

**Pragmatics of Testing**

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**Abstract**

Teaching of a language is a very complicated issue and testing is an indispensable part of this matter. Thanks to testing teachers can assess efficiency of teaching and learning atmosphere, and can get feedback about their learners. In order to realize this, a test should have some qualifications. One of these qualifications is about pragmatics. This paper aims at explaining what makes a test pragmatic and how pragmatic tests can be formed. So, examples of pragmatic tests of different types are presented with explanations. Their pragmatic components and nature are focused on by giving example test items on the problematic area of test questions prepared. Finally, the writer states his last words by making further comments and explanations on pragmatics of testing in the conclusion part.

**Key words:** Testing, pragmatics, pragmatics of testing

**Özet**

Dil öğretimi birçok öğeyi içinde barındıran karmaşık bir olgudur ve bu olguyu oluşturan bileşenlerden biri de kuşkusuz ölçmedir. Ölçme sayesinde öğretmenler öğretim ve öğrenme ortamının verimliliğini ölçebilir ve öğrencilerinin ilerlemesi hakkında dönüt alabilirler. Tabi ki bunu sağlıklı bir şekilde gerçekleştirebilmek için testlerin de bazı nitelikleri olmalıdır. Bahsedilen niteliklerden bir tanesi de edimbilimle ilgilidir. Bu makale nelerin sınavları edimbilimsel yapabileceğini ve edimbilimsel testlerin nasıl oluşturulabileceğini açıklamayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu amaçla, sözkonusu bakış açısıyla test çeşitleri ele alınarak örnekli olarak sorunların olduğu sorular incelenmiştir. Bu örnekleri nelerin edimbilimsel yaptığı açıklanmıştır. Son olarak da yazar ölçme ve edimbilim üzerine nihai sözlerine ve yorumlarına sonuç bölümünde yer vermiştir.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Ölçme, edimbilim, edimbilimsel ölçme

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Teaching of a language has many sub-considerations. One of these sub-considerations is testing. Some scholars even accept testing as the most important component. So, language teaching cannot be considered apart from testing issue. But, what is testing then?

Heaton, (1990) considers tests as “devices to reinforce learning and to motivate the student or primarily as a means of assessing the student’s performance in the language”.

Brown, (1994) defines test as “a method of measuring a person’s ability or knowledge in a given area”. The definition gives us valuable information on the components of a test. First, a test is a method. There is a set of techniques, procedures, test items and some sort of instruments. Next, it has the purpose of measuring. Some measurements are done mathematically, while some other are carried out in other ways. A test also measures a person’s ability or knowledge. Finally, a test measures a given area. So, when testing is the matter of debate, these facts should be observed.

Since language testing is involved in teaching learning process, it should not be neglected. In addition to these all, testing should not be considered as a means of score determining vehicle. Besides score oriented testing which focuses on the result of the test, formative test, which helps the learner in learning process, are in the agenda, as Heaton says in his test definition. Thus, testing can be considered as an effective teaching tool in language teaching.

When language testing is the focus of interest, as well as the above mentioned properties, some other facts should not be disregarded. One of them is pragmatics. How can pragmatics and testing be emerged? The answer is by forming pragmatic tests or pragmatic testing methods and techniques. But, what are they? They will be dealt with in the coming part.

## **2.0 WHAT MAKES A PRAGMATIC TESTING?**

Mousavi, (1997: 101, 102) defines pragmatic test as “a test which requires meaningful processing of sequences of elements in the target language under normal

time constraints". In addition, he states that a pragmatic test should have two criteria. They are:

1. A pragmatic test must require the learner to utilise normal contextual constraints on sequences in the language
2. A pragmatic test must require comprehension of meaningful sequences of elements in the language in relation to extra-linguistic context.

What we understand from these is that context and meaning are two significant components of pragmatic testing. Bachman (1990), considers pragmatics in testing as a kind of authenticity. So, pragmatic tests should have authentic nature in themselves.

Distracters also play an important role in pragmatic testing as far as test items with choices are involved in the matter. Their design, order, meaning relation and even their being long or short can make the test item more or less pragmatic. In other words, distracters should not be given place just for the sake of filling the choices except the correct one. They should have an aim: letting the learner test himself or herself. The learner should eliminate distracters one by one in the way of finding the correct answer. However, here comes an important point. The learner should make use of his mental processing ability, and pragmatic tests make him use this ability. Only by using and developing his mental processing ability, a learner can improve his master of the target language, and pragmatic tests have important roles in this process.

Moreover, recognition tests, which are designed to test students' ability to recognise the correct form, are considered to be less pragmatic than production tests, which require the learners to use the correct form. Therefore, a cloze test can be taken as more pragmatic compared to a true-false test item. So, language teachers should consider this fact.

Consequently, language tests should have the qualities of a pragmatic test. However, do all the test types possess such considerations? In order to have enough information on this subject, it would be wise to go through test types. So, it can be unearthed whether they are pragmatic in nature or not.

### **3.0 TEST TYPES AND PRAGMATICS RELATION**

No doubt there is a strong relation between test types and pragmatics. That is to say, a test type may be pragmatic in nature, whereas another may not be a pragmatic one. So, by having a brief look at test and question types, a better understanding of their pragmatic or non-pragmatic nature can be understood.

### 3.1 Essay Type Tests

Essay-type tests are perhaps among the oldest testing techniques that are utilised for a long time. They have been used as a result of essay-translation approach. They are sometimes regarded as a result of pre-scientific stage of language testing. However, if mental processing possibility is added to this type of testing, it may have pragmatic nature as well. Below is an example of essay type question about a reading passage:

- Read the text quickly and answer the following questions.
1. Why is it important to be able to speak sensibly about art in New York?
  2. What makes Quinn different from his students?
  3. What is the tendency of people against Quinn's courses?
  4. Is Quinn satisfied with his students' performance? Why? Why not?
  5. Why is this age called 'the age of art for survival'? Discuss as a whole class.

#### EXPOSED! THE FINE ART OF ARTSPEAK

##### **...or the instant way to be classic buffer**

Are you one of those unfortunate who knows little about art and, worse still, hasn't the foggiest idea *what* you like or *why* you like it.

It is obvious. You look at the pictures and declare sagely:

*That's very nice* or

##### **Hmmm.....interesting**

Well, sorry, that just isn't good enough.

In New York, discussions about art are currency of social life. Just like in the Woody Allen films, your worth is measured by your Artspeak.

Which is why William Quinn, a young Irishman from County Mayo, is the new hero of the smart set.

He is running a £33 course on how to say intelligent things about works of art in public places. And people are queuing to join his remedial class in art bluffery.

Quinn - an increasingly well-known artist who paints giant versions of the computer bar codes on supermarket products - aims to teach the 'basic but critical vocabulary' of the art.

‘People like to feel sophisticated,’ he says. ‘But they can’t unless they know at least something about art.’

‘If they’re at a dinner party and start talking about the Modigliani heads being inspired by the example of Brancusi, other people pay attention.’

As one student says: ‘This course teaches you how to sound halfway intelligent about art when you aren’t.’

Indeed after a few evenings in the Quinn’s course, you can be an ‘expert’ without even seeing works you discuss. And everyone defers to an ‘expert’.

Just like Librace – who once revealed that his gift was to play Tchaikowsky by leaving out the boring bits – Quinn’s proteges go into New York’s social whirl armed with just the interesting snippets they need.

For this is the age of art for survival, where people would rather die than have nothing to say about something.

A huge TV advertising campaign is running in America for a series of records of the most tuneful pieces of 100 classical music favourites.

Quinn gets very shirty at his students’ go-for-it attitude to art consumption. Yet he agrees that his course title – called Meeting People at the Great Museum – does not sound, well enormously deep.

### **Warmth**

Meanwhile, over in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, one student gazes lamely at Pierre Bonnard’s The Terrace at Vernon and says: ‘I like this one.’ ‘Insufficient’, says Quinn. ‘And if you are with a sophisticate, you should add: ‘The daily intimacies of family life add warmth to Bonnard’s art.’

*(Taken from Headway Advanced p.64)*

## **3.2 Multiple Choice Tests**

Multiple choice tests are composed of a root and choices. One of the choices is correct, and the rest are distracters. If the distracters are designed well enough, the multiple choice question can be a pragmatic question. However, if the distracters do not serve the purpose of making the learners use his ability and knowledge in the target or tested language, then it is not pragmatic. The number of choices should be appropriate for the level of learners. For advanced or upper-intermediate levels five choices should be presented. For beginners and young learners, three choices may be used. Let’s have a look at the below given example:

- Read the letter written to a newspaper and answer the questions below.

### WE WANT A CLEAN TURKEY

I want to write about my concern for the nuclear plant in Turkey. I am aware of the advantages of nuclear power, but what I am completely against is the nuclear power plant in Turkey. My concerns are based on two main topics. The first one is the corruption and the second one is the possibility of an earthquake. Nuclear power is known as the most efficient energy source and also for having the capability of burning its own waste, but what about its dangers? A small mistake or lack of security can cause a disaster like we all witnessed with Chernobyl. If only such a trouble hadn't happened, but it occurred. Considering this fact, it is hard for me to rely on Turkish architects because Turkey is a country of corruption. We wish we hadn't seen it but, we all saw the honesty of our architects with the august 17th earthquake in 1999 and I wish Turkey wouldn't be in trouble again. Having talked about the earthquake, no doubt is Akkuyu in a potential earthquake zone and if it is affected by an earthquake, casualties will increase due to the radioactivity from the nuclear plant. In conclusion, Turkey has enough troubles and there is no need to frighten people with the fear of a possible earthquake causing great damage in an area with a nuclear weapon. I wish our government considered this mistake and took necessary precautions.

Aslan Baruh

Sabancı University student

*(Taken from Turkish Daily News: Wednesday, January 26, 2000)*

- I. The subject matter of the passage is.....
  - a.) the 17th August earthquake.
  - b.) the disaster of Chernobyl.
  - c.) the nuclear power plant in Turkey.
  - d.) the corruption in the field of architecture.
  - e.) the troubles Turkey has..
- II. The writer .....
  - a.) is completely against nuclear power in Turkey.
  - b.) is not affected from the 17th August earthquake much.
  - c.) trusts Turkish architects.

- d.) trusts foreign building companies.
- e.) wants safe nuclear power.

III. Akkuyu.....

- a.) is the most suitable area for a nuclear energy plant
- b.) has perfect natural beauty.
- c.) is in a potential earthquake zone.
- d.) is a place where a nuclear energy plant exists.
- e.) is famous with its corrupted architects.

IV. According to the writer, nuclear power.....

- a.) is the most dangerous way of producing energy.
- b.) is the most efficient way of producing energy.
- c.) is the cause of the troubles of Turkey.
- d.) causes corruption in architecture.
- e.) is desired by many politicians in turkey.

V. According to the passage, Chernobyl.....

- a.) is an example of corrupted architects.
- b.) is an example of the old technology used in nuclear plants.
- c.) is a big disaster witnessed by Turkish people.
- d.) was a nuclear plant in Russia
- e.) is of no concern of us.

(Level: Intermediate)

These questions can be considered as pragmatic in nature because of many reasons. First, distracters are not problematic. Second, they are nearly equal in length. Third, they have production more than recognition. They let the learner use his mental processing power, and moreover develop it.

### 3.3 Yes-No Questions

Yes-no questions can be considered as weak questions in their pragmatic structure. The reason is that they have a high chance of getting the correct answer on the learner's side: this is fifty percent. Thus, it is advised that they be used only for lower levels. Let's have a look at the given example:

- Read the given text and say yes or no the following sentences

- ↑ a. Cooper threatened to stab the pilots.
- ↑ b. His parachute was found.
- ↑ c. It is unlikely that he could have survived.
- ↑ d. He must have been going very fast when he landed in the parachute.
- ↑ e. In the note Cooper said he was hiding somewhere.
- ↑ f. None of Cooper's money was ever found.
- ↑ g. It is possible that Cooper could be prosecuted.

### MYSTERIOUS CRIME

The skyjacker who had commandeered the Northwest Airlines Boeing 727 flight from Portland, Oregon to Seattle, Washington was cold, calculating and ruthless. He terrified the cabin staff when he opened the canvas bag he was carrying in his lap and showed them a home-made bomb – tightly wrapped sticks of dynamite packed round a detonator.

As the jet cruised at 6,000 m above the Cascade Mountains, he had threatened to blow apart the aircraft, killing himself and 35 other passengers on board.

But the man who had cruelly bargained with the lives of the passengers and the crew pulled off some things so daring and lucrative that he is now fondly remembered as a folk hero, a pirate of the jet age. Songs have been written in his honour, fan clubs have been formed to cherish his memory and thousands of admirers wear T-shirts with his name on.

But the true identity of the man who had vanished into thin air with his \$200,000 booty after he got it still remains a mystery. No one knows who he was, where he come from or where he went.

D. B. Cooper may be a frozen corpse, a broken body lying in a heap of bank notes in an impenetrable forest in the mountains of the northwest United States. Or he may be sunning on a beach in Mexico, and gloating over his perfect crime.

The search which followed had involved FBI agents, the army, helicopter pilots and frogmen, and yet no trace of Cooper or his parachute was found among the densely wooded, inhospitable mountains in the American West.

His chances of survival seemed pretty slim – he hadn't been wearing protective clothing and in this high attitude the parachute would only have slowed him to a bone-crushing 18 metres per second before he hit the mountain peaks. Only a superfit expert

could have hoped to escape alive and professional experts agree that Cooper's leap from a speeding jet in a rain storm was a suicide.

Three weeks after the hijack came the first enigmatic clue; a typewritten note, posted in Seattle and signed by D. B. Copper, was sent to a Los Angeles newspaper.

'I am no modern-day Robin Hood. Unfortunately I have only 14 months to live. The hijacking was the fastest and most suitable way to gain a few last grains of peace of mind.

I don't blame people for hating me for what I have done nor do I blame anybody for wanting me caught or punished – though this can never happen. I knew from the start I would not be caught. I've come and gone on several airline flights since I'm not holed up in some obscure backwoods town. Neither am I a psychopath. I've never even received a parking ticket'

This note sparked off a new hunt for Cooper, and as the list of potential suspects dwindled the mountains were combed, looking for clues. There was still no sign of Cooper.

FBI agents were confident that, even if Cooper had survived the jump, he would be nailed as soon as he tried to spend a penny of the ransom money – all US banks and money clearing houses abroad had been alerted to raise the alarm as soon as they began to trickle into circulation.

Not one single dollar of the money turned up, but the mystery hijacker began to gather a cult following from a fascinated public. Ten years later the treasure-hunters started again when an eight-year-old boy playing along the Columbia River near Vancouver had found \$3,000 of Cooper's cash.

If he is still alive, Cooper can now identify himself. After five years the file is officially closed and he can never be prosecuted for the crime. However, he could face a jail sentence for failing to pay tax on his money!

*(Taken from Matters Upper-intermediate p.136, 138)*

### **3.4 True-False Questions**

True-false questions, just like yes-no questions, are not considered to have a pragmatic nature. The reason is the same: the chance of choosing the correct answer is rather high: at least fifty percent. In order to eliminate this luck ratio, a third choice like "not mentioned in the text" may be added; however, this third choice may not be enough to make the structure or true-false questions pragmatic.

- Listen to the five different tapescripts about the future and mark the following sentences as T (true), F (false) or NM (not mentioned) in the given boxes. If your answer is false, write the correct answer.
  - a.  The dresses of the future will develop but they will not have medical use.
  - b.  Communication will be cheaper in the future.
  - a.  Technology will be harmful for family life.
  - d.  Visual responses will be more important in the process of future technology.
  - e.  Traditional life styles will still be prominent.
  - f.  Computers will prepare the meals in the future.

## **TAPESCRIPT**

### **One**

I certainly think that before too long we'll see the results of the research into fabrics that reduce stress and others that contain scent, as well as materials that have medical properties. Manufacturers will be able to do this by putting tiny, micro-sized bubbles into, say, dresses or shirts, and filling them with 'smart' technologies, so that they release fragrances, vitamins or other medications that can be absorbed through our skin from the fibres.

### **Two**

All this equipment to keep you in touch with the outside world has its price. You'll continually have to be buying the latest technologies and paying for expensive updates if you want to send and receive text, pictures and sound at full speed. You'll find yourself saving up all the time to be able to afford it, while connection charges keep going up and the government thinks up more and more ways of taxing the airwaves.

### **Three**

Technology will allow us to escape from the city to the country and do our jobs there. With less commuting, the metropolitan will free themselves from the human gridlock of the nine-to-fivers. Perhaps one day we will look back, laugh and shake our heads when we remember that, as part of the every weekday, we used to waste too much time and

energy trapped in little steel boxes that took us to and from our homes. We even had a name for it: ‘rush hour’.

#### **Four**

People will choose equipment to fit their lifestyles and needs, and makers will respond to that demand. The consumer will have control over everything. Ovens will become voice-activated so that we only have to touch the voicebox panel at the top of the device and say: ‘Lasagne for four and an apricot flan, please.’ Five minutes later, a computerised voice will announce: ‘Meal prepared’.

#### **Five**

I don’t think there’ll be that much change really, apart from making space for the obligatory mod cons. Our lifestyle may be changing but the problem is that at the root of our deepest instinct is the desire to live in a rose-covered cottage; so the sorts being built, and apparently most in demand, have traditional designs and layouts. We’ll still be living in a way that would be readily recognisable to the ancient Romans.

As it is carried out in the example if the statement is false, by asking for the correct answer it can be developed into a more pragmatic one. However, it is still advised for lower levels.

### **3.5 Fill in the Blanks Questions**

Fill in the blank questions are taken apart from cloze-tests. The reason is that in fill in the blank questions context is not looked for all the time. So, it is not much pragmatic. However, if the meaning is emphasised, it can be developed. Let’s consider the below example:

1. Complete the following sentences with the correct relative pronoun.
  - a. His parents always gave him ..... he wanted.
  - b. Thank you for my birthday present. It’s just ..... I wanted.
  - c. You may be surprised by ..... I’m going to tell you.
  - d. The thing ..... I hate about him is his selfishness.
  - e. .... I like about her is her sense of humour.
  - f. The house in ..... they lived was built at the turn of the century.
  - g. The people ..... the house I’m staying in are coming back this week.
  - h. What’s the name of the hotel ..... you stayed last summer?
  - i. I don’t think I have met the couple ..... you’re staying with.

j. The family with ..... I'm living have always been very kind to me.

*(Taken from The Key to Cambridge First Certificate p.119)*

This exercise has a pragmatic nature, because it has a high level of production. The rate of guessing is not high. In the second example, there is a case of recognition; however, by giving an extra item, the teacher may reduce chance of guessing and knowing the last one which is left alone.

2. Complete each sentence by using a word or a phrase from the list below. Use each item only once. There is an extra item which you do not need to use.

championship – cheer – disqualified – draw – explain the rules – final score – first round – keen on – lack of support – member – play cards – sponsor – tactical game – take part in – take up – train really hard – to book
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- a. He agrees to ..... the team provided that they put the name of his company on their shirts.
- b. You have to ..... if you want to get to the top of this sport.
- c. They were knocked out in the ..... of the competition.
- d. She tried to ..... to me but I found them very complicated.
- e. I've never been very ..... jogging, especially at night.
- f. In the evening we used to ..... but never of money, of course.
- g. He was ..... after the drug test proved positive.
- h. I've decided to ..... this year's competition.
- i. The spectators began to ..... as he ran onto the pitch.
- j. It's very expensive to become a ..... of the tennis club.
- k. Chess is a very ..... and you have to think out each move extremely carefully.
- l. Both teams played well so a ..... was a fair result.
- m. The team has a good chance of winning the ..... this year.
- n. The club had to close due to .....
- o. After all the excitement, the ..... was one-nil.
- p. I decided to ..... tennis after my doctor warned me that I was terribly unfit.

*(Taken from First Certificate Organiser p.142)*

### 3.6 Cloze Tests

Cloze tests are probably the most pragmatic test type. The reason is that they have context. The context makes the structure of the test more meaningful and contextual clues help the learner. This is the point that is stated by Mousavei (1997). Cloze tests can be used for testing grammar, vocabulary or reading comprehension. The ratio or the blanks may change up to the level of the learners. That is to say, after the lead in, the part without blanks, every 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> word would be missing and this depends on level. The completion of the missing words require a great deal of mental processing ability in manipulating language, and this is something desired. Diacritic listening tests in TOEFL which work on close tests are examples of this type, as well. In brief, close tests make up a very significant place in pragmatic testing. Below is an example of a cloze test.

- Here is a card from John and Barbara to their friend, Mike. Work with a partner and write the necessary verbs with their correct form in the spaces.

How \_\_\_\_\_ you? We \_\_\_\_\_ on holiday in Bianca Bay. Every day, we \_\_\_\_\_ in the sea. The water \_\_\_\_\_ very warm and clean and the beaches \_\_\_\_\_ lovely. Now, Jessica \_\_\_\_\_ in the hotel but I \_\_\_\_\_ on the beach and writing this postcard. The sun \_\_\_\_\_ and the children \_\_\_\_\_ on the sand. It \_\_\_\_\_ a perfect holiday. We \_\_\_\_\_ at Halley Hotel. Please \_\_\_\_\_ back to us soon. Jessica \_\_\_\_\_ to hear all your news.

Best wishes

John and Jessica

About every 4<sup>th</sup> word is missing in the above given letter. The text is authentic and the exercise is meaningful. So, it is successful in terms of pragmatics.

### 3.7 Matching Tests

Matching tests are other common used testing tools. They combine structures in terms of either grammar or meaning. In both ways they have pragmatic features. However, in order to have pragmatic features, they should have some properties. Initially, the level should be designed well. Secondly, there should be an extra item on one side of the matching in order to reduce the care of answering the last one by chance. Thirdly, as an advice both grammar and meaning components should be used together.

- Match the two parts of the sentences given in column A and B below. In column B. There is an extra item which you will not use.

A	B
a. John wouldn't have woken up... b. If he hadn't been driving so fast... c. If he had calmed down before getting to work... d. He might still have his job...	1. ...if he hadn't lost the business for his company. 2. ...if he had remembered to set the alarm. 3. ...he might not have had the accident. 4. ...he might not have forgotten his appointment. 5. ...he had gone.

*(Taken from Matters Upper-intermediate p.88)*

The example to the matching has an extra item in column B. So, it reduces chance factor. It has a visual side. This makes it more authentic. It combines meaning and grammar, thus it is advisable.

### 3.8 Error Correction Tests

Error correction tests are not much preferred in language teaching. Scholars base this practice on some concerns: exposure to incorrect usage may be dangerous. However, right after lower levels, error correction tests may be utilised. In this way, it can be right to call error correction tests as pragmatic if they do not neglect level and meaning facts. That is to say, they should be to the level of learners, and they should have authenticity in terms of meaning. Below is an example of error correction test.

- After some verbs there is a very different meaning depending on whether the verb is in the *-ing* or *to* form. Correct the mismatched pair of sentences with the two descriptions given near them in parenthesis.

a. *forget*

I.) I'll never forget feeding the parrot. (I promise I'll do it.)

II.) *I'll never forget to feed the parrot. (I remember the occasion very well.)*

b. *remember*

I.) *He remembered to send the invitations. It's all right. (He didn't forget. He sent them.)*

II.) *He remembered sending the invitations. (He had a clear memory of sending them.)*

c. *regret*

I.) *He regret to tell you that I'm leaving. (I'm sorry I told you. It was a mistake.)*

II.) *He regret telling you that I'm leaving. (I'm telling you now. Sorry it's bad news.)*

d. *stop*

I.) *We've stopped to have coffee. (We're going to have coffee.)*

II.) *We've stopped having coffee. (We're not having any more coffee.)*

*(Taken from Matters Upper-intermediate p.100)*

### **3.9 Sentence Formation or Arrangement Tests**

Sentence formation tests or arrangement of items tests have a very wide use especially among lower level classes. In the former one, one or more components of a sentence are missing and they are determined. Rewriting or paraphrasing exercises, which are sometimes given under the title of transformation exercises, are also of this type. In the second one the components of a sentence are in muddled order and they are arranged. In order to make both types pragmatic, context should be used as much as possible. Besides, meaning must be given more importance. More than just grammatical knowledge, semantic investigation should be looked for. An example to this type is given below:

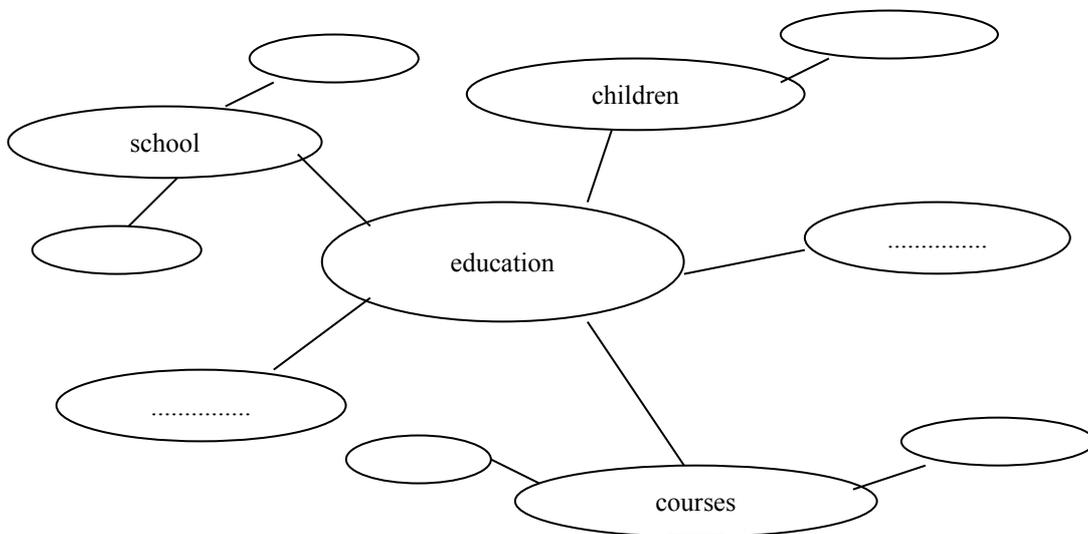
- Complete the following sentences.
  - a. We'll probably eat out tonight if ...
  - b. Remember to heat the meal if ...

- c. The flower dies if ...
- d. The cake will burn if ...
- e. Water evaporates if ...
- f. He would lead the army if ...
- g. They could be happier if ...

### 3.10 Filling in charts, tables

Filling in charts, tables and graphs are among the most favourite exercises desired especially by young learners. The main reason perhaps is that they have visual aids in their structures. This makes them authentic, meaningful and pragmatic. They enhance cognitive learning. They are especially of great help in teaching vocabulary. Looping, cubing and outlining are among the most pragmatic examples of this type. Examples to this situation are given below:

- Continue the spidergram given below with more categories.



- In the below text there are two tenses for talking about the present.
  - b. What are they and how are they formed?
  - c. When do we use each tense? Write the names of the tenses in the table.

TO 'LIVE', NOT TO 'SURVIVE'

It can generally be said that people today do not take enough exercises, a fact which accounts for an alarming increase in the number of heart attacks among young men and women. The fact that many people today lead busy lives means that they have little time for leisure activities. For example, more than half of the Americans are watching TV or sitting in a café at the moment. They are not doing any kind of sports. Because they have a busy day.

What clearly needs to be done is to encourage people to take more exercise by emphasizing the health benefits that it can bring, as well as the risks that we face by not taking any exercise. Some sports centres are doing such things, but they are not many in number. Doctors can play an effective role in persuading people to change their habits by encouraging them to exercise.

Another suggestion is that sports centres open earlier, close later and offer weekend activities. In this way, it would be easier for people to fit an exercise programme into their busy schedules.

Finally, companies should sponsor sports teams and hold regular sports events in an effort to persuade employees to exercise an exhausting chore but a way of making the most of their leisure time. However, if these measures are to have any effect, people must change their lifestyles.

All things considered, exercise should be an important part of everyone's weekly routine. If followed, the suggestions above should result in an improvement in the general health of the population.

*(Adapted from Ways to Reading P.105)*

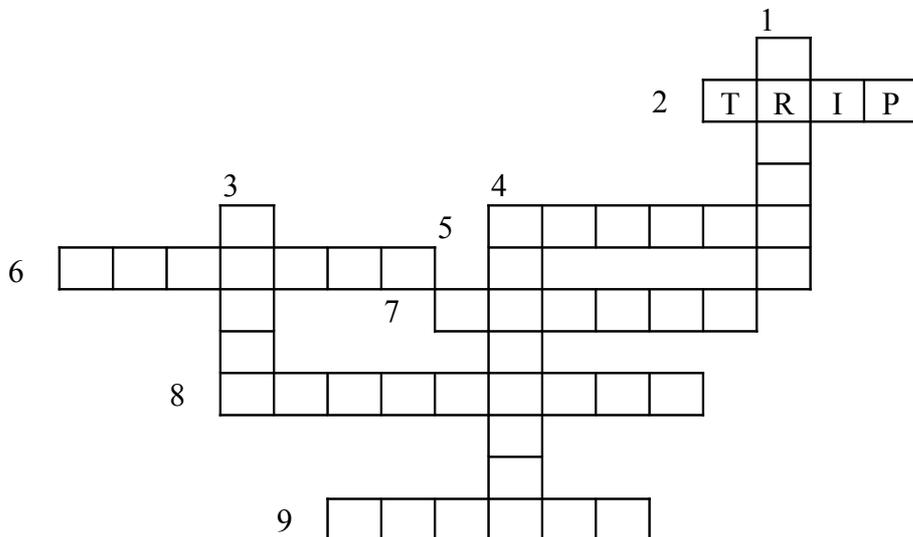
Tense	Use
1. ....	- regular actions or events, general truths
2. ....	- things that are happening now, unfinished actions or events

As is seen in the given examples, both vocabulary and grammar can be practised and tested through using graphs, charts and tables. They refer to visual learners. So, a different way of language learning is improved. Another example is above:

- Fill in the following puzzle according to the sentences given below. The words given in the box are given to help you. There is an extra word which will not be used. The first one is done for you.

flight – journey – cruise – voyage – travel – excursion – trip – crossing – drive -  
ride

- The train ..... from Paris to Moscow takes 24 hours.
- Unfortunately, he got seasick during the ..... to Australia.
- How many students are going on the ..... to Cambridge?
- We had a rough ..... from Dover to Calais, because there was a storm in the North sea.
- Let's go for a ..... this afternoon. I've just bought the car.
- He's been on three business ..... in the last month – to Paris, Tokyo and Moscow.
- ..... is a waste of time for people who are not able to adapt to new customs and traditions.
- We have just come back from a ..... around the Greek Islands. The boat was like a floating luxury hotel.
- I would love to experience a ..... on a plane like Concord.



(Taken from Cambridge First Certificate Course p.51)

### 3.11 Translation Tests

Translation is another important point utilised in testing. It can be either in multiple choice form or essay form. In order to make translation tests more pragmatic, distracters should be selected carefully in multiple choice tests. If text translation is the matter of debate, context and meaning is more important. Information on time, place, conditions help the learner, so translation becomes more pragmatic. Below are some examples of translation tests which are in form of KPDS questions.

1. The sun sinks towards the horizon, leaving its unique reflection on the facade of an old Greek church.
  - A) Güneş, eşsiz yansımasını eski bir Yunan kilisesinin arkasında bırakarak ufukta batmaktadır.
  - B) Güneş, eşsiz yansımasını eski bir Yunan kilisesinin ön yüzünde bırakarak ufukta batmaktadır.
  - C) Güneş, o eşsiz yansımasını eski bir Yunan kilisesinin ön yüzünde bırakarak ufukta batıyor.
  - D) Güneşin yansımasını eski bir Yunan kilisesinin ön yüzünde bırakarak ufukta batması eşsizdir.
  - E) Güneş, her zaman eşsiz yansımasını eski bir Yunan kilisesinin ön yüzünde bırakır ve ufukta batar.
  
2. The magnificent castle of Midas was razed and burnt, and his palace with its exquisite mosaics and wooden furniture inlaid with ivory was abandoned.
  - A) Midas'ın ihtişamlı kalesi yıkılıp yakıldı ve eşsiz güzellikteki mozaik ve fildişi süslemeli ahşap mobilyalı sarayı terkedildi.
  - B) Midas'ın muhteşem kalesi yıkılıp yakıldı, ayrıca eşsiz güzellikteki mozaik ve fildişi süslemeli ahşap mobilyalı sarayı da terkedildi.
  - C) Midas ihtişamlı kalesini yakıp yıktı ve eşsiz güzellikteki mozaik ve fildişi süslemeli ahşap mobilyalı sarayını terketti.
  - D) Midas'ın ihtişamlı kalesi yakılıp yıkıldıktan sonra eşsiz güzellikteki mozaik ve fildişi süslemeli ahşap mobilyalı sarayı terkedildi.
  - E) Midas'ın mükemmel kalesi talan edildi ve eşsiz güzellikteki mozaik ve fildişi ahşap mobilyalı sarayı da herkes tarafından terkedildi.

3. Archaeological excavations have revealed a magnificent city gate flanked by high towers and defensive walls surrounding the city.
- A) Yapılan arkeolojik kazılar sonucunda iki yanında yüksek kuleler olan muhteşem bir şehir kapısı ve şehri çevreleyen surlar bulundu.
  - B) Arkeolojik kazılar, yüksek kulelere sahip muhteşem bir şehir kapısı ve şehri saran surları ortaya çıkardı.
  - C) Arkeolojik kazılar, yanlarında yüksek kuleler olan muhteşem bir şehir kapısı ve şehri çevreleyen surları ortaya çıkarmıştır.
  - D) Arkeolojik kazılarda, yanlarında yüksek kuleler olan muhteşem bir şehir kapısı ve şehri çevreleyen surlar ortaya çıktı.
  - E) Yanlarında yüksek kuleleri olan muhteşem şehir kapısı ve şehri çevreleyen surlar, arkeolojik kazılarla ortaya çıktı.

#### 4.0 WAYS OF MAKING TESTS PRAGMATIC

Till this part, pragmatics in testing with test types was dealt with. Its importance was stated many times. These things are clear. However, what are the ways of making tests pragmatic if they are not so? In order to find an answer to this question, firstly, the definition of pragmatic testing should be reconsidered.

In his definition of pragmatic testing, Mousavi (1997), emphatically stresses two main points. They are meaning and context. That is to say, these two points make up the prerequisites of pragmatic testing. Test questions should be given in context as much as possible. In this way they will be authentic, meaningful and pragmatic.

Secondly, tests should not have a high rate of chance. Yes-no questions or true-false questions are not pragmatic in this respect. By increasing the number of distracters, this deficiency can be eliminated. In cases where an alternative is not easy to find, choices like “none” or “all” can be used. So, the chance of choosing the correct answer accidentally is lowered. This makes questions more pragmatic. Questions with three choices are only for young learners and lower levels. Questions with four options can be used for low levels as well. However, for higher levels questions with five options should be utilized.

Visual aspect makes tests more pragmatic. The reason is that they become more concrete and easy to comprehend. They refer to more senses. So, by making use of visual aids, test questions may be more pragmatic. Charts and tables are good examples of this type. By doing so, test materials become more authentic as well.

In addition to these all, the question should have coherence and consistency in itself. That is to say, the answer of any question should not be given in the previous one. Or, the consistent form of the questions should not be upside down with the next one. This harms pragmatic nature of questions.

Thus, when preparing language tests, test writer who is generally the teacher, should consider all these facts. If such facts are not considered, the aim of the test may not be reached at the end. This results in failure both for formative evaluation and score oriented evaluation. That is why, teachers should use their creativity and either prepare or make use of tests with pragmatic nature.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

After all the mentioned, still there is much left to talk about. Can we carry out pragmatic testing in our teaching and learning atmosphere? It is more than the types that are focused on in this paper. Or are we the slaves of the system? These need to be clarified.

Today, in many language classes tests utilised are not solely prepared for that class. That is to say, they are not written for the application area. Coursebooks which have some kind of packages with them include tests. So, are these tests pragmatic enough for our classes? They may not be so. Pragmatic has cultural ties as well. If the coursebooks have cultural aspects which are far away from our learners, then we have a problem. Such points should either be eliminated or adapted to our learners' cultural aspects. Of course, language is learning culture; however, cultural points should not be a burden for our learners, as well.

Sometimes tests are based on memorisation of some information more than looking for "the ability or knowledge on a given area" (Brown: 1994). If memorisation is looked for more, the above mentioned aim may not be reached at the end. In some cases, this fact is the obstacle provided by the education system of the country or the institution; however, solutions may be provided if there is a desire in doing so, because restrictions have their limits and weak sides.

Pragmatic testing or pragmatic aspect of testing should not be considered as an evil which looks for rather high standards. Some sort of criteria is necessary; however, any test that makes the mind of the learner work in creative manner is also accepted as pragmatic. Creative thinking, which requires going beyond meaning, fosters pragmatics. In this way, limits of semantics are left behind. Besides these positive sides of pragmatic testing, there is an intellectual capacity development which cannot be ignored. Till now, it was stated as mental processing development. In brief, it can be said that pragmatic tests let students force his limits; it also develop his intellectual ability.

Sometimes, because of time constraints, pragmatic ways of testing are not utilised but other ways are used. For instance, the teacher of a crowded class may choose testing his students by yes-no questions instead of another. Here, his aim is to save time. However, while saving time, advantages of pragmatic testing are eliminated.

As a consequence, it is not easy to combine meaning, context, time consuming reading hours, letting your mind work critically and preparing pragmatic questions which carry the learners a step forward. But, in the end there is a desired aim. Most of the teachers may not make use of this fact; on the other hand, it works. Just like the scholars mentioned in the paper, the writer of this piece considers pragmatic component as a must. So, limits should be forced and more useful tests should be prepared for our learners.

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