and vice versa
Positive into negative or interrogative and vice versa
Present tense into past test or continuous
Active voice into passive voice and vice versa
Direct into indirect speech and vice versa

Techniques for Testing Structure.

1- MCQ - Completion Items .

This test has been favored by many teachers for years .The students are given a number of incomplete sentence;each is followed by four options.,one of which is the correct answer.For constructing this test , the teacher has to choose the grammar points that has recently taught.Next , he has to write a sentence or a context for each point .Then , he has to select logical distractors and finally write clear directions.

The following are some examples of MCQ items :

Write the number of the item and the letter of the correct answer.

1-.....are you going ?

To school

a-When b- Where c- What. d-How

2-he tries hard , he will not succeed .

a-Although. b-If. C-Before d- Until

- The teacher may give only two options rather than giving them three or four options for each stem as in the following sentences.The direction could be ((underline the right word)) ..
1-I'd like any / some coffee .Why isn't there some / any on the menu?
2-The two things you can never eat after/ before breakfast are lunch and dinner .

It should be noted that the teacher can give students a text instead of separate and unrelated sentences. The information in the text helps the students to guess correctly the word required to fill in each blank space .for example:

My name is Ahmed . I(is , are , am , be) fourteen years old .My family and I live(at , in, on, by) Diyala(My , Your , You ,Mine) father is a teacher(She , Her , His , he) name is Ali .My mother (working, work, works , worked) in a hospital.

2- Supply test .

This testing technique is very common and can be used for testing a variety of structural points as tenses , prepositions, conjunction, articles and the like .The test can either be devoted to one grammatical area or may include different areas.The direction given may be :

- Put the verbs between brackets in the correct tense .
- Fill in with prepositions or Fill in with articles .

For example:

Rewrite the following sentences and supply the correct form of the verb between brackets.

- 1- I haven't seen him since he (leave) school.
- 2- I (write) to him last summer .
- 3- Peter (punish) by his father for coming late .

This test is in the form of separate unrelated sentences and tests knowledge of verb tenses .The following test is in the form of a text and tests knowledge of articles.

Fill in the blank spaces with a,an , or the .

We live inold house.We ve gotchicken andcookchicken is called chicky andcock is called Coko.

Note 1- : Using texts can restrict the teacher to certain grammatical areas unlike separate sentences where he is free to include different sentences so as to test different structures .

Note 2- Both tests ((the discrete point and the integrative one)) are considered restricted-response tests not closed ended tests .

Note 3- Another variant of supply type test comes in the form of providing the students with a number of grammatical or functional words to fill in the spaces in the sentences.

Note 4- A Supply test may test word formation ((inflection or derivation)) .The students are asked to derive a word from the one given to fill in the blank space correctly .Word formation tests suits students at intermediate or advanced levels .

For example:

From the word in capital letters form a word that fit suitably in the blank space .

- 1-His brother is a (SCIENCE)
- 2-Nora is studying.....at Baghdad University.(ENGINEER)
- 3-The President is going to make a(SPEAK)
- 4-Bewhen you cross the word .(CARE)

3-Completion Items (with two or more words)

This technique is more a semantic test than a grammatical one .It tests the students active control of sentence structure and meaning .Most teachers prefer this technique to MCQ as it tests production rather than recognition and this makes it more suitable for intermediate level than for elementary one .for example:

Complete the following sentences correctly.

1-If I had a camera,of this beautiful sight .

2-He must leave early because.....

3-They are so tired that

4- **Rearrangement.**

This technique requires the students to arrange jumbled sets of words to form grammatically and meaningfully correct sentences.Word order items can offer a means of testing knowledge of grammar and vocabulary.for example:

Put the words in the right order and add capital letters and punctuation marks.

1- A jumper / Adnan/wearing/is

2- In / home / bedroom/Huda/ her/ is / at

3- book / brother/ a/ iraq/ ahmed/ reading / my / is / about

Note : The rearrangement test can be in the form of a short conversation .i. e a communicative test and not a discrete point one .