

# Analyzing the test usefulness: A comparison between PMR English language paper vs PT3 ELSA exam.

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## Abstract

*The PT3 (Penilaian Tingkatan 3) examination was introduced to the Form 3 school students in 2014, replacing PMR (Penilaian Menengah Rendah) which had been carried out since the year 1993. This study aims to investigate the extent to which the PT3 ELSA (English Language Skills Acquisition) assessment is considered useful compared to the PMR English examination in testing Form 3 students' English language competency. Comparison of PMR and PT3 English Language exam papers were made and an interview of two teachers who were markers for PT3 and PMR respectively was done. When comparing the format of the PMR English language examination to PT3 ELSA exam papers we could see vast differences. The PMR English language examination consisted of two papers. Paper 1 is an objective multiple choice question type of exam and paper 2 consists of four sections. Section A is directed writing, where the students are given stimulus, consisting of pictures and words, and is expected to write an essay in not less than 120 words. Section B is literature component comprehension, where the students have to answer comprehension question based on one of the poem that they have learned throughout Form1 until Form 3 and also a short novel response. Section C consists of summary writing, where students are required to summarize an article. Even though the exam paper for PMR consists of two papers, the students would only receive one grade. Comparing this to the PT3 (ELSA) assessment, the students receive two grades for it, namely for the written paper consists of seven questions and also the oral part of the test. Bachman and Palmer's framework of test usefulness (1996:18) consists of reliability, validity, authenticity, interactiveness, impact and practicality. So, in this research, we are also going to focus on the reliability, validity, authenticity, interactiveness, impact and practicality of PMR English language paper versus PT3 ELSA paper.*

## **1.0 Reliability**

Reliability refers to the consistency of a measure (Brogan, R. 2009). In educational testing, reliability refers to the confidence that the test score will be the same across repeated administrations of the test (Brogan, R. 2009)

### **1.1 Reliability PMR English Language Exam vs PT3 ELSA**

Reliability has to do with the consistency and accuracy of the measurement (Arshad,2014: 113). In both exams, the answer sheets have to go through several levels before the final score is being determined. In our interview with Teacher A, in PMR, English language exam questions were prepared by National Examination Board. The school just had to provide a place where the students would be taking the exam. In short, the burden of executing the exam lies with Lembaga Peperiksaan as they would be the one choosing the types of questions to be included in the exam, appointing the teachers as PMR Markers, set a standard of marking for all the markers. However, this differs greatly in PT3. The school is responsible in printing and packaging the exam papers, whilst still upholding the anonymity of the questions being set. In PMR the question is standardized throughout the nation, each school in Malaysia would get the same set of questions for all of the students. In PT3, the exam questions are in produced in three sets. The distribution of the exam question is randomized to the schools therefore, some school might get the same set, but some might get different ones.

Since we could not get hold of the marks of both of the exams as it is confidential. We decided to look at the reliability of both exams through the marking process of both PMR English language and PT3 ELSA papers. Based on our interview with Teacher A, we could summarize that the marking process of a PMR English language paper consists of four levels. According to her, all of the markers were all specially appointed by Lembaga Peperiksaan and there is a Chief Marker for all the groups of markers who are in charge to ensure the quality the marking in the teachers. This Chief Marker is usually a very experienced teacher who has been marking PMR papers for quite some time. The Chief Marker would attend a meeting with Lembaga Peperiksaan to get their scripts and marking standardized as to the standard set by Lembaga Peperiksaan. Furthermore, PMR markers do not know the students, the school or which state the students are in when they mark the papers. These are all confidential information in ensuring no biasedness in marking. After the group marking was done, the exam papers and the scores went through another level of crosschecking in ensuring its reliability adheres to the standards set by Lembaga Peperiksaan. After the crosschecking is done within the group, the scores and exam papers are later brought to the state level crosschecking of scores. Here, groups would exchange the exam papers they have received and do double checking in ensuring that the scores given by the markers are reliable and consistent. Only after this process does the final score being key-in. Teacher A also mentions that for the objective papers, it was marked by a machine at Lembaga Peperiksaan. The teachers are only required to mark paper 2. Since the total score of PMR consists of additions of score in paper 1 and 2 in order to get the final marks, the markers of paper 2 do not know the final score of the students. Comparing to PT3, Teacher B mentioned that PT3 markers consists of teachers at school that teach the students. Some of these teachers have no prior experience in marking PMR exam papers. This makes them inexperienced when they have to mark the exam paper. Similar to PMR, the standard of marking is set by people at Lembaga Peperiksaan. Just like PMR, PT3 also consists of several levels in terms of marking. In the first level the Chief Markers, who are head panels of English Language at school, would attend a meeting with the State Coordinator and Regional Coordinators of PT3 exam markers. These coordinators would have previously attended meeting with Lembaga

Peperiksaan and set a standardized acceptable marking scheme. Then the information from the initial meeting is shared with the Chief Markers from all of the schools all over Malaysia. After that, the Chief Markers would share the information gained about the marking standards with the markers who consists of the teachers teaching the students, who marks their own classes' papers in school. After that, there would be crosschecking and moderation of scores, but these are just at school level. The Regional Coordinators would come to their assigned schools too, to check on the adherence among the teachers when marking the PT3 papers. After that the final score would be verified by the principal at the school level before being keyed in by the teachers in an online system and be sent to Lembaga Peperiksaan.

Teacher B mentions that in a way, the autonomy of marking lies in the hands of the teachers who are teaching the students. This is because since the teacher knows the students, her own personal judgment affects the score. The notion that the teachers wants to help the students to get better score is there too. This is because the teacher who teaches the class, have to mark their own class. Furthermore, the marks for PT3 are verified by the Principal before being keyed in to Lembaga Peperiksaan. The notion of the school administrators wanting the students to score more is there too. Although the teachers who mark the papers tries their very best to adhere to the marking standards set by Lembaga Peperiksaan, all of the external factors does in a way intervene with the final scores.

## **2.0 Validity PMR English Language Exam vs PT3 ELSA**

*"Validity in general refers to the appropriateness of a given test or any of its component parts as a measure of what it is purported to measure. A test is said to be valid to the extent that it measures what it is supposed to measure. It follows that the term is valid when used to describe a test may be valid for some purpose, but not for other"*

On this ground, Hughes (2003:26) consider a test only to be valid if it measures accurately what it is intended to measure. If the score of the intended test is affected by other abilities rather than the one that was intended to be measured, then it will not be a successful analysis of that particular ability. So validity actually refers to the term in which it measures what is says to be measured. It tests what is taught and how it was taught.

## **2.1 Types of Validity**

The types of validities that we are analyzing are face validity, construct validity and content validity.

**Face Validity** refers to the transparency or relevance of a test as it appears to the test takers. It is also explained as the appearance of validity the extent to which a test looks like a test and it measures what is supposed to be measured. However face validity may not be investigated through formal procedures and is not determined by subject matter experts. Instead, the test takers or even the administrators may have an informal opinion by looking at the test and determining whether the test is measuring the intended content taught. Again, face validity alone is not sufficient to establish the test is measuring what it claims to measure. For instance, emotional intelligence and anxiety are the signs of face validity. It is common for test takers to go through emotional turmoil during the test. As we look at both PMR and PT3 ELSA examinations, test takers undergo stress and anxiety over it. The thought of passing it puts them under pressure. Moreover, PMR and PT3 ELSA examinations both give the perception of a test which fulfils the criteria of face validity. This concludes that both PMR and PT3 ELSA examinations have face validity as it appears as a test to the test takers.

According to Bachman and Palmer (1996) and Weir (2005), the term **construct validity** refers to *"the extent to which people can interpret a given test score as an indicator of the abilities or*

constructs that people want to measure.” Besides that, *construct validity can also be referred to as the general, overarching notion of validity.* (Alderson, 2000) If a test measures what it is supposed to be measured and it addresses the issue being measured, that test is considered valid. In order to display construct validity, evidence that the test measures what it is supposed to measure and the evidence that the test does not measure what is irrelevant should be there. As for PMR and PT3 ELSA Examination, we found that PT3 ELSA has construct validity and clearly measures what it wants to measure.

The PT3 ELSA test proves to be better in measuring students understanding in terms of grammar and vocabulary. (See Figure 1)

PMR 2013 English Examination Paper 1 (2013) Section	<p><b>“Tonnes of garbage cleared from tourist spot”</b></p> <p>5. The newspaper headline suggests that the tourist sites were</p> <p>A. dirty          B. noisy          C. busy          D. empty</p>
PT3 ELSA Probation Examination (Kelantan) Section A Question 1 Read the text below. There are grammatical errors in the text. It has been underlined for you. Write one word to correct the error in the space provided.	<p>Mahmud Inus, 42, recalled the abject condition that Rohingyas <u>has</u> to endure in their hometown <u>at</u> Rakhine State. “I’m a Muslim; I have no place in Myanmar. We <u>were</u> not recognized as citizens. They kill Muslims there. The rift <u>among</u> Muslims and Buddhist has been going on for 25 years, “he grieved.</p> <p>(a).....          (b).....          (c).....          (d).....</p>

Figure 1: Testing of vocabulary and grammar in PMR and PT3 ELSA Examination

While the old PMR tests the students understanding of grammar and vocabulary using multiple choice question, the new PT3 ELSA consists of a whole section where students are given a paragraph with errors and are required to use their knowledge to correct those words. When a question is constructed in such a way to test students’ knowledge of grammar and vocabulary, this enables them to use their obtained knowledge in the examination. By doing so, a teacher can determine the real level of understanding the students have achieved so far. This can’t be achieved with MCQ’s as the probability of a student marking the correct answers by chance is very high.

Mastering English language is not only based on writing and reading as how it has been tested in PMR examination, but it also comprises listening and speaking skills which is tested only in PT3 ELSA. (See Figure 2)

<p><i>PMR 2013 English Examination</i></p>	<p><i>* Does not test listening and speaking as a part of the PMR examination. Listening and speaking is done by the subject teacher and is graded separately.</i></p>
<p><i>PT3 ELSA (Malacca) Speaking Test Section B Question 2</i></p>	<p>Family outings can strengthen family relationship. What do you think?</p> <p>(pause)</p> <p>Cues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* own family outing experience</li> <li>* activities</li> <li>* opinions</li> </ul> <p>* Note to examiners: Use cues only when the candidate does not have anything to say. You may rephrase the cues.</p>

*Figure 2: Testing of vocabulary and grammar in PMR and PT3 ELSA Examination*

Finally, as we can see, the speaking test is carried out as a part of the examination in PT3 ELSA, whereas in PMR, students are not tested on listening and speaking. Here we can see the way the PT3 speaking test is constructed, it enables the teachers to test the students speaking ability thoroughly and grade them according to their level. As argued by Bachman & Palmer, 1996, (p.21), construct validity, then, refers to “the extent to which we can interpret a given test score as an indicator of the ability(ies), or construct(s), we want to measure”. Based on Figures 1 and 2, we can come to an conclusion that PT3 ELSA measures the ability or the construct we want to measure perfectly compared to PMR examination.

**Content Validity** refers to the evidence which demonstrates a particular interpretation of test scores is justified. In other words, content validity concerns, primarily, the adequacy with which the test items adequately and representatively sample the content area to be measured. It has a representative sample of the teaching or instructional contents as defined and covered in the curriculum. Hence, a specification of the skills or structures that the test is meant to cover is needed for the purpose. The specification will provide the test constructor with the basis for making a principled selection of elements for inclusion in the test (Hughes, 2003:27). The basis for judgement of content validity is the comparison of test specification and test content. Looking at PMR and PT3 ELSA, both exams do contain the elements of content validity. As for the comparison, we have chosen PMR English Paper 2013 and PT3 ELSA Paper 2015 in this section.

As for the **reading** component in PMR English exam, most of the questions are designed to test grammar and vocabulary. According to Form 3 KBSM English Language Scheme of Work 2012, the questions asked in the PMR English exam do tally with the contents taught throughout the year. Both grammar and vocabulary lessons are given more attention in classroom lessons and the number of questions asked in the PMR English exam are also focusing more on grammar and vocabulary. The type of questions is multiple choice questions whereby students only have to choose from the choices given. Conversely, as what we observed from the PT3 ELSA paper 2015, it does cover KBSM English Language Scheme of Work 2014, which drills more on grammar and

vocabulary as well. The type of questions are slightly different from the PMR English exam because in the PT3 ELSA paper, all the questions asked are in structured form which is also known as subjective questions. Students are required to come up with their knowledge imparted in classroom to answer these questions. Figure 3 shows the types of questions asked in both PMR and PT3 ELSA.

<p>PMR English (2013) Grammar &amp; Vocabulary</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>Mum, I might be late this evening. I am standing in for Zack in drama practice.</p> </div> <p>10. Based on the message above, Ben would be going home late because he is _____.</p> <p>A. Training                      C. Supporting B. Replacing                      D. Accompanying</p> <p>21. Drag on _____.</p> <p>A. Postpone                      C. Forget B. Bother                          D. Delay</p>				
<p>PT3 ELSA (2015) Grammar &amp; Vocabulary</p>	<p>Write one word to correct the grammar in the space provided.</p> <p>1. (a) Penguins <u>is</u> unusual bird as they cannot fly but are excellent swimmers. ( _____ )</p> <p>3. (g)</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Meaning</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">Word</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">(i) 'enhance'</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">_____</td> </tr> </table>	Meaning	Word	(i) 'enhance'	_____
Meaning	Word				
(i) 'enhance'	_____				

Figure 3: PMR English 2013 & PT3 ELSA 2015 Grammar & Vocabulary

In order to test **writing** skills, the PMR English exam has included article writing using pictures in section A while section B has been divided into two components: reading comprehension and literature component based on a novel. Last but not least, section C is solely on summary writing based on a text given. As we refer to the syllabus, writing is another skill which is given equal importance as reading. The PT3 ELSA on the other hand, includes letter writing and literature component based on a novel in section D which also reflects the syllabus.

**Listening** is not part of the questions in the PMR English exam and the assessment for listening is done during the class period. The assessment is not graded, in fact. In a way, listening skill does not play a significant role in the PMR English exam and also in classroom lessons. In contrast, in the PT3 ELSA, listening skill is practiced in classroom lessons as well as tested in the exam. Not only that, the grade measured is included in the PT3 ELSA result. The listening test comprises two sections. Section A contains 10 multiple choice questions (objective) whereas section B contains 10 limited response questions (subjective).

The **speaking** skill is not part of any of the requirements of the PMR English exam. Speaking tests will only be conducted during the class hours and the grades measured will not be included in PMR English result. The grade measured is only for the teachers' record and to note that the assessment has been conducted. Since it

is not part of the exam, speaking skills are not wholly encouraged in classroom lessons. In the PT3 ELSA, however, speaking skill is also counted in PT3 ELSA result. There are two sections to this test as well. Section A includes reading aloud whereby students will choose one out of three texts to be read aloud in front of the teacher. Section B is the spoken interaction which prompts the students by giving ten questions and students can choose one of the ten questions and discuss. Also, since speaking skill is measured in PT3 ELSA, students are given exercises to master this skill.

Generally, what we can conclude from all these four skills is that when one of the skill's grades is not measured in the real examination, that particular skill is not considered as an important skill. Hence, there are possibilities for the students are unable to balance all those four skills. It has been vividly proven, since PMR English exam does not count listening and speaking grades, these two skills are literally not included in the classroom lesson. As PT3 ELSA includes all the four skills evenly, these skills are integrated in the classroom lesson. Thus, PT3 ELSA makes the teaching more effective and promotes higher order thinking skills.

### **3.0 Identifying the Form 3 students' TLU**

In Malaysian lower secondary level, students use English mostly in academic situations, and they have limited contact hour with the language outside of the classroom. For instance, most English language lesson may be carried out in English but they may not necessarily be by the native speakers. The usual classroom activities in the English language classroom in normal secondary schools may require the students to be able to listen and perform the instructions by the teacher, inquire, give responses, note taking, discuss with their classmates and teachers and construct essays. The majority of the students seldom use English to communicate outside of the classroom. This is because, the native language such as Malay is widely used be it in formal or informal settings of their daily life. In other word these students hardly encounter situation where they are forced to use English entirely to communicate or to obtain services. They can do with Malay as English is not crucial for them to engage in social activities unless they encounter foreigners (which is a rare occasion).

Probably for their future career or academic purposes, students might need to use English in the customized private sectors career-related setting such as in multinational companies or when they further their studies in varsities. Thus it is important to start building up their fundamental English competence to function in the future. Knowing these students' TLU will now make better sense to value the constructs of authenticity and interactivensess.

### **3.1 Assesing the Authenticity and Interactivensess of PT3 ELSA vs PMR Paper.**

As mentioned by Bachman and Palmer (1996 : 23) authenticity is “ a critical quality of a language tests”. They define authenticity as “the degree of correspondence of the characteristics of a given language test task to the features of a TLU task.” The most important element of the test usefulness framework is the idea of target language use (TLU). The figure below as drawn by Bachman and Palmer gives a clearer picture on the relationship:

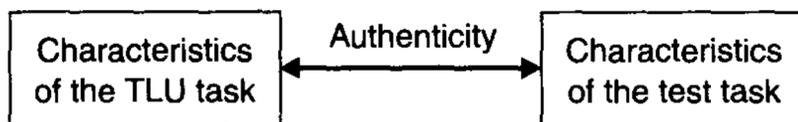


Figure 4: Authenticity (Bachman & Palmer, 1996 : 23)

The reason why authenticity should be taken into consideration in language test is because it provides way to investigate how far the score interpretations generalize beyond performance. Furthermore, it is also crucial as it is likely to affect the test taker's view of the test and

consequently affects their performance. Bachman and Palmer proposed that authenticity should reflect in the task characteristics itself. The test is considered highly authentic when the task reflects as closely as possible the real life non-test language task.

Meanwhile, Bachman and Palmer (1996:25) define interactivenss as “ the extent the type of involvement of the test taker’s individual characteristics in accomplishing a test task.” Individual characteristic here to be exact is the test taker’s language ability which refers to language knowledge and strategic competence, or metacognitive strategies combined with topical knowledge and affective schemata. The figure below gives further understanding on the concept of interactivenss.

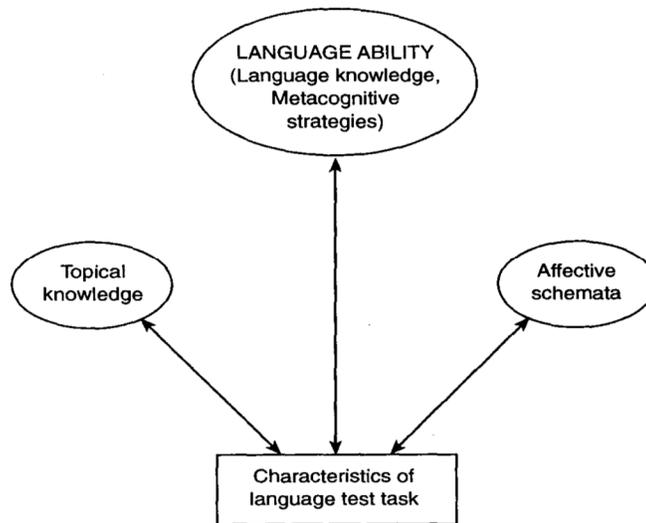


Figure 5 : Interactivenss (Bachman & Palmer, 1996: 26)

In simple words, interactivenss is the degree of interaction between the test taker and the test task when it is testing their language competence, background knowledge and affective schema.

The authenticity and interactivenss between the two papers are assessed simultaneously according to the main components which both the tests are focusing. The main components which are being tested in PT3 are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Meanwhile in PMR it was mainly tested on reading and writing skills.

Referring to Table 1(in Appendix), the situation or content that both tests chosen are largely authentic. The PT3 ELSA has lesser situations and questions but test more reading strategies while in PMR, the format of reading test was only MCQ. In terms of the format, the PT3 reading test is administred more authentically and interactively taking into account the students TLU. Content such as reading very short newspaper excerpts and dialogues which have formal exchanges between friends appear less authentic. From Table 1, it is rather obvious that the new PT3 ELSA is more significant for the current Form 3 students.

Furthermore, as referred to Table 2 (in Appendix) reflects that the level of authenticity and interactivenss in the items to test writing skills. The TLU for writing skill is similar to the reading skills. Questions that test on writing informal letter is no longer authentic for students in current era. Thus, the items are considered less authentic however all the writing strategies required in the questions are interactive and authentic. PT3 ELSA has introduced a new writing section where the students are required to write a persuasive note to someone using the information gained from a passage which is considered highly authentic and interactive. Such an item is also interactive as it requires the students to apply their language ability, topical knowledge and affective schemata when

persuading. Even though both the papers are moderately authentic in terms of format and content in testing writing skills the PT3 ELSA is slightly more authentic compared to the PMR.

Lastly the listening and speaking skills are added components in PT3 ELSA which was originally not tested in the PMR. The students TLU is mostly in an academic setting or sometimes outside of the classroom when encountering foreigners, teachers or relatives who speak English. This test is more likely designed to prepare the students for their future especially when they have left school and have entered work or varsity. As examined in Table 3 (in Appendix), the majority of PT3 ELSA paper's speaking items are authentic and interactive, except for the items which require the students to read aloud the given passage which appear to be entirely unauthentic.

#### **4.0 Impact of PMR English Language Exam vs PT3 ELSA**

The impact of an exam can be seen at two levels that are the micro level and macro level. The micro level defines the individuals who are affected by the test while macro level defines the change in the education system and society (Bachman and Palmer,1996). In this study, we only concentrate on the micro level impact, which are impact on test- takers and impact on teachers.

##### **4.1 Impact on test takers**

As we all know, the students are the test takers in our context. When we asked teacher A about the impact of PT3 on the students compared to PMR, she said that PT3 promotes higher order thinking skills in students compared to PMR. Since all the questions in PT3 ELSA are subjective, the students have to really think critically to answer the questions. Besides that, PT3 ELSA also promotes positive washback towards students. For example, Form 3 students did have oral assessment before this, but it was not included in the PMR results. The oral assessment was tested separately under the assessment called School Based Oral Assessment (SBOA). However, PT3 ELSA has oral assessment component as one of the major scoring criteria. This motivates the students to use the language more in the classroom. Some students tend to practice listening and speaking skills in the classroom to perform well in PT3. Anyway, one of the drawbacks that teachers mention regarding the PT3 ELSA is that some students tend to ask for answers from teachers during the examination because they know the teachers very well. However, this is not a big issue if the teachers know how to tackle the scenario. So, it can be said that PT3 ELSA has a positive impact on the students compared to PMR.

##### **4.2 Impact on teachers**

If we look at the impact of PT3 ELSA on the teachers, it is showing vice versa. Many teachers claim that PT3 ELSA has added on to the burden that they are already having on their shoulders. Teachers have to teach students, prepare the exam papers, sort the exam papers, and mark the exam papers on their own within the given time. Some teachers even felt PMR was better because the markers were paid then. Nowadays there is no payment given to the markers because everyone is an internal marker. Besides that, the teachers have to attend marking courses after the examination to discuss how to grade the papers. Teachers who have never marked papers before sometimes face difficulties in understanding the marking scheme. In a nutshell, it can be said that PT3 ELSA has a negative impact on the teachers compared to PMR.

#### **5.0 Practicality of PMR English Language Exam vs PT3 ELSA**

Bachman and Palmer (1996) define practicality as “the relationship between the resources that will be required in the design, development and use of the test and the resources that will be available for these activities” (p. 36). These resources include: (1) teachers and administrators (human

resources), (2) equipment and materials (material resources), and (3) time (Bachman & Palmer, 1996).

## **5.1 Human Resource**

### **5.1.1 Teachers**

If we take a look at the teachers' component in practicality, for PMR, teachers from each school will be chosen to invigilate other school students during the examination. This group of teachers will go out from their respected schools during school hours in order to attend meetings before the examination and also during the examination to invigilate students. This will usually burden the teachers who are staying in schools because they have to attend relieve classes. This scenario is normally disliked by the teachers because this will hinder them from completing their own work. Meanwhile, if we take a look at PT3 ELSA, it is still the same case. Although the exam is an internal exam, teachers' burden remains the same. The teachers from the same school who are invigilating their students will still have to be relieved if they have class during the examination. Adding on to this, the teachers who are teaching PT3 have an extra work to mark the exam papers. Based on the interviews carried out, the teachers do prefer PMR for this reason. When we asked whether you preferred PMR or PT3, teacher A stated that *'with PT3 being implemented nowadays, we have more burdens on our shoulders.'* So, in terms of teachers, we think PT3 ELSA is more demanding than PMR.

### **5.1.2 Administrators**

During the PMR examination, administrators in a particular school, has to make sure that the teachers who come to invigilate their respective schools get proper hospitality. They have to make sure that everything is arranged properly in the given period before the invigilators come to visit their schools because this represents their schools' rapport. Other than that, the administrators have to make sure that all the classes are ready before the examination. However, when it concerns PT3, the administrators have more important things to worry about. They have to conduct meetings in order to discuss about the cost of printing, setting of examination classes for both oral and written exam and also how to keep the exam papers confidential until the examination. All the terms and procedures must also be briefed by the administrators to the teachers regarding the examination which will be conducted by internal teachers. So, in the terms of administrators, again the PT3 seems to be more demanding than PMR.

## **5.2 Material Resources**

### **5.2.1 Space**

Space in the practicality context defines the rooms for test administration and test development (Bachman and Palmer, 1996). Therefore, both PMR and PT3 had to and have to prepare classrooms to face both the examinations. The only extra preparation that PT3 ELSA has to do compare to PMR is the setting of classrooms for the listening and speaking tasks because during PMR examination, the setting was only done for the written examinations. Teacher B who was interviewed stated that setting up the place for listening and speaking assessment was not a big issue because the examination was only run by the internal teachers. When we asked the teacher's view on which was easier, she said *'Both were ok.....not much difference'*. So, this means that both the examinations were practical in terms of space.

### **5.2.2 Equipment**

Based on the interviews, observation and information gathered from the teachers, more equipment is needed for PT3 ELSA compared to PMR. During the PMR examination, students did not have oral assessment. Other than that, teachers did not have to print the examination papers. So, the teachers only needed limited equipment like PA system and computers. However, the implementation of PT3 needs more equipment like PA system, computers, printers, word processor, radio, DVD players and internet connection because oral examination is a part of the examination and teachers need to print out the exam papers for the written part of the examination. So, PMR was less demanding than PT3 ELSA in terms of equipment.

### **5.2.3 Materials**

Exam papers are the materials used in the examination. If we compare both the examination, PMR was less demanding than PT3 ELSA because PMR exam papers were prepared, printed and sent readily by the Lembaga Peperiksaan. On the other hand, although PT3 ELSA papers are also prepared by the Lembaga Peperiksaan, but the Lembaga Peperiksaan only sends two copies to schools in the form of CD's. The schools have to print, stapler and verify the papers before the examination. The papers must also be kept in a confidential room. Teacher B pointed out that this burdens the schools because the schools need to allocate more time and cost to get the papers ready.

### **5.3 Time**

As discussed earlier, PMR papers were all designed and sent to schools by Lembaga Peperiksaan Malaysia. No time was needed for teachers to prepare the papers. The examination papers were also marked by external markers. During PMR, teachers just teach the syllabus, prepare students for the examination and wait for the results. However, when it concerns PT3, teachers need extra time for the preparation of the papers until the marking and scoring of the papers. Teachers have to get the exam papers ready by the stipulated time. Other than that, they also have to mark and grade their students' papers according to the given time. In between, they have to continue their core responsibility, which is to teach their children. Moreover, PT3 ELSA also has specific time frame for each task which must be followed by teachers. These tasks include printing the papers, sorting the papers, marking and grading the papers and also analyzing the papers. In a nutshell, this scenario depicts that PMR was less demanding than PT3 ELSA in terms of time.

### **6.0 Summary**

All in all, both PMR English language paper and PT3 ELSA are reliable when looked at the marking process. However, the reliability of PT3 ELSA marking process is questionable, as it involves the school level, with teachers who know the students personally marking their own students' papers. External factors like emotional attachment, teachers' and administrators' motivation to give students high scores, and teachers' personal biasedness are present. In terms of validity, PT3 ELSA has higher validity compared to PMR English language papers. This is due to the way it is constructed and the content use is in line with test usefulness.

As for authenticity, as shown in the 3 tables in appendix, the PT3 ELSA has gained more positive remarks (O) compared to PMR test. Thus, it appears to be more authentic and interactive for the Form 3 students in lower secondary in Malaysian public school. By analyzing the component of impact, PT3 ELSA has positive effects on test takers because it promotes their betterment compared to PMR. As for the impact on teachers, PT3 ELSA has negative effects on them because it burdens the teachers more. In terms of practicality, we could generalize that PT3 is more demanding in terms of workloads, time constraints and equipment used, compared to PMR.

## **7.0 Recommendations**

As a recommendation, further research on the external factors that affects the reliability of PT3 ELSA marking process needs to be done. In terms of validity, we would recommend that the listening recording of PT3 test should be investigated in terms of its validity as we did not dive into it at all. Future studies can also be developed by investigating the authenticity and interactiveness of listening text and listening skills which were tested. It is also recommended to investigate on how useful are these tests for students with special needs who sit for the papers. In terms of impact, we would suggest that external markers be hired to mark PT3 ELSA papers, similar to the situation during PMR. This is to ease the teachers' burden in facing PT3. We would also recommend that a research on the degree of practicality to be done, to investigate how it affects the teachers as a whole.

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**Appendix:**

Indications:

Symbol	Meaning
O	High correspondence between test task and the TLU domain
X	There is a lack of correspondence
?	Uncertainty of the degree of correspondence

Category	PMR		PT3 ELSA	
	Test	TLU	Test	TLU
Situation	<i>Short excerpts/passages</i>	O	1) A newspaper report on an accident.	O
	1) Memo from a dad to his son.	O	2) A short book review : Harry Potter series	O
	2) Part of a product label	O	3) About common illness and home remedy to cure the illness	O
	3) Warning signs and notices	O	4) A movie review : An animation movie "Frozen"	O
	4) Advertisement about a cough syrup	O	5) Understanding the message in the poetry. (Heir Conditioning)	?
	5) Dialogue between a pair of friends apologizing for arriving late	X		
	6) Newspaper report on football match.	X		
7) Notice about a motivational program.	O			

Format	1) Multiple choice questions	X	1) Correct the underlined grammatical errors	X
	2) Cloze passage (MCQ)	X	2) Information transfer: linear to non-linear text	O
			3) True false statement	X
			4) Structured questions	O
			5) Summary	O
Strategies	1) Understanding phrasal verbs	O	1) Skimming and scanning	O
	2) Skimming and scanning	O	2) Searching specific information	O
	3) Searching specific information	O	3) Comprehending word meaning	O
	4) Reading for main idea	O	4) Making inferences	O
	5) Understanding non-linear text.	O	5) Summarizing main ideas	O
		6) Stating opinion	O	

Table 1: Authenticity and Interactiveness in Testing Reading Skills in PMR and PT3 ELSA paper.

Category	PMR		PT3 ELSA	
	Test	TLU	Test	TLU
Situation	1) Writing a letter to a friend describing the experience of celebrating teacher's day	X	1) Writing a note to a friend on how to keep headache and fever at bay. (obtain information from the reading text : Home remedy)	O
	2) Write about a lesson learnt in an adapted version of Around the World in 80 days by Jules Verne	O	2) Writing a letter to advising sister who stays in boarding school	X
	3) Summarize a short text about routine cleanliness.	O	3) Write about a Theme on an adapted version of the novel Around the World in 80 days by Jules Verne	O

Format	1) Writing an informal letter	X	1) Writing note	O
	2) Writing a summary	O	2) Writing an informal letter	X
	3) Writing about the novel.	X	3) Writing about the novel	X
Strategies	1) Paragraphing and organizing content point in correct format.	O	1) Conveying the home remedy as stated in the short passage.	O
	2) Giving personal response	O	2) Persuading friends to follow the instruction.	O
	3) Summarizing main points.	X	3) Paragraphing and organizing content point in correct format.	O
			4) Giving personal response on novel	O
			5) Convincing or advising family members by organising the content point	O

Table 2: Authenticity and Interactiveness in Testing Writing Skills in PMR and PT3 ELSA paper.

Category	PMR		PT3 ELSA	
	Test	TLU	Test	TLU
Situation	<i>PMR did not include listening and speaking test in its evaluation</i>		1) About advantages and disadvantages of watching television during your English lesson	O
			2) About the benefits of smart phone	O
			3) About the effects of pollution	O
			4) Discuss about family outings and strengthen family relationships.	O
			5) Discuss about variety of food that they enjoy eating.	O

Format	<i>PMR did not include listening and speaking test in its evaluation</i>		1) Reading aloud a text. 2) Make conversation with teacher.	X O
Strategies	<i>PMR did not include listening and speaking test in its evaluation</i>		1) Pronouncing words correctly 2) Reading aloud with correct intonation and enunciation 3) Answer questions regarding the topic discussed. 4) Discuss and make conversation with teacher.	X X O O

Table 3: Authenticity and Interactiveness in Testing Speaking Skills in PMR and PT3 ELSA paper.