

Applying a Pragmatic-Cognitive Framework to Language Testing: Assessing Contextual Competence

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Abstract

This study explores the extent to which raters or assessors can use a cognitive-pragmatic approach anchored by Diane Blakemore's relevance-theoretic model to assist them in the evaluation of university exam students' written answers. In assessment practice, the predominant emphasis tends to be on the evaluation of grammar, surface accuracy, and the evaluation of constructs, while the evaluation of the communicative constructs of meaning, how meaning is constructed, and the processes of meaning construction tend to go disregarded. This study, using Blakemore's Relevance Theory, regards written answers as inferential acts, where students express meanings that need to be grasped by the examiner in reliance on contextual assumptions, explicatures, and implicatures, as well as a set of meaning instructions. The participants in the study are selected fourth-year college students, and the data consists of written scripts produced by the students. From the scripts, certain repeated expressions as well as answer segments that are representative of those segments are sampled and assembled for cognitive-pragmatic qualitative analysis. The analysis considers the extent to which students' linguistic choices facilitate or obstruct interpretation, the extent to which procedural elements are restrictive in an inferential sense, and the extent to which the clarity, relevance, and cognitive load of a description are in balance with the examiner's description of the adequacy and coherence of the answer. The results show that relevance, cognitive effect, and processing effort, impact how evaluators perceive the clarity and effectiveness of a response, including the presence of minor grammatical mistakes. On the other hand, formally correct responses that require a lot of inferencing and lack procedural guidance receive minor evaluations. This study suggests that an assessment that incorporates elements of relevance theory offers a more reliable and coherent assessment of meaning. This study contributes a model that incorporates cognitive pragmatics to writing assessment that enhances the validity and communicative effectiveness of evaluative practices in higher education.

Keywords

Pragmatic competence; Cognitive pragmatics; Language testing; Contextual competence; Relevance theory

تطبيق منهج تداولي- أدراكي على اختبارات اللغة: تقييم الكفاءة السياقية

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تستكشف هذه الدراسة مدى إمكانية استخدام المقيمين أو المصححين لمقاربة تداولية- ادراكية مستندة إلى نموذج الصلة (Relevance) - Diane Blakemore لمساعدتهم في تقييم الإجابات للامتحانات التحريرية لطلبة الجامعات. ففي العملية التقييمية، يتركز الاهتمام غالبًا على تقييم القواعد اللغوية والدقة السطحية وبنى الاختبار الشكلية، في حين يتم إهمال تقييم البنى التواصلية للمعنى، وكيفية بنائه، والعمليات الإدراكية التي تسهم في تشكّله. تنظر هذه الدراسة، اعتمادًا على نظرية Diane Blakemore ، إلى الإجابات الكتابية بوصفها أفعالًا استدلالية، يعبر فيها الطلبة عن معانٍ ينبغي على المصحح استيعابها بالاعتماد على الافتراضات السياقية، والمصرّحات (explicatures)، والمضّمّنات (implicatures)، إلى جانب مجموعة من تعليمات المعنى الإجرائية. يشارك في الدراسة طلبة السنة الرابعة الجامعية، وتتكون البيانات من نصوص كتابية أنتجها الطلبة. ومن هذه النصوص، تم اختيار تعبيرات متكررة وأجزاء إجابات ممثلة لها، ثم تجميعها لتحليل نوعي تداولي- ادراكي. ويركز التحليل على مدى إسهام الاختيارات اللغوية للطلبة في تسهيل التفسير أو إعاقته، ومدى تقييد العناصر الإجرائية لعملية الاستدلال، وكذلك على مدى التوازن بين الوضوح والصلة والعبء الإدراكي من جهة، ووصف المصحح لكفاية الإجابة وتماسكها من جهة أخرى. وتُظهر النتائج أن الصلة، والأثر الإدراكي، وجهد المعالجة تؤثر في كيفية إدراك المقيمين لوضوح الإجابة وفعاليتها، حتى في وجود أخطاء نحوية طفيفة. وفي المقابل، فإن الإجابات الصحيحة شكليًا التي تتطلب قدرًا كبيرًا من الاستدلال وتفتقر إلى التوجيه الإجرائي تحصل على تقييمات أقل. وتُقدّم الدراسة أن التقييم الذي يدمج عناصر من نظرية الصلة يوفر تقييمًا أكثر موثوقية واتساقًا للمعنى. كما تُقدّم نموذجًا يدمج التداولية الإدراكية في تقييم الكتابة، بما يعزز الصدق والفاعلية التواصلية لممارسات التقييم في التعليم العالي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الكفاءة التداولية؛ التداولية الإدراكية؛ اختبار اللغة؛ الكفاءة السياقية؛ نظرية الصلة

1. Introduction

Teachers have tried to determine what factors contribute to students' academic success. Academic success is typically measured through written exams. Some teachers believe reading and listening skills are crucial to academic success for non-native speakers, as shown in Johnson's (1981) research. However, this only pertains to success in the classroom. In a broader scope, success is determined by the final grade a student receives (usually based on a written exam). For success to be determined, student performance on the exam has to be evaluated by the subject examiner, though such performance is depending on the type of test items, and the standards to which they are marked (Lukmani, 1996). Academic writing has, unlike before, recently come under scrutiny from university teachers, by many, if not most, of the non-native speakers of English, and even by some of the native speakers of English. As Ballard and Clanchy (1990) argue, many of the problems are overlooked as being merely superficial errors. However, these superficial errors are often perceived of as resulting from the poor construction and presentation of their writing. Spack (1988) and Johns (1991) are some of the many researchers and teachers who have supported this notion in the most recent past. Spack mentions the expression of subject content and the need for English instructors to address issues of rhetoric and the academic literacy components of summarizing and paraphrasing, etc, which differ not only from discipline to discipline, but also within the same discipline. The weaknesses in student

writing described by Johns (1991) are similar to the weaknesses relating to the interpretation of content, conceptualization, organization and expression. Representation of knowledge and reasoning (the conceptual) are also important in the classical cognitive theories of writing. This aspect of writing as a skill was captured by Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) as the conceptual problem space. Hillocks (1987), along with Graham and Perrin (2007), noted that the few writing tasks that are essential to the writer are unaddressed in writing.

2. Language Testing

The growing importance of language assessments in the last few years is reflected in many of critical decisions that justify the use of language assessments in the case of law, immigration, and citizenship, as well as in the case of admission to tertiary education (McNamara, 2005; Taylor, 2009). Recently, writing pedagogy has shifted constructively from solely evaluating students' written products to an evaluation of the writing processes (Atkinson, 2018, Bloch, 2018, Kuteeva, 2018) cited in (Zarrabi & Bozorgian, 2020).

Assessment is more than setting examinations and assigning grades. The importance of receiving scores and evaluative comments is fundamental to both individual student learning and to writing developing an effective and responsive writing course. Consequently, comprehension of assessment procedures is needed so that the appropriate teaching is implemented so that students can be rightfully evaluated. Much information from evaluations is required to address the disparity between students' actual performance and their desired performance and to provide the support needed for students to advance. The term assessment can be defined as the range of methods used to gather information about an individual learner's language skill or achievement. Therefore, it is an umbrella term that encompasses a wide variety of activities including one-off classroom tests, short essays, long project reports, writing portfolios, or overly-standardized testing. Teachers are the most evaluative of their students' writings and want to be assured that they are responding uniformly across students' scripts and that other teachers would assess the students' writings similarly. However, raters are often influenced more by their cultural backgrounds and experiences than by actual differences in the quality of the writing. Even in situations where texts are double marked, studies have shown that assessors differ in their writing focus and the criteria they use across identical texts. For example, novice raters are known to place a great deal of emphasis on visible local errors and grammatical precision (Hyland, 2003).

The goal of writing test is to evaluate students' writing skills, particularly how they structure their thoughts and communicate their ideas clearly, coherently, and in their own words, which is a vital skill for communicating in real life. When it comes to test formats, the writing test is considered the most valid, direct, and integrative since it integrates all of the students' linguistic and cognitive skills, grammar and vocabulary, and the ability to organize and manage the discourse. Writing tests, however, are still faced with issues relating to validity and reliability for a number of reasons that affect scoring consistently and accurately.

A major issue is the greater proficiency that the majority of the students have over the language in question. Writing evaluations usually benefit students who have higher levels of fluency and linguistic awareness. These students will have less obstacles to understanding and articulating. Consequently, the tasks that students complete, will be measuring their overall language skills and not their specific writing skills. The duration of the exam is also a factor that will influence how reliable the assessment is. The time constrains that students are working under, may not allow them to provide a full or representative sample of their writing, thus affecting the validity of the assessment. This really comes down to choosing writing tasks that are realistic and feasible in the time provided.

Another element of the issue is the ambiguous nature of the writing prompt. Topics that are broad in scope or poorly defined leave room for a myriad of potential responses, with a corresponding lack of evaluative uniformity and grounds for consistency of scoring. The prompt, therefore, assists evaluators in establishing a more reliable scoring scheme. The evaluators' potential biases, whether personal or due to expectations toward students' abilities, can have a significant effect on scoring neutrality. More systematic scoring in defined categories of response quality can help reduce the subjectivity associated with scoring and in turn increase the reliability of the scoring.

Most importantly, the assessment of writing skills is based on limited performance samples. One writing assignment cannot capture a student's entire writing capability, and this fact diminishes the generalizability of the findings. Incorporating a range of different writing activities is more desirable because it offers a wider and more dependable measure of students' writing abilities (Al Juboury, 1988).

3. A Brief Overview of Pragma-Cognitive Linguistics.

Pragmatic competence is the ability to use language appropriately in a given social context (Taguchi & Roever, 2017). Like other forms of linguistic competence, it contains both the interactive and cognitive dimensions of L2 learners. There is a growing interest in pragmatic performance, and a richer understanding of L2 learners' pragmatic competence would likely emerge from research that examines the cognitive processes in addition to pragmatic knowledge (Robinson, 1992). There are studies that look at the cognitive processes of L2 learners that occur in oral and written communication in different English academic purposes' contexts (Chen, 2015).

Relevance Theory (RT) (Sperber and Wilson 1995) offers an explanation of the process of inferencing, including how people use specific aspects of the situation and the implicit aspects of the text being processed. The essential features of the theory We will be summarized (for more details, see Sperber and Wilson, 1995). According to RT (relevance theory), the interpretation of discourse meaning is situationally bound. The situation includes all of the contextual information available at the time of the interpretation, including prior inferences, general knowledge of the world, and the situational context, including any accompanying speech or other communicative gestures. RT posits that the cognitive system will operate to process the most relevant meaning contained in the

discourse, since the attentional, perceptual, memory, and inference systems tend to work in a way that minimizes cognitive effort to select and process the meaning (Ryder et al., 2008).

4. Theoretical Framework of the Study

This analysis uses a cognitive-pragmatic approach centered on relevance: Communication and Cognition by Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson, and subsequent work on linguistic analysis by Diane Blakemore. From this viewpoint, writing is seen as an inferential more than a communicative activity, where the meaning is created from the combination of the linguistic and the non-linguistic context. Therefore, students' written exam texts are considered as not merely a reflection of grammatical competence, but also as an indication of the effectiveness of students' ability to direct readers to a desired meaning.

The framework posits that communication can achieve successful relevance if it produces sufficient cognitive effects with as few processing efforts as possible. When it is applied to students' writings, it emphasizes the need to go beyond correctness i.e. the evaluation of writing needs to consider pragmatic adequacy, clarity of inference, and communicative efficiency. It includes evaluation of how ambiguity and interpretation are affected by lexical items, connectors, and the overall structure of the writing. As such, the study employs a specific relevance-theoretic analysis of explicatures and implicatures as well as cognitive effects analysis against the processing effort. This combination offers the first opportunity to analyze writing interpretability and pragmatics in student responses.

5. Model of Analysis

This study employs a relevance-theoretic pragmatic angle to assess students' written examination scripts, mainly using Blakemore's inferential model of discourse processing found in Sperber and Wilson's Relevance Theory. From this perspective, written texts are not evaluated in terms of their grammatical or superficial errors, but in terms of how language and other choices facilitate raters to arrive at a specific meaning through a few processes and great cognitive impact. The evaluation of texts is thus reformulated from a primarily grammatical to a meaning construction viewpoint to determine how the language used limited the scope of possible interpretations and helped a successful inferential understanding.

The analysis covers several stages that are all interconnected. Each student's copy is evaluated analytically, and systematically along pragmatic-cognitive dimensions that capture distinct levels of meaning construction and communicative efficiency.

The first step looks at explicature and examines how clearly and how completely propositional meanings have been communicated. This step looks at issues regarding reference resolution, logical relations, tense and aspect, as well as the extent to which propositions are elaborated fully. Any weakness of explicit meaning can be attributed to something vague, an unresolved issue, ambiguous formulation.

The second step focuses on the extent to which meanings that are implied and are beyond the literal text are recoverable. The analysis emphasizes whether the conclusions are meant to be supported, the right assumptions are drawn, and the intended meaning can be derived. In

other words, the absence of logically supported assumptions, reasoning, and the presence of unsupported claims, are all evidence of the failure of inferencing.

Third, in analyzing students' use of discourse and pragmatic markers, procedural meaning is triggered. The improper use, lack or overuse of these markers is viewed as a negative impact on coherence and interpretive direction.

Fourth, the contextual effects are examined in order to assess the degree of information value each of the text segments provides. The scripts are assessed to see whether they are relevant, informative, and precise. In particular, statements are evaluated to see whether they introduce novel information, reinforce existing assumptions, or lead to a conclusion that is valid. Off-topic irrelevant additions, repeated points, and vague statements reduce the cognitive effect.

Fifth, the cognitive effort required of the reader is assessed to determine the processing effort. The lack of clarity, syntactic complexity, ambiguity, poor organization, and lexical misuse are analyzed as interpretive barriers. The sentences that require multiple readings or reconstruction are considered an indication of poor communication.

Finally, all the facets mentioned come together in the principle of optimal relevance, which acts as the evaluative framework. The overall communicative achievement is assessed in terms of the optimal balance between cognitive effects and the effort needed to process the communication and is manifested in the coherence, economy, and the response and intended meaning.

For operational objectives, the framework is developed into a coding scheme. Each individual script is evaluated on six criteria: clarity of explicature, recovery of implicature, procedural marking, contextual relevance, processing effort, and relevance overall. The evaluation results are presented in a table that outlines the strengths and weaknesses of the scripts in the different areas. This provides a systematic basis for the comparison of students' pragmatic competence and communicative effectiveness.

Using this method, the process of assessment builds a cognitive foundation that encompasses not only the students' writing, but also the effectiveness of their language selections in assisting the readers' meaning construction.

6. Methodological Remarks:

6.1 Research Design

This study uses a qualitative analytic design and systematic coding to assess how a pragmatic-cognitive approach, based on Blakemore's relevance-theoretic model, can assist in the analysis of students' written exam answers. Students' responses, in the communicative act sense, call for interpretative inference beyond the text of the exam and should not be seen as responses to be evaluated exclusively for their grammaticality. The analysis is directed on the extent to which answers reach optimal relevance, understood as the cognitive effect versus the processing effort.

6.2 Participants and Data

The data were extracted from scripts of written examinations of fourth-year undergraduate students in an English language program as shown in Appendix A. These scripts were chosen because advanced learners are expected to show written reasoning, coherence,

context relevance, and formal linguistic accuracy. Only open-ended and short essays were included because these types of items involve meaning construction and logical/pragmatic inference. Objective questions were not selected. A purposive sample of scripts with high, average, and low scoring answers were selected to achieve variation with respect to coherence, clarity, and communicative effectiveness. The unit of analysis was made up of sentences and segments of discourse that pertained to overall meaning.

6.3 Analytical Framework

The analysis applies the tools of relevance theory, including explicature, implicature, procedural meaning, and optimal relevance. Each response was analyzed according to the communicative requirements of the exam question and the presumed shared cognitive context of the student and the rater .

The evaluation was guided by four analytic dimensions.

1. Contextual adequacy: how well the answer meets the specific task requirements.
2. Explicature clarity: the degree of completeness and precision pertaining to the explicitly conveyed propositions.
3. Procedural and discourse guidance: the use of connectives, markers, and cohesive elements that aid the interpretation process.
4. Relevance assessment: the balance between cognitive effects (informative, accurate, explanatory) and the processing effort (the degree of readability, coherence, and inferential load.)

Answers that produced significant cognitive effects without any processing effort were regarded as highly relevant, while responses that demanded significant inferential effort or produced weak cognitive effects were classified as less relevant.

6.4 Data Analysis

The current analysis employs Diane Blakemore relevance-theoretic model to assess five student exam scripts on assessment and testing. This model considers explicit and implicit meanings and procedural indicating, contextual effects, and the processing effort the assessor or rater experiences to understand what is meant. In contrast to the conventional marking which largely focussed on grammar or the factual accuracy of a response, this captures the cognitive and pragmatic merit of the student's communication. It allows for an assessment of the student's understanding as well as the interpretative load created for the rater.

Blakemore's model outlines meaning in terms of six dimensions: explicature, implicature, procedural meaning, contextual effects, processing effort, and overall relevance. In terms of clarity of expression, explicature looks at how propositions are articulated and how they connect logically. Implicature looks at whether a meaning, beyond the literal, can be recovered. Procedural meaning is about the interpretive cues. Contextual effects deal with the information's utility and relevance. Processing effort addresses the raters' mental effort. Lastly, overall relevance describes the balance of the cognitive effect and effort, showing how well-meaning is communicated.

6.5 Procedure of analysis

Each exam script was analyzed systematically across the six dimensions. Rather than focusing solely on the linguistic correctness, the analysis examined the assessor's ability to interpret. This study examined the presence and absence of explicit meanings, inferable meanings, the commentary and examples provided, discourse markers, and the cognitive load required to retrieve the meanings. This dual perspective facilitates assessing knowledge and communication efficiency on student scripts.

7. Script-by-Script Analysis

Exam Script 1

At the level of explicature, a number of propositions are communicated partially, and they are often incomplete or lack a clear syntactic structure. Take the example, "the assessment is on ongoing process that encomponent wide range of the activities teacher to use measure learners language ability performance, progress." While someone could guess that this statement is trying to convey the idea that assessment is ongoing and is multifaceted, the missing verbs and unclear antecedents force the assessor to do a lot of reconstructive work. The same is true for "the testing a method measuring to person's reading knowledge or performance It usually use to formal, structure and time bound than general assessment." This statement attempts to differentiate testing from assessment, but the lack of a clear structure diminishes explicitness.

At the inferential level, conclusions regarding the intentions of purpose of assessment and testing can be articulately stated, albeit with weak support. Consider the example, "think testing is and subcomponent of the broad process the assessment" or "the purpose of language assessment the formal and Informal, the formative and summative." These sentences suggest the examiner infers vertical and functional relations, but vertical and functional relations seem to lack substantiation. The examiner presumes the absence of some components or the presence of some components, relying solely on inference.

Discourse markers indicate some degree of procedural meaning. The phrase for example connective and mark exemplification and additive relations, leading the assessor to relationship interpret guide. For example "assessment is happened for example / when teacher asks students to summarizes reading passage aloud, listen carfully and his pronuications", illustrates and gives explicit/breaking down some of the processes. Conversely, the overuse of 'and' and the irregularity of the use of punctuations decrease procedural transparency, leaving the assessor to position the boundaries of the propositions. As for the contextual effects, the script contains information relevant to the different types of assessment and testing, especially with regard to their formality and informality, their formatively and summatively, and including placement and authenticity assessment. These parts of the script are useful to the assessor, but the diminutive repetition (the purpose of language assessment the formal and Informal, the formative and summative) and vague references (current hot Toppers In language assessment) somewhat diminish the overall cognitive effect.

The effort needed to process the information contained in the assessment is somewhat high. The assessor must deal with incomplete sentences, lexical mistakes, and the lack of clear construction of the sentences like: the bound referenced-eristenjasper referenced and other

ideas the placement. These challenges require a high cognitive effort even though the general distinction and the exemplifications are clear.

The overall assessment shows the script's optimal relevance to a limited extent. The assessor can decode the explicit propositions, exemplification, and procedural cues that differentiate assessment and testing. On the other hand, a lack of clarity and coherence is a result of the vagueness of some of the expressions and groundless statements. It is still possible for the assessor to understand the script but a high degree of interpretive effort will be needed which will most probably bring about a middling score on communicative effectiveness.

Exam Script 2

At the level of explication, some propositions are formulated incompletely or unclearly. In the opening segment, "The key differences between assessment and testing and how understanding this distinction can improve classroom evaluation practices", there is no main verb and therefore, no complete proposition is put forth. In the same way, "The testing of in measure the ability person" and "Reflects real world language use" have references that are unresolved, and there are missing syntactic relations. These fragmented structures, and lack of syntactic relations, reduce the clarity of the meaning and force the evaluator to do the work of the proposer. However, the evaluative claim "Performance Based Assessment instructions, questions, and criteria are clear ... easily understood by learners" is explicit and evaluable .

At the level of inferential, that is, implicature, several intended conclusions can be recovered, but the support is weak. "Understanding this distinction can improve classroom evaluation practices" is, pedagogically, a benefit, but is left unjustified. "Positively influence teaching and learning" suggests a causal effect, but left unsubstantiated. Lack of premises that are logically linked is a pointer of a weak control of the extended argument.

In relation to procedural meaning, the script uses some discourse markers to aid meaning construction. Markers, for instance, "and", "even if," "before," "during," and purposive phrases like "to improve," "Purpose of evaluation is to decide if" construe additive, concessive, temporal, and purposive relations. These elements assist the assessor in tracking relations and thus minimize the mental burden. The repeated use of "and" (e.g. "teachin and learing, encouraging effective study habits and ... skill development") could have been used for more specific logical markers and as such, the text loses coherence and interpretive guidance.

Looking at the contextual effects, the script brings in some related disciplinary elements like "summative evaluation, "Discrete point testing" and "Performance Based Assessment." Such terms communicate field-specific content and positively affect the evaluator's cognition. However, the overly used vague terms like "improve classroom evaluation practices" and "encouraging effective study habits" do not provide enough new content, diminishing the informational value. Many sentences have to be read again and again and have issues in terms of grammar and lexis, for example, "Evaluation class room practices for test the teacher and learning for the refer refer language learning." The

content's relevance is almost cancelled out by increasing the cognitive load the need for reconstruction causes.

The script only partially achieves optimal relevance. It contains some useful ideas and offers some procedural assistance. However, weak explicature, unsupported inferencing, and high processing demands obstruct the communication of the message. For that reason, a reviewer can assess the script and reconstruct its general purpose. However, the significant effort needed is likely to yield a mid to low score on clarity and coherence.

Exam Script 3

Regarding explicature, there is some absence of clarity concerning the communication of propositions in the script, as exemplified by the sentence, "he difference between the assessment and the test and how understand this distinction can improve classroom evaluation practices." The sentence has a grammatical error, and omission of articles, yet an assessor can still infer meaning. Further statements can be analyzed for the explicit propositions as in "The assessment is of the nature of them continuous and formative for example teachers oral test" and "while the test is occasional and summative for example final exam proficiency test." Although the wording is poor, these statements reveal the distinction between continuous formative assessment and occasional summative testing. Concerning the pragmatic features of language, the assessor recovers specific intended meanings, such as the continual feedback of formative assessment as opposed to testing that assesses students' proficiency at a specific moment. "And the test mean when the teacher take the student exam and that mean test for students to know the level the student" suggests the purpose of testing, whereas "while the assessment we mean when he take the papers the evaluation from through the papers the asked the students what they know through the study for them" suggests that assessment is more thorough and more reflective. Still, the vague and unsupported assertions lose the ability to direct a line of reasoning to the assessor, thus raising the degree of interpretive effort required.

Some degree of procedural meaning is included in the words for example and while, since they wander in the direction of exemplification and contrast. These words guide the assessor through the distinction between assessment and testing, though the overuse of 'and' and variable sentence boundary placement diminishes procedural clarity. The intended logical relations exist but are poorly expressed.

The context effects of the script show appreciation of the analysis, differentiate, and contextualize the different types of assessment with examples, such as teacher-led, oral assessments, and end-of-the-year examinations. These parts provide useful information that is relevant and appropriate. However, the phrase, "the evaluation from through the papers" presents redundancy and lacks the necessary clarity, thus, diminishing the cognitive effect and the level of cognitive precision.

The amount of processing needed from the recipient is within the moderately acceptable range. The recipient must engage in multiple recapitulations due to the grammatical, inconsistent, and missing articulatory elements which are particularly frustrating. In this instance, the intended distinctions were included, but weak explanation in the syntax increases the amount of cognitive processing and lengthy delay.

The script has managed to present a fair amount of communicative relevance. The non-linguistic, internal, and visual illustrations, define the primary arguments formed within the context of summative and formative assessments. However, the cognitive demands speak to the lack of clarity stemming from inadequate syntax, further slanting the balance away from relevance. The assessments show that the cognitive effort required to assess the script is significant and this is likely to effect the clarity, coherence and communicative relevance in a developing grade range.

Exam Script 4

At the explication level, the script communicates the basic propositions, but the syntax remains incomplete. As an illustration, “Assessment it is continuous process include a wide rang of activities teacher use to measure learning language ability and performe” communicates that assessment is continuous and multifaceted. It requires the assessor to grammatical errors, to infer the full meaning. “The testing it is method to measure person ability knowledge performe on specific domain” lacks precision and purposeful references to the distinction between assessment and testing, and, instead, provides an imprecise description of testing and assessment.

As for implicature and inferencing, the assessor is able to recapture the meaning(s) intended for the purpose of testing and assessment. “The different between them the test is a snapshot of an ability in a specific the assessment is a continuous picture of the learning process entails” describes a testing as measuring discrete points but assessment as an ongoing monitoring of the learning progress. These intended contrasts, though, remain somewhat unclear, records of a reasoning deficit, and the absence of overt connective clauses.

There is a partial meaning attributed to the phrase, for example “when a teacher asks students to summarize the reading passage”. Words like “when” and “while” suggest exemplification and contrast. These words provide little to no assistance in developing a relationship for the assessor and the propositions. However, the use of the simple word “and” repeatedly, as well as the phrase “Assessment Test continuous final exam Formative proficiency test Summative”, greatly lowers the clarity and coherence of the procedural meaning.

Regarding clarity of the context, the script contains enough detail to differentiate various types of assessments, especially the reference to continuous formative feedback, summative testing, and proficiency testing. These explanations have a significant positive value, and the assessor is able to apply the relevant theory to a practical situation. However, repetition, vague phrases (e.g., “general teacher oral feedback”) leads to the loss of informativeness.

Because of grammatical mistakes, use of the wrong word (performe), and an overall high level of fragmented sentences, the level of processing required is high. Phrases such as “the test it is more formal exam structure and time general teacher oral feedback” leave the assessor with the load of reconstructing the meaning, which increases the cognitive load.

As a whole, Exam Script 4 conveys moderate relevance. The assessor is able to understand the student’s grasp of the concepts of assessment and testing, however, the lack of precision in syntax, incomplete propositional structures, and weak procedural signaling hinder the

relevance. The assessor is able to evaluate the script, but the interpretive effort is considerable, and this will probably mean a to a good few effort, lack clarity, lack coherence, and lack communicative adequate performance.

Exam Script 5

The script states the purposes of testing and assessment at the boundary of explicature, but usually they are not clear. Take, for instance, "The testing is use to show the wickness and the strong point to the student and the teacher." While the statement intends to say testing shows strengths and weaknesses, the spelling and grammatical errors diminish the statement's overall clarity. To put it as "The assessment is the last method the teacher and college use it to they assesst the students," means the test taker intends to say something about assessment and testing, but the incomplete sentence leaves it to the recipient to fill in the gaps.

Speaking of implicature, the assessor should know that testing is meant to be diagnostic and assessment is meant to be a terminal point for students to show any proficiency. "this method is the final chance fore the student to sucksess" and "this two method are improve student skills" lack logical connectors and supporting explanation and as a result, the burden of interpretation is too high. The assessor is left to make assumptions to recreate the intended meaning.

The previous scripts provided instances of how explanatory or procedural meaning or reasoning is captured by markers, such as 'for instance'. Although, this particular script provides very few, if any, markers of this nature. Furthermore, while the use of 'and' is intended to be a connective that shows additive relationships, excessive usage without clear demarcations of propositions means that the guidance offered to the assessor as to how to follow the argument is diminished.

The presence of contextual effects is limited, yet they do still exist. The script mentions relevant educational concepts, such as diagnostic testing, final assessments, and the development of skills which informs the assessor. However, vague references, misspelt words, and repetitive phrases like 'this two method are improve student skills' diminish the information's accuracy and detrimental value.

The amount of effort required to process the information is noticeably high. The assessor must expend effort to understand, especially due to the numerous syntactic errors, misspellings (wickness, assesst, sucksess, quezes, exque), and incomplete sentences. The assessor has to figure out these intended propositions over multiple readings, and this will definitely increase the cognitive load and reduce the efficiency of the assessment.

Exam Script 5 is of moderate relevance. The main points the assessor is able to extract concerns the functions and purpose of testing and assessment and their role in the development of student skills. However, weak explicature, a lack of procedural markers, and high processing effort further hinder the attainment of optimal relevance. Because of the inherent vagueness in the script, an assessor's evaluation is further compounded and the effort required can be considerable which would lead to a more moderate appraisal of how

the script performs in relation to coherence, clarity, and the communicative purpose designed to be achieved.

8. Discussion

Five exam scripts were evaluated through the lenses of Diane Blakemore's relevance-theoretic pragmatics (1992, 2002) framework, focusing on explicature, implicature, and procedural/ contextual/ processing meaning and effects, and overall communicative relevance (see Appendix B). This framework makes it possible to assess the propositional content students intend to articulate and the amount of inferential work, if any, the assessor must undertake to retrieve that propositional content. Thus, the analysis focuses on the encoded information as well as the amount of cognitive load that had to be spent to unpack an exam script's commentary concerning assessment and testing.

All five scripts tried to respond to explicature by focusing on the difference between assessment as an ongoing, without testing as a form of, time-bound, summative, and more formal measure. The most explicit descriptions of this difference were made by scripts 3 and 4, who, for example, described oral classroom activities as opposed to finals or proficiency exams. Script 1 also contained similar propositions, albeit with incomplete and inaccurate syntax, which obscured the boundaries of the propositions. Scripts 2 and 5 had the weakest explicature; the absence of verbs, broken phrases, and spelling errors led to the incomplete encoding of propositions and made the evaluator 'guess' the intended meaning. Therefore, while most of the ideas were certainly present throughout the dataset, the level of clarity and consistency of the main ideas were the most important variables affecting interpretive consistency.

In terms of implicature, the ability of the scripts to reference higher-order conceptual relations was irregular. For example, scripts 3 and 4 made it easier to draw distinctions between formative and summative purposes and to consider feedback and progress monitoring from a pedagogical perspective. In Script 1, similar distinctions were possible, but the load on the assessor was greater due to the absence of contextual supplements. Script 2 provided weaker justification for broader educational benefits, such as better practice in the classroom and increased development of the learners, and as a result, the reasoning was less powerful without the ability to state it. Script 5 was the most demanding in this regard, as the role of the diagnostic and summative were only obliquely referred to and left dissatisfied by weakly related statements. Overall, assessors had to do the most work and try to draw inferences, which indicated that the intended meaning was left more implicit and relied more on the absence of reasoning than the presence of explanatory logic. The encoding of meaning that relies on signals guiding interpretation was done quite inconsistently. Both Scripts 3 and 4 used discourse markers such as "for example" and "while" most effectively in terms of pointing out exemplification and contrast, and aiding the information being sequenced. Script 1 also used markers of illustration, but the excessive use of conjunctive additives (especially "and") was a drawback in the articulation of the logical connections. Illustrative leading "before", "during", and "to improve" from Script 2, and a couple of others motivated a positive interpretative effect, but poor structure offset that. Script 5 displayed the worst of the lot as far as procedural methodology is

outlined, and the implicitness of the logical relations between the propositions left the structure overly open and increased the burden of the assessor's inference. Hence, the presence and absences of these cues determined the intended meaning's recoverability.

Regarding contextual effects, the scripts differed in the informativeness and degrees of relevance of the knowledge activated. In scripts, 2, 3, and 4, the use of discipline-appropriate language and examples, such as summative evaluation, performance-based tasks, and classroom oral assessment, elicited positive cognitive effects and showed familiarity with the topic. Script 1 gave relevant distinctions, but the repetition and vague references reduced cognitive value. Compared to the other scripts, Script 5 had less information, and the generalized cognitive effects were weaker. When the content was specific and grounded in a concept, such as knowledge or an idea, the evaluator could easily assess understanding, but in cases of vagueness or repetition, their confidence in interpretation diminished.

The amount of processing effort in the scripts was noticeably different. Only moderate effort was required for scripts 3 and 4, as the structure of their propositions and discourse elements supported comprehension, even with some superficial errors. Due to lexical errors and fragmentary sentences, Script 1 required moderate effort. In Scripts 2 and 5, the processing effort was greatest due to the presence of the greatest cognitive load: incomplete clauses, spelling errors, and various unclear issues with the syntax. These observations demonstrate the principles of relevance theory in that the success of a communication is based not only in the existence of information, but also in the processing effort to get the information.

Balancing overall communicative relevance—the interplay of context and processing effort—Scripts 3 and 4 yielded the best results with strong cognitive impact and acceptable interpretive cost. Script 1 relevance was moderate. Recoverable meaning was counterbalanced by effort. Scripts 2 and 5 displayed interpretive demands that outweighed the relevance and benefits of the content. However, the assessor was able to recover the intended meaning across the scripts, so there was partial communicative success despite the linguistic shortcomings.

The relevance-theoretic analysis offers the understanding that certain elements outline the comprehension of principles of assessment and encodes more abstract and structured assessments with adequate procedural elements. Scripts that engaged clear propositions, structured contrasts, and marked discourse yielded efficient interpretation and more evidence of knowledge. In contrast, fragmented syntax and weak procedural signaling increased effort and communicative efficiency. These findings emphasize the need of teaching academic writing, organizational logic, and clarity of language to increase both the reliability of assessment judgments and student performance.

Conclusion

It has been shown, applying Blakemore's relevance-theoretic model, that assessment scripts differ in the understanding of concepts and in the effectiveness of communication. The majority of students appreciate the distinction between assessment and testing, but rater's understanding is obstructed by the lack of clarity, procedural markers, and poor

organization. Assessment scripts that allow high relevance and thus provide rater with the opportunity to make accurate and consistent judgments are those which contain a good balance of explicit propositional content, structured discourse, and a high level of consistent content. Hence, it is important to combine assessment with the structured academic writing and practical writing of the students to maintain a high level of conceptual understanding.

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Appendix A

Script 1. the assessment is on ongoing process that encompass wide range of the activities teacher to use measure learners language ability performance, progress, Its limited formal exam, Every time teacher gives feedback and check home work, assessment is happened for example / when teacher asks students to summarize reading passage aloud, listen carefully and his pronunciations.

and the testing a method measuring to person's reading knowledge or performance It usually use to formal, structure and time bound than general assessment for example A midterm Grammar exam or TOEFL test are formal testing, the relationship between assessment and testing, think testing is and subcomponent of the broad process the assessment, the purpose of language assessment the formal and Informal, the formative and summative, the bound referenced-eristenjasper referenced and other ideas the placement, the current hot Toppers In language assessment the alternative and authenticity assessment.

Script 2. The key differences between assessment and testing and how understanding this distinction can improve classroom evaluation practices. The assessment and testing can be considered reliable even if different rater's score it inconsistently testing before finalizing an exam. The testing of in measure the ability person on the reading and understanding for the following. Reflects real world language use and tasks that learners will encounter outside the classroom.

The summative evaluation is conducted during the development of a test to improve it understand this distinction can improve.

Evaluation class room practices for test the teacher and learning for the refer refer language learning and student for the rebar on through the Brown's pp book. Positively influences teaching and learning, encouraging effective study habits and senseless meaningful skill test

and skill development. Purpose of evaluation is to decide whether to continue using card a testing instrument, evaluation assessment. structuralist Discrete point testing focuses on isolated bits of language often using multiple choice or matching item for high reliability reliability. Performance Based Assessment instructions, questions, and criteria are clear, water unambiguous, and easily understood by learners.

Script 3. he difference between the assessment and the test and how understand this distinction can improve classroom evaluation practices.

The assessment is of the nature of them continuous and formative for example teachers oral test.

while the test is occasional and summative for example final exam proficiency test.

and the test mean when the teacher take the student exam and that mean test for students to know the level the student

while the assessment we mean when he take the papers the evaluation from through the papers or asked the students what they know through the study for them.

Script 4. Assessment it is continuous process include a wide rang of activities teacher use to measure learning language ability and performe. it is not limited formal exam every time teacher gives feedback for examp- when teacher asks students to summarize the reading passage listen carefully and notes pronunciation errors. the testing it is method to measure person ability knowledge performe on specific domain and the different between them the test snapshot of ability in specific time while the assessment provide continuous pictured of learning development. the test it is more formal exam structure and time general teacher oral feedback. Assessment Test continuous final exam Formative proficiency test Summative

Script 5. The testing is use to show the wickness and the strong point to the student and the teacher. and the teacher chose the right question for the student. we have this method here in college. like quezes.

The assessment is the last method the teacher and college use it to the assesst the students. this method is the final chance fore the student to sucksess. we have this method also in college. like the final exque.this two method are improve student skills.

Appendix B

Script	Explicature	Implicature	Procedural Meaning	Contextual Effects	Processing Effort	Overall Relevance
1	Moderate	Moderate	Low	Moderate	High	Moderate
2	High	High	Moderate	High	Moderate	Moderately High
3	Moderate	Moderate	Low	Moderate	High	Moderate
4	Moderate	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-High
5	Low-Moderate	Low-Moderate	Low	Low	High	Moderate