

Washback and Communicative Testing and their Influence on Educational Programs

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Abstract

Washback and commutative testing possess direct impact on the outcome quality of education. They have, therefore, been looked at thoughtfully by specialists in the field of testing, measurement and assessment in the last decade. The Arabic library, however, lacks materials on those two themes, which was the objective behind publishing this paper in one of Arabic periodicals, with the goal to draw the attention of stakeholders and policy makers to the influence of washback and commutative testing possess on the curriculum. The methodology of the current paper tends to focus on applied perspectives with simplicity and illustration of models and examples.

Since it is a quite recent term, Washback do not have an Arabic equivalent. The current paper has, therefore, chosen the term "En'kasiya" to indicate the Washback concept. The Arabic term carries out an Arabic sound in addition to a meaningful morphology. Based on the strength of the impact of Washback as tests are so important to students, it inevitably would have the power to influence and lead the way of teaching and learning, it also may influence the type of educational material used. It is a global phenomenon, occurring in most educational situations. As for the communicative testing, it is a mirror that reflects the ability in real life practice. This implies that communicative testing result maintains test validity and a positive washback on the educational process.

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For the paper in Arabic see pages (803-830)

The study recommends the educationists and decision-maker to pay attention to the tests as an effective instrument to stimulate curriculum, instead of looking at them only as achievement tests. Modifying the tests' content and style is a simple procedure and inexpensive. Their washback, however, on teaching and learning methods is powerful. For example, those questions which are commonly used in Arabic language tests that request to recall information and rules description of grammatical knowledge do not indicate the actual language usage. On the other hand, if the test has become communicative, the matter would be different. The educational situations parties would focus more on practice, which would be a vital factor to improve the educational outcome.