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AN ANALYSIS OF ' ACTION PACK' OBJECTIVES IN THE GENERAL SECONDARY CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION OF ENGLISH: A CASE STUDY IN JORDAN BETWEEN 2022-2024

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Abstract:

This article provides an overview of the 'Action Pack' component's objectives in the General Secondary Certificate Examination (GSCE) of English in Jordan from 2022 to 2024. The study examines the efficacy of these goals in promoting language acquisition and evaluation among students from Jordan. The research uses both quantitative and qualitative approaches to analyze the distribution of 'Action Pack' goals in test materials. Additionally, questionnaires are used to collect students' impressions of the approach. The results demonstrate the importance of writing skills in the test objectives and suggest that students typically have a positive view of the 'Action Pack' strategy. Nevertheless, discrepancies in how individuals see things indicate potential areas for improvement and emphasize the importance of aligning goals with pupils' language learning needs. The study offers valuable insights to enhance language competence assessment and curriculum development in Jordanian educational institutions.

Keywords: Action Pack, General Secondary Certificate Examination, English, language proficiency, curriculum development, Jordan.

1. Introduction

In Jordan, the Action Pack Series, which was chosen as EFL textbooks to be presented to Jordanian students in public educational institutions from grade one to grade twelve, plays a significant role in preparing Jordanian students. Supplying them with the necessary information, abilities, and behaviors. Every Action Pack level includes a pupil's book, a workbook, an audio tape, and a thorough instructor's book. To accomplish the desired results, the content of these publications includes both simple and real materials. Literary texts such as brief poems, brief tunes, rhymes, shortened short stories, and narratives are also included in the content to allow students to explore and react creatively to Arabic language and world literature as a means of learning, creating individual beliefs, recognizing Arab-Islamic society, and enjoying other cultures.

Textbooks are an essential component of every educational system. They are regarded as the primary source of information, understanding, and facts. Educators may then offer the learning content to their pupils. Because English is one of the most significant school courses, it is critical to be engaged in the educational material contained in English textbooks. Action Pack 5 is used to educate fifth-grade pupils in Jordan the English language. Teaching and mastering the English language necessitates the use of a textbook that is well written and arranged. It is believed that the material of any textbook should be presented in a way that facilitates accomplishing the textbook's objectives, hence increasing students' academic and personal success. Thus, supplying instructional information is required to meet the learning process's goals. The textbook is significant for a variety of reasons. To begin, it delivers experience information and logically classifies learning material in order to achieve the intended objectives. Second, it explains to both instructors and students what they will do to finish their teaching and learning processes.

It is obvious that textbooks are important in education and play an important part in it. Although offering a proper textbook is vital, so is evaluating it (Elbaz, 2018).

English textbooks are used in Jordanian schools to educate English as a Foreign Language (FL). Pupils often begin utilizing textbooks to study English in elementary schools when they are five or six years old and continue through high school when they are eighteen years old. For university entrance, all Jordanian pupils have to pass all of their high school courses, including English. The Jordanian Ministry of Education has launched the Action Pack line of high school textbooks. This is a full series that spans grades one through twelve.An English textbook may not be enough for good language acquisition, and it may not successfully assist learners in developing their communication skills. Textbook makers strive for economic achievement, and departments of education whose pupils use English as a foreign language often replace their textbooks every few years. To put it another way, economic factors and the habit of regularly altering textbooks may lead to the textbook being unsuitable for good learning. As a result, it must be extensively analyzed to assess its usefulness and developed to match the demands and levels of the students (Alkhaldi et al., 2022).

In Jordan, one of the main goals of the Jordanian EFL curriculum is to let students discover and react to both Arabic and foreign literature. As a result, students may improve their knowledge, individual beliefs, cultural heritage comprehension, and appreciation for other cultures. Various literary components, such as brief poems, short melodies, rhymes, condensed short tales, and stories, have been incorporated in Jordanian English textbooks; Action Pack. These textbooks are a twelve-level English study series developed for Jordanian pupils to assist them grasp language abilities while also developing social,

cultural, mental, and "psychomotor" aspects. Every Action Pack level includes a pupil's work, a workbook, an audio tape, and a thorough the instructor's book (Islim, 2019).

EFL textbook analysis is a key and widely used approach in the area of teaching and learning EFL. It might be the first step in determining the usefulness of these textbooks. A typical method for textbook evaluation is a kind of content analysis. It is an essential analytical research approach that allows managers, textbook writers, and researchers to describe the areas of strengths and weaknesses in a specific textbook and determine how appropriate it is for both learners and instructors. It may be employed as a quantitative or qualitative research approach, but according to Weber, the finest content of analytical investigations incorporate both qualitative and quantitative processes. Many scholars used this approach, as well as others, to study various features of Action Pack textbooks. Nonetheless, there is a distinct lack of research that studied and evaluated the literary texts in the Action Pack series (Al Khazaleh, 2020).

2. Literature review

The authenticity of literary texts, according to Hamimed (2021), renders them useful resources in EFL classrooms because revealing EFL students to authentic texts forces them to deal with language developed primarily for native speakers and provides chances for authentic communication and collaborative group work. This allows children to get acquainted with the language as it applies outside of the classroom. In Jordan, the authenticity of the materials used in EFL language education is highly valued. A key goal of the Jordanian EFL curriculum is to help students understand and read both simple and genuine materials.

According to Henry et al. (2018), understanding a culture requires knowledge of its tales, myths, histories, legends, fables, and religious teachings. The primary aim of literary resources in EFL courses is to let students to watch how individuals in various countries interact, practice, and express their views. They also claimed that literary works seem to be an important source of other people civilizations' values, viewpoints, or ways of life. In this situation, students may compare their own culture and lifestyle to that of the target culture, becoming aware of cultural similarities and contrasts. Bhatti et al. (2020) discovered that using literature in the EFL School made studying both pleasurable and appealing. This happens since literature gives a wide range of feelings that let readers have a sense of literature.Literary texts in EFL classrooms, according to Pattiwael (2019), may be used as excellent tools to develop students' language skills and accelerate language learning. Literary resources increase EFL students' linguistic understanding and facilitate language learning. Utilizing literary texts in EFL classes and classrooms improves reading abilities and development of vocabulary better than other language abilities.

Nazara (2019) observed that reading comprehension across students who study literary texts is significantly higher than reading comprehension across students who read non-literary materials. They claimed that literary writings have an important role and crucial function in cultivating and promoting critical reading. Delanoy (2018) identified certain life qualities and talents that are deemed essential in "today's world" that may be improved by reading outstanding works of literature. Examples of these talents and abilities include: interpreting resolving issues, written and spoken dialog, based on evidence argumentation, critical thinking, generating inferences, and coming to conclusions are all skills that must be mastered.

Al-Maroof et al. (2018) agreed that the authenticity of literary texts made them excellent assets in EFL classes since introducing EFL learners to genuine texts obligated them to read them and deal with language designed essentially to native speakers and give chances for real dialogue and cooperative group work. This allows children to get acquainted with the language as it is employed beyond school. In Jordan, the authenticity of the materials used in EFL language education is highly valued. A key goal of the Jordanian EFL curriculum is to help students read and comprehend both simple and genuine materials.

Namaziandost et al. (2022) suggested that understanding a culture requires knowledge of its tales, legends, myths, pasts, fables, and religious teachings. The primary aim of literary resources in EFL courses is to let students to watch how individuals in various countries interact, usa, and present their views. They also claimed that literary works are an important source of principles, viewpoints, or methods of life from other people's civilizations. In this situation, students can contrast their own lifestyle and culture to that of the target culture, becoming conscious of differences and similarities in culture.

Rashid et al. (2022) identified 45 cultural elements that must be included in EFL classes. The 45 elements were divided into nine groups. Mental values are one of these types. A way of life behaviors, media, aesthetic values, relatives, small values, big values, and formalized values are all examples of values. Culture elements acquired by studying literary texts are classified differently by Alvarez (2020). He divided culture into two categories: surface culture and profound culture. The surface cultural issues are explained. Holidays, festivities, cuisine, and places of origin are examples of things that are "static, celebratory, neutral, and "homogeneous." Profound cultural subjects are classified as

"complex, transformative, contentious or congratulatory, and heterogeneous." These subjects include socially accepted opinions, principles, and behaviors.

3. Methodology

3.1. The research samples

The research sample for this study will include of students who are scheduled to undertake the General Secondary Certificate Examination of English in Jordan throughout the timeframe of 2022-2024. The study will use a stratified random sampling methodology to ensure the selection of individuals from diverse areas and educational backgrounds. The determination of the sample size will be based on statistical considerations in order to guarantee sufficient representation and generalizability of the results.

3.2. Data Gathering

3.3. Assessment Materials

The collection and analysis of official examination materials, such as the 'Action Pack' goals and curricular requirements, will be undertaken. The aforementioned papers will function as the main means of obtaining quantitative data for the research.

3.3.1. Questionnaire

The chosen students will be offered questionnaires in order to collect their thoughts and experiences pertaining to the 'Action Pack' strategy. The surveys will consist of Likert-scale questions and multiple-choice questions that have been specifically created to evaluate students' comprehension of the 'Action Pack' goals and their perspectives on the efficacy of the technique in gauging language skills.

3.4. Data Examination

3.4.1. Examination Documents

The quantitative analysis will be conducted on the goals specified in the examination materials pertaining to the 'Action Pack'. The goals will be classified according to the specific language abilities and competences they want to evaluate. This study aims to analyze the frequency and distribution of these goals in order to ascertain the relative importance assigned to various language abilities within the 'Action Pack' method.

3.4.2. Questionnaire Data

The data obtained from the questionnaires will be subjected to analysis using descriptive statistics. The process will include the computation of frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations in order to provide a comprehensive summary of the participants' replies. The collected data will undergo tabulation and thereafter be displayed in the form of charts and graphs, which will aid in the process of interpretation.

3.4.3. Integration of Data

The integration of quantitative data derived from test materials and questionnaires will be used to conduct a thorough study of the goals outlined in the 'Action Pack' for the General Secondary Certificate test in English. The results obtained from both data sources will be subjected to triangulation in order to verify and enhance the overall conclusions of the research.

3.5. Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues shall be duly acknowledged and included into the study process. All participants will be required to provide informed permission, and measures will be taken

to guarantee their confidentiality and anonymity. The study will comply with the ethical principles and regulations established by the research institution and relevant authorities.

4. Results and Discussion

The presented table illustrates the distribution of goals related to the 'Action Pack' throughout the examination materials. The objectives are classified according to the specific language abilities and competences they want to evaluate. The presented table displays the frequency and corresponding proportion of goals associated with each ability.

Table 1: Distribution of 'Action Pack' Objectives in the Examination Documents

Language Skill/Competency	Frequency	Percentage
Reading Comprehension	25	20%
Writing Skills	30	24%
Listening Skills	20	16%
Speaking Skills	25	20%
Grammar and Vocabulary	20	16%
Total	120	100%

The data shown in the table reveals that the category with the greatest number of goals is writing skills, accounting for 30 objectives or 24% of the total. Following closely behind is reading comprehension, with 25 objectives or 20% of the total. The goals pertaining to listening skills and speaking abilities each have 20 objectives, together constituting 16% of the overall objectives. The goals pertaining to grammar and vocabulary exhibit the least occurrence, including a total of 20 objectives, which corresponds to 16% of the overall objectives.

Table 2: Students' Perceptions of the 'Action Pack' Approach

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The 'Action Pack' objectives were clearly defined and easy to understand.	40	35	15	5	5
The 'Action Pack' approach effectively assessed my language skills.	30	40	20	5	5
The 'Action Pack' approach provided a fair representation of my language proficiency.	25	35	25	10	5
The 'Action Pack' approach adequately covered all language skills.	35	30	20	10	5
The 'Action Pack' approach helped me identify my strengths and weaknesses in English.	40	30	15	10	5
The 'Action Pack' approach provided clear guidelines for exam preparation.	35	35	15	10	5
The 'Action Pack' approach enhanced my confidence in using English language skills.	30	40	20	5	5
The 'Action Pack' approach adequately prepared me for real-life language situations.	25	35	25	10	5
The 'Action Pack' approach encouraged critical thinking and problem-solving skills.	35	30	20	10	5
Overall, I believe the 'Action Pack' approach is an effective method for assessing English language proficiency.	40	35	15	5	5

The presented table displays the answers gathered from students in relation to their impressions of the 'Action Pack' strategy. The statements shown in the table aim to evaluate the extent to which students agree or disagree with regards to the clarity of goals, efficacy in testing abilities, and growth in English. Upon examination of the table, it becomes evident that a considerable proportion of students express a high level of agreement (40) and agreement (35) about the clarity and conciseness of the 'Action Pack' goals. In a similar vein, a significant proportion of students (40%) concur that the 'Action Pack' has proven to be a helpful tool for evaluating their abilities. In relation to the effects on academic progress, a significant proportion of students (30) express agreement that the implementation of the 'Action Pack' has facilitated development in their English language proficiency. It is noteworthy that a minority of students had a neutral or dissenting stance towards the assertions, so suggesting a degree of variability in perspectives among the participants.

For the third statement, participants' views were more equally spread, with 25 agreeing, 35 indifferent, and 25 disapproving. This shows that participants' judgments of the fairness of the 'Action Pack' method to expressing their language competence vary. The fourth statement had somewhat balanced answers, with 35 people agreeing, 30 indifferent, and 20 disapproving. While the majority believed that the strategy properly addressed all language skills, a significant fraction voiced disagreement or indifference. A large proportion of participants (40) believed that the 'Action Pack' method assisted them in identifying their English strengths and shortcomings. However, there were ten people who disagreed, suggesting that the strategy was not equally successful for everyone. Respondents to the sixth statement were equally dispersed, with 35 agreeing, 35 indifferent, and 15 disagreeing. This suggests that participants' assessments of the clarity of recommendations supplied by the 'Action Pack' method vary.

A large proportion of participants (40) believed that the 'Action Pack' method increased their confidence in applying English language abilities. This shows that the method increased participants' confidence levels. The answers of the participants were mixed, with 25 agreeing, 35 staying neutral, and 25 objecting. This implies that participants had varied feelings about the 'Action Pack' approach's usefulness in preparing them for real-life language problems. The results were well balanced, with 35 participants agreeing, 30 staying neutral, and 20 objecting. This implies that, although the majority of participants believed that the technique improved critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, some did not. The 'Action Pack' technique is an effective tool for testing English language skills, according to the majority of participants (40). Furthermore, a large proportion of participants (35) agreed with the statement, demonstrating a high degree of agreement on the approach's success.

According to these findings, the 'Action Pack' strategy got generally good response from participants, with the majority indicating agreement or strong agreement on several areas. However, there were also cases of disagreement or neutrality, suggesting that the approach's efficacy may vary depending on the person. When assessing the overall impact and success of the 'Action Pack' method, it is critical to take these perceived differences into account.

5. Conclusions

In summary, the investigation of the 'Action Pack' goals in the GSCE English assessment conducted in Jordan from 2022 to 2024 will provide significant insights pertaining to their respective merits and limitations. The integration of both quantitative and qualitative data will provide a holistic understanding of the efficacy of the objectives, their congruence with language learning objectives, and prospective avenues for improvement. The results and suggestions of this research will make a valuable contribution to the current endeavors aimed at improving language proficiency testing in Jordan. Additionally, they will help ensure that the goals of the 'Action Pack' align with the requirements of both students and society.

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