

WASHBACK EFFECT OF THE CEPA ENGLISH TEST
ON TEACHING IN AN EDUCATIONAL ZONE IN THE UAE

A THESIS IN TEACHING ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

Presented to the faculty of the American University of Sharjah

College of Arts and Sciences

in partial fulfillment of

the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF ARTS

by

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B.A. 2001

Sharjah, UAE

August 2010

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American University of Sharjah, 2010

ABSTRACT

Studies conducted to investigate the washback effect of standardized tests have found that the influence which a test might have on teaching can be positive or negative (see Cheng, 2005; Shohamy, 2001; and Wall & Alderson, 1996). One reason for variation in the washback effect of achievement and placement tests depends on the connection between the content of the test and the content of the students' syllabus. One way positive washback can be achieved is when the test is designed to include subjects and skills related to what students study in their daily lessons. Teachers in that case may make more efforts to ensure students' understanding of the content of their syllabus in order to ensure their success in their standardized tests. Such efforts would lead to providing students with a learning experience of a better quality (see Wall & Alderson, 1996). On the other hand, in contexts where the administered test is not related to the studied syllabus, negative washback might occur. Teachers in such a context may tend to teach to the test, concentrating more on the skills and subjects that are expected to be in the test and skipping over or superficially teaching the subjects that are not tested (see Wall & Alderson, 1996; and Volante, 2006). Of course, such practices have direct influence on the learning which takes place in these contexts.

In 2006, it was decided to have all grade 12 students in the UAE take the CEPA English Test. Many decisions were decided to be taken regarding grade 12 students based on their results in the CEPA English Test. These decisions were related to secondary school graduation and university admission and placement. It is logical to think that

introducing a high-stakes test like the CEPA English Test would have a washback effect on the teaching and learning process in the UAE, and this study aimed to discover the dimensions of that washback effect, if such an effect exists.

Data collection methods included a teachers' questionnaire and interviews, as well as analysis of two Mock CEPA English Tests in comparison with grade 12 textbooks' scope and sequences. All the data were collected from one educational zone in the UAE. The findings of this study showed that there was not a direct relationship between the content of the analyzed Mock CEPA English Tests and the grade 12 syllabi as shown in the scope and sequence. Also, there were some aspects of both positive and negative washback present in the teaching process in the educational zone under study.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis is the result of many people's efforts. It would not have been possible to finish it without their guidance and support. I am grateful to my supervisor, Dr. Betty Lanteigne who did not spare any effort to help me throughout my thesis writing process. I present my deepest thanks to her for her encouragement, support and guidance. I also extend my gratitude to the members of the supervisory committee, Dr. Cindy Gunn and Dr. Khawlah Ahmed whose assistance and knowledge helped me succeed in my thesis. My warm thanks are also extended to Dr. Fatima Badry for being a source of guidance and support for all students in the MA TESOL program. Also, I would like to present my gratitude and appreciation to all the professors who taught me in the Master's Program. Their knowledge and effort helped me enrich my teaching experience. My thanks are also conveyed to all the teachers who participated in my study and provided me with their insightful ideas and thoughts. I wish to express my warmest gratitude to my beloved family for their endless encouragement, support and understanding.

Dedication

To my beloved parents who always give my life a meaning. Their encouragement and support are the secrets behind my success. To my beloved husband who triggers my soul with hope whenever I feel down. To my son who enlightened my world during the period of my study in the MA TESOL Program.

CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

According to the website of the National Admissions and Placement Office (NAPO) (“Common Educational Proficiency Assessment for U.A.E. Higher Education,” 2008), the Ministry of Education in the United Arab Emirates decided in 2006 to administer the Common Educational Proficiency Assessment for the UAE Higher Education. This test, which is called the CEPA Test, includes an English test (which UAE secondary school teachers call the CEPA English Test). Grade 12 students from schools under the Ministry of Education are required to take the CEPA English Test to graduate; thus the CEPA English Test is a high-stakes test that has a direct effect on grade 12 students.

The CEPA English Test “serves two purposes” (p. 4), as mentioned by Annie Brown, Associate Director of Assessment and Professional Development at the Department of Higher Education and Policy Planning Coordination at the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, in the *Gulf News* (Ismail, 2008). As explained by Brown, the CEPA English Test “works as part of the application requirements for federal tertiary institutes [and] forms a part of the grade 12 final examinations and accounts for one fourth of a student’s overall grades” (p. 5). In 2006-2008, grade 12 students in the UAE took the CEPA English Test as a substitute for their second semester English language test, and the grade which they scored in the CEPA English Test was counted as a part of their total grade which was used to calculate their grade 12 average out of 100%. At the same time, the grade which grade 12 students scored in the CEPA English Test determined eligibility for placement into higher diploma and bachelor degree courses in the public higher education institutions in the country, which are Zayed University, the UAE University, or the Higher Colleges of Technology which have English as the medium of instruction.

The CEPA English Test has generated different reactions toward it since its implementation in 2006. In almost every meeting, English teachers expressed their discomfort because of the extra burden that the CEPA English Test placed on their shoulders. I have observed that grade 12 English teachers felt the increased responsibility that rested on their shoulders and seemed to be exerting greater efforts

than teachers of other subjects in grade 12 because they felt that they had to cover the material of their syllabus in addition to providing their students with extra CEPA preparation materials. (It was only the English portion of the CEPA which was included in the grade 12 students' final score.) At the same time, the English teachers felt that the implementation of the CEPA English Test had positive influences on their students' learning experience. This view was stated by Daphne Johnson, an English teacher at Al Dhabyania Private School, during a press interview with a local newspaper (Ismail, 2008). Johnson said, "the CEPA truly tests a student's English competency by application and practical learning" (p. 15). She added that the CEPA English Test "takes students through a step-by-step process to ensure they learn English the right way, with students who haven't done this, they often found themselves unprepared for the English standards required at higher education levels" (p. 16). Of course, ensuring that students are being taught English "the right way" is the responsibility of teachers, of which they seem to be very aware.

It is very logical to think that introducing a high-stakes test like the CEPA English Test would have a washback effect on the teaching and learning process in the UAE. Coombe and Hubley (2005) summarize the definition of washback in their glossary of important testing terms, saying that it "refers to the impact that a test or a testing program may have on a curriculum" (p. 191). That view of washback indicates that washback is used to refer to "the effects of tests on course content, teaching, learning, and classroom activities" (Saif, 2006, p. 1). The interest of this study was to investigate the washback effect, if any, of the CEPA English Test on the teaching process in secondary schools in one of the educational zones in the UAE, including possible effects on curricular content, teaching methods, and methods of assessment.

This research's focus was not the development and/or design of the CEPA English Test as a test itself because, when looking at it, it is evident that the CEPA English Test is a well designed test in terms of its ability to measure students' general proficiency levels in the English language. However, of concern is the content of the CEPA English Test as an achievement test because Kane (2001) states that achievement tests should be related to the content which students usually study, and one of the stated functions of the CEPA English Test was to be a summative achievement test of what students have learned in the grade 12 English curriculum, even though it was designed as a general English proficiency test.

The purpose of this study was to determine if the introduction of the CEPA English Test has had an influence on English language teaching in one educational zone in the UAE. So, this study focused on the washback effect of the CEPA English Test on teachers and teaching in the educational zone under study. I wanted to determine whether the test's influence (if any) was positive or negative or had elements of both, according to Wall and Alderson's (1996) characteristics of positive and negative washback. Wall and Alderson's characteristics of washback are research-based observations, and not just theoretical. I investigated the CEPA English Test's influence in terms of its relationship to the content taught to grade 12 students, the teachers' methods of teaching, and the methods of assessing these students. This study involved participants from both male and female secondary schools who work under the authority of one of the educational zones in the UAE. The study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. Is the content of the Mock CEPA English Tests for 2007 and 2008 directly related to the grade 12 syllabi taught in those years?
2. As reported by the participating teachers, does the CEPA English Test have positive or negative washback or elements of both (according to Wall and Alderson's characteristics of positive and negative washback)?
3. What changes (if any) in content, methods of teaching, and methods of assessment have been made by the participating teachers since the implementation of the CEPA English Test?

In order to answer these research questions, I used different methods of data collection. I used a questionnaire to gain insight into the grade 12 teachers' point of view about the washback effect of the CEPA English Test on the content they teach to their students, the methods which they use to assess their students, and their methods of teaching. Also, I interviewed two of the teachers who responded to the questionnaire to get more data about the effect of the introduction of the CEPA English Test on their teaching. In addition, Mock CEPA English Tests from 2007 and 2008 were analyzed to see whether their content was directly related to the content of the grade 12 English syllabi of these years or not.

Overview of the Chapters and Appendices

Chapter One presents the introduction, statement of the problem, significance of the study, research questions, and design of the study. Chapter Two contains a review of the literature concerning standardized language testing and washback. Chapter Three describes the methodology and procedures which were used to collect and analyze the data for the study. Chapter Four displays the results that were found from the different methods of data collection and their analysis. Chapter Five contains a summary of the study and findings, conclusions and implications, and limitations of the study.

There are 12 appendices. Appendices A, B, C, and D show the forms I used to analyze the Mock CEPA English Tests regarding grammar, vocabulary, reading and writing. Appendix E is the teacher questionnaire, while Appendix F contains the teachers' interview questions. Appendix G shows the analysis of the grammar sections from the Mock CEPA English Test from 2007, and Appendix H shows the analysis of the vocabulary section of the same test. Appendix I includes the analysis of the grammar section from the Mock CEPA English Test from 2008, while Appendix J shows the analysis of the vocabulary section from the same test. Some of the teachers' comments from the interviews are listed in Appendix K. Appendix L includes some of the teachers' responses in the section of the open-ended questions of the questionnaire.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter presents a review of literature about the issue of washback. It begins with a discussion of high-stakes tests and their effect on different stake holders, especially the test takers. Next, it presents a discussion of the issue of the power of tests. Then, it moves to talk about washback and its relation to high-stakes tests. After that, it includes a discussion of positive and negative washback. This chapter ends with discussion of the CEPA English Test and washback.

High-Stakes Tests

It is not a new idea to say that teaching has always been related to testing. In general, students are tested frequently for many reasons. Tests are used to measure “aptitude, achievement or proficiency, or perhaps to diagnose special problems” (Wall, 2005, p. 30). Nowadays, decision makers in different educational contexts tend to favor the implementation of a variety of high-stakes standardized tests for students in different stages, which leads to these standardized tests becoming “a fact of life in [these] educational contexts” (Coombe, 2005, p. 37). Mousavi (2009) defines a high-stakes test as “an objective test that is given and scored in a uniform manner” (p. 656). As Cheng (2005) explains, “[high-stakes tests] are usually public examinations or large-scale standardized tests” (p. 43). Coombe (2005) defines a high-stakes test as a test by which “admission, promotion, placement or graduations are directly influenced or dependent on test scores” (p. 32). In his glossary of important testing terms, McNamara (2000) explains that high-stakes tests are “[t]ests which provide information on the basis of which significant decisions are made about candidates, e.g. admission to courses of study, or to work settings” (p. 133).

High-stakes tests have a serious impact on different levels in society as well as the learning and the teaching processes. Kirkland (1971) believes that this impact is “complicated and interwoven with effects on parents, teachers, schools and society” (p. 307). Hamilton, Stecher, and Klein (2002) state that there is a focus on the effects of high-stakes tests on students, teachers and principals because “the evidence of these effects is comparatively strong” (p. 102). As Wall (2005) clarifies, high-stakes

tests might influence “the way that teachers and students behave as well as their perceptions of their own abilities and worth” (p. 29). Also, Hamilton et al. (2002) add that high-stakes tests might affect parents. More specifically, they might affect “their attitudes toward education, their engagement with schools and their direct participation in their child’s learning” (p. 102). In addition, high-stakes tests might affect policymakers. In other words, such tests might affect “their beliefs about system performance, their judgments about program effectiveness and their allocation of resources” (p. 102).

Tests’ Effect on Test Takers

Although many sectors are affected by students' performance in standardized tests, these tests' consequences "are profound for the participants [themselves]" (Paris, Lawton, Turner, & Roth, 1991, p. 12). That is because a test taker "is the one whose status in school and society is determined by test scores and the one whose self-image, motivation, and aspirations are influenced [by them]" (Kirkland, 1971, p. 307). As Gronlund (2006) points out, a test might have consequences affecting students' performance in a course, self-assessment skills, independent learning, study habits, and attitudes towards school work. The effect of test scores on the participants and on their future makes it necessary for language testers to be aware of the responsibility which they are holding. Hamp-Lyons (1997) points out that language testers' work "can affect the lives of large numbers of people they may never see, and who will never call them to account" (p. 323).

The impact that a high-stakes test might have on learners is not limited to its effect on their learning, but it may extend to their future in a very serious way. Many scholars look at high-stakes tests as reasons for making important decisions regarding test takers. Cheng (2005) states that the results of high-stakes tests "are seen ... by students, teachers, administrators, parents, or the general public as the basis upon which important decisions are made that immediately and directly affect the students" (p. 43). Cheng points out that such tests “offer future academic and employment opportunities based upon their results” (p. 43). Coombe (2005) clarifies that the decisions that are taken depending on test takers' scores extend to including many aspects such as "admission, promotion, placement or graduation" (p. 32). Brindley (2001) says that high-stakes tests help stakeholders in language learning programs to collect information on learners' language proficiency and/or achievement for various

purposes that include selection, certification, accountability and diagnosis. Heubert and Hauser (1999) insist that tests used for “such high-stakes purposes must ... meet professional standards of reliability, validity and fairness” (p. 71).

The Power of Tests

The important roles which high-stakes tests play in the lives of the students who take them put educators in the field under intense pressure to raise their students' scores on these high-stakes tests. Because of teachers' attempts to ensure their students' success in their high-stakes tests, education in the USA is “witnessing a nationwide diminishment of curricular attention toward any subject that is not included on a high-stakes test” (Popham, 2001, p. 19). Popham (2001) raises a very logical question, asking, “If our chief job is to raise test scores, why waste time teaching content that's not even tested?” (p. 19). This “curricular exodus” is not limited to one place but “is seen in almost any setting where high-stakes tests dominate” (Popham, 2001, p. 10). Popham relates this action to a human response “to a reward structure that focuses exclusively in a single criterion” (p. 19) which in education often is widely used high-stakes tests.

The multi-dimensional effect of high-stakes tests raises the issue of the power of tests. Carlsen (2007) believes that “sometimes the most efficient way to change teaching is by introducing a test” (p. 99). Of course, the achievement of a test's desired effects depend on many factors. McNamara (2000) summarizes these factors to include “local conditions in classrooms, the established traditions of teaching, the immediate motivation of learners, and the frequently unpredictable ways in which classroom interaction develop” (p. 74). In addition, the main factor that shapes any test's effects is the importance of that test. In other words, “if a test is considered important by test users, it is likely to affect teaching and learning” (Carlsen, 2007, p. 99).

When talking about the impact of high-stakes tests, it is very important to point out that high-stakes tests “can have significant impact not only on individuals but also on practices and policies” (Wall, 2005, p. 29). As Hamp-Lyons (1997) states, “tests have an impact on the lives of test takers, classrooms, school systems, and even whole societies” (p. 326). Hamilton, Stecher, and Klein (2002) state that there is some evidence about changes at the school level due to high-stakes tests. These changes “[include] decisions about curriculum emphasis, teacher support, and programmatic

changes” (p. 110). Hamilton et al. add that “the goal of changing educational practice is one of the major justifications for implementing high-stakes tests” (p. 103). They explain this issue, saying, “advocates hope test scores will prompt schools to reform policy, encourage teachers to adopt more effective practices, and motivate students to work harder” (p. 103). On the other hand, Alderson and Wall (1992) raise an important point of view regarding the impact of high stakes tests. They point out that it is important to distinguish between influence/impact and washback. They explain that it might be useful to talk about the influence of tests on teachers' attitudes toward these tests or even to talk about pupils' and parents' opinions about tests which affect students' behaviors; however, "this is not the same as, although conceivably related to, the influence of the test on teaching and learning" (p. 4) which is the washback effect of tests.

What Is Washback?

From the previous discussion, it seems that the matter of tests' influence on stakeholders and on the teaching and learning processes is a complicated matter that needs to be seriously taken into consideration (see Wall, 2005; Kirkland, 1971). Cheng (2002) insists that "in most societies, [standardized tests'] relationship to the curriculum, teaching and learning and their effect on individual opportunities in life are of vital importance" (p. 91). He adds that "the current extensive use of examination scores for various educational and social purposes has made what is called 'washback'" (p. 91). Alderson and Wall (1992) report that the concept of washback, or backwash, is often introduced in language testing courses as a powerful concept that all test designers need to pay attention to, and which most classroom teachers are aware of. Cheng (2005) explains that washback "is rooted in the notion that tests should drive teaching and hence learning" (p. 26). Mousavi (2009) clarifies that the washback hypothesis is “a hypothesis which assumes that teachers and learners do things they would not necessarily otherwise do because of the test” (p. 833). Some scholars give a broad definition of washback by saying that it means "the effect of testing on teaching and learning" (Coombe & Hubley, 2005, p. 5).

Alderson and Wall (1992) give a more specific explanation of that concept, and they even restrict the use of the term washback to "classroom behaviours of teachers and learners rather than to the nature of print and other pedagogical material" (p. 6). Alderson and Wall (1992) present a more complex view about washback. They

think that there are many aspects that might be influenced by tests, which results in having many possible washback hypotheses. For them, a test will influence teaching and learning. More specifically, it will influence teachers' methods of teaching and the content which they teach. In addition, it will influence the nature of teaching, including the rate, sequence, degree and depth of what is taught. Carlsen (2007) presents an example that clarifies the washback effect on the teaching process, saying, “ a good test may influence a poor teacher to do things that stimulate learning, just as a poor test may mislead a good teacher to engage her students in activities which do not necessarily enhance learning” (p. 99). As for learning, a test will influence what learners learn, and how they learn it, which will influence the rate, sequence, degree, and depth of their learning. Alderson and Wall (1992) add that a test will influence attitudes toward learning and teaching. All these variables that might be influenced by a test indicate that the issue of washback is a complicated one that requires an understanding of any educational context with all its components before talking about the washback effect of a test in it.

Scholars in the field of language assessment are aware of the presence of the phenomenon of washback. Wall and Alderson (1996) support that point of view, saying, "It is common to claim the existence of washback (the impact of a test on teaching) and to declare that tests can be powerful determiners, both positively and negatively, of what happens in classrooms" (p. 194). What attracts attention when reading about the phenomenon of washback is the scholars' insistence on connecting the appearance of washback to the existence of high-stakes tests. Cheng (2005) gives an explanation for that connection between high-stakes tests and the concept of washback which he sees as being a result of the consequences of high-stakes tests. He believes that "the greater the consequences attached to a particular test, the more likely it is to have an impact on teaching and learning" (p. 45). In modern language testing, the quality of a test is judged based partially on that test's washback. Carlsen (2007) states that “no test can be said to be valid according to modern definition of the term, unless it affects learning and teaching in a positive way” (p. 98). Positive washback is one of the criteria for good testing. Regarding that issue, Coombe and Hubley (2005) state that positive washback is "one of the cornerstones of good testing practice" (p. 191).

Washback has become an increasingly prevalent and prominent phenomenon in the field of language teaching. That phenomenon is rooted in “the notion that tests

or examinations should derive teaching, and therefore learning” (Coombe, 2005, p. 32), which portrays tests as being a powerful force regarding impact on teaching and learning. Shohamy (2001) clarifies the power which tests have, saying, "the power of tests has reached such high levels that it is now a common belief that what is tested is important" (p. 113). Shohamy adds that this power of tests leads to "the redefinition of knowledge through [these] tests" (p. 113) in most contexts. She sees this redefinition of knowledge through tests as being the reason behind creating two parallel systems: "one manifested through the curriculum or policy documents, the other reflecting bureaucratic aspirations through tests" (p. 113). That means that tests send messages to teachers about what they should teach.

High-Stakes Tests and Washback

It is clearly stated in the literature of assessment that high-stakes tests serve as an effective tool for changing the behaviors of teachers and students. Of course, there are logical reasons that make teachers and learners change their behavior as a result of a specific test. Sometimes that change is a deliberate one, but other times, teachers and learners are not aware of the change that is happening because they seem forced by the power of tests to change in one specific way or another. The nature of the change which might take place can be related to the consequences which tests scores might have on the different stakeholders, which drives them to take it seriously. Green (2007) relates the consequences of high-stakes tests to the opportunities which test takers might gain as a result of doing well on them, which reinforces the importance of achieving well in these tests regardless of the means used to do so. He adds that "the educational consequences of using tests to regulate access to opportunities have worried educators ever since examinations came into widespread use for this purpose" (p. 76). Shohamy (2001) states that "since teachers experience fear and anxiety as students, principals, and parents all demand preparation of this high-stakes test, they change their behavior and start teaching for the test, as the test serves as a model of knowledge and as an immediate pedagogical source" (p. 114).

Cheng (2005) states that "the teacher's professional worth, and student learning outcomes" (p. 45) might be influenced by a specific test. Coombe (2005) says that this influence might extend to include "the attitudes toward the value of educational objectives" (p. 33). It is obvious that the influence of high-stakes tests alters many factors in the teaching and learning process, and it is important to point

out that this influence might be either positive or negative, which generates "strong views both 'for' and 'against' the use of high-stakes tests in education" (Coombe, 2005, p. 33). In fact, the quality of the existing washback is related to the quality of the test itself. Cheng (2005) points out that whether the washback effect is negative or positive could be "dependent on what the examination measures" (p. 26). That indicates that examinations can be used as levers for change. Cheng (2005) explains the possible changes that might occur as a result of specific tests and says,

New textbooks will likely be designed to match the purposes of a new test, and school administrative staff, teachers, and students will all strive to achieve good scores on tests. In addition, many more changes in teaching and learning can happen as a result of a particular new test. Often such consequences are independent of the original intentions of the test designer. (p. 31)

He explains that relationship by adding, "if an examination is congruent with the sentiment and purposes of the course objectives, beneficial washback can be achieved; if not, negative washback effects are bound to happen" (p. 26). In the editorial of *Assessment in Education* ("Washback from Language Tests on Teaching, Learning and Policy: Evidence from Diverse Settings," 2007), the editor reports that washback is an extremely complex phenomenon which "not only varies according to the test, but also in terms of contextual factors and participants' responses" (p. 2). That means that it would be worthwhile to first investigate the nature of an examination and/or assessment in teaching and learning, and "then the nature of washback effect and the conditions under which it operates, keeping in mind the importance of the context in which it might take place in order to understand how washback functions in practice" (Cheng, 2005, p. 30-31).

Washback can vary according to the test that it appears as a result of, which means that achievement tests' washback effect might be different than the washback of proficiency tests or placement tests. It is important to know that achievement, proficiency, and placement tests have different purposes. As McNamara (2000) explains, achievement tests "aim to establish what has been learned in a course of instruction" (p. 131). Coombe and Hubleby (2005) state that "this type of test is typically given by the teacher at a particular time during a course and covers a certain amount of material" (p. 183). Alderson, Clapham, and Wall (1995) state that achievement tests "are similar to progress tests, but they are given at the end of the course" (p. 286). On the other hand, proficiency tests are not based on a specific

syllabus, but they are general tests. They are designed to "test the ability of students with different language training backgrounds" (Alderson, Clapham, & Wall, 1995, p. 293). McNamara (2000) points out that proficiency tests "aim to establish a candidate's readiness for a particular communicative role" (p. 135). Alderson, Clapham, and Wall (1995) add that these tests intend "to show whether students have reached a given level of general language ability" or "to show whether students have sufficient ability to be able to use a language in some specific area such as medicine, tourism, or academic study" (p. 293).

Placement tests differ in purpose from achievement and proficiency tests. These tests, as Bachman and Palmer (1996) explain, "involve determining in which of several different levels of instruction it would be most appropriate to place the test taker" (p. 97). Bachman (1990) states that when designing a test for placement, "the test developers may choose to base the test content either on a theory of language proficiency or on the learning objectives of the syllabus to be taken" (p. 59). He explains that in some situations where students who enter the program are from a wide variety of language backgrounds and prior language learning experience, and "in which the syllabus to be followed encompasses the full range of competencies and skills of language proficiency" (p. 59), it may be difficult to specify clear objectives to be a basis for test development. In such situations, placement test developers may choose to develop a test "based on a theory of language proficiency and determine placement according to a norming procedure" (Bachman, 1990, p. 59).

Negative, Mixed, and Positive Washback

It can be difficult to try to predict the washback of a specific test before applying it in reality. As McNamara (2000) argues, "washback is often rather unpredictable" (p. 74). That is because an "exam, in spite of the good intentions surrounding its introduction, might have a restraining or distorting influence on what was being taught and how" (Wall & Alderson, 1996, p. 199), or it might promote beneficial change in teaching and learning.

Negative Washback

Shohamy (2001) explains that point saying, "while the introduction of a test can be influential in terms of changing the focus and increasing awareness, the educational effectiveness of tests introduced in such ways cannot be very high,

because the approach narrows the process of education, making it merely instrumental and not meaningful" (p. 110). That is because the increased salience of standardized test scores might lead teachers to adopt inappropriate preparation practices while teaching their students. Brindley (2001) points out that these inappropriate practices might include practices such as "relentless drilling on test content, eliminating important curricular content not covered by the test, and providing long practice sessions that incorporate similar items from these measures" (p. 130). Of course, such practices have had a negative impact on the teaching and learning process in that they have "undermined authentic forms of teaching and learning and eroded the inferences one can draw from these measures" (Volante, 2006, p. 131).

In addition, possible negative effects which Wall (2005) presents include "encouraging teachers to 'watch the examiner's foibles and to note his idiosyncrasies' in order to prepare the pupils for the questions that were likely to appear" (p. 34), as well as "limiting [the teachers'] freedom to teach their subjects in their own way, encouraging them to do the work that the pupils should be doing, tempting them to overvalue the type of skills that [lead] to successful examination performance... and convincing them to neglect the side which would not be tested" (p. 34).

There is a crucial point that needs to be taken in consideration when thinking of high-stakes tests. Hamilton, Stecher, and Klein (2002) believe that it is very important to understand the relationship between the test scores and students' achievement. They think that "changes in behavior may, in turn, affect the validity of various interpretations of test scores" (p. 103). For example, some reactions to high-stakes tests, such as changes in tests administration conditions, will "affect the relationship between test scores and achievement" (p. 103). These behaviors, as they explain, "can lead to increases in scores without concomitant increases in knowledge" (p. 103). Hamilton et al. (2002) add that "without monitoring such changes in behavior, we will not know the extent to which gained scores are due to real improvement in achievement rather than differences in testing conditions or other factors" (p. 103).

Mixed Washback

Carlsen (2007) states that as a result of the introduction of new high-stakes tests, "teachers and parents fear that teachers may begin to teach different things in a different way... often referred to as 'teaching to the test'" (p. 99). On the other hand,

it should be taken in consideration that teaching to the test is not always negative. Actually, it can be either positive or negative based on the nature of the test itself. In other words, “if a language test covers a representative set of all relevant aspects of the ability, ‘teaching to the test’ will necessarily involve a varied language pedagogy focusing on all aspects of language proficiency” (p. 100). If the test under-represented proficiency, on the other hand, e.g., focusing on a specific linguistic area, “this could have negative consequences for language learning” (Carlsen, 2007, p. 100). This effect of the content of tests on the quality of education provided to students makes it the responsibility of language testers to “make sure their tests measure broadly enough to stimulate variation in classroom activities” (Carlsen, 2007, p. 100).

Positive Washback

There are conditions which need to be present in order to have positive washback. Wall and Alderson (1996) think that positive washback can occur when there are "no conflicts in the aims, activities or the marking criteria of the textbook and the exam, and if teachers accepted these and worked towards them" (p. 199). In other words, positive washback would result when “the testing procedure reflects the skills and abilities that are taught in the course” (Bachman, 1990, p. 283). Also, Carlsen (2007) summarizes the conditions in which a test will be most likely to affect teaching and learning in a positive way, based on the arguments of Bailey (1996). These conditions which he presents are that “texts and tasks are authentic, direct test methods are used, the test is criterion referenced, the feedback is detailed and meaningful to users, there is a match between the test construct and the curriculum, [and] the test has legitimacy in the society” (p. 100). In addition, washback can be positive when "the results from high-stakes tests are used to measure, monitor and improve the quality of teachers and students" (Coombe, 2005, p. 33).

Wall (2005) lists a number of beneficial effects that an examination might have on teachers and on pupils. She says that possible positive effects on teachers include “ inducing them to cover their subjects thoroughly, making them complete their syllabi within the prescribed time limits, compelling them to pay as much attention to weak pupils as to strong ones, and making them familiar with the standards which other teachers and other schools were able to achieve” (p. 34).

Wall and Alderson's Impact Study

As Wall and Alderson (1996) hypothesized, the aspects influenced by washback include the teaching content, the method of teaching, and the ways of assessing students. Wall and Alderson (1996) conducted a study which they called "The Impact Study" to investigate the washback effect of a newly implemented standardized test on the teaching process in Sri Lanka. They focused their study on washback regarding three variables, which were the content of teaching, the method of teaching, and the ways of assessing students. In their study's conclusion, they report that there is evidence of washback on the content of teaching and on the way teachers and local education offices design tests. On the other hand, they report that they found no evidence of washback on the methods of teaching.

In their 1996 study, Wall and Alderson identified both positive and negative washback effects. Regarding the positive washback of the test on the content of teaching, they reported that "teachers' determination to cover the textbooks" (p. 218) could be considered a mostly positive evidence of the positive washback that a test might have on teaching but it turns into negative "if the motivation is to memorise texts which may become 'seen passages' " (p. 218). It is obvious that the presence of positive washback in an achievement test is determined by whether there is coordination between the textbook and exam or not. That means teachers tend to place much emphasis on all the content of their students' textbooks in case their students are going to be tested in this content. In other cases when the tests that students take are not related to specific textbooks, teachers might tend to look for supplementary materials that might prepare their students for their tests.

The evidence which Wall and Alderson (1996) present to support the observation about tests coordinating with the textbook includes talking about the teachers' attempts to focus more on the skills being tested rather than the skills provided by the textbooks. More specifically, as a result of their study, Wall and Alderson noticed "more attention being paid to reading than textbook provides for...[and] less attention paid to oral skills than textbook provides for" (p. 218). That observation illustrates how in some cases teachers might tend to concentrate more on teaching the skills that are included in the test and ignore or superficially teach the ones that are not included in the test. The matter might be more serious than giving more attention to one skill than another because in some cases teachers might go to the extreme of skipping the lessons that focus on the skills that are not tested. Wall

and Alderson (1996) found that the teachers in their study tended to skip the listening lessons because the exam does not test this skill. They report that another negative evidence regarding the washback of tests on the content of teaching can be the existence of "long examination preparation periods with materials reflecting content of exam and abandonment of listening and speaking" (p. 218).

A test's washback might extend to affect the teachers' ways of assessing their students. Wall and Alderson (1996) present some evidence to clarify that issue. As a result of their Impact Study, they found that teachers tended to give more attention to reading and writing than to grammar, which they label as positive washback. Of course, the focus which teachers gave to teaching reading and writing may be related to the fact that in some cases teachers might have tended to concentrate more on teaching the skills that are included in the test and ignore or superficially teach the ones that are not included in it. In addition to teachers concentrating on some skills more than others, Wall and Alderson (1996) found that more focus was given to use "item types which have appeared on the exam," which they see as being positive if these items have also appeared in the textbook "but negative when they have not and when certain types are over-used" (p. 218). In addition, another evidence of the negative washback of the test was the "copying of passages and questions straight from past papers" (Wall & Alderson, 1996, p. 218). There is no doubt that many teachers copy the questions of previous examinations to use them when assessing their students as an attempt to prepare them for similar questions that are expected to be in their test. In that case, they are considering the previous tests as models for students to give them an idea about what they might encounter in their test papers.

The CEPA English Test and Washback

The phenomenon of washback can occur in any context where new standardized high-stakes tests take place. Washback in the UAE context might occur as a result of the implementation of the English portion of the Common Educational Proficiency Assessment for the Higher Education, which is called the CEPA Test. In 2006-2008, all students completing Grade 12 of the Ministry of Education English curriculum had to take the CEPA English Test as their Semester 2 examination for English in 2006-2008. The CEPA English Test plays two different roles and was implemented for a variety of purposes. As mentioned on the website of the National Admissions and Placement Office (NAPO) ("Common Educational Proficiency

Assessment for U.A.E. Higher Education,” 2008), the CEPA English Test played the role of an achievement test in that its score counted for 25% of the overall GSC English grade of grade 12 students. In addition, the CEPA English Test was developed originally as a general proficiency test to facilitate the placement of students for English language study purposes across three of the higher education institutions in the UAE which are the United Arab Emirates University (UAEU), Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT) and Zayed University (ZU). From 2006 to 2009, the CEPA English Test has been used to determine eligibility for placement into Higher Diploma and Bachelor’s degree courses. It is mentioned on the website of the NAPO that applicants must achieve a minimum score of 150 on the CEPA English Test, in addition to a minimum average of 70% on the GSC exam or equivalent, to be eligible for Bachelor’s programs at the three institutions, and Higher Diploma programs at the HCT. Those students scoring less than 150 on the CEPA English Test are automatically transferred to the HCT Diploma. Based on these functions of the CEPA Test, one can safely claim that this test is vital for grade 12 students in the UAE.

There are many studies in the literature of assessment that examine the changes that occurred in specific educational contexts as a result of the implementation of new standardized tests, but this present study was specifically related to the educational context in one educational zone in the UAE. It was the aim of my study to investigate whether or not a washback effect is present in the UAE context and specifically in the context of English classes in government schools in the educational zone under study as a result of the implementation of the CEPA English Test. In addition, I explored the features of that washback effect, i.e., was it positive, negative, or both, according to the criteria described by Wall and Alderson (1996)

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This study focused on the washback effect of the CEPA English Test on the teaching process in grade 12 English classes in government schools in one educational zone in the UAE: negative or positive washback, or elements of both. The three aspects of washback that were investigated in the study of Wall and Alderson (1996), (1. the content of teaching, 2. the methods of teaching, and 3. the teachers' ways of assessing students) were addressed.

Changes in the Research Plan

Addressing Research Question 1 about alignment of the Mock CEPA English Tests with the grade 12 curricula, my plan was to analyze the actual CEPA English Tests of the years 2006, 2007 and 2008, to see whether their content correspond with the content of grade 12 textbooks in these years or not. After contacting some officials in the educational zone, I was told that the official CEPA English Tests in general are not available for the public. This procedure of making the real CEPA English Tests inaccessible was taken to maintain test security for this high-stakes test which is a crucial measure to preserve the validity and reliability of this very important test. On the other hand, Mock CEPA English Tests were made available by NAPO so that teachers and students would know what to expect on the official CEPA Test. As such, they are an indication of the content of the CEPA English Test.

As a result of the lack of availability of the official CEPA English Tests, I decided to analyze the Mock CEPA English Tests from the years 2006, 2007 and 2008 instead of the real CEPA English Tests ("Fujairah Educational Zone," 2007). In my attempt to get the NAPO Mock CEPA English Tests, I was only able to find the mock tests from the years 2007 and 2008. Both of these mock tests were available on the website of the Educational Zone as a resource for grade 12 students. I could not find a mock test for 2006 prepared by the NAPO. The only test that I found for 2006 was prepared by Sharjah Education Office, not by the NAPO. This Sharjah Education Office version was not analyzed in this research because it is unknown if it was written based on the same test specifications that were followed by the NAPO in developing the official CEPA and the Mock CEPA. Osterfind (1997) explains that a

test specification is a "preliminary organization [which] precedes the work of actually writing test items" (p. 89). He adds that "[the] information [in a test specifications is used] to carry out the intentions of the test developer" (p. 89). In other words, a test specification "...document[s] the characteristics of the test for the purposes of guiding test construction" (Davidson & Lynch, 2002, p. 19). Thus Research Question 1 was modified to be "Is the content of the Mock CEPA English Tests from 2007 and 2008 directly related to the grade 12 syllabi taught in those years?"

The original plan of my research included one more question which was about analysis of the content of some grade 12 teachers' lesson planning notebooks and whether they reflected an effect of the CEPA English Test. Doing this analysis would have helped me triangulate my findings, but unfortunately I was not able to get more than one complete lesson planning notebook and a half of another one, although I tried my best to get a larger number of them. In my attempt to get the grade 12 teachers' lesson planning notebooks, I called the nine girls secondary schools in the educational zone under study and talked to the English coordinator in each of these schools to ask for the lesson planning notebooks. I called the girls' schools only because, as a female teacher, it would be very difficult for me to get into direct contact with male teachers. I was surprised to be informed that almost all the teachers that I called stated that they threw away their lesson planning notebooks at the beginning of the school year – even ones who had earlier agreed to give me their lesson planning notebooks. They all explained that they threw away their lesson planning notebooks because grade 12 students have a new textbook and consequently a new curriculum this year. Having a textbook that is completely different than the previous one made the grade 12 teachers feel that they would not need their lesson planning notebooks of the previous years. Also, the CEPA English Test was no longer being used as an achievement test for grade 12 students, which would have drastically changed their lesson plans for 2009-2010 school year. The fact of not being able to find enough data to answer this question made me change my plan and decide to exclude this research question from the study.

Research Questions

Therefore, I sought to answer the following research questions:

1. Is the content of the Mock CEPA English Tests from 2007, and 2008 directly related to the grade 12 syllabi for those years?

2. As reported by the participating teachers, does the CEPA English Test have positive or negative washback or elements of both according to Wall and Alderson's characteristics of positive and negative washback?
 - Wall and Alderson's Characteristics of Positive Washback:
 - Teachers' attempt to cover all the content of their students' textbooks.
 - Teachers' focus on all the language skills, not the tested ones only.
 - Using item types which have appeared in previous exam if these items were mentioned in the students' book.
 - Wall and Alderson's Characteristics of Negative Washback:
 - Teachers' focus on the tested skills more than the other skills.
 - Using item types which have appeared in previous exam if these items were not mentioned in the students' book or when they are overused.
 - Copying passages and questions straight from past papers.
3. What changes (if any) in content, methods of teaching and methods of assessment have been made by the participating teachers since the implementation of the CEPA English Test?

In order to be able to answer these research questions, I used a variety of methods of data collection. These methods included a questionnaire for teachers in the educational zone, analysis of the Mock CEPA English Tests from the years 2007 and 2008, and interviews with two of the teachers who responded to the questionnaire. Using these methods of data collection helped search for answers from different angles. Hopkins (2002) states that "[questionnaires] are a quick and simple way of obtaining broad and rich information" (p. 117). The Mock CEPA English Tests and the grade 12 textbooks scope and sequence, are considered documentary evidence. Using such evidence can "illuminate rationale and purpose in interesting ways" (Hopkins, 2002, p. 122). These materials, as Hopkins (2002) states, can "provide

background information and understanding of issues that would not otherwise be available" (p. 122).

The Participants

All the participants in this study were English teachers from one educational zone in the UAE. These 12 participating teachers (12 out of a total of 41 English teachers in the zone, 11 female and 1 male) all have at least one year of experience in teaching grade 12 students. Since the questionnaires were anonymous, the nationality of the participating teachers is unknown, but all of them were native speakers of Arabic because all teachers in this educational zone are native speakers of Arabic except the ones in Madaras Al Ghad (MAG) schools. The questionnaires were not sent to MAG schools, which indicates that all the participants were native speakers of Arabic. The participants answered the questionnaire about the CEPA English Test. Table 1 provides background information about the teachers who participated in the questionnaire, including years of teaching experience, teaching experience of grade 12, and how many extra classes per week they taught.

Table 1 Background Information about the Participants in the Questionnaire

<i>Teacher</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Years of Teaching Experience</i>	<i>Years of Teaching Experience of Grade 12</i>	<i>Number of Extra Periods Per Week for Grade 12</i>
T1	Female	>12 years	1-3 years	1
T2	Female	>12 years	>12 years	2-3
T3	Female	>12 years	1-3 years	1
T4	Female	>12 years	>12 years	2-3
T5	Female	>12 years	>12 years	2-3
T6	Female	>12 years	>12 years	1
T7	Male	>12 years	8-12 years	None
T8	Female	8-12 years	4-7 years	None
T9	Female	8-12 years	4-7 years	None
T10	Female	8-12 years	4-7 years	1
T11	Female	>12 years	8-12 years	1
T12	Female	8- 12 years	1-3 years	2-3

Two of the 12 participating teachers were interviewed to obtain more data about the washback effect of the CEPA English Test. Both of the interviewed teachers

have more than 12 years of experience in teaching, but they teach in two different schools in the same educational zone.

Data Collection Instruments

The data in this study were collected using a questionnaire (see Appendix E), interviews (see Appendix F), and analysis of the grade 12 textbook's scope and sequence of 2007 and 2008 and Mock CEPA English Tests for those years. These data were collected throughout the academic year of 2009-2010, although the focus was on the Mock CEPA English Tests of 2007 and 2008.

The Scope and Sequence

Research Question 1 is about the relationship between the content of the CEPA English Test and the content of the grade 12 syllabus. The scope and sequence charts of grade 12 in the years 2007 and 2008 were used in order to be able to examine the relationship between their content and the content of the CEPA English Test. These scope and sequence charts were taken from the teacher's book of each of the years and give an overview of the grammar, vocabulary, reading and writing themes in the textbooks. In 2007, grade 12 students studied a textbook called *English for the Emirates* (Smith, McDermott, Hubley, Baird, Badran, Hashim, & Al Najar, 2007) which was first published in 2003. Changes were made in the textbook in 2008 and it was presented under the title of *New English for the Emirates* (Smith, McDermott, Hubley, Baird, Badran, Hashim, & Al Najar, 2008) in 2008. Scope and sequence charts of both 2007 and 2008 were used in this study as a result of the change in the textbooks in order to be able to compare the content of each of the analyzed mock tests to the textbook which grade 12 students studied in the same year of the test. The content of the Mock CEPA English Test of 2007 was compared to the scope and sequence of the same year. In addition, the content of the Mock CEPA English Test of 2008 was compared to the scope and sequence of that year.

The Mock CEPA English Tests

In order to be able to analyze the content of the Mock CEPA English Tests from the years 2007 and 2008 and compare that content to the content of grade 12 textbook, I used specific forms that I developed for this analysis. I developed a separate form to analyze the content of each of the sections of grammar (see

Appendix A), vocabulary (see Appendix B), reading (see Appendix C) and writing (see Appendix D). These forms which I developed helped me identify the content of each of the test questions and see to what extent it was related to any of the grade 12 lessons. Thus, it was readily apparent whether the analyzed Mock CEPA English Tests were related to the content of the grade 12 textbooks or not.

The Teacher Questionnaire

Addressing Research Questions 2 and 3 about the teachers' view of washback of the CEPA English Test and Research Question 4 about changes in content, teaching and assessment methods, in October, 2009, the teacher questionnaire (see Appendix E) was sent through the electronic mail of the educational zone to all the schools of the zone. It was sent three times with a period of one month between each sending. The first time the questionnaire was released was in October, 2009. The two other times were in the two following months (November and December, 2009). Only nine questionnaires came back the first time and three in the second one. No questionnaire came back in the third time. I received 12 questionnaires back out of a total of 41 grade 12 teachers in the educational zone under study.

The Interviews

Addressing Research Questions 2 and 3 about the washback effect of the CEPA English Test, the interviews involved two teachers who volunteered to be interviewed from those who responded to the questionnaire. One of these teachers was from my recent school, and the other one was from another school in the same educational zone. Both of the teachers were interviewed in January, 2010, and each of them was interviewed in her own school. The interviews were done in English, and the two teachers were asked the same set of questions (see Appendix F). Each of the interviews was about 15 minutes long, and they were both recorded and transcribed to facilitate analysis.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS OF ANALYSIS

This study sought to answer three research questions. The first question (modified) addressed whether the content of the Mock CEPA English Tests from 2007 and 2008 is directly related to the grade 12 syllabi for those years. The second question explored the washback effect of the CEPA English Test to see whether it was positive or negative washback or it had elements of both, according to Wall and Alderson's characteristics of positive and negative washback. The third question addressed the changes (if any) in content, methods of teaching, and methods of assessment made by the participating teachers since the implementation of the CEPA English Test.

This chapter reports the results of analysis of the Mock CEPA English Tests, scope and sequence for the grade 12 curriculum for 2007 and 2008, as well as teachers' questionnaire. In discussion of Question 1, I present my major findings based on analysis of the Mock CEPA English Tests from 2007 and 2008 and comparison of their content to the content of grade 12 textbooks scope and sequence in these years. In discussion of Question 2, I outline the main positive and negative effects of the CEPA English Test as reported by the participating teachers. In discussion of Question 3, I present the changes made in the content taught to grade 12 students, the methods of teaching, and the methods of assessment, according to the answers provided by the participating teachers.

Research Question 1

In order to answer research question 1, which is about the relationship between the content of the Mock CEPA English Tests in the years of 2007 and 2008 and the grade 12 syllabi for those years, I analyzed the content of each of the Mock CEPA English Tests and compared it to the scope and sequence of the grade 12 textbook of the same years. In 2007, grade 12 students studied a book called *English for the Emirates* (Smith, et al., 2007) and in 2008, some modifications were made to the text book, and it was presented as *New English for the Emirates* (Smith, et al., 2008). According to the scope and sequence of *English for the Emirates* (Smith, et al., 2007), grade 12 students study six units throughout their school year. They study

three units in each semester. Each unit talks about a specific general theme and includes 15 lessons related to that theme. In each unit, grade 12 students are exposed to new vocabulary items related to the theme of the unit. In addition, some of the lesson focuses on a specific grammatical point, as indicated in the scope and sequence.

Analyzing the Mock CEPA English Test of 2007

The content of the CEPA Mock English Test of 2007 was analyzed using forms that I developed myself. The same forms were used to analyze the Mock CEPA English Tests of 2008 (see Appendices A, B, C, G, and H.) The analysis focused on all the sections included in the analyzed Mock CEPA English Tests. The forms were designed in a way that would make it easier to track the similarities and differences between the content of the analyzed mock tests and the content of the grade 12 syllabus.

In each of the analyzed Mock CEPA English Tests, there are three parts. Part 1 is the Grammar and Vocabulary section in which there are 50 grammar questions and 40 vocabulary questions. Part 2 is the Reading Comprehension section in which students answer 40 questions related to 4 reading texts. Part 3 is the Writing section in which students are required to present points of view and reasons in written responses.

When comparing *English for the Emirates* and *New English for the Emirates*, I found that the second textbook was modified to be shorter. In general, all the lessons in the second book were the same as lessons from the first one. As in *English for the Emirates*, *New English for the Emirates* consists of 6 units, but each of these units consists of 10 lessons instead of 15. Each of the 10 lessons of each unit in *New English for the Emirates* (Smith, et al., 2008) were chosen from the 15 lessons which were in the *English for the Emirates* (Smith, et al., 2007). In addition, the order of the units was a little bit different in the two textbooks. Table 2 (see next page) shows the order of units in both of the textbooks of 2007 and 2008.

Comparison between the content of the two analyzed Mock CEPA English Test and the grade 12 textbook was done based on the scope and the sequence of these two books. The scope and sequence of *New English for the Emirates* is more detailed in terms of grammar. For each of the lessons in the scope and sequence of the 2007 textbook, there is a grammatical point mentioned to be the focus of the lesson, while in the scope and sequence of *English for the Emirates*, the textbook for

2008, grammatical points are mentioned regarding some of the lessons, but not all of them.

Table 2: The Order of the Units in the Textbooks of 2007 and 2008

<i>Unit</i>	<i>English for the Emirates</i>	<i>New English for the Emirates</i>
<i>One</i>	Deserts	Study Skills
<i>Two</i>	Consumers	Consumers
<i>Three</i>	Healthy Lifestyles	Healthy Lifestyles
<i>Four</i>	Study Skills	Deserts
<i>Five</i>	Changing Ways	Changing Ways
<i>Six</i>	Your Future	Your Future

Analysis revealed that the 2007 mock test's relationship to the grade 12 students' textbook of that year differed from one section to another. After analyzing the content of this test, it appeared that the topics of the reading and the writing sections (Parts 2 and 3) of the 2007 Mock CEPA English Test were thematically related to the content of the students' English textbook, whereas the grammar and the vocabulary section (Part 1) had a weak relationship to the textbook.

There were four texts in the reading section of the test. Of the four texts, one was about nutrition, one was about a board game, one was about Eskimos, and one was about CPR. The themes of three of these texts were related to what students studied in grade 12 in the year of the test. The themes of these texts were studied by students in more than one lesson. In the mock test of 2007, only one reading text, (which was about the board game Backgammon) out of four texts on the test was not thematically related to the content which grade 12 students studied throughout the year. Table 3 shows the relationship between the content of the reading comprehension section and the content of grade 12 textbook, indicating the topic of each reading text and the units and lessons that the same topic is covered in.

Table 3: Analysis of the Reading Comprehension Section/Mock CEPA English Test 2007

<i>Text</i>	<i>Topic of the Reading Passage</i>	<i>Relationship to Grade 12 English Textbook</i>	<i>Details</i>	
			<i>Unit</i>	<i>Lesson(s)</i>
1	Supporting Nutrition for Everyone	√	3/Healthy Lifestyles	L1 L3 L4 L5 L6
2	Backgammon Board Game	×		
3	Eskimos	√	1/Deserts	L3 L4
4	CPR	√	3/Healthy Lifestyles	L12

In the writing section of the mock test of 2007 (Part 3), students were required to describe the reasons which make people drop out of high school and to give their opinion about them. As indicated in the scope and sequence of the grade 12 syllabus for 2007, students encountered the topic of education in three units of their textbook, which were Units 4, 5, and 6. That fact indicates that the tested topic of school drop outs on the test was related to the grade 12 syllabus. Table 4 shows the writing topics of the Mock CEPA English Test of 2007 and its relationship with the grade 12 syllabus.

Table 4: Analysis of the Writing Section / Mock CEPA English Test 2007

<i>The Writing Question Prompt</i>	<i>Relationship to Grade 12 English Textbook</i>	<i>Details</i>	
		<i>Unit(s)</i>	<i>Lesson(s)</i>
People drop out of high school for many different reasons. Describe some of them and give your opinion on them. For each one you should -Describe the reason -Say whether it is a good reason to drop out of school -Say why you think this.	√	4/Study Skills 5/Changing Ways 6/Your Future	L5 L8 L9 L10 L5 L1

There were 50 items in the grammar section of the 2007 mock test (Part 1), and 40 of these items measured students' mastery of common grammatical patterns in English while 10 of them were about parts of speech. Among the 40 first items which tested students' recognition of the common grammatical patterns, 16 items tested the students' understanding of grammatical patterns mentioned in their grade 12 English textbook, based on the scope and sequence of their textbook. These grammatical patterns that were related to the grade 12 textbook included conditional tenses, linking words, past tense, sequence words, comparatives, superlatives, past tense, future tense, WH questions, and pronouns. On the other hand, the content of 24 test items was not covered in the grammatical patterns focused in the grade 12 textbook (see Appendix G). This means that 24 out of 50 of the grammar items on the test were not related to the grammatical patterns which the students studied throughout their school year. The grammatical patterns which were in the mock test of 2007 and were not related to the grade 12 textbook included quantifiers, gerunds, infinitives, prepositions, reflexive pronouns, adjectives ending with "ed," demonstrative pronouns, phrasal verbs, yes/no questions, present perfect continuous, and modals. In addition, based on the scope and sequence of the grade 12 textbook, grade 12 students were not taught the use of "as soon as," "both," "during," or "have to/has to," which all were the focus of test items in the grammar section of the mock test for 2007.

10 of the items in the first section (grammar) of the mock test for 2007 were related to parts of speech. According to the scope and sequence of the grade 12 English textbook in 2007, none of the lessons focused on parts of speech. That difference means that parts of speech were not mentioned in the grade 12 students' lessons, which were 90 lessons in total, based on the scope and sequence of their textbook, whereas 10 out of the 50 grammar items on the test (20%) were about parts of speech. Appendix G shows the focused grammatical rules in each of grade 12 English lessons and the mock test questions that tested the students in the same grammatical point.

Analysis of the vocabulary section revealed a large discrepancy between the vocabulary items taught to grade 12 students and the tested vocabulary items in the analyzed Mock CEPA English Test of 2007. There were 40 vocabulary items in the vocabulary section of the 2007 mock test. Analysis of the vocabulary section indicated that it was not related to the vocabulary items which grade 12 students

studied throughout the year. 39 of the tested vocabulary items in the 2007 Mock CEPA English Test were not included in the new words presented in the grade 12 textbook. Only one word, "drying," in the whole vocabulary section of the test was mentioned in the students' textbook as a new vocabulary item. Even though some of the tested words were basic English words which grade 12 students are expected to be aware of, still, these words were not included in the syllabus which the students studied, which would be expected to be the basis for the summative achievement test for 2007. Thus, 39 out of 40 (97.5%) of the vocabulary items on the analyzed mock test were not related to the new vocabulary presented in the grade 12 syllabus (see Appendix H).

Analyzing the Mock CEPA English Test of 2008

Analysis of the Mock CEPA English Test from 2008 showed that it was less related to the syllabus of grade 12 for 2008 than the mock test from 2007 was to the 2007 syllabus. The analysis of the reading section (in Part 2) of the 2008 mock test showed that not one of the reading comprehension texts was related to the themes of the units studied by grade 12 students. Table 5 shows the topics of the reading text of the Mock CEPA English Test of 2008 and the lack of relationship between them and the content of grade 12 textbook.

Table 5: Analysis of the Reading Comprehension Section/Mock CEPA English Test 2008.

<i>No.</i>	<i>Topic of the Reading Passage</i>	<i>Relationship to Grade 12 English Text</i>	<i>Details</i>	
			<i>Unit</i>	<i>Lesson(s)</i>
Text 1	Advertisement on sports shoes	None	None	None
Text 2	Narrative about a triplet	None	None	None
Text 3	History of the terracotta army	None	None	None
Text 4	Bermuda Triangle	None	None	None

On the other hand, the writing section (Part 3) of the mock test was related to the content which grade 12 students studied, based on their 2008 textbook scope and sequence. In that section, students were required to express their point of view about the banning of smoking in public places and express their reasons for their position. The topic of health and healthy lifestyles was focused on in two of the units which the students studied in the year of the analyzed test (2008), based on the scope and

sequence of their textbook. Table 6 shows the writing topic and the units and lessons it was related to.

Table 6: Analysis of the Writing Section / Mock CEPA English Test 2008.

<i>The Writing Question Prompt</i>	<i>Relationship to Grade 12 English Text</i>	<i>Details</i>	
		<i>Unit(s)</i>	<i>Lesson(s)</i>
Many countries are now stopping people from smoking in public places such as shopping malls. Do you agree or disagree with this? Explain why. You can support your opinion by writing about: Freedom, health, economy, environment	√	3/Healthy Lifestyles	L8
		6/To Your Future	L10

As in the 2007 mock test, there were 50 grammatical items in the Mock CEPA English Test of 2008, in which 40 tested common grammatical patterns, and 10 were about parts of speech. Analysis of the mock test of 2008 showed that 19 of the items testing the students' mastery of common grammatical patterns did not address grammatical patterns that were taught to grade 12 students in that year. Thus, 38% of the grammar items in the test were not related to the grade 12 scope and sequence. As with the mock test of 2007, 10 of the items in the first section (grammar) of the 2008 test were related to parts of speech. According to the scope and sequence of the grade 12 English textbook of 2008, only three lessons mentioned parts of speech as the focus of the grammar section. This difference means that parts of speech were mentioned in only 5% of the lessons of grade 12 in 2008 (which are 60 lessons in total), whereas 10 out of the 50 grammar items (20%) on the test were about parts of speech. This finding indicates a mismatch in emphasis between the content taught to grade 12 students in 2008 and the content about which they were tested. Appendix I shows each rule and the test items that were written to test grade 12 students' understanding of it (see Appendix I).

Similar to analysis of the mock test from 2007, analysis of the vocabulary items in the 2008 mock test revealed that not one of them was included in the list of the new vocabulary items of the grade 12 English textbook. Thus, 0% of the vocabulary from the analyzed mock test of 2008 was related to the new vocabulary introduced to grade 12 in the same year, which means that the content of that section

(Part 1) did not cover the content of grade 12 curriculum, as would be expected in a summative achievement test (see Appendix J).

In answering Research Question 1, analysis of both of the Mock CEPA English Tests of 2007 and 2008 showed that their content was not completely related to the content of the grade 12 students in these years. Tables 7 and 8 summarize the content of the 2007 and 2008 mock tests and their relationship to the grade 12 students' textbook of the same years.

Table 7: Summary of the Content of the 2007 Mock Test and its Relation to the Grade 12 Textbook of the Same Year.

<i>Part</i>	<i>Relationship to the Grade 12 Textbook</i>
1: Grammar and Vocabulary	In the grammar section, 24 items were not related to the content of grade 12 textbook. In the vocabulary section, only one word was from the students' textbook.
2: Reading	Three of the four reading texts in the 2007 test were thematically related to the content which grade 12 students studied.
3: Writing	The writing section was related to six lessons from the students' textbook.

Table 8: Summary of the Content of the 2008 Mock Test and its Relation to the Grade 12 Textbook of the Same Year.

<i>Part</i>	<i>Relationship to the Grade 12 Textbook</i>
1: Grammar and Vocabulary	19 of the 40 items testing general grammatical rules were not related to the grade 12 textbook. None of the tested vocabulary items was from the students' textbook.
2: Reading	None of the reading comprehension texts was thematically related to the content of the students' textbook.
3: Writing	The writing section was related to two lessons from the students' textbook.

Research Question 2

The second research question aimed to find out whether the CEPA English Test has had positive or negative washback (or elements of both), in the views of the participating teachers. The data for this question were collected through the teacher questionnaire (see Appendix E), in addition to interviews with two teachers. The responses of the participating teachers indicated the presence of elements of both positive and negative washback as a result of the introduction of the CEPA English Test: Positive in that it encourage positive teaching practices, and negative in that it included extensive content unrelated to students' textbooks. Wall and Alderson (1996) mention teachers' attempt to cover all the content of their students' textbooks and their focus on all the language skills, not only the ones tested, as evidence of positive washback in term of content. On the other hand, they mention teachers' focus on the tested skills more than the other skills as being negative washback. In terms of teachers' way of assessing their students, Wall and Alderson (1996) identify using item types which have appeared in previous exams as being positive washback if these items were mentioned in the students' book but negative when they do not or when they are overused. Moreover, Wall and Alderson identify copying passages and questions straight from past papers as being negative washback.

As mentioned before in this study, the washback effect of a test is its effect on teaching and learning. Not having a direct relationship between the content of grade 12 students' syllabus and the content of their summative end-of-year test (CEPA English Test) raises the possibility of having negative washback effects on the teaching process. Because the CEPA English Test is a high-stakes test, it could be anticipated that the grade 12 teachers in these schools would ignore or superficially teach the content of their students' original syllabus and teach to the test instead. These teachers' intentions to have their students pass their CEPA English Test could have made them focus on teaching the skills that were tested in the CEPA English more than the other skills which the CEPA English Test does not test. It was interesting to discover that the grade 12 teachers who responded to the questionnaire in this research gave a point of view that contradicted such expectation.

In order to investigate possible washback of the CEPA English Test, a questionnaire was used to investigate the teachers' point of view about that issue. The first five questions in Part One of this questionnaire (see Appendix E) aimed at answering the second research question of this study through exploring the aspects of

washback effect and whether it was positive or negative or had elements of both. In general, the responses of the 12 participating teachers indicated that the introduction of the CEPA English Test had elements of both positive and negative washback effect on the teaching process on the educational zone under study. It seemed that one point which all the respondents agreed on was the importance of teaching all four language skills to their students. All the participating teachers stated that they teach all the content of their grade 12 students textbook although they do so in different amounts. 3 of the 12 participants said that they taught all the content of their students' textbook in every lesson, and six of them stated that they did so in most of their lessons, while three of the participants stated that they taught the content of their students' textbook in only some of their lessons. From these results it was clear that there were differences among the participating teachers in their insistence on teaching all the content of their students' textbook. Figure 1 shows the responses of the participants to the first statement in the questionnaire which aims to know to what extent they teach the content of their students' textbook.

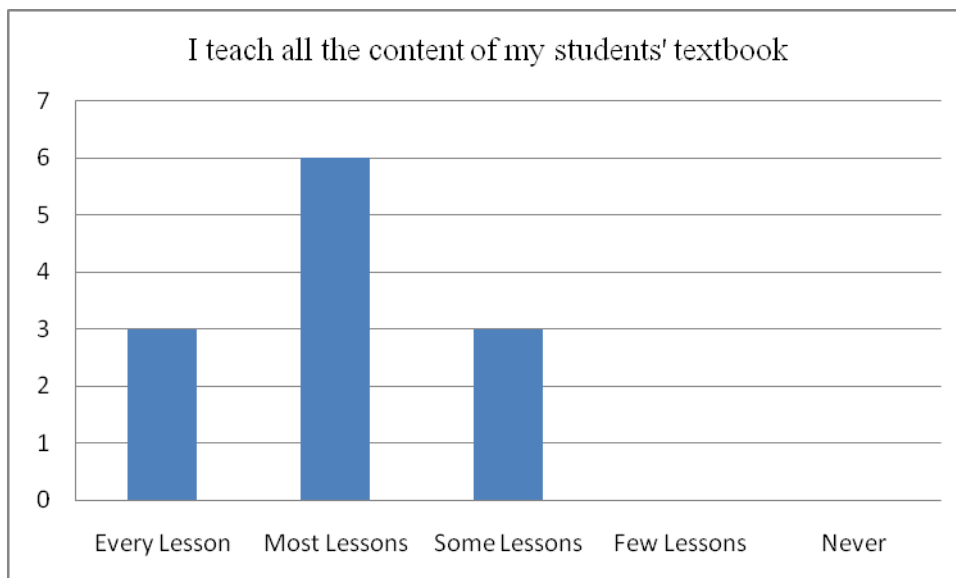


Figure 1 Teachers' Responses to Statement 1 (total=12)

This finding highlights a very important point because, based on Wall and Alderson's (1996) characteristics of negative washback, teachers tend to neglect the areas that their students are not going to be tested on. Applying this principle to the CEPA English Test, the fact that it does not include a listening or a speaking part

raises the possibility that grade 12 teachers might neglect teaching these two skills. However, these 12 participating teachers' insistence on teaching listening and speaking might have a relationship with the grade 12 assessment framework that was used in 2007 and 2008. In that framework, grade 12 students were required to take listening and speaking quizzes as part of their monthly assessments and mid-year exam as well.

The participants' responses to the second statement showed that they all teach all the language skills, whether they do so in all their lessons or in most of them.

Figure 2 shows the participants' responses.



Figure 2 Teachers' Responses to Statement 2 (total=12)

The majority of the participating teachers said that when they are teaching from the textbook, they skip the parts that are not included in the CEPA English Test. The participants' responses to this statement contradict their responses to the first statement in which they stated that they teach all the content of their students' textbook. Based on the participants' responses to the third statement, it seemed that the frequency with which they tend to skip some of the textbook sections differs from one teacher's lesson to another's. 1 of the 12 participants indicated that she/he never skips any part of her/his students' textbook, and six of them said that they do so in few lessons only. On the other hand, three of the participants stated that they do skip parts from their students' textbook in some of their lesson while two of the participants do so in most of their lessons. Skipping the parts that are not included in

the CEPA English Test points to the participating teachers' tendency to teach to the test, thus not covering the full curriculum, which is one of the aspects of having negative washback. Figure 3 shows the differences among the participants' responses.

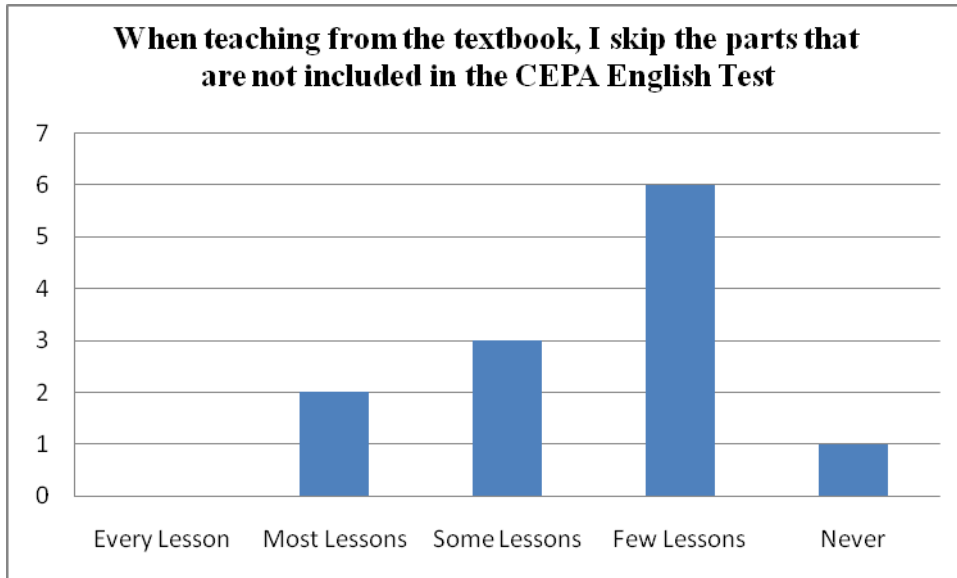


Figure 3 Teachers' Responses to Statement 3 (total=12)

The respondents' answers differ regarding the fourth question in the questionnaire, which is related to whether or not they find time to finish their syllabus and prepare their students for the CEPA English Test. Only 1 teacher out of the 12 said that he/she never finds time to finish the curriculum and prepare his/her students for the CEPA Test. Six of the participating teachers stated that they find enough time to finish their curriculum and prepare their students for the CEPA Test in most of their lessons while three of the teachers said that they only find enough time in some of their lessons. Two participants said that they find enough time to finish their curriculum and prepare their students for the CEPA English Test in few lessons. Figure 4 shows the varied responses to statement 4.

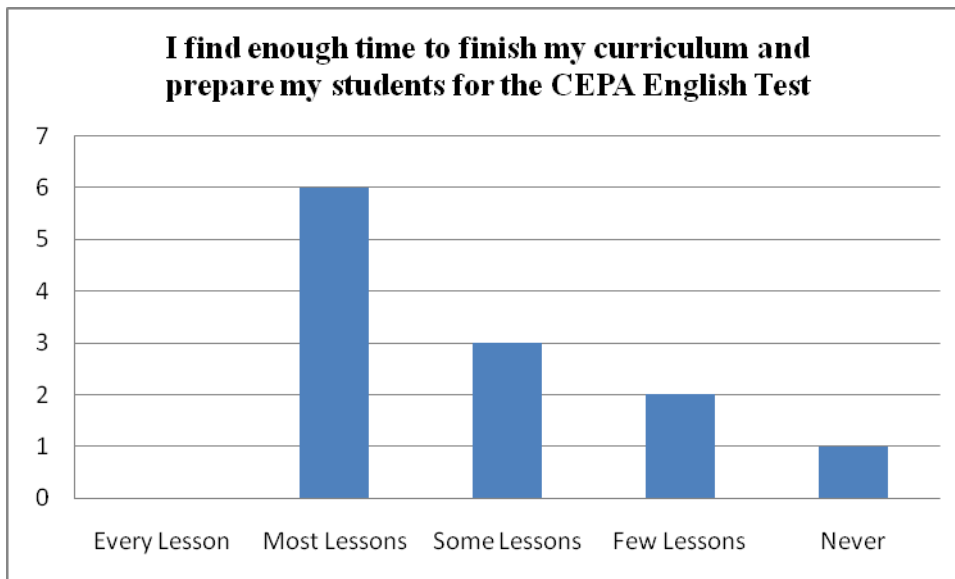


Figure 4 Teachers' Responses to Statement 4 (total=12)

The participants' responses in this question were supported by their responses in question 5 (“I have had less time to teach the grade 12 curriculum since the introduction of the CEPA English Test,”) in the questionnaire. Six of the participants thought that they had had less time to teach the grade 12 curriculum since the introduction of the CEPA English Test, whether this happened in most of their lessons or in only some of them. However, four of the participants indicated that they faced a problem with time in only a few of their lessons. On the other hand, two of the participants stated that the introduction of the CEPA English Test had no effect on the time which they use to teach their grade 12 curriculum. The time problem which some of the participating teachers suffered from might be a result of their practices during their lessons in terms of efficiency of time management. Of course, time would be a problem when they need to cover their students' curriculum and prepare these students for the CEPA English Test at the same time. Figure 5 presents the participants' responses to the fifth statement in the questionnaire.

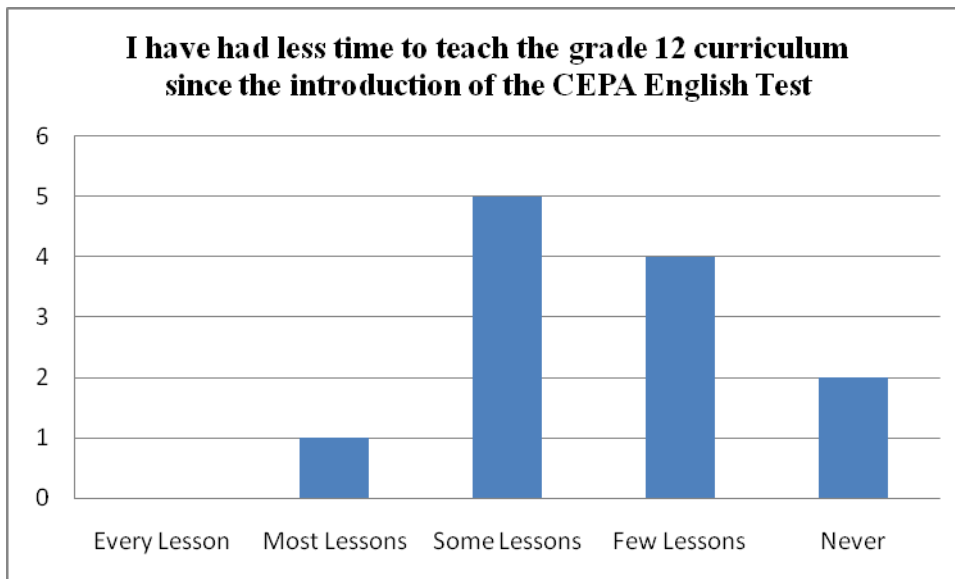


Figure 5 Teachers' Responses to Statement 5 (total=12)

The responses of the participating teachers indicated the presence of elements of both positive and negative washback as a result of the introduction of the CEPA English Test. All the participating teachers stated that they teach all the content of their grade 12 textbook and that they teach all the language skills. Covering all the content of the students' textbook and focusing on all the language skills are considered elements of positive washback according to Wall and Alderson, but it might be positive washback from the grade 12 quizzes and midterm exams. On the other hand, the participating teachers seemed to be contradicting themselves by saying that when they are teaching from the textbook, they skip the parts that are not included in the CEPA English Test. Skipping parts of the students' textbook is considered negative washback according to Wall and Alderson. In addition, 10 of the participants thought that they had had less time to teach the grade 12 curriculum since the introduction of the CEPA English Test, which is considered negative washback according to Wall and Alderson.

Two teachers of those who responded to the questionnaire were interviewed to obtain more information about the washback effect of the CEPA English Test on their teaching (see Appendix K). The first interviewed teacher has 20 years of teaching experience in teaching English in general and 13 years of experience in teaching grade 12 English in particular, while the second teacher who has 26 years of experience in teaching in which she has taught grade 12 English for 18 years.

Both of these teachers expressed their belief in the importance of providing their students with CEPA supplementary materials. They indicated the reasons behind believing in the importance of providing their students with supplementary materials. One of them said that the content of the CEPA English Test was not related to the content of the grade 12 textbook. The other teacher said, “the materials of the book were not enough at all and were not the same as the test.” Having a test that is not related to the students’ syllabus makes it the teachers’ responsibility to prepare their students to pass that test by providing them with supplementary materials related to the test.

Both teachers believed that the supplementary materials which they provided their students helped their students become familiar with the CEPA English Test questions and practice answering them so they gave them practice CEPA English Test items. In their discussion of the aspects of washback effect, Wall and Alderson (1996) mention that using item types similar to the ones that might appear in the students’ test is positive washback if these items are similar to the content of the students’ textbook. Based on the analysis of the two Mock CEPA English Tests, it was shown that the content of the analyzed tests was not directly related to the content of the grade 12 syllabi, a fact that makes the use of item types from these tests to be evidence of negative washback. In addition, the practice of drilling on test content has a negative impact on the teaching and learning process because it weakens authentic forms of teaching and learning (see Volant, 2006).

When interviewed, the first teacher said that she thinks that grade 12 students should be given CEPA English supplementary materials from the beginning of the school year. Not only that, but she said, "I advise to start training them [on CEPA materials] from grade 10." The second teacher agreed with the first one on the importance of presenting the CEPA supplementary materials early in the beginning of the school year. This early introduction of CEPA English materials reflects these teachers' belief in the importance of starting to prepare their students for the CEPA English Test early.

In addition, the interviewed teachers stated that it is important to ensure that the students are using these supplementary materials, either through checking students’ work or through general discussions. Although both of the teachers provided their students with CEPA supplementary materials, they said that they did not have any specific system that they followed in presenting these materials. In the

interview, the second teacher explained that she had no specific routine which she followed in presenting the CEPA English materials to her students. She said that while making her weekly lesson plans she tried to make sure to include all the CEPA English tested skills weekly, which means that she used to present CEPA English Test grammar, vocabulary, reading and writing materials every week to her students. During the interview with this teacher, she mentioned that "We do not have [the tested vocabulary items] at all in the student's book," and that difference might be the reason behind her focus on the vocabulary more than the other skills. Testing students in skills that are not focused on in their textbook results in negative washback in teachers' daily practices.

Both of the interviewed teachers thought that it was very helpful for their students to be given supplementary materials. They both responded positively when they were asked whether they think that these materials were helpful for their students or not. The second teacher explained that "yes, of course, they were of a great help to my students because they did not have any material for the test other than what I provided them with." This teacher wondered about the reasons behind giving the students the CEPA English Test which is not related to what they study in their daily lessons. She said, "The strangest thing about the CEPA English Test is that it is an test without a book for it, without a syllabus, so the students have to take something to train them."

The interviewed teachers' responses indicated their insistence on making sure that their students answered the supplementary materials which they provided them with. The first teacher said that she makes sure that her students answer these supplementary materials provided to them through checking them or through class general discussion. In addition, the second teacher said that she usually answers these supplementary materials with the students in the class and that "They had to do the tasks and to answer and to be involved in the tasks during the classes." Of course, it needs a long time to answer a big number of supplementary materials with the students, and this devoted time might be at the expense of the time which could have been devoted to teach the students' original curriculum. According to the Wall and Alderson (1996) criteria of washback, giving long examination preparation periods to students is considered negative washback.

To sum up answering Research Question 2, there were elements of both positive and negative washback as follows:

- Elements of Positive Washback:
 - Teaching all the language skills, even the ones not tested in the CEPA English Test.
- Elements of Negative Washback:
 - Skipping the parts not included in the CEPA English Test.
 - Having less time to teach the grade 12 curriculum since the introduction of the CEPA English Test.
 - Providing the grade 12 students with test items from the CEPA English Test, which was not directly related to the content of their textbook based on the analysis.
 - Giving long examination preparation periods to students.

Research Question 3

The third research question sought to find out the kind of changes (if any) in content, methods of teaching, and assessment that have been made by the participating teachers since the implementation of the CEPA English Test. This question was answered through the teacher questionnaire and the interviews with the two teachers. In the teacher questionnaire, statements 6-13 were written to track the changes (if any) in the content taught to grade 12 students, the methods of teaching, and assessment (see Appendix E).

Changes in Content

The teachers seemed to have different points of view regarding their attempts to give the listening and speaking skills the same importance they give to reading and writing. Five of the participants indicated that they do so in most of their lessons. A lesser number of teachers (three teachers) indicated that they only do so in a few lessons. Only one teacher said that she/he never gives the same importance to all skills. Figure 6 presents the participants' different responses concerning this aspect of teaching content.



Figure 6 Teachers' Responses to Statement 6 (total=12)

The washback effect of the CEPA English Test seemed to be most apparent in the content which the grade 12 teachers present to their students. In their responses to the questionnaire questions, all the participating teachers stated that they provided their students with lists of words that might be included in the CEPA English Test. The difference among these teachers was in the frequency in which they presented these lists to their students. 10 of the 12 participating teachers stated that they provide their students with lists of words that might be included in the CEPA English Test in all their lessons. The rest of the participants said that they provide these lists in most of the lessons or in some of them. Focusing on content other than that emphasized by the students' syllabus is considered to be evidence of negative washback according to Wall and Alderson (1996). Figure 7 indicates the respondents' answers regarding providing their students with CEPA vocabulary lists.

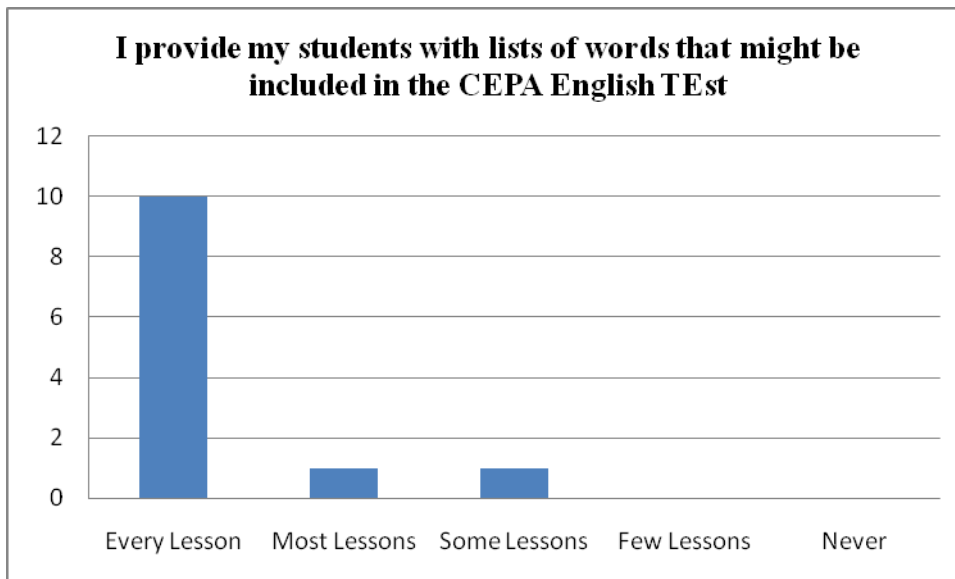


Figure 7 Teachers' Responses to Statement 7 (total=12)

To sum up the changes in content taught by the participating teachers as a result of the EPA English Test, they indicated that they introduced use of CEPA word lists with their students. Of course, these lists were extra materials added to the students' original syllabus. Presenting a content that differs than the students' textbook is considered negative washback according to Wall and Alderson.

Changes in Assessment

The effect of the CEPA English Test seems to be not limited to the content taught to grade 12 students, but it extends to cover grade 12 teachers' methods of assessing their students. In their responses to question 8 in the questionnaire, all the participating teachers stated that they not only provided their students with CEPA vocabulary lists but they also tested them in these lists. 4 of the 12 participating teachers stated that they always tested their students in these lists. In addition, six of them said that they usually did so most of the time, while two did in some of their lessons. Figure 8 shows the variation in the respondents' answers.

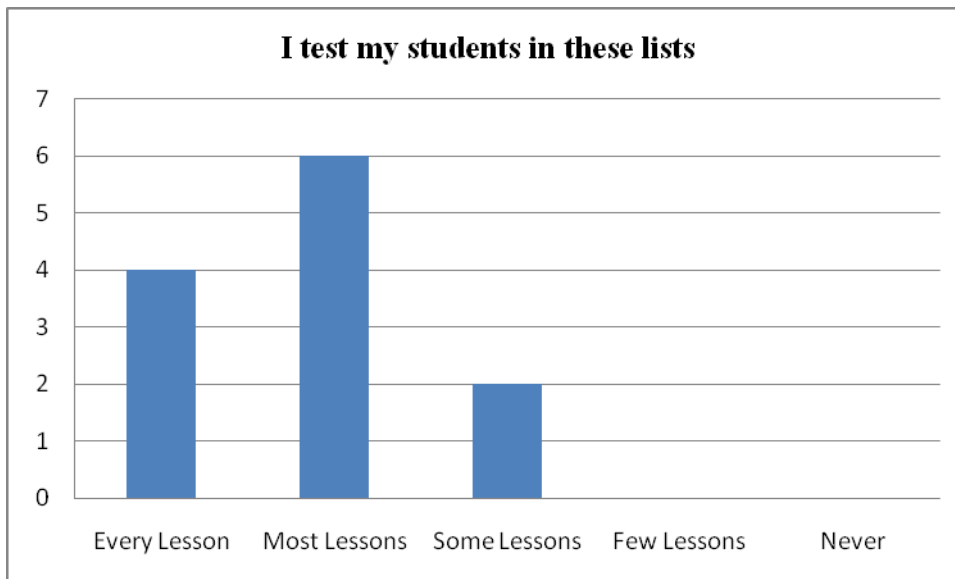


Figure 8 Teachers' Responses to Statement 8 (total=12)

The aspect that was most affected by the introduction of the CEPA English Test was assessment. Grade 12 teachers seemed to be aware of the importance of providing their students with assessment materials similar to what they would encounter in their CEPA English Test. Regarding statement 9, all the questionnaire's respondents indicated that they include some grammatical items from previous CEPA English Tests in their monthly tests. While the provided alternatives were "every lesson, most lessons, some lessons, few lessons, and never," the teachers may have interpreted them to mean the range from always to never which would have been clearer alternatives. Figure 9 (on the following page) shows the respondents' responses concerning including CEPA content in their classroom tests.

The participating teachers not only took grammatical items from previous CEPA English Tests, but they also gave their students CEPA reading comprehension passages to prepare them to deal with similar passages. Figure 10 (on the following page) shows the respondents' responses to statement 10 regarding that issue.

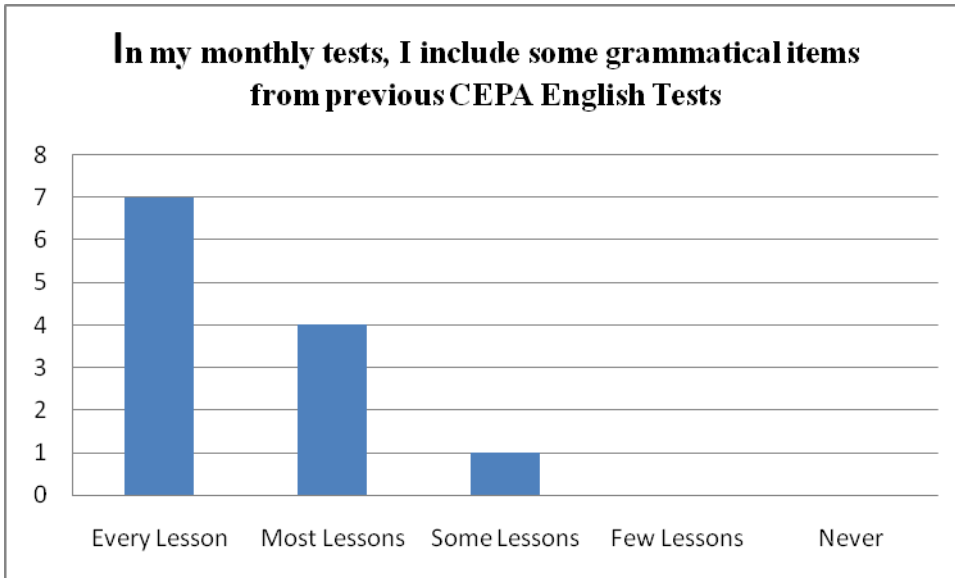


Figure 9 Teachers' Responses to Statement 9 (total=12)

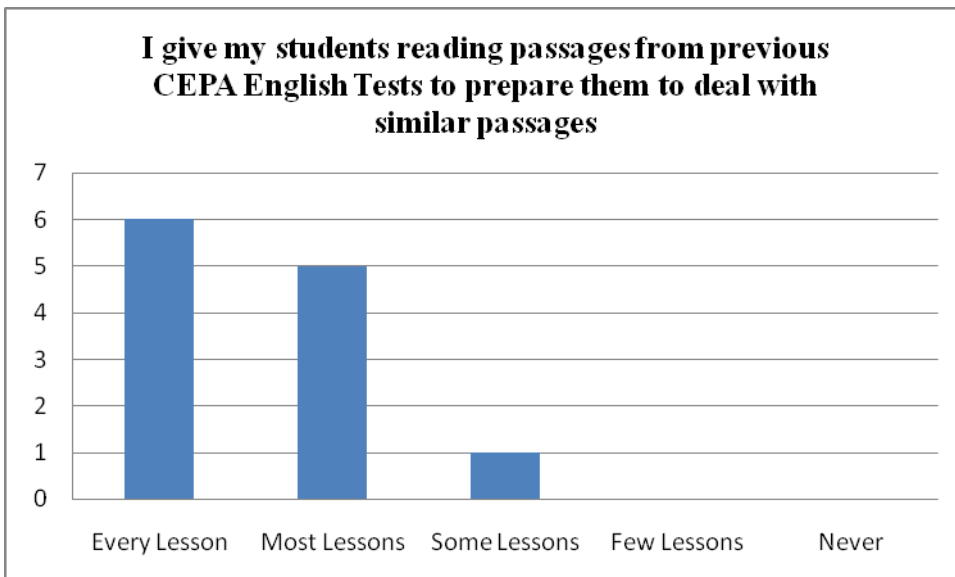


Figure 10 Teachers' Responses to Statement 10 (total=12)

Also, the participating teachers indicated that they give their students some writing topics that were included in previous CEPA English Tests. 11 of the 12 participants indicated that some of the writing topics that they provided their students with were from previous CEPA English Tests. Figure 11 shows participants' responses about providing students writing topics from previous CEPA English Tests.

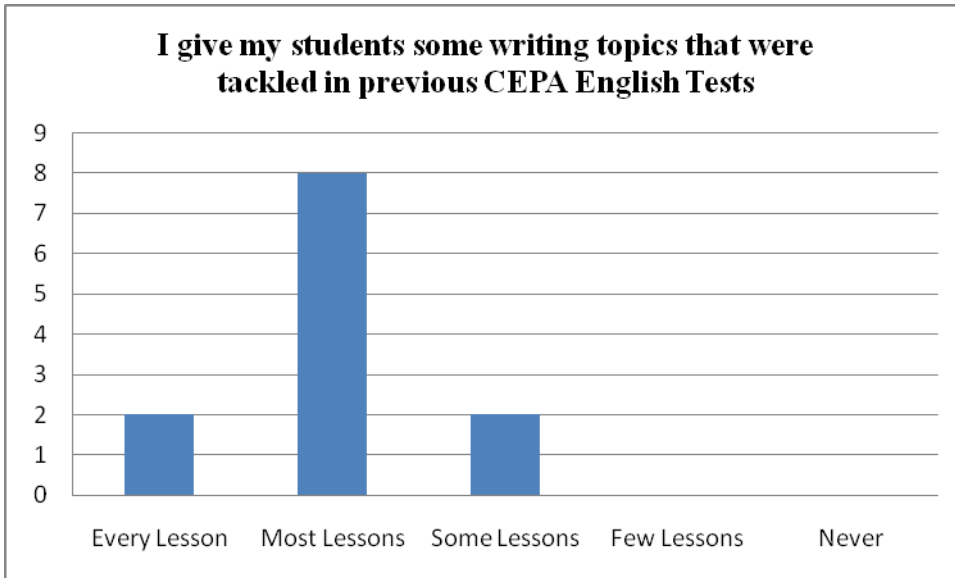


Figure 11: Teachers' Responses to Statement 11 (total=12)

The participating teachers not only provided their students with some parts of previous CEPA English Tests, but 11 of them tended to provide students with whole Mock CEPA English Tests to prepare them for that test. Figure 12 displays the participants' responses regarding using Mock CEPA English Tests.

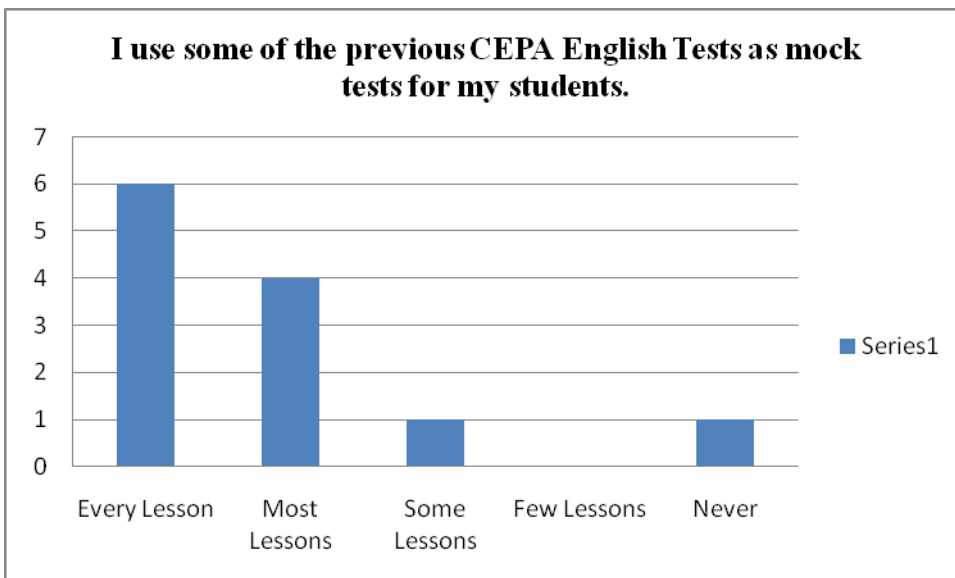


Figure 12 Teachers' Responses to Statement 12 (total=12)

When talking about assessment, the only aspect that was not affected by the introduction of the CEPA English Test was the skills which grade 12 English teachers tested their students in. All the participating teachers indicated that they tested their

students in listening and speaking, the two skills which are not tested by the CEPA English Test. On the other hand, there were differences among the participating teachers in the frequency in which they tested their students in listening and speaking. 5 of the 12 participating teachers in the questionnaire indicated that they always tested their students in these two skills, and four of them said that they did so most of the time. Two of the participating teachers said that they only tested speaking and listening in some of their lessons. Only 1 of the participating teachers indicated that she/he rarely tests these skills. Figure 13 shows the participants' responses to the statement, "I test my students in listening and speaking." This practice of testing listening and speaking can be related to the grading criteria used by the Ministry of Education which states that grade 12 students should be tested in listening and speaking in their monthly assessments.

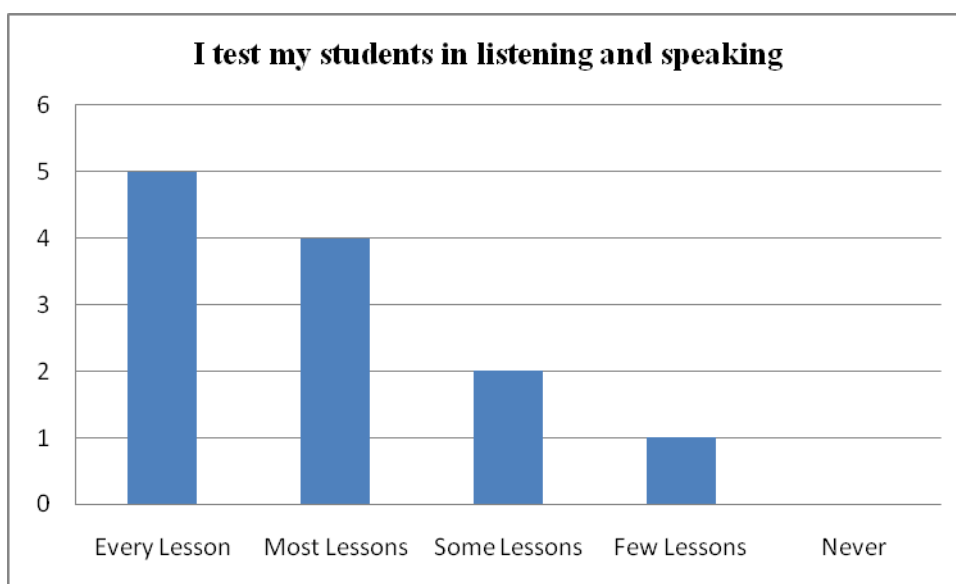


Figure 13 Teachers' Responses to Statement 13 (total=12)

The responses of the participating teachers indicated the existence of some changes in their way of assessing their students. One of the changes was that the participating teachers tended to test their students in the extra CEPA vocabulary word lists which they provided them with. Also, they tended to use some items from previous CEPA English Tests to test their students in grammar, reading and writing. In addition, the participating teachers indicated their use of previous CEPA English Tests as practice tests for their students.

Changes in Teaching Methods

There were two open-ended questions in Part Three of the teacher questionnaire about the washback of the CEPA English Test in terms of its effect on methods of teaching. Almost all of the participating teachers stated that they had changed their methods of teaching as a result of the introduction of the CEPA English Test. Only one of the participants responded no to the question about whether or not she/he had made major changes in her/his teaching methods as a result of the introduction of the CEPA English Test. The remaining participating teachers mentioned a variety of changes in methods of teaching that they had made as a result of the introduction of the CEPA English Test (see Appendix L).

One of the participating teachers explained that "all the changes made are related to what is required from students to improve their skills in reading, writing and grammar as well as to give them support to get the highest marks that enable them to join the faculty they want." Other teachers tended to be more specific regarding the changes that they made in their methods of teaching. Three teachers said that they have their students use the Internet to train them for the CEPA English Test. Another teacher mentioned that she/he uses some techniques to help the students recall their previous knowledge about the presented topics before starting their new lessons like using the (know, want to know, learnt) technique in which students recall their previous knowledge and mention new things they want to learn about a specific topic before studying it, and then they write what they learnt out of the lesson. Also, one of the participating teachers said that a new technique that they follow in their lessons is to encourage their outstanding students to create their own activities. According to Wall and Alderson's characteristics of positive and negative washback, these changes in the participating teachers' methods of teaching can be labeled as being aspects of positive washback. This is because having such changes will provide the students with a learning experience of a better quality through being more involved in their own learning.

Two of the participating teachers said that they tend to encourage their students to self-study using the CEPA practice book. Also, they said that they tend to refer to and point to the CEPA English Test items as a revision, like for vocabulary and grammar. In addition, the participating teachers tended to provide their students with more practice related to the CEPA English and to train them in using the bubble sheet which they will use to answer in their CEPA English Test. According to Wall

and Alderson's characteristics of positive and negative washback, this action of training the students on using the bubble sheet is negative washback because it is different than the students' original curriculum. In their original curriculum, they are not required to use the bubble sheets in their examinations.

In the section of the open-ended questions in the questionnaire, the participating teachers gave many answers regarding the changes that they made in their methods of teaching. The major changes that they made were related to teaching the writing skill. As a result of the CEPA English Test, one teacher stated that she/he turned to "pay more attention to the writing skill." In general, the participants stated that they tended to use methods to encourage their students to use their own words to express their viewpoints. This was the situation for many teachers. One of them said that she/he specifies two lessons weekly to teach writing only. 6 of the 12 participating teachers agreed with this teacher's point of view and indicated that they increased their "writing instructions and practices." Another change that the participating teachers made was related to the teachers' focus on teaching how to write a persuasive essay. Highlighting persuasive writing is a direct effect of the CEPA English Test because in the CEPA English Test students are required to write a persuasive essay. Other teachers stated that they adopted new writing strategies in their classes. For example, some teachers used the process writing approach to help their students learn from their mistakes. One of the participating teachers stated that they use videos and cartoons during their writing lessons to help their students generate ideas for writing. According to Wall and Alderson's characteristics of positive and negative washback, the participating teachers' tendency to use a variety of teaching techniques to improve their students' writing skill can be categorized as being positive washback because of the positive effect that it might have on the students' levels in this area. On the other hand, if teachers focused on writing more than the other skills, this could be evidence of negative washback.

The reported changes in the teaching methods as a result of the CEPA English Test also included teaching effects on reading skill. One teacher said that she/he "integrate[s] the CEPA questions format in the reading passages." Another teacher explained the way in which they integrate the CEPA English format in teaching the reading comprehension. He/she said that "students no more write down answers to questions, they only choose correct answers from a, b, c or d after reading the passages." The same point was clear in the worksheets that were in the lesson

planning notebook of the first teacher in which she made CEPA-format reading questions based on her students' textbook lessons. Also, another teacher pointed out that she/he teaches the main point and the sub point reading skills. This action of focusing on the reading skill is considered positive washback according to Wall and Alderson because it provides the students with a learning experience of a better quality.

One of the participating teachers claimed the focus on reading skill to be the key to the students' success in the CEPA. He/she said, "I should use more reading in class to provide my students with knowledge and to increase their vocabulary. This, I think, will enforce their speaking, writing and grammar usage. In that way, CEPA will just test their ability to use the language correctly, the thing which will not be difficult for the students to do." The teachers' focus on the reading skill is considered positive washback according to Wall and Alderson because the teachers were providing their students with a teaching experience of a better quality in their attempt to improve their students' reading skill.

The last question in the teacher questionnaire explored teachers' points of view about the teaching practices that would be important to ensure their students' success in the CEPA English Test. The participating teachers mentioned many teaching practices that they think will ensure their students' success in the CEPA English Test. One of the teachers talked about the importance of providing grade 12 students with a daily opportunity for practice on CEPA materials including "reading comprehension passages, grammar activities and CEPA vocabulary items." In addition, another teacher suggested the importance of focusing on the writing skill, which "needs a lot of time," as she/he mentioned. Another suggestion was to provide grade 12 students with vocabulary lists of the words that are expected to be in the CEPA English Test. This practice, the participating teachers believe, will "expand [the students'] vocabulary knowledge."

Another group of the participating teachers talked about teaching methods that will help improve the students' level in English. One of them mentioned that using student-centered activities will help students improve their levels and will make it easy for them to pass their CEPA Tests. Another method that they mentioned was to use writing process strategies to encourage students to correct their own mistakes to learn from them which will help them do better in the writing section of the CEPA English Test. These practices of using student-centered activities and writing process

add positively to the quality of the teaching experience, which would be considered positive washback according to Wall and Alderson.

Another group of the participants presented some suggestions to help bridge the gap between the content of the CEPA English Test and the grade 12 syllabus. One of these suggestions was to introduce a textbook that would help the students to make progress in their English levels. Another suggestion was to forget about the content of the syllabus and focus on teaching for the CEPA Test. Other teachers find it a good idea to create their own materials and extra activities for their students to ensure that they are preparing them well enough for their CEPA English Test. However, focusing on content different from the students' original content is considered negative washback according to Wall and Alderson.

The responses of the questionnaire participants indicated that there were many changes that happened as a result of the CEPA English Test. Some of these changes were in the content taught to the students that tended to be more than what was in the students' textbook while neglecting part of the syllabus which is negative washback. Other changes were related to the assessment of grade 12 students which changed to include many parts from CEPA mock tests. Major changes happened in the area of the teaching methods which were changed to ensure increasing grade 12 students' chances of success which was primarily positive in effect. Results indicate that there were elements of both positive and negative washback that appeared as a result of the introduction of the CEPA English Test.

The responses of the questionnaire participants indicated the existence of both positive and negative changes in their methods of teaching, as follows:

- Positive Changes:
 - Using the Internet in the English lessons
 - Using the K, W, L technique
 - Having the outstanding students create their own activities.
 - Encouraging students to self-study
 - Teaching process writing
 - Teaching the reading skills
- Negative Changes:
 - Using the bubble sheet
 - Using test items to have their students practice for the CEPA English Test

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter discusses conclusions about the washback effect of the CEPA English Test on the teaching process in one educational zone in the UAE. It has seven sections: summary of the analysis of the Mock CEPA English Tests from 2007 and 2008, summary of the teacher questionnaire and interview results, implications for grade 12 English teachers, the limitations of the study, and suggestions for further research and a final thought.

Summary of the Analysis of the Mock CEPA English Tests from 2007 and 2008

Analysis of the Mock CEPA English Tests from 2007 and 2008, in comparison with the grade 12 scope and sequences of these two years, showed that the content of these tests was not directly related to the content of the grade 12 syllabi in the same years. In the Mock CEPA English Test of 2007, only three of the four reading texts were related to the content of grade 12 syllabus, while in the mock test of 2008, none of the reading passages was thematically related to the grade 12 syllabus. On the other hand, the topics of the writing sections in both of the analyzed mock tests were related to more than one of the units in the students' textbooks. Some items from the grammar section in both of the analyzed mock tests were related to the content of grade 12 syllabus while some other items were not related to that content. The section that was completely unrelated to the grade 12 syllabus was the vocabulary section in both of the analyzed mock tests. In the Mock CEPA English Test of 2007 there was only one vocabulary item from the new vocabulary items that were presented to grade 12 students. In addition, none of the tested vocabulary items in the CEPA Mock English Test of 2008 was related to the words which grade 12 students studied.

Summary of the Teacher Questionnaire and Interview Results

The teacher questionnaire and interviews included different questions to help me identify whether there was a washback effect that resulted from the presence of the CEPA English Test, in terms of its effect of the content which grade 12 English

teachers present to their students, the methods of teaching which these teachers use, and their ways of assessing their students. The findings of the study showed that there was a washback effect of the CEPA English Test on the content which grade 12 teachers teach to their students. The questionnaire results showed that there were differences in the participating teachers' insistence on teaching all the content of their students' textbook. On the other hand, most of the questionnaire participants indicated that they teach the four language skills to their students, including listening and speaking which are not tested in the CEPA English Test but are tested in the monthly tests. Teaching all the four language skills as a result of a test is considered positive washback according to Wall and Alderson.

In addition, the participating teachers stated that they tended to use a variety of new teaching methods as a result of the presence of the CEPA English Test. They provided many examples of these new techniques that they started to use after the introduction of the CEPA English Test, such as using the Internet and videos in the English lessons, using the process writing and K, W, L techniques.

When talking about the CEPA English Test's washback effect on the methods of assessment, we find that the participating teachers tended to present to their students tests similar to the format of the CEPA English Test. Not only that, but they all agreed that they used to take some questions from CEPA mock tests to test their students in CEPA format. Teaching to the test and drilling on test items are considered elements of negative washback according to Wall and Alderson.

The only aspect that was not affected by the presence of the CEPA Test was the skills which grade 12 teachers used to test their students in. All the participating teachers indicated that they test their students in listening although this skill is not tested in the CEPA English Test but it is assessed in the monthly quizzes.

Summary of the Washback of the CEPA English Test

Analysis of the teacher questionnaire and interviews data indicated the presence of a washback effect as a result of the CEPA English Test. The collected data provided evidence of the presence of aspects of both positive and negative washback effects. The major evidence of positive washback effect revealed in this study was in the changes of the participating teachers' methods of teaching. As a result of the CEPA English Test, the participating teachers tended to use a variety of teaching methods which provided their students with a learning experience of a better

quality. As mentioned in the collected data, a large focus was put on improving students' writing, which is evidence of positive washback. On the other hand, this focus on writing could change to be negative if it was at the expense of teaching the other language skills.

Based on the collected data, evidence of negative washback was greater than evidence of positive washback. One evidence of the CEPA English Test's negative washback was related to the participating teachers' tendency to use item types similar to the ones in the CEPA English Test although these items types were different than the content of the students' syllabi. An example of that is the teachers' tendency to have their students practice answering multiple choice questions in reading comprehension although this form of multiple choice questions is not included in their textbook. Another evidence of negative washback was the long examination preparation periods which the participating teachers involved their students in. Also, the participating teachers' insistence on training their students on the CEPA format can be considered as evidence of negative washback because it involves the students in activities different than the ones in their textbook (which is Wall and Alderson's view.) On the other hand, focusing on training the students on the CEPA format represented by training them on the bubble sheet can be considered positive washback because this action of training on using the bubble sheet can benefit the students in other international tests such as the TOEFL or the IELTS. However, focusing on a different content than the one included in the students' syllabi, especially regarding vocabulary, is another evidence of negative washback.

Nevertheless, the collected data did indicate the presence of some aspects of positive washback. For example, some of the teachers' practices like using student-centered activities, and process writing can be considered positive washback because involving the students in such activities will provide them with a learning experience of a better quality. In addition, the participating teachers' focus on improving the students' reading and writing skills is considered positive washback.

Implications for Administrators and Teachers in the UAE

The analysis of the Mock CEPA English Tests of 2007 and 2008 showed a gap between their content and the content of grade 12 syllabi. Having a test that is not related to the content taught to students lead to having a negative washback effect. Of course, negative washback affects a wide area of the whole educational system. All

aspects of washback effect result from the stakeholders' attempt to "adjust their curricular and instructional practices in order to achieve their goals" (Wall, 2005, p. 36). Thus, the administrators in the Ministry of Education are highly recommended to pay more attention to the construction process of any high-stakes tests in the future, particularly ones which are used as achievement tests. Administrators need to "develop their tests in such a way that test takers learn the language by practicing for the test" (Carlsen, 2007, p. 99). Some of the participating teachers suggested developing a new textbook which is related to the content of the CEPA English Test, and this book has since been developed and has been distributed to all grade 12 students in the UAE beginning in fall 2009.

In addition, administrators need to take the purpose of any test into consideration before deciding on the content of that test (e.g., do needs analysis). They need to be aware of what tests are designed for. In other words, they need to understand that a specific test should be designed for a specific use. Taking into consideration this issue of identifying the purpose behind each designed test will lead administrators to be more able to produce more valid tests. For example, they need to take in consideration that the content of achievement tests should be related to the content taught to the students who are going to take these tests. On the other hand, when tests are intended to be general proficiency tests, they should test students' mastery of general language skills.

The data collected for this research showed that the participating teachers changed their methods of teaching, the content which they taught to their students and their assessment of their grade 12 students as a result of the introduction of the CEPA English Test. It is true that all the changes made by these teachers were intended to help grade 12 students succeed in the CEPA English Test, but still it is necessary to ensure that these changes would not turn to be negative washback. In other words, teachers need to create a sort of balance between their attempt to prepare their students to the CEPA English Test and the grade 12 curriculum which they are mainly supposed to teach. A good solution for them would be to adapt the materials suggested by their curriculum to provide their students with the skills they need to pass their tests. In addition, making use of pre-prepared material can save teachers' time if it is readily available.

In addition, English language supervisors and secondary school principals need to be aware of the washback effect of any standardized test on teaching in their

schools. These administrators need to be present in the field to be able to notice any sort of change, which means that they need to be in close contact with teachers to know the challenges they are facing. They need to help the teachers in their schools avoid negative washback (narrowing the curriculum) and make use of positive washback (enhancing teaching and classroom assessment.)

Limitations of the Study

The major limitation of this study was not being able to collect more than two teachers' lesson planning notebooks. I strongly agree with Blaxter and Hughes (2006) when they say, "The progress of your project, in the way you envisage it, and your ability to collect the kind of data which you want, may be critically dependent on [the participants] cooperation" (p. 155). This is true because "[i]f they say 'yes', you are in and underway" (p. 155) "but if they say 'no', you may have to look elsewhere or revise your plans" (p. 155). Not being able to collect more than two teachers' lesson planning notebooks had a considerable effect on the design of my research. In my original plan, I was intending to answer one more research question about the content of some teachers' lesson planning notebooks and whether they reflect any effect by the introduction of the CEPA English Test on teaching practices or not. Unfortunately, I was only able to get one complete lesson planning notebook, and another one that included plans for the first three units only. Not being able to get a larger number of the teachers' lesson planning notebooks limited my ability to triangulate my study's results because two lesson planning notebooks were deemed insufficient data. Thus this research question was excluded from the study.

Another limitation was related to the gender of the participating teachers. Among the 12 participants of the questionnaire, there were 11 female teachers but only 1 male teacher. The results very likely would have been different if a larger number of male teachers had responded to the questionnaire (which was sent to all the English Teachers in the zone three times).

Suggestions for Further Research

Researching about the washback effect of the CEPA English Test raised my curiosity regarding different issues. We always talk about positive washback and indicators of having positive washback, but it would be informative if we could provide administrators with tips of what they can do to make use of positive

washback. For example, they can be provided with tips to help them use tests to encourage positive practices to provide students with a better learning experience such as focusing on development of process writing skill, using student-centered activities, and teaching reading strategies such as reading for the main point. This can be done through involving teachers in training workshops about effective methods of teaching. Also, I think that it would be an interesting research point to try to answer the question of “how can teachers prepare their students for their standardized tests without narrowing their curriculum?” One way to do that would be through having a study about the most effective teaching practices existing in the context. Another interesting point would be trying to find whether the washback effect of the CEPA English Test is the same regarding male and female teachers, by conducting a much larger study.

While this research mainly focused on the effect of the introduction of the CEPA English Test on teachers and teaching, it would be very informative to investigate the effect of the CEPA English Test on learners and their learning.

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APPENDIX A GRAMMAR SECTION ANALYSIS FORM/UNITS 1 AND 2-2008

<i>Unit 1</i> <i>Study Skills</i>		
	<i>Grammar in Focus</i>	<i>Questions from 2007 Mock Test Related to the Grammar in Focus</i>
Lesson 1	Tenses	
Lesson 2	Gerunds and Infinitives	
Lesson 3	Tenses	
Lesson 4	Tenses	
Lesson 5	Frequency Adverbs	
Lesson 6	Linking Words	
Lesson 7	Conditional Tenses	
Lesson 8	Parts of Speech	
Lesson 9	Tenses	
Lesson 10	Wish had + PP	
<i>Unit 2</i> <i>Consumers</i>		
	<i>Grammar in Focus</i>	<i>Questions from 2007 Mock Test Related to the Grammar in Focus</i>
Lesson 1	Pronouns Verbs Tenses	
Lesson 2	Linking Words	
Lesson 3	Present Perfect Questions	
Lesson 4	Verb Tenses	
Lesson 5	Forming Questions	
Lesson 6	Tenses	
Lesson 7	Tenses	
Lesson 8	Conditionals	
Lesson 9	Second Conditional	
Lesson 10	-	

APPENDIX B VOCABULARY ANALYSIS FORM

No.	Vocabulary Items in the CEPA English Mock Test	Relationship to the New Vocabulary Items in Grade 12 Text
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
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27		
28		
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30		
31		
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33		
34		
35		
36		
37		
38		
39		
40		

APPENDIX C READING SECTION ANALYSIS FORM

<i>Text</i>	<i>Topic of the Reading Passage</i>	<i>Relationship to the Content of Grade 12 English Text</i>	<i>Details</i>	
			<i>Unit</i>	<i>Lesson(s)</i>
1				
2				
3				
4				

APPENDIX D WRITING SECTION ANALYSIS FORM

<i>The Writing Question Prompt</i>	<i>Relationship to the Content of Grade 12 English Text</i>	<i>Details</i>	
		<i>Unit(s)</i>	<i>Lesson(s)</i>

APPENDIX E TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

A Questionnaire about the CEPA English Test

Dear Teachers:

In this questionnaire we would like to know whether the implementation of the CEPA English Test has had an effect on your teaching or not. **All information you provide here will be treated in the strictest confidence** and will be used for research purposes only. Thank you for your valuable time.

PART ONE: Please underline the appropriate answer.

1- Your gender:

a- Female

b- Male

2- How many years of experience in teaching do you have?

a- 1-3 years

b- 4 -7 years

c- 8- 12 years

d- more than 12 years

3- How many years of experience in teaching grade 12 do you have?

a- 1-3 years

b- 4 -7 years

c- 8 -12 years

d- more than 12 years

4- According to your schedule, how many periods are you supposed to teach a week?

a- less than 12 periods

b- 12 periods

c- 18 periods

d- 24 periods

5- How many extra classes do you teach to your grade 12 students weekly?

a- none

b- one class

c- two -three classes

d- four - five classes

e- more than five

PART TWO:

Please read the following statements carefully, and then place a tick (√) in the box that best represents your point of view.

No.	Statement	Every Lesson	Most Lessons	Some Lessons	Few Lessons	Never
1	I teach all the content of my students' textbook.					
2	I teach all the language skills.					
3	When teaching from the textbook, I skip the parts that are not included in the CEPA English Test.					
4	I find enough time to finish my curriculum and prepare my students for the CEPA English Test.					
5	I have had less time to teach the grade 12 curriculum since the introduction of the CEPA English Test.					
6	I give the listening and speaking skills the same importance I give to reading and writing in my teaching.					
7	I provide my students with lists of words that might be included in the CEPA English Test.					
8	I test my students in these lists.					
9	In my monthly tests, I include some grammatical items from previous CEPA English Tests.					
10	I give my students reading passages from previous CEPA English Tests to prepare them to deal with similar passages.					
11	I give my students some writing topics that were tackled in previous CEPA English Tests.					
12	I use some of the previous CEPA English Tests as mock tests for my students.					
13	I test my students in listening and					

PART THREE:

Please, decide whether you agree or disagree with the following items, and provide your explanation.

1- Have you made any major changes in your teaching methods as a result of the introduction of the CEPA English Test? (underline the appropriate answer.)

a- yes

b- no

2- If yes, what are these changes?

3- From your point of view, what are teaching practices that you need to use to ensure your students' success in the CEPA English Test?

Completion of this form signifies consent for your responses to be used in this research.

Thank you for your valuable time

APPENDIX F TEACHERS' INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

A) **General Information Questions**

- 1- How many years of teaching experience do you have?
- 2- How long have you been teaching grade 12?
- 3- How many periods do you teach each week?
- 4- How many periods do you teach to each of your grade 12 sections weekly?
- 5- Do you take any extra classes?

B) **Questions about Supplementary Materials**

I see that you used supplementary materials in addition to the content of your textbook,

- 1- Where did you get these materials from?
- 2- Why do you provide your students with supplementary materials?
- 3- Did anyone tell you to use them?
- 4- Do you think that these materials helped your students in their CEPA English Test? Why/why not?
- 5- From your point of view, what is the best time to start presenting CEPA supplementary materials to your students?
- 6- Did all your students answer all the CEPA supplementary materials that you provided them with? How did you make sure of that?
- 7- Did you have any specific routine or system that you followed in presenting the CEPA materials to your students?

APPENDIX G ANALYSIS OF GRAMMAR SECTION/

MOCK CEPA ENGLISH TEST 2007

<i>Unit 1 (Deserts)</i>		
	<i>Grammar in Focus</i>	<i>Questions from 2007 Mock Test Related to the Grammar in Focus</i>
Lesson 1		
Lesson 2		
Lesson 3	Suggestions with should/ could, let's	
Lesson 4		
Lesson 5	Comparatives/ superlatives	Q5
Lesson 6		
Lesson 7	Past tense, did questions	Q 29
Lesson 8		
Lesson 9		
Lesson 10	Wh questions Words in past	Q28, Q30, Q32
Lesson 11		
Lesson 12		
Lesson 13	Connectors, sequencing	Q 37, Q 14, Q 36
Lesson 14	Similarities and differences	
Lesson 15	Sequencing	
<i>Unit 2 (Consumers)</i>		
	<i>Grammar in Focus</i>	<i>Questions from 2007 Mock Test Related to the Grammar in Focus</i>
Lesson 1	Verb tense	Q 9, Q 39
Lesson 2		
Lesson 3		
Lesson 4	Present perfect	
Lesson 5		
Lesson 6		
Lesson 7	Writing numbers	
Lesson 8		
Lesson 9		
Lesson 10		
Lesson 11		
Lesson 12		
Lesson 13	First conditional	Q 23
Lesson 14	Second conditional	
Lesson 15		

<i>Unit 3 (Healthy Lifestyles)</i>		
	<i>Grammar in Focus</i>	<i>Questions from 2007 Mock Test Related to the Grammar in Focus</i>
Lesson 1	Frequency words	
Lesson 2	Used to	
Lesson 3	Frequency words	
Lesson 4		
Lesson 5		
Lesson 6		
Lesson 7		
Lesson 8		
Lesson 9		
Lesson 10		
Lesson 11		
Lesson 12		
Lesson 13		
Lesson 14		
Lesson 15		
<i>Unit 4 (Study Skills)</i>		
	<i>Grammar in Focus</i>	<i>Questions from 2007 Mock Test Related to the Grammar in Focus</i>
Lesson 1		
Lesson 2	Error correction	
Lesson 3		
Lesson 4		
Lesson 5	Should/ought to in the past opinion	
Lesson 6		
Lesson 7		
Lesson 8		
Lesson 9		
Lesson 10		
Lesson 11	3 rd conditional	Q 35
Lesson 12		
Lesson 13		
Lesson 14		
Lesson 15	Error correction	

<i>Unit 5 (Changing Ways)</i>		
	<i>Grammar in Focus</i>	<i>Questions from 2007 Mock Test Related to the Grammar in Focus</i>
Lesson 1		
Lesson 2	Would for past habits	
Lesson 3		
Lesson 4	Pronouns	Q6, Q12
Lesson 5		
Lesson 6		
Lesson 7		
Lesson 8		
Lesson 9		
Lesson 10		
Lesson 11	Comparing things	
Lesson 12		
Lesson 13		
Lesson 14	The passive	
Lesson 15		
<i>Unit 6 (Your Future)</i>		
	<i>Grammar in Focus</i>	<i>Questions from 2007 Mock Test Related to the Grammar in Focus</i>
Lesson 1	Future forms	Q25
Lesson 2		
Lesson 3		
Lesson 4		
Lesson 5		
Lesson 6		
Lesson 7		
Lesson 8	Reported speech	
Lesson 9		
Lesson 10		
Lesson 11		
Lesson 12		
Lesson 13	Reported speech	
Lesson 14		
Lesson 15		

APPENDIX H ANALYSIS OF THE VOCABULARY SECTION / MOCK CEPA
ENGLISH TEST 2007

No.	Vocabulary Items in 2007 Mock CEPA English Test	Relationship to the New Vocabulary Items in Grade 12 Textbook
1	Raw	None
2	Monitor	None
3	Square	None
4	Overall	None
5	Continuously	None
6	Wave	None
7	Extreme	None
8	Finger	None
9	Crop	None
10	Ripe	None
11	Roof	None
12	Salary	None
13	Spilled	None
14	Solution	None
15	Lend	None
16	Fade	None
17	Across	None
18	Rub	None
19	Loves	None
20	Arrow	None
21	Ugly	None
22	Hand writing	None
23	Area	None
24	Text	None
25	Range	None
26	Reacted	None
27	Parallel	None
28	Respond	None
29	Piece	None
30	Welfare	None
31	Drying	Yes
32	Full	None
33	Rough	None
34	Located	None
35	Actors	None
36	Blind	None
37	Treating	None
38	Hall	None
39	Flight	None
40	Sink	None

APPENDIX I ANALYSIS OF THE GRAMMAR SECTION/

MOCK CEPA ENGLISH TEST 2008.

<i>Unit 1 (Study Skills)</i>		
	<i>Grammar in Focus</i>	<i>Questions from 2008 Mock Test Related to the Grammar in Focus</i>
Lesson 1	Tenses	Q1
Lesson 2	Gerunds and Infinitives	
Lesson 3	Tenses	Q1
Lesson 4	Tenses	Q1
Lesson 5	Frequency Adverbs	
Lesson 6	Linking Words	Q21- Q38
Lesson 7	Conditional Tenses	Q1
Lesson 8	Parts of Speech	
Lesson 9	Tenses	Q1
Lesson 10	Wish had + PP	
<i>Unit 2 (Consumers)</i>		
	<i>Grammar in Focus</i>	<i>Questions from 2008 Mock Test Related to the Grammar in Focus</i>
Lesson 1	Pronouns Verbs Tenses	Q26
Lesson 2	Linking Words	Q21- Q38
Lesson 3	Present Perfect Questions	Q13- Q19
Lesson 4	Verb Tenses	
Lesson 5	Forming Questions	Q9
Lesson 6	Tenses	Q1
Lesson 7	Tenses	Q1
Lesson 8	Conditionals	
Lesson 9	Second Conditional	
Lesson 10	-	
<i>Unit 3 (Healthy Lifestyles)</i>		
	<i>Grammar in Focus</i>	<i>Questions from 2008 Mock Test Related to the Grammar in Focus</i>
Lesson 1	Prepositives Frequency Words	
Lesson 2	Passive Reference	
Lesson 3	Linking Words	
Lesson 4	Quantifiers	Q18- Q40
Lesson 5	Tenses	Q1
Lesson 6	Parts of Speech	Q41- Q42- Q43
Lesson 7	Gerunds and Infinitives	Q2- Q22- Q34- Q37
Lesson 8	Tenses	Q1
Lesson 9	Sequence Words	Q7
Lesson 10	Imperative	

<i>Unit 4 (Deserts)</i>		
	<i>Grammar in Focus</i>	<i>Questions from 2008 Mock Test Related to the Grammar in Focus</i>
Lesson 1	Tenses	Q1
Lesson 2	Present Simple	Q36
Lesson 3	Tenses	Q1
Lesson 4	Comparatives/Superlatives	Q24
Lesson 5	So...that	
Lesson 6	Past Tense	
Lesson 7	Equatives	
Lesson 8	WH Questions Words in Past	Q9- Q25
Lesson 9	Adjective Order	
Lesson 10	Sequence	
<i>Unit 5(Changing Ways)</i>		
	<i>Grammar in Focus</i>	<i>Questions from 2008 Mock Test Related to the Grammar in Focus</i>
Lesson 1	Linking Words	
Lesson 2	Future	Q30
Lesson 3	Relative Pronouns	Q8- Q17- Q20
Lesson 4	Past & Present	
Lesson 5	Used to	
Lesson 6	Tenses	Q1
Lesson 7	Other(s) Another	
Lesson 8	Parts of Speech	
Lesson 9	Passive Voice	
Lesson 10	-	
<i>Unit 6 (To Your Future)</i>		
	<i>Grammar in Focus</i>	<i>Questions from 2008 Mock Test Related to the Grammar in Focus</i>
Lesson 1	Word Ordering	
Lesson 2	Error Correction	
Lesson 3	Tenses	Q1
Lesson 4	Prepositions	
Lesson 5	-	
Lesson 6	Reported Speech	
Lesson 7	Unless If...not	
Lesson 8	Passive Conjunctions	
Lesson 9	Future	
Lesson 10	Reported Speech Joining Words	

APPENDIX J ANALYSIS OF THE VOCABULARY SECTION / MOCK CEPA

ENGLISH TEST 2008.

No.	Vocabulary Items in 2008 Mock CEPA English Test	Relationship to the New Vocabulary Items in Grade 12 Text
1	Precise	None
2	Brain	None
3	Custom	None
4	Sum	None
5	Selfish	None
6	Deeply	None
7	Army	None
8	Chance	None
9	Confidently	None
10	Occupies	None
11	Clothes	None
12	Obedient	None
13	Dipped	None
14	Attend	None
15	Entire	None
16	Charming	None
17	Percent	None
18	Contain	None
19	Credit	None
20	Distinct	None
21	Ink	None
22	Whiten	None
23	Friendly	None
24	Advice	None
25	Base	None
26	Demonstrate	None
27	Undertake	None
28	Bag	None
29	Compose	None
30	Club	None
31	Damp	None
32	Dominant	None
33	Bus	None
34	Engine	None
35	Hilly	None
36	Measure	None
37	Angrily	None
38	Entirely	None
39	Urgent	None
40	Library	None

APPENDIX K TEACHERS' COMMENTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

Teacher One:

- Because the materials of the book were not enough at all and were not the same as the test. So No.1 to provide them with semi like materials like the CEPA exam, and to train them on them. Especially, regarding the vocabulary, most of the vocabulary items we do not have them at all in the student's book.

- For example the supervisors of English, the school principal, the students themselves because they meet with students from other institutions, so we had to give it. It was not our choice.

-Yes, of course, a great help. Because they did not have any material for the test, and that was very strange. The strangest thing for the CEPA exam is that it is an exam without a book for it, without a syllabus for it, so the students have to take something to train them.

- From the very beginning, from the first day you start giving them the vocabulary, the bases of writing, the structures they are going to use. I present them but I don't have to tell them each time that this is for the CEPA. They know that everything in the session, everything in English is related to the CEPA in a way or another.

- Yes all of them answered but their answers were not in the same level.

- Because, I did them with them in the class and I made all kinds of assessment; formal and informal. It was an ongoing assessment all the time. So, they had to do the task and to answer and to be involved in the tasks during the classes.

7- I don't have a specific routine, but in general every week when I plan my lesson, I have to be sure to present everything every week, so I present vocabulary, grammar, reading and writing every week. So I have seven classes, so the vocabulary and the grammar can be one or more.

Teacher Two:

- Yes, through some websites, CEPA preparations courses, mock exams.
- You know, of course we train them for exams.
- First I like the materials, I like to train them. Besides the supervisor, the monitor of the CEPA course, she came to observe some of my classes so students are active when we use these materials.
- Yes, of course. They train a lot so it helps them in the exam.
- According to grade 12 from the beginning of the year, and I advise to start training them from grade 10.
- Yes, in general yes. I can check their works through checking, sometimes through general discussions. Sure they did their activities.
- No specific system of routine. Every day we have something so it is according to the exercise itself.

APPENDIX L TEACHERS' RESPONSES TO THE OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

<i>Teacher</i>	<i>Question 2</i>	<i>Question 3</i>
<i>T1</i>	All the changes made are related to what is required from students to improve their skills in reading, writing and grammar as well as to give them support to get the highest marks that enable them to join the faculty they want to join.	We need more time. It is better to start this program from the early cycles. We need text books that help to make progress and help this program to succeed.
<i>T2</i>	Some methods help students to recall their knowledge before starting the lesson through (K.W.L), teaching the lesson through M.Q.	Teaching practices in speaking and listening.
<i>T3</i>	-	No CEPA Test anymore so no need for that.
<i>T4</i>	Changes in : 1- Reading Comprehension: Students no more write down answers to questions , they only choose correct answers from a, b or c after reading the passage. 2- Essay Writing: Students use their own words to express their view points wither to agree or disagree while writing about a certain topic or problem. 3- Self Study by using “Ds and CEPA Learn” practice exercises.	I think that students should have enough practice (daily) for reading comprehension passages, focus on grammar, drills and sentences on CEPA vocabulary items. They should be encouraged to write simple and compound sentences using suitable connectors, punctuation, correct grammar and organized paragraphs (introduction, body, conclusion).
<i>T5</i>	-whole periods for teaching vocabulary only. -I have two periods for writing a week. -Using the Internet for training for the CEPA Exam.	-
<i>T6</i>	- More focus on the writing skill with variety of teaching methods. I use videos, cartoons, etc. - Students surf the internet and get extra exercises for more practice.	-Focusing on CEPA English Tests. -Creating my own tests for extra practice. -Always surf the net for new material.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I encourage students to use the bubble sheets. - Some brilliant students are asked to create their own exercises. 	
<i>T7</i>	I adopted new writing and writing strategies that I grabbed during the professional development program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More focus on writing, but it needs time.
<i>T8</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New methods in teaching the four skills; reading, writing, speaking and listening. - Teaching grammar. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Grammar CEPA -vocabulary lists. -Reading comprehension.
<i>T9</i>	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -CEPA exam papers -Vocabulary lists.
<i>T10</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -It provides Ss with more practice related to the CEPA . -I also learnt new methods of teaching and test taking strategies. I had the chance to meet with other G12 teachers in other schools and exchange ideas and teaching methods. 	-More readings in class to provide my students with knowledge and increase their vocabulary. This, I think, will enforce their speaking, writing and grammar usage. In that way, CEPA will just test their ability to use the language correctly.
<i>T11</i>	I integrated CEPA questions format in reading passages, grammar, and vocabulary. I increased writing instructions and practices and highlighted the persuasive essay organization and strategies. In each lesson, I refer and point to CEPA items as revision like the vocabulary and the grammar.	-I used the writing process strategies in teaching writing and some student centered activities to teach reading and vocabulary.
<i>T12</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Paying more attention to the writing process. -giving more time to the vocabulary practice. -Teaching the main and sub reading skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Having a clear concept of the grammatical structures. -Expanding their vocabulary knowledge and their derivatives.

VITA

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