

The 'washback' effects of testing in aviation English

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‘washback’ effects of testing

‘The influence of testing on
teaching and learning’

‘washback’ effects of testing

‘Will this be in the exam, sir?’

‘washback’ effects of testing

Test focus, form & content ----→

Curriculum focus, form & content

‘washback’ effects of testing

‘washback’ = impact on:

- Society
- Educational systems
- Individuals

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Design & content impact validity
&
Validity impacts reliability

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Proficiency testing: ‘high stakes’

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- Test reliability
- Level & breadth of proficiency
- Testing <-> training

'washback' effects of testing

FOCUS

Standardised
phraseology



Everyday
language

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Narrow focus (phraseology):

- ICAO requirements not targeted
- High-risk situations not addressed
- Language proficiency misrepresented
- False sense of security created

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Wide focus (‘aviation-flavoured’):

- Operational language not assessed
- Specific functions not targeted
- Training time extended
- False sense of security created

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TYPE

- Indirect computer-assisted
- Semi-direct computer-assisted
- Oral Proficiency Interview
- Hybrid

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TYPE

- Assess all 6 skills?
- Too narrowly-focused training?
- Replicate natural interaction?

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DELIVERY

- Computerized / person-to-person
- Telephone / face-to-face
- Textual / oral
- Native / non-native speaker
- Operational / linguistic interlocutor

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‘Language tests for the aviation community should replicate as far as possible the work-related communicative requirements.’

Doc. 9835

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CONTENT

Broad, work-related vocabulary

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CONTENT

Operational functions define
required language structure

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CONTENT

Requirements to be met
within context of ICAO
aviation language sub-set

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CONCLUSIONS

Regulators & administrators:
Scope of language proficiency

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CONCLUSIONS

Language professionals:
Level & breadth of ICAO Level 4
language proficiency

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CONCLUSIONS

Operational requirements of R/T:
the acid test

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Thank you for your attention

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