



## RESEARCH ARTICLE



## QUIZZES AND OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS OF STUDENTS

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### ABSTRACT



The assessment system in any institution plays an essential role in producing quality students and their performance. Quizzes are also assessments that assist students in continuously making good scores, and finally, they significantly affect their study results and overall performance. The study aims to determine how quizzes affect students' final achievement of Saudi Arabian students. Two groups of 100 students were the subjects in each group. One group had a pretest and final exam. In contrast, the other group had four quizzes of the same marks as of pretest, and the other was a final test that ultimately affected their final achievement score significantly. The study's finding shows that quizzes do have a mentionable impact on students' overall performance of language skills. This study will guide the educationalists, syllabus designers, and authorities in designing the course assessment and evaluation procedures. This study will also help the new researchers explore more in this field.

**Keywords:** *Quizzes, Language skills, overall performance, Saudi students*



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Students' academic accomplishment is a significant concern for practitioners and researchers interested in improving students' academic achievement at all levels. The fall in students' performance is a significant concern, and it is critical to understand how teachers may enhance students' accomplishments to improve educational quality (Shafiq & Siddiquah, 2017). Sotola & Crede (2021) discovered that quiz performance is highly connected with academic performance, implying that quiz performance is a good predictor of eventual test performance. Areed et al., (2021) applied a new type of gamified e-quizzes and found that quizzes are very effective in the final or overall performance of the students. The results demonstrated that the new gamified e-quizzes were more successful than paper-based quizzes. They are better for measuring the students' learning performance, particularly formative assessment.

Several quizzes and changes in the syllabus have a prominent effect on the performance and engagement of the students in the class. Evans et al., (2021) also found that changes in the syllabus and assessment, especially the number of quizzes, can yield better performance and improve students' engagements. Their data assessments from various sources show that intervention resulted in a sustained improvement in students' engagement with the subject, more excellent lecture attendance, and improved grades.

Quizzes have a significant impact on the presence of students in the language class and remembering the courses' contents. A study by (Gholami & Moghaddam, 2013) showed that quizzes increased

the presence of students in the classes. The data showed that student attendance increased by 10% when the quizzes were implemented. Quizzes were used to assist students in remembering content over extended periods or prepare them for high-stakes tests (Johnson & Kiviniemi, 2009 as cited in Gholami & Moghaddam, 2013).

Another study in Iran showed that quizzes had very positive feedback on the students' performance and motivations. Frequent tests, according to proponents, motivate practice and revision, provide students with additional options for feedback, and have a good impact on students' study time (Gholami & Moghaddam, 2013). Quizzes keep students accumulating higher marks successively in their exams. Students whose Quizzical engagement increased from one exam to the following earned significantly higher scores on the subsequent exam. Students who attempted Quizzical questions from earlier in the term scored higher on average on the cumulative portion of the final exam during both terms investigated (Riggs et al., 2020).

The study of English teaching and learning in the Gulf States has piqued the interest of various academics. Numerous publications have emphasised curriculum deficiencies, instructional approaches, student attitudes, and difficulties in learning English (Afreen, 2020). English has a unique position in the Saudi community for several historical, social, cultural, and economic reasons. English is the primary (and, in some cases, the sole) means of communication in many social, administrative, educational, and professional spheres. English is the lingua franca for communication between Saudis and



many foreign employees employed in Saudi business (Moskovsky & Picard, 2018).

In Saudi Arabian schools, English is the sole foreign language taught. The late 1950s saw the introduction of English as a subject in schools. According to (Al-Johani, 2009, as cited in Alrashidi & Phan, 2015), English was introduced in the 1930s with the discovery of oil and was solely used in commerce. However, the government did not make it compulsory until the 1950s. Initially, English was only taught as a compulsory subject in intermediate and secondary schools.

Although the Saudi government was initially dead against the teaching of English, now English has got full attention in the education of Saudi Arabia. According to (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015), the Saudi government was opposed to English being taught in primary schools because it was thought that knowing English would interfere with a student's ability to learn Arabic. However, in 2010, the education system transformed in response to the importance of English, and English is now taught at all levels of schools (starting from the 4th grade of elementary school, when students are 10 years old). The primary level (4th-6th grade) students get two 45-minute English courses per week. However, in intermediate and secondary school, the number of lessons each week climbs to four (each class lasts 45 minutes).

The status and function of English have been changed, and it is very much evident by the attitude of Saudi people to English. According to (Faruk 2013 as cited in (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015), Saudis' opinions about English are generally favourable; most Saudis

feel that English is critical to the country's future growth and is widely used in numerous fields.

Although English has a particular position in Saudi education, it has many constraints. A detailed examination of the Saudi EFL curriculum reveals several obstacles that obstruct the process of teaching EFL, including a shortage of instructional time, learning material resources, knowledge transfer, and teaching approach limits (Al-Seghayer, 2014).

As the curriculum and syllabus have many constraints, it affects the assessment and language skills. Even when students are nearing their tertiary-level graduation with an English speciality, empirical data shows that there are still too many visible mispronunciations, native-language interference, grammatical mistakes, and code-switching among Saudi students (Afreen, 2020).

**1.2 Problem Statement:** Several types of research have been done on the weakness of Saudi students in the English language, but almost a few researches have been done to find out their causes of being weak in the overall English language skills of Saudi students. This research finds out the lack of their assessment systems and shows how quizzes can impact Saudi students' overall performance of English language skills.

**1.3 Research Objective:** This study investigated how quizzes affected Saudi students' overall English language abilities or skills.

**1.4 Research Questions:** What influence do quizzes have on Saudi pupils' overall success in English language skills?



## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

There has been a lot of debate in the relevant literature about getting the students frequent quizzes. On the one hand, supporters of quizzes claim that quizzes offer indisputable benefits, such as helping students memorise material for extended periods or preparing them for high-stakes tests. (Kviniemi & Johnson, 2009)

It is difficult for students to have only a summative assessment. Especially EFL and ESL students need frequent tests and assignments to get feedback, improve, and progress to pass the final exam with good grades. From the beginning of education, history educators have acknowledged the value of giving students feedback, especially language teachers. Teachers will find it challenging to share feedback with only observation in the classroom. In reality, giving students feedback and comments helps them build a sense of responsibility and a self-monitoring mechanism. It can be seen that there are different types of assessment. The assessment for learning is designed to aid the learning process, and traditional summative assessment is primarily concerned with determining the learning outcome. Umar (2018) conducted a study to identify students' attitudes and the effect of assessment on learning. He used a mixed method to establish this study. Two pre-medical classes were the subjects of his research. Before the experiment, he gave the students two proficiency tests to check their level, and they were at the same level. The finding indicated that the process of using the assessment as a learning tool for pre-medical students has remarkably increased their level in English. Also, the result suggests that instant feedback provided as part of the evaluation

procedures has been considered highly favourable by the learners. The learners are also enthusiastic about the possibility of evaluating and assessing themselves or evaluating their peers' work. He also thinks having an assessment for learning is intended to achieve, as it aims to improve the quality of education by modifying students' learning using assessment results.

One of the published studies investigating the effectiveness of the formative assessment in Saudi schools on speaking skills. Alahmadi et al. (2019) reported a study of formative speaking tests on Students' Performance. The researchers divided 30 students into two groups—an experimental and a control group. The control group only received a summative test, and the experimental group received a formative test. All participants were of the same age and had the same background English knowledge. Unlike the control group, the experimental group received feedback about their strengths and pointed out weaknesses. The study results show a significant difference in student performance in the speaking test for the controlled group, which had just taken the summative assessment and received no feedback. This study demonstrates the importance of formative assessment. The results show a significant improvement in overall speaking test performance, resulting in higher marks for participants in the experimental group.

Ameen and Umar (2021) studied the impact of formative assessment on students who enrolled in an ESP class. This study carried two aims, whether the formative evaluation impacts learners' achievement. The other objective is to know the teachers' and learners' attitudes to the formative assessment. The



sampling in this study was purposive; the learners were male. The majority of the participants were pleased with the constructive evaluation procedures, and very few believe that it consumes most of their time. They are expected to do numerous tasks and homework as the teachers did not agree on one point. Some believe it is essential for students to give them feedback. It positively affects the learning process; they also think it could significantly impact students' performance.

On the other hand, the other instructors believe it takes much effort to implement the formative evaluation. It takes more time, effort, and resources. Additionally, they think it is a difficult task. The learners will need much training to complete it effectively.; the first aim of this study showed that the experimental group students' performance was significantly higher than that of the control group.

Al-Serhani (2007) examined the portfolio assessment strategy's effect on teaching and assessing writing performance of EFL third-year students enrolled at the 3rd Secondary School, Skaka (Al-Jouf region). The purpose of the study was to determine whether a specific portfolio assessment model was influential in helping the students to improve their English writing performance in general and writing product skills and writing processes in particular. The targeted population consisted of 63 female students. The results of the pre-administration of instruments indicated that the two groups were homogenous and that their English writing performance was poor and inadequate. However, the findings of the post-administration showed a remarkable improvement in English writing performance of the portfolio group students in

general and their writing product skills in particular as compared with the non-portfolio group.

Likewise, findings indicated a statistically significant increase in the students' use of writing processes due to the portfolio assessment strategy. Moreover, a positive correlation was found between the students' (experimental group) scores in the portfolio and their English writing test scores. Using portfolio assessment, as a complementary to traditional tests, in teaching and assessing EFL writing was recommended, and that assessment should be an integral part of the teaching process. The study concluded that the portfolio assessment model is an effective instructional strategy and an evaluation tool. It enhances the students' English writing performance by focusing on writing products and writing processes.

Rana and Zubair (2019) conducted a study to explore the assessment practice in Saudi universities with a significant focus on Continuous Assessment Strategies. The study specifically aimed at finding out the different assessment strategies and their contribution to students' learning and performance. It was conducted in Jubail University College and Al Mustaqbal University, involving a sample of one hundred and fifty students and forty-five teachers. Data was collected qualitatively and quantitatively using students' academic records and questionnaires. The findings showed that continuous assessment helps students understand difficult areas related to the EFL content. The study revealed that although there are various kinds of continuous assessment strategies, EFL teachers at both the universities generally employed take-home assignments, written tests and recap exercises to assess how the EFL



students learn the English language. Continuous assessment also provides more confidence to students and prepares them for final examinations. Therefore, it was recommended that competent EFL teachers, who are trained and knowledgeable about evaluation strategies and procedures, should be motivated to share their expertise in order to improve the performance of Saudi EFL university students.

Alashwal (2020) investigated the effect of formative classroom assessment (FCA) on elementary school pupils in Saudi Arabia. The duration of the study covered one entire academic year. The work was based on an experimental design of two tests: pre-and post-test. The number of participants was 120 pupils of mixed gender. The participants were purposively sampled for this study. The study's two tests were based on the Basic Science Achievement Test (BSAT). Experienced teachers in the field validated the pupil's test feedback. The results demonstrated that FCA significantly affected elementary school pupils by improving academic test scores. This research further showed that FCA had an increased positive effect on female pupils' academic exam scores compared to male students.

AlTameemy et al. (2020) explored the difficulties and opportunities of using Blackboard investigated electronic tests in testing writing skills. The data of the study were collected using a questionnaire. The questionnaire was composed of three sections. The total number of participants was 660 EFL Saudi learners studying at the Preparatory Year Deanship at Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University. The study results indicated that most participants have a

positive attitude towards using e-assessment in testing the English language in general and writing skills. The findings confirm that using e-assessment for testing writing skills makes the test easy and effective. Students showed their interest in implementing Blackboard for testing writing. The respondents stated that writing essays and paragraphs might not suit administering Blackboard. In general, the participants did not face severe difficulties regarding devices and internet access, but the finding indicated that they faced some technical problems.

### 3. METHODS

The research method depends on the research objective, research questions, scale of measurement of IV and DV, sampling method, normality of distribution and number of groups or variables. Based on these factors, the following methods for the study have been chosen (Booth et al., 2016a). A quantitative method was adopted to conduct the research based on the factors above.

**3.1 Design:** This research was designed to see the effect of quizzes on the overall performance of different language skills of Saudi students of tertiary level. So they taught two groups of students. One group of students had a pretest of 40 marks and a final achievement test of 60 marks without any quizzes. Only the final achievement test was conducted at the end of the semester. Another group of 100 students had four quizzes of 10 marks on each language skill at different times of the semester. So the final achievement test was only 60 marks. Later on, quiz marks and final achievement test marks were added as a whole, and then both the



results of the final achievement test were preserved to compare.

### 3.2 Hypothesis:

**Ho hypothesis:** there is no significant impact of quizzes on the overall performance of language skills of Saudi students.

**H1 hypothesis:** there is a significant impact of quizzes on the overall performance of language skills of Saudi students.

**3.3 Data collection:** The researcher taught 100 students divided into three courses with 33, 33, and 34 pupils in each group, together with his experienced colleagues from a particular university in Saudi Arabia. They were given the same materials and classroom facilities available in that university. The researchers agreed to conduct a final achievement test of 100 marks. Before the final achievement test, students did not have based on the studied subject; instead, they had a pretest. The results of the final achievement test were gathered and saved for analysis.

Again, another 100 students divided into three groups were taught by the researcher and his qualified colleague in the same semester. The number of students in each group was the same as the previous group. Similarly, they were supplied and supported with the same types of materials. However, the researchers conducted four quizzes on language skills based on the materials taught during the semester before the final achievement test. The first was conducted before the progress test, and the second quiz was conducted after a few weeks. Again, the third and fourth quizzes were conducted before

the final achievement test, which covered the whole text and materials covered in the class by the teachers. Each quiz contained 10 marks, so the final test marks were only 60. All the quizzes and tests were collected and preserved to measure the overall performance of the students. An Independent Sample T-Test was conducted to show the impact of quizzes on the overall performance of two groups. (Sotola & Crede, 2021) used this test to show correlation and difference.

**3.4 Sampling:** The nature of the samples in this investigation necessitated purposeful sampling in choosing samples for this study. Only a few students were engaged in this study, namely 200 students from a Saudi Arabian university where the English language is taught as a compulsory course. First semester students were chosen due to their lower language abilities because of being new in the tertiary level. They improve those skills a lot more than other students at higher levels. The number of students in each group was determined based on the Independent Sample T-test as this test requires a minimum of 80 students. (Areed et al., 2021) also used the same number of participants. Participants were randomly chosen from a pool of 180 students from Damietta University's Faculty of Engineering. The 60 students chosen were all in their second year of study and were divided into experimental and control groups.

**3.5 Instruments:** Different instruments were used to measure the students' performance of the language skills based on the types of skills (productive or receptive) and situations. For example, a quiz on reading comprehension was conducted for reading skills, and for writing, they had to write some creative



items. For speaking, they had to speak on specific topics taught in their courses, and for listening, they had to listen to audio and answer true-false and multiple-choice questions. Pretest and post-test were

also designed similarly, and their performance scores were preserved for analysis. (Sotola & Crede, 2021) also used the simal types of instruments.

#### 4. DATA ANALYSIS

Group Statistics					
	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
pretest VS Quizzes	1	100	27.1	3.95045	0.39505
	2	100	37.64	1.03981	0.10398

Table no. 1

We discovered that each group had a hundred pupils in the table above. Before the final exam, one group received a 40-point pretest covering all language skills, while the other received four 10-point quizzes. However, the mean score of the two independent groups differed significantly. Group A's mean score

was 27.1, while group B's mean score was 37.64, considerably higher than group A's. This demonstrated that simply summative pretesting could not improve the students' performance. On the other hand, quizzes on all language skills scored highly in all areas.

Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	t-test for Equality of Means					
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
pretest VS Quizzes	Equal variances assumed	84.371	0	-25.802	198	0	-10.54	0.4085
	Equal variances not assumed			-25.802	112.652	0	-10.54	0.4085

Table no. 2





Overall students of group B ( $M = -10.54$ ,  $SD = 0.41$ ) scored significantly higher than Group A ( $M = 27.1$ ,  $SD = 37.64$ ). Based on the results of independent samples t-test,  $t(198) = -25.80$ ,  $p = .00$ , 95%, since the significant value was smaller than alpha at .05 level of

significance, there was sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. It can be concluded that there was a significant difference between group A and group B's achievement scores.

Group Statistics					
	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Final test	1	100	41.15	5.38305	0.53831
	2	100	55.15	2.49596	0.2496

Table no. 3

We observed that each group contained a hundred students in the table above. One group received a 60-point final exam covering all language skills, and the other received four 60-point similar exams. The mean score of the two independent groups, on the other

hand, differed significantly. The mean score for group A was 41.15, whereas the mean score for group B was 55.15, which was considerably higher than group A's. This indicated an effect of quizzes on the final exams in both groups.

Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Final test	Equal variances assumed	85.995	0	-23.595	198	0	-14	0.59336
	Equal variances not assumed			-23.595	139.687	0	-14	0.59336

Table no. 4



Group B students scored considerably higher than Group A students (M = -10.54, SD = 0.41) on average (M = 27.1, SD = 37.64). Because the significant value was smaller than alpha at the .05 levels of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected based

on the findings of the independent samples t-test,  $t(198) = -25.80, p = .00, 95$ . It can be stated that there was a significant difference in achievement scores between groups A and B.

Group Statistics					
	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
final_achievement_score	1	100	68.25	6.42655	0.64265
	2	100	92.79	2.70165	0.27016

Table no. 5

The table above showed that an equal number of students took part in the pretest, quizzes, and final exams. Still, their Mean scores (Group A, M=68.25 and group B, M=92.79 ) proved that the performance

of both groups had a considerable difference due to assessment systems. The difference was not so significant in the previous two exams, as was prominently high in the final achievement test.

Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	t-test for Equality of Means					
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
final_achievement_score	Equal variances assumed	73.468	0	-35.201	198	0	-24.54	0.69713
	Equal variances not assumed			-35.201	132.932	0	-24.54	0.69713

Table no. 6



On average, Group B students outperformed Group A students ( $M = -24.54$ ,  $SD = 0.6913$ ) (Group A,  $M=68.25$ , and Group B,  $M=92.79$ ). The null hypothesis was rejected based on the findings of the independent samples t-test,  $t(198) = -35.20$ ,  $p = .00$  since the significant value was smaller than alpha at the .05 levels of significance. There was a considerable difference in achievement scores between groups A and B, it may be said. The significant difference in the prior two exams was not as noticeable. Still, the difference became quite significant; the difference became significant when the results from the pretests, quizzes, and final exams were added to the total achievement score. This demonstrated that quizzes significantly impacted group B's overall test scores.

**5. Findings and Discussion:** The findings of this study are very significant in the assessment of Saudi students in their educational institutions. Group A had only a pretest after a certain period and after a course coverage, but the performance was not good. Since it focused on syllabus coverage, not the language skills, the students were not sincere in preparing them for the test. They had only a superficial understanding of the course. While another group had four quizzes several times, students focused on every aspect of the language course. They had to revise the course and prepare themselves for their test repeatedly. Each quiz focused on each skill of the language course. So they equally developed the understanding and mastery of the course. Students' discipline was visible for the frequent number of quizzes, and they were very much attentive throughout the whole semester.

On the other hand, students with pretest and final exams were not so serious in preparing themselves for the final achievement. Quizzes helped the students and helped teachers prepare the students for their intended exams. Teachers had to prepare class lectures and cover every aspect of the syllabus. They were also required to assess the weakness of the students to give them feedback. So through the continuous assessment and feedback, teachers were able to get the students to yield a significant result. When we compared the quizzes result with the pretest result, the mean score of both groups was not so different, but when we compared their final achievement score, we found a big difference in their performance. So quizzes at different times before the final exam yield an outstanding result in the overall performance of the students. This is very effective for Saudi students since they are not so serious and attentive in their classes.

**6. Conclusion.** Quizzes prepare students for a short course, but they focus intensely and minutely. It is like breaking the mammoth task into small parts, and they complete them one after another without taking so much pressure. This study reveals the impacts of quizzes on the students' overall performance, especially Saudi students who are not so serious and attentive in their classes. The assessment system in any institution may bring a massive change in the upliftment of the students' performance. This study will help the educationalists, syllabus designers, and teachers redesign their syllabus and change their teaching styles. New researchers will also be benefited from this study in exploring the new horizons in this field.



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