PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
University of Tlemcen

Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of English

Investigating the Impact of Washback on an EFL Setting: Case
of Second Year EFL Students at the University of Tlemcen

Dissertation submitted to the Department of English as a partial
fulfilment of the requirements for the Masters' degree in Didactics
and Assessment in English Language Education

Presented by   **Supervised by**
Miss. Asma KAZOUZ   Dr. Smail BENMOUSSAT

BOARD OF EXAMINERS

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Academic Year: 2016-2017

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Dedication

To family and friends

Acknowledgments

Abstract

The present research aims to investigate the impact of washback on an EFL setting, namely the English Language Department at the University of Tlemcen. It seeks to identify whether this impact is positive or negative, to what extent washback exerts its influence, andhow it is perceived. To tackle such issue, a research instrument, in the form of two questionnaires, has been administered to a sample population consisting of 14 EFL teachers and 40 2nd year-EFL students. The collected data has been analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively, and it showed a clear relationship between learning andtesting, in the sense that this latter influences students' affective factors and test performance, leading to the adoption of multiple strategies to remedy such deficiencies. Furthermore, testing has influenced teaching through the changes of teachers' behaviour at the levels of curriculum design, teaching methodology, use of materials, and the development of language tests. In order to sensitise the reader about the crucial role of the washback effect, and drawing on the findings of the study, a set of recommendations has been proposed in order improve language testing and learning by promoting positive washback.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ASL: Arabic as a Second Language

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ELT: English Language Teaching

HKCEE: Hong Kong Certificate Education Examination

ICT's: Information and Communication Technologies

IF: Interactive Fiction

MCQs: Multiple Choice Questions

VR: Virtual Reality

General Introduction

Testing has always played a crucial role in the language teaching and learning process. For many years, it was regarded as a recluse subject that was frequently administered at the end of a course, a term, or an academic year. Nowadays, testing has gained much ground and interest, in the sense that it is considered as an integral part of the curriculum, and is often seen as a "fun" learning experience in itself. Furthermore, language tests are now regarded as inestimable means for providing information that is relevant to various aspects of the educational process. They provide feedback to both teachers and students about the progress and extent of attaining the language learning objectives. They are tools for evaluating the implemented teaching methodology and the instructional materials, and they are often esteemed as "levers for change" based on the decisions that teachers, administrators, and policy-makers, in sum stakeholders, make due to their results. This influence that testing exerts on teaching and learning is what is known as "washback".

Studies about this phenomenon have triggered the researcher's attention to investigate the impact of washback on the EFL setting at hand. It is evident that testing affects the teachers and learners, but in what form and to what extent is what impelled the researcher to tackle such topic, and seek to categorise this influence as either a negative washback or a positive one. Thereby, the aim has also been to employ the research findings to provide solutions and suggestions that strive to raise awareness about the existence of this issue, and to promote beneficial washback that leads to the betterment of the teaching/learning process.

In order to highlight the teachers and students' perceptions about this phenomenon, two research questions have been formulated:

1. What is the nature and scope of the washback effect on the teachers' attitudes and classroom behaviour?
2. How do learners perceive language testing, and to what extent are they affected by such a "necessary evil"?

The aforementioned questions have led to the formulation of the following hypotheses:

1. Washback can either be positive or negative, and it is often seen in the changes teachers adopt in their teaching methodology, teaching content, materials, and assessment strategies.

2. Students are affected psychologically and mentally by testing. This impact can be seen in the perceptions and decisions of students involved in this process, such as changing learning styles, devotion of more time for revision, enrolling in paid-coaching classes, and other learn-to-the-test practices.

In an attempt to confirm our hypotheses, a sample of tertiary teachers and 2nd Year-EFL students at the University of Tlemcen have accepted to represent our sample population.

The present research work has been structured on the basis of three chapters. The first one outlines the theoretical underpinnings related to the washback effect; it defines its major concepts and provides the reader with a general overview about the phenomenon.

The second chapter revolves around the methodological procedures that have been used in order to back up this study. Here, the investigator highlights the research design, the sample of population, the research instruments, and provides a detailed analysis of the of the teachers and students' questionnaires.

The third chapter provides an interpretation of the main results, with reference to our topic of concern in order to either confirm or reject the hypotheses mentioned above. It is then followed by a set of suggestions and recommendations that aim to enhance the field of language assessment and ameliorate learners' performances.

Chapter One: Literature Review

Chapter One: Literature Review

1.1. Introduction

The essence of this chapter revolves around the theoretical underpinnings of the washback effect. It first examines its definitions as they are provided by various educationalists. Then, it reviews the types of washback with special reference to both the micro and macro levels. Next, it lists the hypothesis behind this effect and how it relates to the teaching/learning process. Following this section, an analysis of a major effect of washback, teaching-to-the-test approach, is discussed in detail. Finally, the chapter ends by providing the various areas that are affected by the washback effect.

1.2. Definition of Washback

Washback, or backwash[1], has been under the scrutiny of many educationalists and applied linguists. Thus, a number of definitions were put forward to explain such a phenomenon. One of the prominent ones indicates that the notion of washback refers to the influence of language testing on teaching and learning (Alderson and Wall, 1993).In accordance with this definition, Shohamy et al. (1996:298) define washback as "the connections between testing and learning". Messick (1996) notes that washback can either have a positive effect that fosters language learning, or a negative one that hinders the process. As for Pearson (1988) and Cheng (2005), they have both pointed out a broader scope of washback. The former shows the impact of examinations on the attitudes, behaviours, and motivation of teachers, learners and even parents. The latter, however, demonstrates the role of washback in curriculum change and its impact on the teaching methodology.

Washback, however, is not confined only to teachers and learners. Its impact encompasses society, educational systems and individuals, thus this concept can be further defined according to two major perspectives: a holistic view beyond the

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[1]Washback and backwash are synonymous. The former is associated with British applied linguistics, while the latter is utilised in general education circles.

classroom at a macro level, and a narrow view within the classroom at a micro level.

As proposed by Bachman and Palmer (1996), macro level washback refers to the test effect within the society as a whole. Such as the government policy-making, school administration, publishing houses, and even parents' expectations from their children. At a micro level, washback refers to the influence of testing within the classroom that mostly results in the innovation of curricula, change or improvement of teaching methodologies, and the adaptation of new and suitable learning strategies by the students. In a nutshell, tests can have "significant impact not only on individuals but also on practices and policies in the classroom, the school, the educational system and in society as a whole" (Wall, 1997:291).

It is important to understand that washback has always been a recurrent phenomenon in the academic career of every teacher and student in the form of the question: Will this be included in the test? And as might be expected, teachers and students are prone to adjust their teaching and learning to fulfil the requirements of tests, particularly since this latter's outcomes assume a vital role in achieving educational and social success.

1.3. Types of Washback

The notion of washback has been dissected under many assessment studies. One common result was that it is a two-fold phenomenon, i.e., it can either be negative or positive. These studies aimed to investigate and describe the teaching-testing relationship. As Alderson and Wall (1993:115) state its importance by denoting that "tests are held to be powerful determiners of what happens in classrooms."

Regarding the view of washback as a concept that covers a wide range of impact at a micro level (within a classroom setting), and a macro level (within the educational/societal system). Negative and positive washback can further be ramified according to those viewpoints.

1.3.1. Negative Washback

It is assumed that testing influences teaching and learning. This influence, however, is perceived as a negative one by some scholars. The following section details these perceptions with reference to both the macro and micro levels.

1.3.1.1. Classroom Setting

Negative washback can simply be defined as the negative effect of testing. Alderson and Wall (1993) argued that tests which do not correspond with the stated objectives and principles of the course will most likely have an undesirable effect on teaching and learning. This leads to a heavy focus on testing specific items of the language, rather than evaluating total phases of understanding (Shohamy, 1992). Vernon (1956) posits a view that tests negatively distort the curriculum since teachers tend to focus on subjects and activities that are related to passing a certain exam, while neglecting the rest of the curriculum. A more dangerous remark was the one stated by Smith (1991) in which she observed a significant reduction of instruction time, a narrowing of curricular activities and modes of instruction, a decrease in teachers' capacities of teaching content, and an incompatible use of methods and materials as a result of testing programmes. Even teachers dealt with a massive share of anxiety, fear, and pressure to cover the material, notably those novice ones who felt as if they were judged based on their students' test scores.

A large number of paid coaching classes erupted aiming to prepare students for exams, but instead, they fostered a tense learning environment in which the focus was on test-taking skills rather than on language learning activities. Madaus lists additional outcomes of negative washback, stating that (1988:22):

> The negative washback will definitely result in cramming, narrowing the curriculum, focus of attention on those skills that are most relevant to testing, placement of constraints on teachers' and students' creativity and spontaneity, and disparage the professional judgment of educators.

1.3.1.2. Educational/Societal System

The way teachers and students view language tests is in contrast with the way they are perceived by policy-makers. This discrepancy is a consequence of the bureaucrats' belief that through a test they have power over teaching and learning. They seem to use the test both as a means to improve matters and as a device by which they control the system, i.e., to serve their political agendas. Thus, tests are tools to prescribe the behaviour of teachers and students (Shohamy, 1996).

1.3.2. Positive Washback

Regarding the positive views about washback, a number of educationalists affirmed that testing can be utilised to optimise learners' outcomes, and accomplish the general objectives of the educational system. These views are further detailed in the following sections.

1.3.2.1. Classroom Setting

Many researchers strongly believe that it is feasible to implement beneficial changes in teaching by changing tests. In this sense, teachers and learners are more tolerant towards examinations, and motivated to work collaboratively to achieve the course objectives and to cover the material more thoroughly.

Pearson (1988) states that good tests can be redesigned and employed as beneficial teaching-learning tasks. And Heyneman (1987) even argues that coaching can be seen rather as a virtue instead of a drawback. Andrews et al. (2002) and Davies (1985) basically share the same thought about the relationship between testing and curriculum design. The former states that deliberate curriculum change can be attained by immediate modifications in language testing. The latter claims that creative and innovative testing can advantageously result in a syllabus alteration.

1.3.2.2. Educational/societal system

A positive outcome of washback is that it promotes lifelong learning, and encourages people outside the academic setting to take initiatives in learning

English. Through positive washback, decision-makers are able to achieve their objectives regarding the educational system by utilising the authority and power of high-stakes testing. These objectives may include, for instance, the introduction of new textbooks and new curricula.

One thing for certain, is that there comes to be various conflicting orientations towards the positions of washback in language testing, since there is no clear-cut division as to what makes an effect positive or negative. In this vein, Pearson (1988) theorised that a test's washback will be negative if it does not match the course principles and objectives it is supposed to attain; conversely, it will be positive if it does reflect those aims and encourage a whole other range of desired changes. However, Alderson and Wall (1993) posit that no matter the quality of a test, whether it is good or bad, we can never predict whether it is going to attain beneficial or detrimental washback effects, and this is attributed to the vital influence of the unpredictable contextual factors.

1.4. Washback Hypothesis

In an article entitled <u>Does Washback Exist</u>?, Alderson and Wall (1993:121-122) indicate that many of the asserted assumptions revolving around the influence of washback have no empirical findings to confirm their claims. Accordingly, they set a list of 15 hypotheses that note the effect of tests on teaching and learning. These hypotheses resulted from their readings of the literature on language testing generally, but mostly it was the fruit of a two-year longitudinal observational study conducted in Sri Lanka, and hence the washback hypothesis states that:

- A test will influence teaching.
- A test will influence learning.
- A test will influence what teachers teach; and
- A test will influence how teachers teach; and
- A test will influence what learners learn; and
- A test will influence how learners learn.
- A test will influence the rate and sequence of teaching; and
- A test will influence the rate and sequence of learning.

- A test will influence the degree and depth of teaching; and

- A test will influence the degree and depth of learning.

- A test will influence attitudes to the content, method, etc. of teaching and learning.

- Tests that have important consequences will have washback; and conversely

- Tests that do not have important consequences will have no washback.

- Tests will have washback on all learners and teachers.

- Tests will have washback effects for some learners and some teachers, but not for others.

The aforementioned hypotheses illustrate the tie existing between washback and teaching and learning,thus we can deduce that the scope of washback includes: the content of teaching, the methodology of teaching, learning strategies, how quickly and in what order teaching and learning occurs, the quality and quantity of teaching and learning, the attitudes towards teaching and learning, the consideration of washback consequences, and the extent of washback's impact on stakeholders.

Alderson and Wall (1993:117) further denote that "The Washback Hypothesis seems to assume that teachers and learners do things they would not necessarily otherwise do because of the test, hence the notion of influence."

This leads to the assumption that even "poor" tests may have a positive influence if it makes learners do "good things that they would not otherwise do", such as: doing their homework, learning by heart, taking the subject being tested more seriously, and so on. Teachers, too, will be compelled to prepare lessons more thoroughly, recognise and remedy the learners' weaknesses, and changing teaching methodologies. All in all, any test, whether good or bad, can possess a beneficial washback if it intensifies such activities and extrinsic motivation[2].

On the other hand, one should contemplate the possibility of having bad effects whether the test is good or bad. Anxiety is one of the substantial factors that

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[2] It refers to motivation that comes from outside an individual. The motivating factors are external, or outside, rewards such as money or grades. These rewards provide satisfaction and pleasure that the task itself may not provide.

may affect learners. As it is suspected, and stated by Alderson and wall (1993:117) "any learner who is obliged to do something under pressure will perform abnormally and may therefore experience anxiety." In the same manner, teachers are influenced by their learners' performances and thus:

> The fear of poor results, and the associated guilt, shame, or embarrassment, might lead to the desire for their pupils to achieve high scores in whatever way seems possible. This might lead to teaching to the test, with an undesirable narrowing of the curriculum. (Alderson and Wall, 1993:118).

1.5. Teaching-to-the-test Approach

It goes without saying that language testing is, in effect, a great responsibility that teachers are to assume. As it aids them to diagnose their students' strengths and weaknesses, to assess their progress, and also to gain feedback on one's own teaching practices. In short, testing holds a powerful position in the teaching/learning process. In this vein, it is only natural that both teachers and learners tend to tailor their classroom activities to the demands of tests, particularly when this latter can determine the future of the learners, and passing scores are used to measure teachers' success. This influence of the test, referred to as washback, may lead instructors to adopt certain procedures to achieve better results, hence teaching-to-the-test approach emerged to cater to the needs of learners, teachers, as well as policy-makers.

Teaching-to-the-test is self-defined. It is an approach in which the instruction is more test-oriented, as exam-taking skills and strategies are taught rather than content knowledge. Teachers usually employ past examination papers to serve this purpose with the intention and hope that the students will achieve better results if they are familiarised with the tested items. McEwen (1995:42) summarises this point by stating that "what is assessed becomes what is valued, which becomes what is taught".

However, this approach has often been deemed as an educational malpractice for a number of reasons. It shifts the educational process from "curriculum-teaching" to "item-teaching". Using Popham's distinction (2001), the former refers to teaching the full body of knowledge and skills that learners need to develop. While the latter impels teachers to readjust their classroom practices according to the test, by teaching only those items related to passing the exam, and ignoring the subjects that do not. In a way, this approach has a "dumbing" effect on teaching and learning and reduces the depth of the process, since students are not being taught authentic skills that they would use in real-life situations.

In a study initiated by Smith and Rottenberg (1991), damaging effects of teaching-to-the-test were found. One of the pivotal ones is that it narrows the curriculum. Non-tested subjects receive less or no attention which repels a large portion of students whose academic strengths lie outside the commonly tested items. It also reduces the instruction time since teachers substitute sessions where students should be learning authentic skills by those in which they prepare them for tests. These effects lead to even more detrimental consequences as it drives the learners to adopt a passive memorisation approach with no emphasis on critical thinking, and teachers experience a sense of confinement by examinations and cramming of the lessons that should be covered.

It is commonly known that standardised tests do not fairly assess the learners' academics. Whatever validity it has left, is further compromised when teaching-to-the-test is adopted. When using this approach, students' scores may indeed elevate, however, they do not reflect authentic learning in which students apply the acquired skills and knowledge in a novel situation. It only denotes that the learners were schooled in test-taking techniques that are most likely emphasised in paid coaching classes. In a nutshell, teaching test-taking skills and drilling on past examination papers are very likely to ameliorate test scores, but only test scores, and not education, which will improve.

Lastly, teaching-to-the-test affects the morale of learners. It creates a restricted atmosphere that fosters anxiety and undermines the school's worth from an educational institution that promotes knowledge and encourages curiosity to a mere pass/fail system that only emphasises how to get "good enough" grades. The same can be said for teachers, as the fear of poor results that breeds feelings of guilt, shame, and embarrassment, peer-pressure, and public announcement of results may very likely lead to the desire for their students to achieve better scores in whatever way possible, i.e., it will further impel instructors to use this approach creating a vicious circle that no one can escape. And in this line of thought, Swain (1985:43) states that "it has frequently been noted that teachers will teach to a test: that is, if they know the content of a test and/or the format of a test, they will teach their students accordingly".

1.6. Washback Impact

Language testing has been widely recognised as a powerful device capable of altering the behaviours of all those affected by its results, such as: teachers, learners, decision-makers, administrators, parents, and politicians. Due to its significance at both the micro and macro levels, it has often been utilised to implement new curricula, teaching methods, teaching materials, and renewed language education policies. The washback acquired from such processes is further detailed in the following sections.

1.6.1. Curriculum

The influence on the teaching content is one of the most demonstrable areas in which there is a tacit consensus among scholars and educationalists about the washback's impact. Alderson and Wall's observational study in Sri Lanka (1993) showed that there was an obvious effect on the content of the language lessons; this effect was a narrowing of the curriculum directed towards the items that are most likely to be tested.

Shohamy's (1996) comparative study of the high-stakes test of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and the low-stakes examination of Arabic as a Second

Language (ASL) in Israel, showed not only similar findings of narrowing the curriculum and a focus on teaching the parts that carry the most marks in the EFL test while neglecting all what is related to the ASL one, but it also proved one of Alderson and Wall's washback hypothesis: "Tests that have important consequences will have washback; and conversely, tests that do not have important consequences will have no washback." (1993:121).

Cheng's (1997) study of the revised Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE) allowed her to observe two classrooms in which one was taught based on the old exam syllabus, while the other prepared for the new test. This context allowed Cheng to drew a conclusion that there is, indeed, a change in the curriculum when administering a test. In this case, it has been a replacement of reading aloud sections by role-play tasks and group discussion activities that reflect the orientation of the new test content.

Similarly, when a new needs-based English test was introduced in the University of Turkey, it provoked contradictory reactions according to Hughes (1988). There was a noticeable resistance expressed by the teachers in which they argued that their students could not possibly cope with such a test; however, assumptions were put aside and a radical change of the syllabus was issued along with teacher training courses. Hughes sums up this effect on the teachers by saying:

> For the first time, at least in some years, the teachers were compelled, by the test, to consider seriously just how to provide their students with training appropriate for the tasks which would face them at the end of the course. (1988:144).

Just enough, a considerable improvement in the standard of English in comparison with previous years at the university was registered.

Likewise, while conducting a qualitative study of the role of external testing in elementary schools in the United States (1991); Smith found that, along with

what have been previously stated, a reduction in the time available for instruction has been noted. Lam (1994) explains that much of the curriculum time is devoted to exam preparation. Shohamy (1996) agrees with this viewpoint suggesting that is it only true if the exam is regarded as a high-stakes.

One important matter to note is that these alterations are often regarded as curricular innovations prompted by washback effects of examination reforms. i.e., tests are considered as "levers for change" and accordingly, their washback must be cautiously taken into account in order to ideally enhance and implement the intended changes in the educational system.

1.6.2. Teaching Methodology

One common theme regarding washback and its impact on the methodology adopted by teachers is that it has a skittish nature, as the literature that investigated this part has registered a cline that ranges from finding no washback at all to indicating a heavy washback. These paradoxical findings were influenced by different variables, and many researchers stress that the variables may not be so much the nature of the exam as being the teacher himself.

Alderson and Wall's case study denoted that the exam "had virtually no impact on the way that teachers teach" (1993:127). This is presumably because the teachers had absolutely no knowledge of the content of the test, and so they did not feel the need to change their teaching methods and techniques. A similar result was found by Cheng, in which she explains that although there has been a palpable change in the teaching content, the methodology used to instruct the students remained the same. Using her example, reading aloud sections were indeed replaced by role-play tasks due to the revised HKCEE but both were taught through drilling.

On the flipside, Andrews et al. (2002) indicate that the revised exam influenced the methodology of teaching. Teachers adopted more explanatory techniques in order to engage learners in certain tasks. Shohamy registered parallel findings when the instructors simulated exam tasks by teaching activities that

develop exam-taking skills and solving strategies like speeches, debates, mimicking authentic situations, and discussions. And these tasks were more emphasised as the exam got closer. Read and Hayes (2003) found the same results as the teachers employed a heavy use of practice tasks, homework, and test-taking techniques.

A tangible evidence of the wide range of ways teachers choose to teach is summarised in the study of Smith (1991). Her research combined results from both ends of the spectrum, and she classified these findings into eight categories: No special preparation (the teacher did not provide something new in order to brace the learners for the test, i.e., no washback), teaching test-taking skills (skills such as working within time limits), exhortation (prep talk and encouraging students), teaching the content known to be covered by the test (such as sequencing topics and prioritising the tested ones), teaching to the test (using materials that mimic the format and content of the test), stress inoculation (boosting students' confidence and self-esteem), practising on items of the test itself (or on parallel forms), and cheating (hints and rephrasing of correct answers, and amplifying marks, i.e., it indicates a heavy washback impact).

Studies have found that methods vary from one teacher to another. Some were found to assume creative and independent approaches, while others adopted much more overt "teaching-to-the-test" approaches. This latter is considered as a direct outcome of negative washback, and it has already been discussed in the previous section.

1.6.3. Materials

It goes without saying that washback exerts a certain effect on teaching materials. These materials usually are school textbooks, commercial textbooks, exam-related booklets, annals, and past examination papers. This "textbook washback", to use Lam's term (1994), has been identified as one of the possible results of test use, and it is highly evident when there is a change in an exam or an implementation of a new one.

What has been noticed is the teachers' heavy reliance on textbooks. In the Sri Lankan study conducted by Alderson and Wall (1993), they observed that teachers did not fully grasp the philosophy embodied in the texts. Instead, they followed the textbook faithfully because they believed that the exam will be merely designed based on its content. This same reliance was perceived by Lam (1994) when he described teachers as "textbook slaves", and considered this effect as an evidence of negative washback since the instructors relied on commercial textbooks, which are barely modified copies of past examination papers, instead of introducing authentic materials.

The publication of exam-related textbooks has been, undoubtedly, a thriving business. These textbooks are regarded as a direct form of teaching support due to what they supply from teaching materials, detailed methods for conducting activities, and time management suggestions. In an interview initiated by Cheng, a textbook publisher stated the following (1997:50):

> Anyone who speaks some English would be able to teach English in Hong Kong as we have provided everything for them …. Sometimes teachers phone us when they come across difficulties in teaching a particular unit or task. And we would write a detailed plan for them.

It is evident that such publications provide test-like topics and exam-solving techniques that have been widely consumed by the population. They contain materials that may only help students prepare to some extent before taking the test, but none that teachers or students would use after the test.

One important matter to keep in mind is an issue raised by Andrews (1994), in which he denotes that even though commercial textbooks are designed based on exam-related information, the final product is not moulded according to the educationalists' views of what should be taught, but rather according to the publishers' views of what would sell. This phenomenon leads to examination-

specific materials that constrict the scope of teachers and learners, leading to a "narrowing of the curriculum" and an adoption of teaching-to-the-test approach.

1.6.4. Learning

The impact on students is highly pivotal, since the washback that influences them through testing is directly linked to their language learning. It is an answer to a question that most teachers ponder about: did the exam affect my students' learning, and how? However, little research was conducted regarding this matter; hence the slim findings are inconclusive and varied.

Bachman and Palmer (1996) argue that washback has a threefold effect on learners. First, they are affected during the preparation for the test; then, when they receive feedback about their performances; and finally, when they make decisions based on their test results. They also suggest that learners must be included in all phases of test development in order to promote positive washback and create a sense of authenticity for the test-takers.

In an article written by Bailey (1996:264-265), she concluded some of the processes that learners engage in when they are faced with an exam. She mentioned the following: practicing items similar in format to those on the test, studying vocabulary and grammar rules, participating in interactive language practice, reading widely in the target language, listening to non-interactive language, applying test-taking strategies, enrolling in test-preparation courses, requesting guidance in their studying and feedback on their performance, requesting or demanding unscheduled tutorials or test-preparation classes, skipping language classes to study for the test. These all indicate a shift or an adjustment in the students' learning styles.

Various studies confirmed that language testing has increased learners' performance, which is evidence that they were affected by washback as they were preparing for the test. Amongst the prominent ones, we mention Hughes's study about the new English Proficiency Test introduced in Turkey that posed a revolutionary curriculum change for teachers but still, learners scored better grades

and indicated higher percentages of learning in the subsequent years as students got more familiarised with its content, and adapted their learning styles accordingly. Similarly, Andrews et al. (2002) found approximately the same results in their Hong Kong study where they described an improvement in students' oral performance. However, they regarded it as a result of "superficial learning" and stated the following:

> The sort of washback that is most apparent seems to represent a very superficial level of learning outcome: familiarisation with the exam format, and the rote learning of exam specific strategies and formulaic phrases… the inappropriate use of these phrases by a number of students seems indicative of memorisation rather than meaningful internalisation. In these instances, the students appear to have learnt which language features to use, but not when and how to use them appropriately. (Andrews et al., 2002:221).

1.6.5. Impact on Policy-Makers and Parents

It is important to note that the scope of washback goes beyond the micro level where it affects mostly teachers and learners, and reaches the macro level as it intervenes with the bureaucrats' and parents' agendas, and affects the society as a whole.

Language tests are recognised as powerful tools that can either amplify or diminish the status, impact, and use of certain languages in the society. It is a strategy that is employed by bureaucrats and politicians in order to reform or manipulate the language policy through affecting classroom behaviour and creating a washback that serves their ideologies. It is best shown when a particular language is included in a high-stakes examination, giving the impression that it is more valued than the non-tested ones, and that its results are used to make decisions concerning graduation or granting entry to higher education systems for example. Central authorities have also used tests to accomplish some hidden intentions regarding immigration processes, such as, the use of language tests' results in order

to deny residence, entrance to educational institutions, and workplace. These procedures are often regarded as unethical since they violate human rights, harm language diversity, and attribute prestige and recognition for certain languages. Shohamy states that "the washback and impact of these tests is that they influence and redefine knowledge, language priorities, hierarchies, standards, choice of languages, methods and content studied, as well as the criteria for language standards and correctness." (2007: 126). In a nutshell, the washback effect is seen, from a political and social aspect, in the suppression of multilingual diversity, the control of centralised agencies, and the implementation of new ideologies and reforms.

A surprising effect of washback is the one observed on parents and their behaviour. However, there is little research documenting this effect, and most of the literature reviewed is collected through students' perceptions. One of the obvious changes in behaviour is the feeling of pressure and anxiety as their children prepare and undertake a given test. Cheng posits that the exams' results exerted a threefold influence on parents which is stated in the following: "The advice their parents gave them, parents became tense and anxious, and parents put more pressure on them" (1997:47). According to Ingulsrud (1994), parents who were earnest about attaining the best quality education in the most prestigious institutions, impelled their children to attend after-school and holiday coaching schools in order to ensure admission. However, the financial aspect also plays an important role in these types of situations. Alderson and Wall (1993) note that even though English is regarded as one of the most important subject-matters in Sri Lanka, some parents were not able to provide their children with the basic necessities such as the textbook because simply they were too costly, consequently this has impacted the learners' performances in the language.

1.7. Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, washback has been displayed as a multi-dimensional concept that impacts not only the classroom setting, but also the political and societal systems. It is a polarised phenomenon encompassing both a negative and a positive side. The authoritative power of tests and its role in influencing the teaching/learning process have been greatly demonstrated in this present work. Washback interrelates with various facets; it impacts the teaching content, teaching methodology, teaching materials, teachers and learners' perceptions, policy-makers, parents, publishers and many other stakeholders. However, the literature must be further enriched and founded on sane and modern empirical findings. Hence the need to pursue this issue is encouraged and highly emphasised.

Chapter Two:Research Methodology

Chapter Two: Research Methodology

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter, we will present the practical aspect of the study that was initiated in order to investigate the washback effect at the level of the University of Tlemcen. For this purpose, an elaborate description of the research methods, the sample of the study, and the research instruments was provided. The data gathered from the sample's feedback have been analysedand reported in the form of tabular and graphic representations.

2.2. Research Method

By adopting a exploratory method, we were able to conduct a quantitative-qualitative study in order to investigate the washback effect on this setting. As we aimed to dissect this latter's influence on the teachers' attitudes and behaviours during their classroom practices; as well as, on the learners' perceptions of this concept, and to what extent they were affected by it.

2.3. Sample of the Study

The sample population of this study was second year EFL students at the University of Tlemcen. We have chosen this sample because normally they have already been familiarised with testing, and thus their level qualifies them to answer our questions in an appropriate manner, and with reflection to their experience. Out of a population of 445 students, we have chosen 40 participants randomly to be our sample.

As for teachers, we have dealt with 14 teachers in the English Department at the University of Tlemcen. They were also chosen randomly, as the aim was to provide information mainly due to their expertise in the field of language teaching and testing.

2.4. Research Instruments

For ensuring the validity of our research, choosing a suitable instrument to collect data was extremely important. And due to the nature of this study, we have chosen the questionnaire as an appropriate data gathering tool, and thus it was administered to both teachers and students.

2.4.1. Students' Questionnaire

In the following section, the aim, the description, and the analysis of the students' questionnaire will be presented in detail.

2.4.1.1. Aim of the Questionnaire

The students' questionnaire aims to investigate the learners' perceptions and attitudes towards their language learning and testing. It seeks to elicit information about their profiles, and the amount of impact they have been subjected to under this process.

2.4.1.2. Description of the Questionnaire

This questionnaire consists of 15 questions divided into two sections. The first section includes three questions that deal with the background information of the learners such as age, gender, and language proficiency level. The second section is composed of 12 questions that vary in their types. Close-ended questions were employed to elicit students' beliefs about testing and test-preparation. A multiple-choice question was used to inspect which kind of practice was emphasised in the English paid-coaching class. At the end, two open-ended questions aimed to elicit students' suggestions about how to improve testing and learning.

2.4.1.3. Analysis of the Results

This section is concerned with the analysis of the data gathered from the students' questionnaire.

Section One: Background Information

<u>**Item 01:**</u> Students' Age

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
18-20	22	55 %
21-23	16	40 %
24-26	01	2.5 %
More than 26	01	2.5 %
Total	40	100 %

Table 2.1: Students' Age Distribution

According to the results, more than half the sample's age ranges from 18 to 20 years old (55%). It is then followed by 16 participants whose age ranges from 21 to 23 (40%). Ages ranging from 24 to 26 and above have both scored similar results of having only 1 participant each (2.5%).

<u>**Item 02:**</u> Students' Gender

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Male	11	27.5 %
Female	29	72.5 %
Total	40	100%

Table 2.2: Students' Gender Distribution

The table above shows that 72.5% of our respondents are females. While the remaining 27.5% is made up of males.

<u>**Item 03:**</u> How do you consider your level in English?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Very good	02	05 %
Good	21	52.5 %
Average	17	42.5 %
Poor	00	00 %
Total	40	100%

Table 2.3: Students' Level in English

According to the results, the majority of students perceive that they have a good level in English (52.5%). 17 students assume that they have an average level (42.5%). While only 02 students believe that they possess a very good level in English (05%). Students usually associate their proficiency level with how well or how bad they score on exams.

Section Two: Learners' Attitudes towards the Washback Effect

<u>**Item 01:**</u> Does the test result reflect your level accurately?
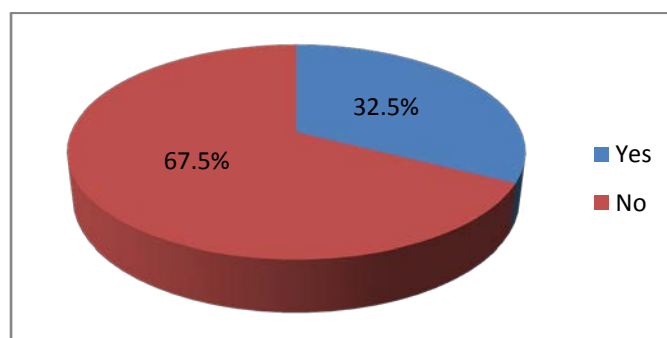
Figure 2.1: Students' Perceptions about the Accuracy of Test Results

From the chart above, it is clear that the majority of students 67.5% (27 participants) do not feel that test scores measure exactly their level in English. It is possible that testing has hindered their ability to reach their full potentials. However, the remaining 13 participants (32.5%) seem to agree that test results often represent their level in English.

Item 02: Do you learn from tests?
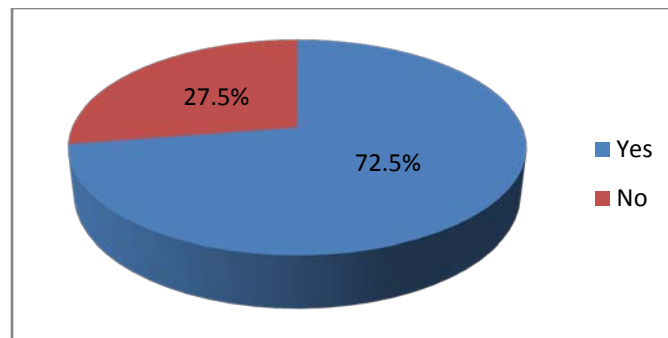
Figure 2.2: Students' Attitudes towards Learning from Tests

As it is noted, 27.5% of the sample (11 students) denies learning from tests. While the majority of 72.5% (29 students) confirm this statement indicating that testing, has indeed, an effect on learning. These perceptions are further exemplified in the second part of the question (If yes, please specify).

Students' explanation

There was an evident consensus among students concerning what do they learn from tests. As the majority of answers agreed that by correcting the tests, they recognize their weaknesses and strengths. They learn from their mistakes, and avoid them in upcoming examinations. Some emphasised that by failing certain tested items, it becomes more memorable and hence, ensuring not to repeat the mistake again. Another aspect they learn from tests is how to simplify and organize their exam preparation and revision for future tests.

Item 03: Does your teacher use past-examination papers to instruct in class?
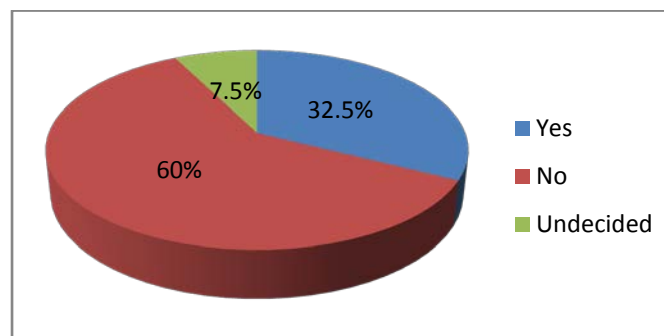
Figure 2.3: Teachers' Use of Past-papers during Instruction

The chart indicates that 13 students (32.5%) have confirmed the use of past-papers by their teachers in order to deliver their lectures. This shows an evidence of the teaching-to-the-test approach that may be adopted by some instructors. However, 24 students (60%) denied such use of past-papers. While 03 participants (7.5%) did not confirm, nor deny the statement, and instead it remained unanswered.

Item 04: Do you ask your teacher to provide you with revision sessions before exams?
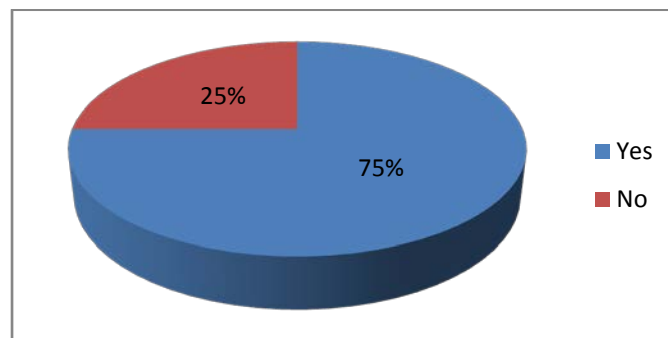
Figure 2.4: Students' Request for Revision Sessions

According to the results, 75% of students (30 participants) ask for a revision session before examinations in order to recapitulate the main elements of lectures, or practise test-taking techniques. The remaining 25% (10 participants) denied making such a demand.

Item 05: Did a test change your way of preparing for upcoming tests?
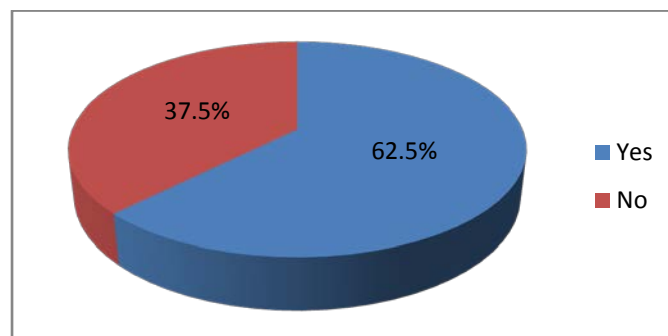
Figure 2.5: Alteration of Students' Learning Styles Post-testing

The chart indicates that 25 students (62.5%)have indeed changed their ways of preparation post examination. This impact is further exemplified in the second part of the question (If yes, how?). On the other hand, 15 students (37.5%) denied making such changes.

Students' explanation

Most students' responses state that they usually vary or change their revision techniques after taking a test. It makes them aware of the criteria that are going to be tested, and what points to focus on during their revision. One participant even said that he had changed his learning style from individual preparation to group work after failing a test. It is evident that students become more familiarised with the test format, and thus the prediction of question types becomes an easy task.

Item 06: Do you use materials when preparing for a test?
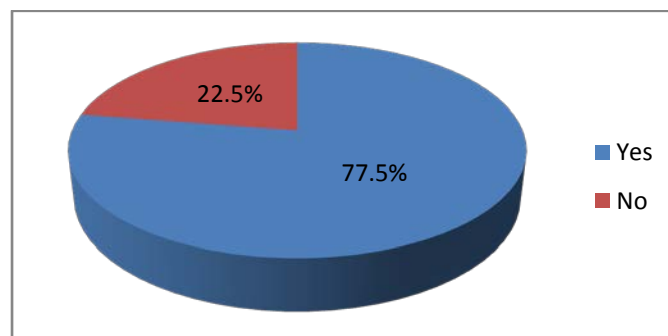
Figure 2.6: Students' Use of Materials during Exam-preparation

The majority of the respondents 77.5% (31 students) admitted to using various materials while preparing for a test. These materials were revealed in the second part of the question (If yes, please mention them) and they are as follows: textbooks, past-examination papers, annals, handouts, documentaries and movies, dictionaries, books, the internet, and students' past copy-books of previous years. All of these are utilised for the purpose of improving their test scores and passing the exam. The rest of the sample with 22.5% (09 students) denied using any extra type of material during test-preparation, meaning that they rely solely on what they acquire during their classroom practices.

Item 07: Do affective factors influence your performance on tests?
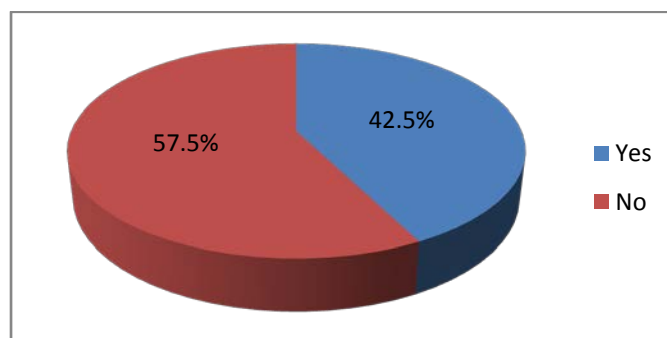
Figure 2.7: The Affective Factors' Influence on Students' Test Results

Most of the participants 57.5% (23 students) state that they are not influenced psychologically while undertaking a test. While the remaining 42.5% (17 students) confirm that they undergo certain affective factors that either hinder their performance such as anxiety, nervousness, stress, and panicking; or foster it such as motivation and self-confidence.

Item 08: Have you ever attended English paid-coaching classes?
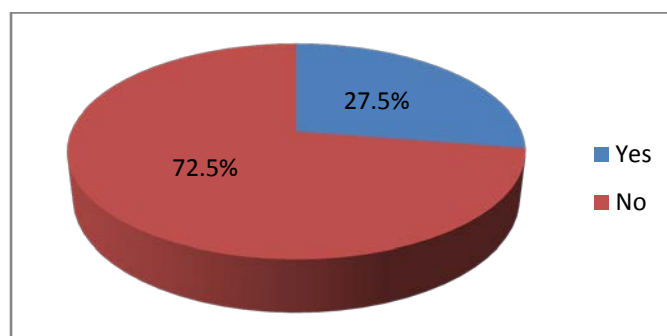
Figure 2.8: The Attendance of English Paid-coaching Classes

As it is seen, the majority of students 72.5% (29 students) have never attended an English coaching-class. While 27.5% of the sample (11 students) confirm having done so. The next question is a fellow-up that seeks to elicit what types of activities are practised in these classes, and it has been answered by the 11 students who have attended such classes.

Item 09: In the paid-coaching class, you practised?
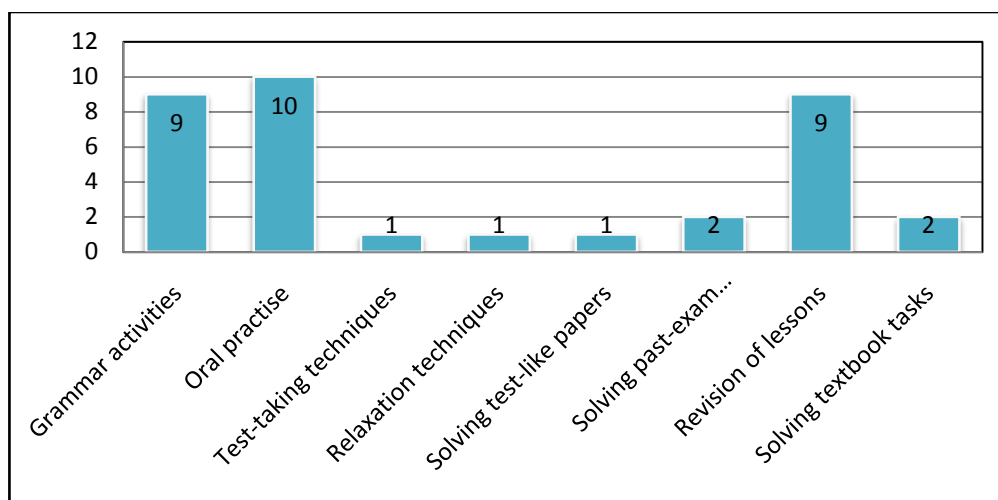
Figure 2.9: The Practised Activities in English Paid-coaching Classes

The 11 participants were asked to specify what kind of activities they practised during these classes. They were given the choice to select more than one answer, and thus the majority (10 students out of 11) agreed that paid-coaching classes focused on developing and improving the oral performance. There was also an emphasis on grammar activities and reviewing classroom lessons (09 students each). Solving textbook tasks and past-papers were not much practised (02 students each). Finally, what is noted most is the almost non-teaching of test-taking and relaxation techniques, which may be highly benefit them as it creates a positive attitude towards testing.

Item 10: Have you been tested on elements you weren't taught?
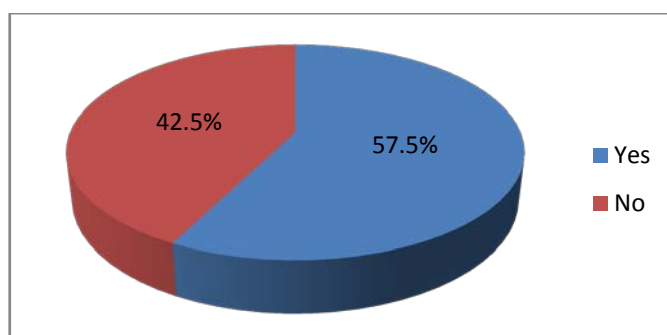
Figure 2.10: Students' Perceptions about the Tested Elements

This chart further denotes the dissatisfaction of students with their results. 57.5% of the sample (23 students) affirm that they have been tested on elements

they have not seen before, and this naturally affects their test scores and breeds a feeling of inhibition towards future testing. 42.5% of the sample (17 students) express a satisfaction with their testing content, as it may be attributed to their success in this process.

Item 11: According to you, should you be taught only the items you're going to be tested on, or should you receive general non-tested knowledge? Explain.
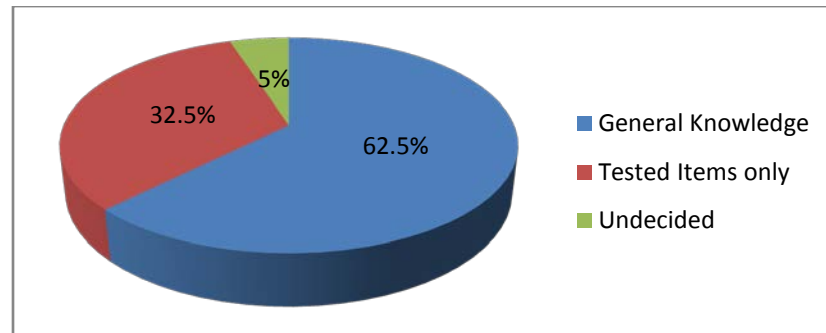
Figure 2.11: Students' Perceptions about the Tested-elements

A surprising note was the fact that 62.5% of the sample (25 participants) revealed that they rather acquire general knowledge that will not be tested. They explained that this type of knowledge will enrich their background information, contribute to their life-long learning, and enhance their competencies. An important point is that non-tested knowledge will make them feel more at ease, and more daring to take risks, as the goal of learning is to acquire a set of knowledge and skills, and not to simply get high grades based on memorisation. On the other hand, 32.5% of students (13 participants) believe that they should be taught only elements that are going to be tested, and the reason that the extra information will only confuse the students, waste time, and add to unnecessary test-preparation. There were 02 students (05%) who did not answer this question, and this may be attributed to their lack of comprehension or interest.

Item 12: What kind of changes do you suggest in order to improve learning and testing?

The aim of this open-ended question was to give the students freedom of expression, and to gauge their viewpoints about how to improve language learning,

and consequently language testing. Various answers were recorded, and they are categorised and summarised in the following points:

- **Improving learning**

- Teachers should provide learners with the curriculum of the module, and invite them to prepare lessons, and present them.

- Lessons should be of interest to students, and they should also cater to their needs.

- The use of technological aids while delivering lectures.

- The provision of extra practise sessions in order to consolidate the acquired knowledge.

-The use of authentic and concrete examples during instruction.

- **Improving testing**

-Teachers should specify which lessons are included in the exam in order to facilitate test-preparation.

-Changing the format of test questions to more direct ones, such as true/false, and MCQs.

- The instructions should also be clear and simple.

-The test's grade should not be the sole factor for passing.

2.4.2. Teachers' Questionnaire

In the following section, the aim, the description, and the analysis of the teachers' questionnaire will be presented in detail.

2.4.2.1. Aim of the Questionnaire

The purpose of the teachers' questionnaire is to explore the impact of the washback effect on the EFL context at the University of Tlemcen. It seeks to debrief information about the teachers' attitudes towards language testing in general, and

how much this latter affects their classroom practices in general, and behaviours in particular.

2.4.2.2. Description of the Questionnaire

The teachers' questionnaire is composed of 13 questions and sectioned into two parts. The first section deals with the bio-data of the participants in which they fill in their degree, gender, and teaching experience. The second section is devoted to the teachers' attitudes towards the washback effect, it consists of close-ended questions about their teaching methodology, teaching content, and teaching materials that are related to testing. There is a multiple-choice question about which criteria is considered while designing a test. Two open-ended questions that elicit the teachers' suggestions about how to improve education through promoting positive washback, and how to avoid negative washback and its impact.

2.4.2.3. Analysis of the Results

This section is concerned with the analysis of the data gathered from the students' questionnaire.

Section One: Background Information

Item 01: Teachers' Qualifications

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Magister	04	28.6 %
Doctorate	10	71.4 %
Total	14	100%

Table 2.4: Teachers' Qualifications

The table above shows that most of our participants (10 teachers), at the University of Tlemcen, hold a doctorate degree. While the remaining (04 teachers) have a Magister degree.

<u>**Item 02**</u>: Teachers' Gender

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Male	09	64.2 %
Female	05	35.8 %
Total	14	100%

Table 2.5: Teachers' Gender Distribution

We have adopted a random sampling method at the University of Tlemcen, and the results reveal that 64.2% of our sample (09 teachers) are males, and 35.8% are females (05 teachers).

<u>**Item 03:**</u>How long have you been teaching English?

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 05 years	01	7.1 %
Between 05 and 10 years	04	28.6 %
More than 10 years	09	64.3 %
Total	14	100 %

Table 2.6: Teachers' Teaching Experience

According to the table above, most of the participants 64.3% (09 teachers) have been in the field of teaching English for more than a decade, which is vital for our study. 04 of the respondents (28.6%) have a teaching experience that ranges from 05 to 10 years. And only 01 teacher with an experience that is less than 05 years (7.1%).

Section Two: Teachers' Attitudes towards the Washback Effect

Item 01: Do test results reflect the students' accurate level?
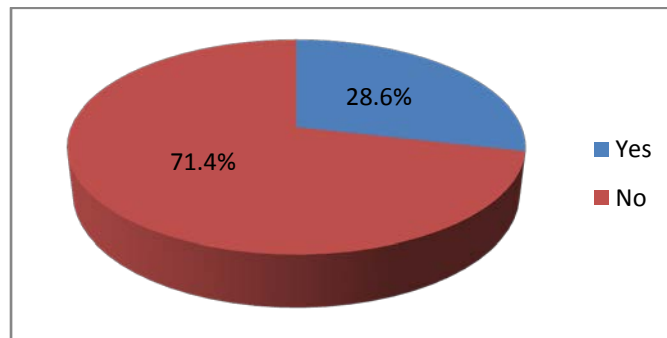
Figure 2.12: Teachers' Perceptions of Learners' Proficiency Level

According to the results, 71.4% of the sample (10 teachers) confirm that test results do not showcase a thorough representation of the learners' level. 28.6% of the sample (04 teachers) disagrees with the previous statement and affirms that students' level is accurately represented by their test scores.

Item 02: Do students' results often match the instructional objectives?
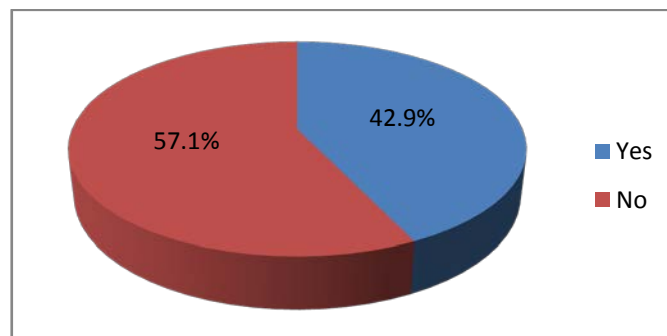
Figure 2.13: Learners' Attainment of Instructional Objectives

The majority of teachers 57.1% (08 participants) confirm that learners do not always reach the targeted objectives of the course/test. This may be due to a number of factors that were supplied to answer the second part of the question (If no, what are the reasons for the mismatch?). However, 42.9% of teachers (06 participants) agree with the statement.

Teachers' explanation

The reasons of the incongruity between students' results and the set objectives are numerous. Most teachers agree that the lack of accurate assessment

measures is what leads to this mismatch; as they often teach learners to use their analytical skills but test their factual recall and memorisation abilities. This latter impacts negatively on test scores and learners' attitudes towards testing. Furthermore, they state that students who use rote learning techniques deceive the teacher's expectations and learning objectives, i.e., it tricks the teacher into believing that the students have actually reached the intended goal, but instead, they are simply employing memorisation skills without actually acquiring the targeted structure.

Item 03: Do you use past-examination papers when teaching?
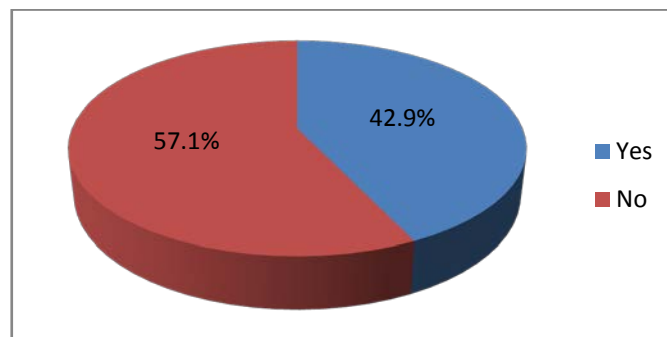
Figure 2.14: Teachers' Use of Past-examination Papers

Most teachers 57.1% (08 participants) denied using past-papers while instructing. However, the remaining 42.9% (06 participants) affirme using such teaching methodology. In the fellow-up question (If yes, to what extent?), teachers justified this use as getting the learners accustome to the test format, by explaining the structures of questions, and the scale of correction. This also helps them optimize their test-preparation techniques, and practise time management.

Item 04: Do you teach test-taking techniques?
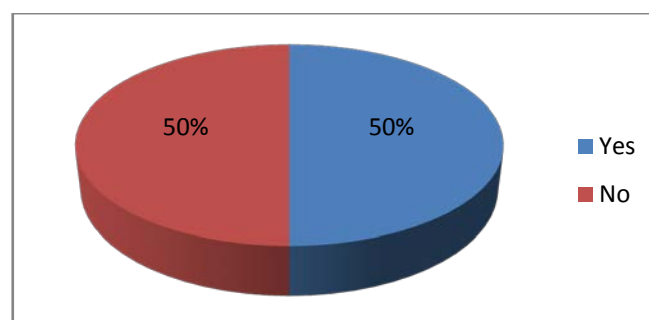
Figure 2.15: Teaching Test-taking Techniques

As it is noticed from this chart, there is a clear balance between teachers who choose to teach such skills, and teachers who do not (7 teachers each). Generally, teaching students how to appropriately analyse a test in order to ensure maximum performance is highly beneficial.

Item 05: Do you search for past-examination papers to help design
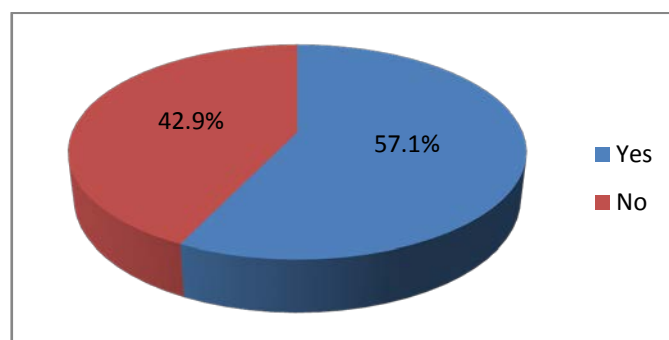
Figure 2.16: The Use of Past-papers in Test Design

The majority of teachers (57.1%) confirm their use of past-papers when designing a test. They are utilised in order to respect the same format, but with changing the content in accordance to the learners' needs. They also help the teacher to vary question types and tested elements. As for the 42.9% (06 teachers) who deny using past-papers during their test-design phase, they state that they use the following materials instead: textbooks, documentaries, books, the internet, and the curriculum's objectives.

Item 06: What criteria do you take into account when designing a test?
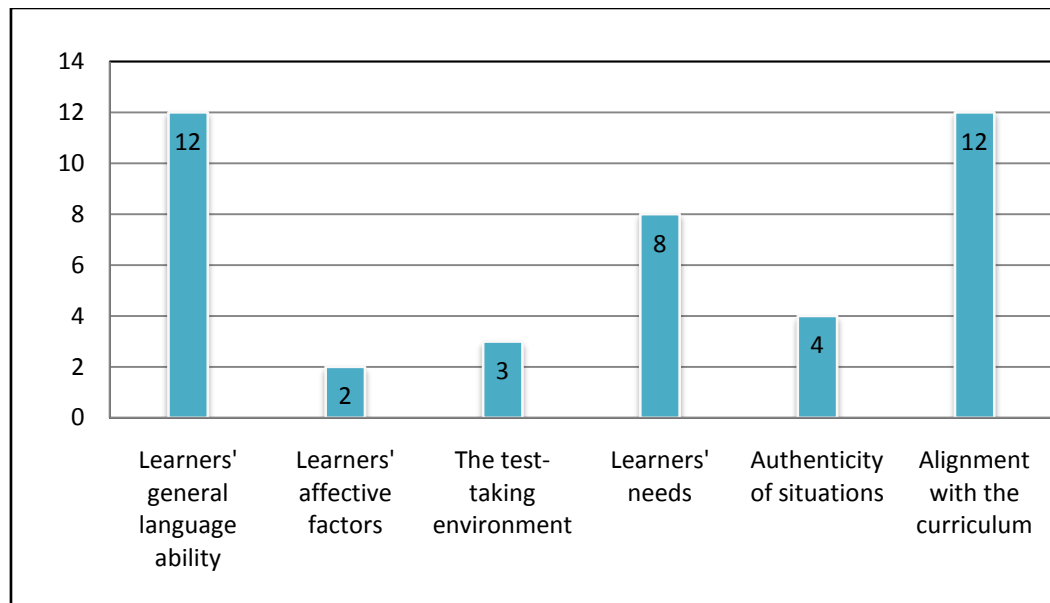
Figure 2.17: Test-design Criteria

In this item, teachers were requested to choose the answers that reflect their considerations during the stage of constructing a test. 12 teachers agreed that the test should be well-aligned with the curriculum, and that it should take into account the learners' language ability. 08 teachers state that the test should cater to the learners' needs. 04 teachers affirm that tests should include authentic situations that learners would encounter in the real world. Only 03 teachers state that they also take the testing environment into consideration (time, place, etc...). Finally, there were only 02 teachers took into consideration the learners' psychological factors and how this might influence them both negatively and positively.

Item 07: Does testing affect your teaching content?
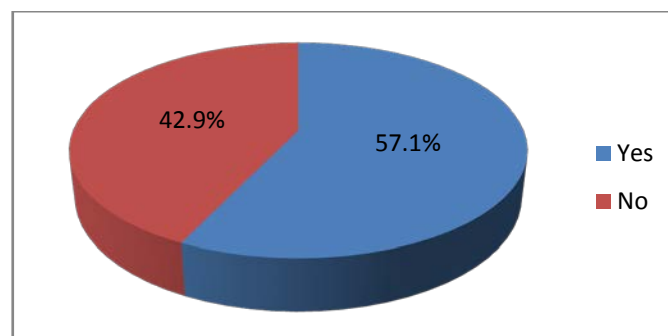
Figure 2.18: Washback's Effect on Teaching Content

According to the results, 42.9% of the sample (06 teachers) was not affected by testing, and it did not cause any curriculum alteration. However, the remaining 57.1% of the sample (08 teachers) confirm that testing does impact their teaching content in many ways, such as: addressing the learners' weaknesses in their future teaching content, and receiving feedback about the success of their practices which will help them make decisions about the nature and purpose of the curriculum as a whole.

Item 08: Does testing affect your teaching methodology?
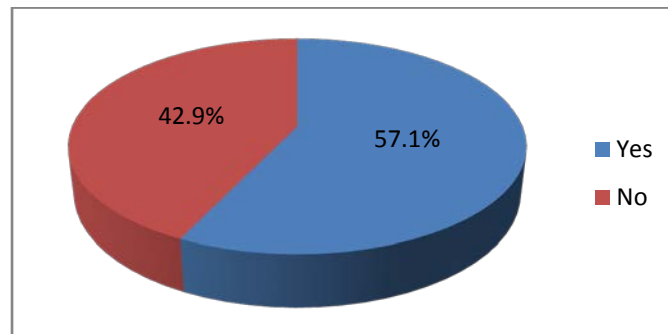
Figure 2.19: Washback's Effect on Teaching Methodology

This chart indicates that 42.9% of the sample do not exert any methodological changes after administering a test. While the majority of the sample (57.1%) assert such changes. Some teachers argue that if students receive low grades, they will either change or adapt their teaching methodology according to the learners' needs, and what transmits the message best.

Item 09: According to you, what are the impacts of negative washback?

This is an open-ended question that seeks to identify the negative impacts of washback, its causes, and how to avoid it. It has been answered by 11 teachers, representing 78.6% of our sample; and their answers are summarised in the following points. However, 03 teachers (21.4% of the sample) refrained from answering, and this may be attributed to a lack of knowledge about such a concept.

- **Causes of Negative Washback**

-It is caused when the test does not really test the target aspect.

-When the objectives do no match the instruction, negative washback is created.

-If the teaching methodology is not compatible with the teaching content, learning will become ambiguous, and confusion will be fostered.

- **Effects of Negative Washback**

-Influences learners' concentration, and creates and anxious atmosphere of learning.

-Demotivation and loss of confidence.

-Students will focus only on test-like tasks and ignore other activities.

-It can slow down or even stop the teaching/learning process.

-Negative washback impacts the learners' communicative abilities.

-The test starts guiding the teaching/learning process by interfering in the methodology and content of instruction, i.e., to teach according to the test's demands.

Item 10: What do you suggest to promote positive washback in order to achieve quality education?

11 participants (78.6%) provided a set of suggestions for the sake of promoting positive washback, while 03 participants (21.4%) refrained from answering this open-ended item. The suggestions are listed below:

- **Promoting Positive Washback by Improving Teaching**

-To employ real-life language use situations.

-To determine clearly and accurately the functional outcomes of instruction.

-To foster learners' autonomy and self-evaluation.

-The provision of technical and technological aids.

- **Promoting Positive Washback by Improving Assessment**

-To assess in a detailed, innovative, and diagnostic way.

-Designing tests according to the lectures and activities practiced in the classroom.

-While constructing a test, the teacher must take into account: students' level, time devoted, and psychological aspects.

-The teacher should well prepare his students for undertaking a test, by providing revision, discussion, extra activities, and test-taking strategies.

- Focus on test-correction sessions and remedial activities.

- **Promoting Positive Washback by Focusing on Affective Factors**

- Boosting students' self-confidence and motivation.

-Encouraging students' risk-taking instances.

2.5. Conclusion

After analysing the results obtained from the students and teachers' questionnaires at the University of Tlemcen, we conclude that washback is clear and present at this setting. The analysis has allowed us to recognise the extent of the washback effect on the teachers' behaviours and beliefs, as they mostly showed a change or adjustment of teaching content, teaching methodology, and teaching materials due to the impact of testing. Furthermore, students also were influenced by testing, and this was clearly seen in the decisions they made about their learning after sitting for a certain test, such as: engaging in paid-coaching classes, changing the learning style, devoting more time to test-preparation and past-papers solving, the use of different materials to ensure maximum learning, and so on. These findings will be further dealt with and discussed to in the following chapter.

Chapter Three:Data Discussion and Recommendations

Chapter Three: Data Discussion and Recommendations

3.1. Introduction

The previous chapter has dealt with the methodological procedures that were assumed during our investigation. After collecting and analysing the data both quantitatively and qualitatively, we devote the third chapter to discuss the main findings of the research. Thereafter, we put forward a set of suggestions and recommendations that intend to reduce the impact of negative washback in order to improve language learning and testing, and therefore achieve quality education.

3.2. Discussion of Main Results

In the following section, the major results obtained from each research instrument will be discussed in relation to our topic of concern.

The teachers and students' questionnaires have provided the researcher with a considerable amount of data concerning the impact of washback on the teachers' attitudes and classroom behaviour, as well as on the students' perceptions of their language learning and testing.

The main points reported by the students under investigation are as follows:

First of all, it is worth knowing how learners perceive their level of proficiency in English, as this latter is tightly linked to their examination scores. The real issue of concern is whether the test scores really reflect the accurate level, for which 67.5% of our sample have denied such assumption. This incongruity may be attributed to the various affective factors that influence the learners while undertaking their exams, such as anxiety and stress, and thispoint has been directly addressed in item 07 of the questionnaire. On the other hand, it may be due to the fact that students are being tested on elements that they have not seen before, and this statement has been confirmed by 57.5% of the sample in item 10. This result illustrates the importance of testing on the students' psyche and performance, and it further shows a discrepancy between what is taught and what is tested, i.e., the

instructional objectives do not match the learners' level, and this is one of the factors leading to negative washback.

Moreover, the items 02, 04, 05, 06, 08, and 09 exhibit a tangible evidence of washback. Learners have confirmed that they do request revision sessions as a way of test-preparation. Some of them have even attended English paid-coaching classes in which the focus of activities is on oral performance and grammatical structures. 72.5% of the respondents indicate that they benefit from tests through correcting their mistakes and avoiding them in the future. In addition, they stressed the advantages of tests in helping them to recognise their strengths and weaknesses, and ameliorate their revision techniques. Furthermore, our sample affirms that as they become more familiarised with the test format and the teachers' methods, they are able to predict the type of questions and the way of correction, thus they adapt their learning styles accordingly. These results confirm that there is, indeed, a washback effect on learners. There is even an indication of materials' washback (elicited in item 06 of the questionnaire) as students reveal the instructional materials they use during their test-preparation.

Finally, students revealed that instead of focusing mainly on tested items, they rather acquire general non-tested knowledge. This kind of reasoning promotes quality education. For the end of improving language learning and testing, hence achieving positive washback, the learners suggested that by administering oral tests, and taking the students' overall classroom performance into account, testing will become more authentic and valid, this will ultimately improve the teaching/learning process.

In sum, all of the results discussed in this section have come in conformity with our second hypothesis which states that students are affected psychologically and mentally by testing. This impact can be seen in the perceptions and decisions of students involved in this process, such as changing their learning styles, devoting more time for revision, enrolling in paid-coaching classes, and other learn-to-the-test practices.

The following section provides the discussion of the essential points obtained from the teachers' questionnaires.

As a whole, the teachers' results highly support the students' feedback. 71.4% of teachers revealed that, indeed, test scores do not reflect the actual level of learners. These results do not even match the set instructional objectives mainly due to the lack of accurate assessment measures, i.e., the content validity[3] of the test is often compromised. Furthermore, they indicated an influence on their teaching content post testing, as most of them attempted to address the students' weaknesses in future teaching, and catered to the newly registered students' needs. In sum, testing influenced the teachers' decisions about the nature and purpose of the curriculum.

As a matter of fact, testing has a tremendous impact on the teaching methodology as well. This was confirmed by 57.1% of our sample, who stated that they had often changed or adapted the way they taught certain lessons after seeing the students' failing grades. Items 03, 04, and 05 of the questionnaire assert that most teachers relied on past-examination papers either in their teaching or testing. This insinuates a use of teaching-to-the-test approach, which is deemed as an outcome of negative washback.

Teachers at the University of Tlemcen displayed an overall awareness of the role of testing and the washback effect. They stated that this latter is caused when the methodology of teaching is incompatible with the content, in case when the set objectives do not match the instruction, as well as when the test fails to measure the target criteria. As for the results, it is evident that negative washback hinders the teaching/learning process as a whole. It therefore affects the learners' motivation, self-confidence, concentration, communicative abilities, and the general classroom behaviour. However, there are ways to prevent it and nurture instead a positive washback. It can be done through employing real-life tasks, designing tests according to classroom practices, innovative assessing and focus on remedial work,

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[3] It is defined as "the extent to which a test adequately and sufficiently measures the particular skills it sets out to measure".(Hughes, 1989: 26)

taking the students' affective factors and the test-taking environment into consideration, and fostering the learners' autonomy and self-evaluation.

For the most part, the results gathered from the teachers serve to confirm our first hypothesis which states that washback can either be positive or negative, and it is often seen in the changes that teachers make in their teaching methodology, teaching content, materials, and assessment strategies.

3.3. Suggestions and Recommendations

The analysis and interpretation of the results have enabled the researcher to deduce a number of solutions that can be applied in the field of foreign language teaching and testing. The inclusion and application of the following suggestions, by both teachers and learners at the level of the University of Tlemcen, can guarantee the effectiveness of the whole process, as these seek to develop a positive washbackeffect that intends not only to rectify learners' perceptions about language testing, but also attempts to enhance teachers' classroom behaviour and beliefs.

3.3.1. Curriculum Design

The content of teaching should, first and foremost, cater to the learners' needs. It should seek to develop the necessary skills and knowledge that they will utilise during their educational and professional careers. Therefore, authentic language tasks must be employed by comprising both local and global topics in the instruction. In this respect, teaching general non-tested knowledge is highly advocated since it fosters a friendly and relaxing learning environment that provides a well-rounded education, and aids teachers to avoid item-teaching.

The course/curriculum objectives should conform to the instruction. This enables the teacher to assess the progress of learning, to predict areas of deficiency, and provide immediate remedy.

One point to ponder is the lack of curriculum materials such as teachers' guides, assessment procedures booklets, and so on. Such teaching support must be thoroughly elaborated and distributed to ensure a proper understanding of the various concepts.

3.3.2. Appropriate Teaching Methodology Selection

Undoubtedly, the teaching method should be congruent with the content in order to assure the effectiveness of the instruction. Teaching-to-the-test approach ought to be averted due to its numerous impediments which have already been stated in earlier sections. To the contrary, the use of technological and modern aids is highly endorsed. It connects the learners to the digital world and helps them cope with the 21st century requirements.

Organising group work, discussion sessions, language games, riddles, presentations, debates, and conferences can propel the students' engagement and classroom participation. Besides, establishing effective communication channels with the learners through diaries and portfolios, for instance, can substantially enhance and facilitate the exchange between the teacher and the students.

3.3.3. Professional Development

In the field of education, it is a must to initiate a gradual process of growth, reflection, and self-evaluation based on one's own experience and research. Therefore, the organisation of workshops, teacher training, and seminars should be prioritised in order to equip the teachers, notably the novice ones, with the appropriate coaching that enables them to identify and master the different components of language teaching and assessment.

3.3.4. Focus on Affective Factors

Affective factors, which "are broadly considered as aspects of emotion, feeling, mood or attitude which condition behavior in language learning." (Arnold, 1999:01), retain a momentous influence on the teaching/learning process. Unfortunately, they are often disparaged during both instruction and testing.

Therefore, teachers must consider their impact during the test design phase and correction. They should also make the learners aware of such factors, among the prominent ones we mention:

- **Self-esteem:** It refers to a personal evaluation and judgment of worthiness that is expressed in the individual's attitude towards himself or towards his capabilities.

- **Motivation**: It is defined as "the choices people make as to what experiences or goals they will approach or avoid, and the degree of effort they will exert in the respect" (Keller, 1983: 389).

- **Anxiety**: It is an emotional state of tension, nervousness and worry that occurs by the arousal of the automatic nervous system.

- **Attitude**: when an individual is faced with a new task, with an unusual object, this episode causes a series of reactions charged with value, meaning that the stimulus has the potential to cause positive or negative perceptions.

Teachers should sensitise the learners about the existence of such psychological factors, and they ought to pursue methods to overcome them such as teaching relaxation techniques, encouraging risk-taking abilities, counselling learners and reinforcing their confidence and self-esteem, exhortation, prep-talk, and promoting students' motivation.

3.3.5. Language Learning Strategy Training

Strategy training is assumed to relief a great deal of language learning hassles, as students are explicitly trained to learn how to learn foreign languages by employing a wide range of mechanisms and techniques that ease the whole process.

Seifert (1993) has elaborated a number of strategies, among which we have:

- **Representational Imagery**: It seeks to enhance memory and comprehension. The learner reads the information to be remembered and then he visualises a picture to match the information.

- **Elaborative Interrogation**:It is best used to memorise facts. The learner reads the information, he turns it into a question (e. g, why is this true?), and then he answers the why question.

- **Acronyms**:An acronym is an abbreviation formed from the initial letters of other words and pronounced as a word. Here, the student makes a list of the words that should be remembered; he then selects the first letters and comprises them into words or sentences. He, subsequently, practices remembering these words and what each letter stands for.

- **Keyword Method**:It involves both imagery and sound components. The student reads the word or vocabulary to be learned. He thinks of a familiar word that sounds similar to the target vocabulary, and then he visualises an image that depicts the familiar keyword with the definition attributed, for instance, the word "antiar" which is defined as a poison used on an arrow by natives, can be remembered by generating a similar sound, such as the word "ant", and then envisioning a picture of a dead ant struck with an arrow.

- **Summarising:** It helps the learners to remember the main ideas and relate the different concepts by rewriting the information in precise and clear statements.

- **Concept Mapping:** It is also known as webbing. Here, the learner reads the passage and identifies the main concepts and how they interrelate with each other. He then copies these concepts and draws lines between them which represent the relationships in a figure; he can as well label the lines with the type of the existing relation.

In addition to these learning strategies, students must be aware of their own learning styles, which will enable them to opt for the efficient methods and procedures that are most suitable to their needs.

3.3.6. Developing Learner Autonomy and Self-evaluation Skills

Learner autonomy indicates that the student is handling his schooling with responsibility and care, i.e., he is making active decisions about how and what he

learns. This internal self-regulation has a direct connection with one of Alderson and Wall's (1993:121) washback hypothesis: "A test will influence the degree and depth of learning".

As a matter of fact, there is a distinct liaison between positive washback, autonomous learning,and self-assessment. Since this latter enables the learners toassume responsibility for the evaluation of their progress and proficiency, it aids them to diagnose their strengths and weaknesses, and to devise a plan in order to reach the goals they wish to attain.

Inculcating such concepts by encouraging individual research and promoting life-long learning can increasingly improve the quality of education and the authenticity of testing.

3.3.7. Teaching Test-taking Strategies

Test-preparation is a crucial phase in language assessment and a clear evidence of washback. Our sample of students has suggested providing extra practice sessions, specification of lessons included in the exam, and classroom revision as means of enhancing language testing and promoting positive washback.

Over and above, teaching test-taking skills can considerably elevate students' performance, and assert the validity of the test. The following represents the various strategies that can be undertaken by the students:

- **The Test-taking atmosphere**: It is preferable to arrive early and get accustomed to the place. This will enable the learner to relax and reduce his anxiety, and he can even use the extra time to focus his mind and clear his thoughts.
- **Teachers' instructions**: When the teacher is explaining, the student should listen carefully to his instructions and gestures. He should also interpret the instructor's body language as it might hint to the possible answers.

- **Reading the topic**: It is crucial to read the whole topic before answering. This gives the learner an idea about the coverage and objective of the test. Most questions are related to each other, thus some answers might be found in subsequent items. Reading the guidelines thoroughly and underlining both the keywords and the instruction words such as: analyse, compare, discuss, and define; helps to avoid redundancy and ensures cohesion and coherence.

- **Time management**: The student should first check the exam duration and estimate the time and pace it will take him to complete each section. It is preferable to start with the easiest section and allot some time for the final proofreading and revision.

- **First impressions**: The first answer that comes to mind is most likely the right one. Thus it is favoured to register these answers in a draft immediately in order to prevent forgetfulness and ambiguity.

- **True/false questions**: If there are absolute qualifiers such as always, all, and none. It is highly possible that the question is false. As opposed to relative qualifiers such as often, frequently, or seldom which indicate that the question is probably true. If one part of the item is incorrect, then the whole question is false.

- **Multiple-choice questions**: First of all, the learner must check if he can select more than one option. He should anticipate the answer first and then looks for it. If it is still ambiguous, he ought to eliminate obvious and absurd alternatives. Whenever two options are identical, then both are incorrect. And if they are opposites, then at least one of them can be eliminated. Also alternatives that do not match the item grammatically are usually incorrect.

- **Essays and composition writing**: There is a certain drill to be followed when writing compositions. The learner, first, brainstorms the ideas related to his topic, then makes a draft in which he selects and organizes the suitable ones. He revises his content by adding or omitting the

content. He edits the work by checking grammar, form, and punctuation. Lastly, he publishes his essay and submits it to the tester.

- **Revision**: After completing the test, it is important for the learner to review his work. Although, he should avoid last minute answer changing. In this phase, he can check if his answers are precise and clear, he numbers the items, and he inspects the grammatical and spelling mistakes.

3.3.8. Selecting Appropriate Test Format

The use of direct testing is one of the essential points that should be taken into account when designing a test. Hughes (1989:45) defines this latter as "the testing of performance skills, with texts and tasks as authentic as possible". Consequently, students are being taught how to solve real-life situations that they might encounter as they are undertaking the test.

Another way to ensure the application of direct testing is through the concise and precise statement of instructions and questions. As reported by our sample, it is favoured to employ multiple-choice items, true/false questions, and explicit interrogation in general. They also advocated that it is necessary to consider the learners' proficiency level, time allocated for the exam, the atmosphere, and the affective factors during the test design process.

Varying examination types from written to oral endues a dynamic and vitality to testing. The majority of the sample indicated that oral exams are conceived as the most suitable method to test the speaking and listening skills, to practise the correct use and usage of the language, as well as to avoid cheating, passive memorisation and rote learning.

3.3.9. Innovative Language Testing

The provision of technological aids, modern softwares, and the integration of ICT's in language learning and testing can enhance learners' achievements and

productivity. In this regard, Alderson (1990) posits that computer-based testing does not only facilitate the task of administering a test, but it also propels the learners' self-rating confidence about their task performance, and promotes autonomous learning since the easiness of delivery and immediate feedback endues them the ability to control and condition their learning.

In this context, various e-tools were elaborated to serve such purpose, like: Electronic tablets, VR[4] headsets, interactive whiteboards, video-conferencing, edugames, interactive fiction (IF)[5], mobile applications, and even social media platforms.

3.3.10. Ensuring Content-Validity

During the process of test design, the instructor should base his layout upon the degree to which the test actually measures what it intends to, which is known as content specification. In this vein, Flavel (1983:11) asserts that:

> The content specification is important because it ensures as far as possible that the test reflects all the areas to be tested in suitable proportions and also because it represents a balanced sample, without bias towards the test material which happens to be available.

In simpler terms, the content of the test should match the instructional objectives, and measure the skills it seeks to develop.

3.3.11.Emphasising the Use of Formative Assessment

It is commonly agreed that summative assessment holds more than its fair share when it comes to examining students' performance and behaviour. This latter results mainly in the negligence of formative assessment which is an in-process evaluation of students' comprehension, learning needs, and academic progress during the instruction. Formative assessment exploits the collected feedback to

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[4] It is a realistic and immersive simulation of a three-dimensional 360-degree environment, created using interactive software and hardware, and experienced or controlled by movement of the body. (Nagubandi, 2014)
[5] It is a text-based digital game in which the readers participate in the storytelling process by becoming the main protagonist, and influencing how the narrative. (Pereira, 2012)

adjust the teaching and learning tasks according to the learners' needs, interests, and lacks.

It is of high importance to incorporate formative assessment while maintaining a clear balance between the amounts of testing and teaching in class, as too much testing can highlight the students' inadequacies and have a negative impact on self-efficacy and self-esteem. There are various methods to conduct formative assessment, among which we mention: Observations, lesson summary, questioning, response logs, portfolios, peer/self-assessment, laundry day[6], and Think-Pair-Share.

3.3.12. Grading Tests and Correction

During our data analysis process, we came to the conclusion that there is a considerable amount of washback exerted on learners after taking a test. The results have shown that most of the students learn from tests through the correction. For this end, it is highly recommended to set up such sessions in which the teacher categorises the common mistakes, provides remedial activities, and details the grading system he used. This enables the learners to assess their progress, avoid making the same mistakes in future testing, and solve the test more efficiently.

Another point to ponder is that learners' overall performance, classroom behaviour, and participation should as well be assessed and acknowledged. This way, the low test grade that might be due to anxiety or fear cannot impede the final score of the learners.

3.3.13. Delivering Feedback

Feedback is one of the essential classroom interactions that impel learners to perceive their errors and correct them. Sàrosdy et al., posit that "feedback refers to the information that learners receive from their teacher about their performance, which will help them take self-corrective action and improve their achievement" (2006:253).

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[6]After evaluating their own learning in preparation for a unit test, students group themselves in the classroom around four different kinds of laundry detergent (Tide, Gain, Bold and Cheer).in their chosen corners, they will work on activities that enrich or improve their understanding of the required content. (Erkens, 2007).

- **Explicit Feedback**: This type focuses on the form and correctness of the learners responses when using the foreign language. Harmer (2001:246) states that "Form feedback deals with the linguistic accuracy of the students' performance". In this type, the teacher discusses the successful achievement of the task while drawing attention directly to the errors that were made.

- **Implicit Feedback**: It focuses on the content of the learners responses. Harmer (2001:246) posits that "Content feedback involves the assessment of how good the student's performance was in the communicative activity, focusing on their ability to perform the task rather than dealing with the correctness of their language used in the activity". Here, the teacher provides a corrective feedback that requests illustrations and recast.

3.4. Conclusion

The present study attempts to shed light on one of the important facets of language testing which is washback. Our findings have assented the existence of such phenomenon in our setting of investigation. In this chapter, we have provided a number of suggestions that represent our contribution to the field of language assessment, with the intention of optimising foreign language education in general, and ELT in particular.

General Conclusion

The current study served as an attempt to investigate the washback effect on the EFL setting at the English Department of TlemcenUniversity.The objective was to explore the nature and scope of washback on the teachers and students' perceptions and behaviours, to determine areas of washback intensity, and to utilise the research results into funding a better conduct of language tests.

By means of investigation, the researcher hypothesised that washback is evident in our setting through the changes teachers adopt in their teaching content, methodology of instruction, materials use, and test design. The learners' views about testing and ways of preparation have, as well, showed the existence of the phenomenon. It is seen in both psychological and mental aspects, as students attempt to cope with the pressure and anxiety of testing by devoting more time for test-preparation, changing of learning styles, enrolling in paid-coaching classes, and requesting extra revision and practice sessions.

The research work comprised three chapters. The first one was dedicated to the literature review and background researches related to the washback effect. The second chapter presented the field work of our research, drawing from the results of the two questionnaires administered to our sample population. The third chapter that highlighted the research findings in relation to the hypotheses formulated in the general introduction. Finally, a sum of solutions and recommendations were mentioned for the sake of improving foreign language assessment and learning.

The research findings have come to consolidate that testing is not an easy task. It is, in fact, a complex and systemic procedure of gathering data about general and specific abilities of performance that can be employed to diagnose areas of strengths and weaknesses, supply feedback about the success or failure of teaching methodologies and materials, and generate change through the decisions that teachers and learners make after receiving such feedback. In this study, we have deduced that assessment is an intricate process that one needs to conceptualise, develop, and put into practice in a very delicate way. It is vital to consider the available research on testing and rely on classroom experience to guide the design and development of tests that should not only match the instructional objectives, but

also cater to the learners' needs and individual language abilities. The selection of an appropriate teaching methodology highly interrelates with the effectiveness of testing. Our results have indicated a deliberate use of teaching-to-the-test approach as a means to familiarise students with the test format, and in order to elevate testing scores. However, it is rather a curse than a blessing to adopt such method in teaching, as its damage has been thoroughly displayed in previous sections of the work. Our sample of students proved that they, indeed, undergo through some affective and mental obstacles during the period of exams, which they seek to overcome through intensive test-preparation and positive thinking.

In addition to the intent of investigating the washback effect at the level of the University of Tlemcen, and highlighting the sample's perceptions about such topic; we aimed to sensitise the teachers, learners, and whoever lies eyes on this research about the importance of assessment as an independent field, and as an integrated part of the teaching/learning process in the form of washback. Thereby, this research detailed a number of suggestions that can affect the learners' performances directly if they are righteously implemented, thus improving the quality of education and fostering autonomous learning.

Hopefully, this research has tackled the major notions related to washback, and outlined its importance in the teaching and learning process. We can only hope that this study serves as a guide for future research in the field of language assessment, and that its findings are to be taken into account by at least attempting to implement some of our research suggestions and recommendations.

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Appendices

Appendix "A"

Teachers' Questionnaire

The present questionnaire aims to investigate the impact of the washback effect on the EFL setting. Your answers are very important for the validity of this research and so you are kindly invited to answer the following questions.

Section One: General Information

- Qualifications: …………………………………………

- Gender:

  Male ☐   Female ☐

- How long have you been teaching English?

  Less than 5 years☐   Between 5 and 10 years☐   More than 10 years☐

Section Two: Teachers' Attitudes towards the Washback Effect

1. Do test results reflect the students' accurate level?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

2. Do students' results often match the instructional objectives?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

   If no, what are the reasons for the mismatch?

   ....……………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………...
   ………………………………………………………………………..…

3. Do you use past-examination papers when teaching?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

   If yes, to what extent?

   ……………………………………………………………………………
   ……………………………………………………………………………
   ……………………………………………………………………………

4. Do you teach test-taking techniques?

    Yes ☐   No ☐

5. Do you search for past-examination papers to help design your test?

    Yes ☐   No ☐

    If yes, to what extent you use them

    …………………………………………............……………………………

    ……………………………………………………………………………..…

    ……………………………………………………………………………..…

    If no, what materials do you use instead?

    …………………………………………………………………………….…

    …………………………………………………………………………….…

    …………………………………………………………………………….…

6. What criteria do you take into account when designing a test? (you can select more than one answer)

    Learners' general language ability   ☐

    Learners' affective factors   ☐

    The test-taking environment   ☐

    Learners' needs   ☐

    Authenticity of situations   ☐

    Alignment with the curriculum   ☐

    Others……………………………………………………………………

7. Does testing affect your teaching content?

    Yes ☐   No ☐

    If yes, how?

    ....……

    ……………………………………………………………………...….

    ……………………………………………………….…………...……

8. Does testing affect your teaching methodology?

    Yes ☐   No ☐

    If yes, please illustrate

    ……………………………………………………………………………

    ……………………………………………………………………………

    ……………………………………………………………………………

9. According to you, what are the impacts of negative washback?

   …………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………

10. What do you suggest to promote positive washback in order to achieve quality education?

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Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Appendix "B"

Students' Questionnaire

Dear students, you are kindly requested to fill in this questionnaire which aims to investigate the impact of the washback effect on an EFL setting (Washback is defined as the influence of testing on teaching and learning). Your answers are important for the validity of this research and so we seek for your full attention and interest. Please tick (√) the appropriate box (es) or give full answers where the gaps are provided.

Section One: General Information

- Age: ……

- Gender:
    Male ☐   Female ☐

- How do you consider your level in English?
    Very good   ☐
    Good   ☐
    Average   ☐
    Poor   ☐

Section Two: Learners' Attitudes towards the Washback Effect

1. Does the test result reflect your level accurately?
    Yes ☐   No ☐

2. Do you learn from tests?
    Yes ☐   No ☐
   If yes, please specify
   …………………………………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………......................…………

3. Does your teacher use past-examination papers to instruct in the classroom?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

4. Do you ask your teacher to provide you with revision sessions before exams?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

5. Did a test change your way of preparing for upcoming tests?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

   If yes, how?

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6. Do you use materials when preparing for a test (such as textbooks, past papers, etc...)?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

   If yes, please mention them

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   ..………………………………………………………………………………………...

7. Do affective factors (such as anxiety, motivation, etc...) influence your performance on tests?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

   If yes, explain

   ………………………………………………………………………………………

   ………………………………………………………………………………………

8. Have you ever attended English paid-coaching classes?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

9. In the paid coaching classes, you practised (you can tick more than one answer):

Grammar activities ☐

Oral practice ☐

Test-taking techniques and strategies ☐

Relaxation techniques ☐

Solving test-like papers ☐

Solving past-examination papers ☐

Revision of lessons ☐

Solving textbook tasks ☐

Others ……………………………………………………………

10. Have you been tested on elements you weren't taught?

Yes ☐   No ☐

11. According to you, should you be taught only the items you're going to be tested on, or should you receive general non-tested knowledge? Explain

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12. What kind of changes do you suggest in order to improve learning and testing (i.e., to achieve positive washback)?

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Thank you very much for your cooperation.

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ملخص

يعرف مفهوم " Washback" بأنه التأثير الإنعكاسي للإختبارات على التعليم و التعلم. هذا التأثير قد يكون إيجابي أو سلبي؛ لهذا يهدف البحث الحالي لتوعية القارئ عن وجود هذه الظاهرةو نتائجها. لتحقيق هذه الغاية, حاولنا استنباط آراء و تصورات الأساتذة و الطلاب من خلال تسليط الضوء على طبيعة هذا المفهوم , نطاقه, و مظاهر تأثيرهعلى مستوى قسم اللغة الإنجليزية في جامعة تلمسان.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التأثير الإنعكاسي,إختبارات اللغة الإنجليزية , التقويم

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Summary

The concept of "washback" is commonly defined as the influence of testing on teaching and learning. This influence can be positive or negative. Thus the present research work seeks to sensitise the reader about the existence and the consequences that can be brought up by this effect. To this end, we have tried to elicit the teachers and students' perceptions about such phenomenon by shedding light on its nature, its scope, and its areas of impact on the EFL setting at the University of Tlemcen.

Keywords :Washback, English language testing, assessment.

Resumé

Le concept de « washback » est souvent défini comme l'influence des tests sur l'enseignement et l'apprentissage. Cette influence peut être positive, aussi bien que négative; Donc, la recherche actuelle vise à sensibiliser le lecteur à l'existence et le consequence qui peuvent en découler ce phénomène. A cette effet, nous avons essayé de susciter la perception des enseignants et des étudiants à l'égard de ce phénomène en mettant l'accent sur sa nature, sa portée et ses impacts sur le cadre de l'enseignement de l'anglais à l'Université De Tlemcen.

Mots-clés: Washback, test de langue anglaise, évaluation.