

Title: The Positive Impact of the State School Leaving Exam on ELT Methodology.
The Influence of Testing Writing on Teaching English at Czech Secondary
Schools.

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Abstract

This thesis deals with the topic of testing writing in the context of the state school-leaving exam in English language. The research assesses the impact of clearly specified standards on teaching English to Czech secondary school students, and thus focuses on the field which no systematic investigation has dealt with. The research concentrates on specific subskills assessed within distinctive criteria, analyses the relationships between them and estimates their complexity regarding both student success and teaching challenges.

Three major research strategies were used: (1) a quantitative analysis of the large-scale data, (2) a small-scale pedagogical experiment and (3) a survey. To examine the relationship between various subskills of language ability we analysed test score data from the school-leaving exams in the years 2014-2017. Data from secondary vocational schools students were mainly used, as the level of these students' language skills should correspond the most with the level of the state school-leaving exam, which is set to meet CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) level B1. Secondary school teachers from all types of schools were asked to respond to the questions concerning teaching writing.

The reported results illustrate the relationships between the individual parts of the school leaving exam test. The analysis of the English teachers' attitude towards teaching writing shows the considerable impact of the state school-leaving exam on ELT methodology. The findings from the research offer insights into teaching writing at Czech secondary schools. The major problems the teachers have to face have been identified, and solutions to some of them suggested.

Key words:

ELT methodology, writing ability, state school-leaving exam, assessment criteria